

# The relationship of organizational politics and support to work behaviors, attitudes, and stress

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## Summary

The purpose of this paper is to report two studies that investigated the consequences of organizational politics and organizational support on two separate samples of employees. Study 1 surveys 69 full-time employees, while Study 2's sample includes 185 part-time workers. Four major findings were observed. First, the present studies replicated prior findings concerning the relationships of politics and support to such variables as withdrawal behaviors, turnover intentions, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In general, politics is related to negative work outcomes while support is related to positive ones. Consistent results were obtained within both the full- and part-time samples. Second, we elaborated upon previous work concerning the relationship of politics and support to job involvement. Third, we found in both samples that politics and support did predict above and beyond each other, suggesting that they should be viewed as separate constructs rather than opposite ends of a single continuum. Lastly, Study 2 extended the research on politics and support by analyzing their relationships to four work stress variables: job tension, somatic tension, general fatigue, and burnout. Each of these four variables was predicted by both politics and support. © 1997 by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

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## Introduction

Each of us works in order to obtain certain objectives. These may be concrete and economic, such as pay, or abstract and social, such as status attainment (Foa and Foa, 1974; Cropanzano, Kacmar and Bozeman, 1995). In order to obtain these objectives, work requires a considerable expenditure of effort. Consequently, choosing to affiliate with a given firm can be seen as an investment of personal resources (*cf.* Thibault and Kelly, 1986; Taylor and Moghaddam, 1987). A workplace, therefore, involves a marketplace in which different individuals and groups interact to exchange outcomes (Blau, 1964; Rusbult and Farrell, 1983; Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers and Mainous, 1988). For example, pay is exchanged for productive performance or friendship might be exchanged for a desirable assignment. All marketplaces function according to rules, but the same rules need not be in force for every marketplace.

In some organizations, people adopt a competitive and self-serving style. They band together into small groups and are inattentive, perhaps even destructive, to the needs of others. This

organization would be political. When the marketplace is political, individuals attain rewards by competition and by amassing power. This has a variety of implications for the nature of the marketplace. One implication is that, many people will not belong to the strongest cabal. Thus, they will have trouble fulfilling their aspirations. To the extent that aspirations go unfulfilled, the political environment is unsatisfying and stressful. Another implication of politics is that the marketplace becomes more volatile and less predictable. Since rewards are allocated based on power, the rules may change from one day to the next. This uncertainty causes individuals to have less confidence that their efforts will produce any beneficial outcomes. This lack of confidence makes it less likely that individuals will allocate additional resources to the organization. Finally, a political firm is also likely to be more threatening, since the different cabals may be actively trying to harm one another. Not only are goals less likely to be accomplished, but individuals are also at risk for losing the things that they have already obtained.

Based on these considerations, a political environment makes for a risky investment. As the setting becomes more political, an individual may not be able to guarantee high payoffs. He or she may even be fearful of threats, thereby raising stress levels even more. Consequently, a given individual cannot be confident that his or her efforts of personal resources will yield any tangible benefits. When politics is absent, the marketplace is more favorable.

However, all organizational markets need not function according to these difficult rules. In some organizations people adopt a collaborative and supporting style. They help each other fulfill their needs. People assist in the attainment of other's objectives. This has three powerful consequences. First, an individual in a supportive setting has more people working with her to achieve her goals. This provides the worker with a distinct resource advantage. Consequently, her objectives are more likely to be achieved. Over the long run, individuals can expect better payoffs. Second, support creates a setting that is generally more stable. The environment is more predictable. Loyalty, therefore, pays a little better. One can have more confidence that his or her investment in resources will yield benefits. Third, at the very least, support makes threatening events less frequent, since friends are less likely to mount an attack. Goal attainment, stability, and reduced threats should all serve to make the marketplace more favorable. This should increase satisfaction and reduce stress. Individuals should be more likely to remain in a favorable marketplace since it offers a greater possibility of future rewards.

Under these definitions, organizational politics and organizational support refer to one's perception of the organizational marketplace as a whole. Considerable work has examined how individuals respond to particular aspects of the work setting, such as their supervisor, co-workers, and so forth. What we are considering here, however, is one's overall perception of the social environment in the workplace. In particular, we are examining the extent to which the work environment is characterized by groups and individuals who competitively pursue their own ends (politics), or by helpful individuals who look out for the needs of their co-workers (support).

## **Research Defining Organizational Politics and Organizational Support**

### *Organizational politics*

There are at least two widely used definitions of organizational politics. One view sees politics as an influence process that is exercised within work settings. In this view, politics includes a very general set of social behavior. It is a broad and influential social tool that can contribute to the

basic functioning of the organization (Pfeffer, 1981). Perhaps as a result of this generality, this definition allows that politics can be functional or dysfunctional depending on the circumstances. However, a more common view defines politics more narrowly. In the more specific definition, the term politics is limited to behavior that is strategically designed to maximize short-term or long-term self-interest (see especially, Ferris, Russ and Fandt, 1989). Some good examples of political behavior are provided by Gandz and Murray (1980) and Kacmar and Ferris (1991). A politically-oriented manager might use the performance evaluation system for self-promotion or show favoritism to a personal friend. Given this second definition, politics is generally seen as dysfunctional (Ferris, Brand, Brand, Rowland, Gilmore, Kacmar and Burton, 1993; Ferris and Judge, 1991; Gandz and Murray, 1980).

Both approaches are useful, it is only that the first is general and the second specific. Contributions can be made using either perspective, so long as researchers are clear about their definition. For our current purposes, we will limit ourselves to the second, more specific, definition. Partly, our choice is based on the fact that when asked to describe political behavior, individuals typically list self-serving and manipulative activities that observers do not evaluate positively (Ferris and Kacmar, 1992; Drory and Romm, 1988; Gandz and Murray, 1980; Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick and Mayes, 1980).

The individual's perception of politics is more relevant for our purposes than the actual presence of organizational politics. This is because individuals respond to what they perceive, not necessarily to what is objectively real (Ferris, Frink, Galang, Zhou, Kacmar and Howard, 1994; Ferris *et al.*, 1993; Lewin, 1936; Weick, 1979). In this context, the perception of reality is what should show the strongest relationship to work outcomes. This is not to say that the objective environment is unimportant. In fact, as demonstrated by Parker, Dipboye and Jackson (in press), Gandz and Murray (1980) and Madison *et al.* (1980), analyzing the organizational antecedents of perceived politics is useful for a more comprehensive understanding of the work environment. Likewise, Witt (1995) has examined the role of supervisors in raising and lowering levels of workplace politics. However, for our purposes here we will focus on the role of political perceptions as a predictor of work outcomes. Should these perceptions prove to be important predictors, then subsequent work should examine their distal antecedents.

### *Organizational support*

The study of organizational support has a long history. As early as the 1950s, researchers were suggesting that employees form global perceptions of support and that these perceptions are related to a variety of positive work outcomes (e.g. March and Simon, 1958; Etzioni, 1961; Kelman, 1961; Levinson, 1965). This early work maintained that organizational support indicates a secure, positive environment (Shore and Shore, 1995). A supportive organization would be synonymous with a caring workplace. Employees form these beliefs by examining such things as their relationships with their supervisor (Wayne, Shore and Liden, 1993), discretionary rewards dispensed by the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986), and procedural justice (Fasolo, 1995). The employees then may feel obligated to respond to such behavior with increased effort, citizenship behaviors, and loyalty (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986; Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Shore and Wayne, 1993; Fasolo, 1995).

### *Summary*

We have argued that work settings can be seen as a type of marketplace. If politics and support are global conceptualizations of this marketplace, then they should have profound implications for

the manner in which individuals respond to the work setting. An individual who sees him or herself in a political setting has reason to believe that hard work will not be consistently rewarded. Since power is the route to success, then his or her efforts are best devoted to alliance building. Additionally, the setting is potentially less predictable and more threatening. All of this should serve to make most individuals less happy and less apt to invest additional effort to maintaining the organization. They are more likely to withdraw. On the other hand, within a supportive workplace the individual's investment is safe. Others are looking out for you and threats are few. Consequently, the environment should be less stressful and more pleasant. This should create greater satisfaction and make an individual more willing to allocate personal resources to the organization. Since politics and support are global perceptions, they should touch on a wide variety of organizational outcomes. In this paper we examine five broad classes: positive work behaviors, withdrawal behaviors, antagonistic work behaviors, work attitudes, and work stress.

## Positive Work Behaviors

Positive work behaviors include such things as volunteering for extra work, courtesy and timeliness. Organizational citizenship behaviors, or OCB (Organ, 1990), would be a type of positive work behaviors; actions at work which are above and beyond what is required of the employee. Based on our earlier observations, we expected that individuals are more likely to invest effort on behalf of an organization that meets their needs rather than threatening them. This prediction, however, has been more consistently confirmed for support than for politics.

Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann and Birjulin (1994, Study 2) did find a significant correlation between OCB and politics. However, these findings were not replicated by either Wayne *et al.* (1993, see their Table 3) or Randall *et al.* (1994, Study 1). Shore and Wayne (1993) supported this expectation with a study of 276 employees and their supervisors. The employee's perceived organizational support was positively related to their supervisor's ratings of organizational citizenship behavior. Similar results were obtained by Randall *et al.* (1994, Study 2) and Wayne *et al.* (1993). In Study 1 we examined the correlation of politics and support to OCB. In Study 2 we used a self-report measure of positive work behaviors.

## Withdrawal Behaviors

Based on the literature reviewed thus far, organizational politics is a disconcerting phenomenon. As such individuals should be less likely to desire remaining in a political workplace. Conversely, support seems to be highly valued. A supportive workplace should be more attractive and involving. It is anticipated that workers will be less likely to withdraw when support is high. Previous conceptual and empirical work has demonstrated that the construct of 'withdrawal' is a broad one (*cf.* Hulin, 1991). In consideration of this, we utilized two different measures of withdrawal.

### *Psychological withdrawal behaviors*

When the work environment becomes uncomfortable, individuals will often try to disengage or withdraw psychologically. They may be physically present, but their minds are elsewhere.

Psychological withdrawal behaviors could be daydreaming, or chatting with co-workers about non-work related subjects (Hulin, 1991; Lehman and Simpson, 1992). Psychological withdrawal seems to be positively related to politics and negatively related to support (Ferris *et al.*, 1993, Study 2; Randall *et al.*, 1994, Study 1). Psychological withdrawal behaviors were addressed in Study 2.

### *Turnover intentions*

As a result of the difficulties involved in operationalizing actual turnover (*cf.* Hulin, 1991) researchers have tended to focus on turnover intentions. This is reasonable, insofar as these intentions seem to be related to actual turnover (e.g. Hom, Caranikas-Walker, Prussia and Griffeth, 1992; Steel and Ovalle, 1984). Ferris *et al.* (1993) found that perceived politics is significantly related to turnover intentions. Randall *et al.* (1994) and Wayne *et al.* (1993) found that perceived organizational support is negatively related to turnover intentions, while politics is positively related to these intentions. The relationships of politics and support to turnover intentions were assessed in both Study 1 and Study 2.

## **Antagonistic Work Behaviors**

While workplaces may promote positive, prosocial activities, they may also be the scene of antagonism and contentiousness. Such things as arguing with co-workers or gossiping would be viewed as antagonistic work behaviors. Antagonistic work behaviors do seem to positively correlate with perceived political behavior (Cheng, 1983; Randall *et al.*, 1994). For example, Cheng (1983) found that when a politically-oriented scenario was presented to individuals, they were more likely to use acrimonious influence techniques, such as threats, instead of rational tactics to achieve objectives. Thus, antagonistic work behaviors seem to follow perceived politics. Only one study to date has examined the association between antagonistic work behaviors and support. Randall *et al.* (1994, Study 1) found that individuals who perceived high levels of organizational support showed lower levels of antagonistic work behavior. Antagonistic work behaviors were investigated in Study 2.

## **Work Attitudes**

As noted earlier, individuals are more likely to have a positive evaluation of an organization when their goals are being met rather than when their aspirations are threatened (*cf.* Hulin, 1991). We have also argued that supportive organizations are more concerned with the personal needs of subordinates. Political organizations are less concerned with and may even threaten these needs. In keeping with this, employees' attitudes toward their work, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job involvement, also seem to be related to the perceived presence of politics and support. All three of these attitudes were examined in both Study 1 and Study 2.

### *Job satisfaction*

Many studies have concluded that the social climate affects job satisfaction. Gandz and Murray (1980) surveyed more than 400 respondents about their perception of workplace politics and job satisfaction. Perceived organizational politics emerged as a negative predictor. Ferris and Kacmar (1992) found similar results With the presence of co-worker cliques negatively affecting the workers' perception of the work environment. Shore and Tetrick (1991) examined the relation of perceived support with job satisfaction. They surveyed 330 employees who held a great variety of job positions with a large corporation. They found a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational support. Additional studies by Ferris *et al.* (1993, Study 2), Nye and Witt (1993), Wayne *et al.* (1993) and Randall *et al.* (1994) reached similar conclusions.

### *Organizational commitment*

Organizational commitment is an attachment to an organization. Commitment was found to be negatively related to perceived political behavior by Randall *et al.* (1994). The reverse is true for organizational support. Many studies on these relationships exist (e.g. Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986, 1990; Shore and Tetrick, 1991; Shore and Wayne, 1993; Wayne *et al.*, 1993; Nye and Witt, 1993; Randall *et al.*, 1994).

### *Job involvement*

Job involvement is a measure of how much the employee identifies with, or gives to, the job. Highly involved employees would consider their job a large part of their identity. Job involvement's relationship to the social climate has been unclear so far. Ferris and Kacmar (1992) surveyed 264 employees in three different organizations on their perceptions of political behavior and, using a one-time measure, their job involvement. Their findings suggest that one may actually have higher levels of job involvement when one perceives politics. To explain this outcome, the authors proposed that one may try to escape the politics by burying oneself into work. However, this could be a counter-intuitive conclusion, if an employee's job involves working with and among peers. Peer relations disrupted by politics should lower one's desire for involvement, which would lead to a negative relationship between politics and job involvement. This reasoning is still in need of testing, however, and will be investigated by the two present studies.

Job involvement would seem to be heightened by perceived support. However, empirical evidence for a relationship between job involvement and support is lacking. An employee's belief that the organization values his or her work may encourage one to identify strongly with the workplace (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1990).

## **Work Stress**

In our second study we were able to examine work stress. For our purposes, stress is the subjective feeling that work demands exceed the individual's belief in his or her capacity to cope

(Folkman and Lazarus, 1991; Edwards, 1992). This experience creates a sense of anxiety or tension. According to Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg and Jacobs (1983) this tension is manifested as nervousness and apprehension about their work, as well as by ill health and physical symptoms. Work stress has an obvious negative impact on the individual and equally deleterious effects on the organization and the economy. The costs of stress can be enormous, due to lost time, reduced production, and accidents (Ganster and Schaubroeck, 1991; Holley and Frye, 1989; Joure, Leon, Simpson, Holley and Frye, 1989; Minter, 1991; Murphy, 1988).

There is considerable evidence that social climate at work, in general, is related to work stress (for reviews see Beehr (1985), Cooper and Payne (1988) and Kahn and Byosiere (1992). However, very little research has examined perceived organizational politics and perceived organizational support in the strict sense that the two terms are used here. Rather, previous work has focused on related concepts such as 'ambiguity', 'conflict' and 'control'. This suggests, but does not prove, that politics and support should also be related to work stress. However, the nature of this relationship (if it exists at all) is still unclear.

Ferris *et al.* (1994) examined the relationship between perceived politics and stress using questionnaires and a subject pool of 822 employees in various job positions. This study did find a positive relationship between perceived politics and job anxiety. In another study, Ferris *et al.* (1993, Study 1) found that perceived politics and job stress tended to be positively related, but less so when the individual understood the nature of organizational politics. It can be presumed that politics and stress are positively related, but more systematic research is needed to test this relationship.

The empirical data on the relationship between work stress and organizational support is also sparse. Nevertheless, there are good conceptual and empirical reasons to suspect that such a relationship exists. We can tentatively glean such evidence by examining research on social support at the individual level. In general, when people feel that they have social support from others, they report less stress, less anxiety, greater life satisfaction, and more psychophysical health (Carver, Scheier and Weintraub, 1989; Clark, Bormann, Cropanzano and James, in press; Cohen, 1991; Diener, 1984; Folkman and Lazarus, 1991; Ganster, Fusilier and Mayes, 1986). Social support has also been found to be reasonably effective in reducing the negative effects of interpersonal conflict (Lepore, 1993).

All of these studies have looked at support received by a person from other *individuals*. Support by an organization is somewhat different. Organizational support is a more general construct and is not limited to any one specific problem. Nonetheless, for the reasons we discussed earlier, it seems reasonable to suspect that a supportive organization will reduce at least some kinds of stress. For instance, a supportive organization creates a more predictable environment and also provides employees with helpful co-workers to whom they can turn for assistance. These kinds of effects should reduce stress levels.

Also suggestive is a recent study by Thomas and Ganster (1995). They examined the effect of supportive policies and supervisors on the work-family conflict and resulting strain. They found that organizational supportive practices, especially flexible scheduling and supportive supervisors, increased employees' perceptions of control over their lives. This perceived control was associated with lower levels of psychological and somatic measures of stress. The associations among politics, support and stress were only examined in Study 2.

## Organizational Politics and Support Together

Politics and support are highly correlated (Nye and Witt, 1993; Randall *et al.*, 1994), but their exact relationship is still unclear. Available validation studies have found that both a two-factor and unifactor model fit well. The two-factor model provides a slightly better fit, but the unifactor model is more parsimonious (Nye and Witt, 1993; Randall *et al.*, 1994). Thus, from the factor analytic data, one could plausibly argue for either collapsing the two constructs together or keeping them separate. Since this research is still in the developmental stage, it seemed appropriate to look at politics and support separately for now. This will allow us to assess the pattern of relationships between politics, support, and other variables. If either politics or support consistently predicts additional variance above and beyond the other, then this would suggest some utility in keeping the two constructs separate. That is, better prediction would be achieved by using two variables rather than one (*cf.* Wayne *et al.*, 1993).

On the other hand, if politics and support are highly related and consistently account for roughly the same variance in a variety of different outcome measures, this would suggest that politics and support occupy the same space in the nomological network (Cronbach and Meehl, 1995). There would then be more utility in viewing politics and support as opposite ends of a single continuum. Thus, a principle purpose of the two present studies was to examine the relationship of perceived politics and support to a wide range of organizationally relevant criteria. We were especially interested in examining the extent to which each construct contributed useful variance above and beyond the other. It is our hope that these studies will assist in making a decision about how these two constructs should be studied in the future.

### Study 1: Politics and Support Among Full-Time Workers

Our first study was conducted in a large manufacturing firm. We restricted the sample to only full-time employees and their supervisors. All respondents completed measures of politics, support, and various work attitudes. Subordinate stress was not examined in this first study. The participants' supervisor completed a measure of OCB. We generated the following two predictions

**Hypothesis 1:** Organizational citizenship behavior will positively correlate with perceived organizational support and negatively correlate with perceived organizational politics. Turnover intentions will be positively correlated with organizational politics and negative correlated with organizational support.

**Hypothesis 2:** Job involvement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment will positively correlate with perceived organizational support and negatively correlate with perceived organizational politics.

#### *Method*

##### **Subjects**

This study was conducted using 69 members of a manufacturing organization located in the southwest United States. Questionnaires were administered to 53 line workers, 10 supervisors,

and six individuals which were neither supervisors or subordinates. Approximately 60 per cent of the respondents were women and 14 per cent were minorities. The average age of the respondents was 43. All items were not completed on all questionnaires. Therefore, the sample size varies slightly among the different analyses. The 59 line nonsupervisory employees completed the surveys in two group sessions held in a large room during their regular work time. Forms were mailed to the 10 supervisors and all of these were returned in a sealed envelope.

## Measures

*Perceptions of organizational politics* Organizational politics was assessed using the 12-item Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS) developed by Kacmar and Ferris (1991). Further validation evidence was provided by Ferris and Kacmar (1992), Nye and Witt (1993) and Randall *et al.* (1994).

*Perceptions of organizational support* Organizational support was assessed using a 17-item scale developed by Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) called the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS). For additional validation evidence see Shore and Tetrick (1991) and Eisenberger *et al.* (1990).

*Job satisfaction* Job satisfaction was measured with a three-item scale called the Job Satisfaction Scale (Seashore, Lawler, Mirvis and Camman, 1982). This measurement scale provides an assessment of global job satisfaction. Respondents completed the instrument using a seven-point Likert scale.

*Organizational commitment* Organizational commitment was assessed using the eight-item Affective Commitment Scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1984). This is a widely used measure of organizational commitment. For validation literature, see Meyer, Allen and Gellatly (1990), Allen and Meyer (1990), Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin and Jackson (1989), and McGee and Ford (1987). In this study subjects responded using a seven-point Likert scale.

*Intention to turnover* An employee's intention to turnover was measured with a three-item scale developed and tested by Cropanzano, James and Konovsky (1993) and Randall *et al.* (1994). Subjects responded on a seven-point Likert scale.

*Job involvement* Consistent with previous research, job involvement was here defined as the extent to which an individual identified with his or her job (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965; Kanungo, 1982). In other words, job involvement was treated as a component of the individual's self-image. Thus, we measured this construct with a 12-item scale developed and validated by Bormann (1995). This scale included such items as 'When I meet someone new, I want them to know what my job is'. Subjects responded on a seven-point Likert scale.

*Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB)* OCB was measured with a 16-item scale devised by Smith, Organ and Near (1983). Previous factor analytic work has revealed two factors (Organ, 1988). Factor I involved face-to-face helping of individuals, and was labeled 'Altruism'. Factor II involved more impersonal conscientiousness, responding to the general requirements of the collective order. OCB ratings for each of these dimensions were collected from the respondents' supervisor.

## Results and discussion

### Correlational analyses

The coefficient alpha scores, means, standard deviations and intercorrelations among the variables are illustrated in Table 1. As shown, the alpha reliabilities ranged from a low of 0.79 to a high of 0.94. All of these are considered acceptable for research purposes (Nunnally, 1978). Inspection of this table shows mixed support for our two hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Perceived organizational politics predicted neither compliance ( $r = -0.08$ , n.s.) nor altruism ( $r = -0.01$ , n.s.), but did predict turnover intentions ( $r = 0.49$ ). Also disconfirming hypothesis 1 was the fact that perceived organizational support was unrelated to both compliance ( $r = 0.04$ , n.s.) and altruism ( $r = -0.09$ , n.s.). However, support did predict turnover intentions ( $r = -0.38$ ). On the other hand, strong support existed for hypothesis 2. Politics was significantly related to job satisfaction ( $r = -0.50$ ), organizational commitment ( $r = -0.70$ ), and job involvement ( $r = -0.33$ ). Organizational support was also significantly associated with satisfaction ( $r = 0.63$ ) and commitment ( $r = 0.63$ ). However, contrary to expectations support was not significantly related to job involvement, although a strong trend was in evidence ( $r = 0.22$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ).

Table 1. Study 1 means, standard deviations, internal consistency reliability, and intercorrelations

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Org. support	4.08	1.20	<u>0.94</u>							
2. Org. politics	4.28	1.37	-0.80	<u>0.91</u>						
3. Turnover intent.	3.84	1.65	-0.38	0.47	<u>0.79</u>					
4. OCB-compliance	5.68	1.27	0.04	-0.08	-0.09	<u>0.91</u>				
5. OCB-altruism	5.96	0.91	-0.09	-0.01	0.09	0.62	<u>0.86</u>			
6. Job satisfaction	4.96	1.54	0.63	-0.49	0.51	-0.12	-0.28	<u>0.89</u>		
7. Org. commitment	3.74	1.35	0.69	0.70	-0.65	0.15	-0.07	0.55	<u>0.87</u>	
8. Job involvement	4.35	1.26	0.22	-0.33	-0.36	0.19	0.08	0.21	0.42	<u>0.91</u>

Correlations greater than 0.29 are significant at  $p < 0.05$ , correlations greater than 0.32 are significant at  $p < 0.01$ . Coefficient alphas for each scale are underlined and shown in the diagonal.

These analyses provide only limited information. Correlational data does not indicate the effect of either politics or support above or beyond the other. In addition, we do not know the utility of examining politics and support simultaneously. It would be useful for future researchers to know the overall  $R^2$  that can be expected when both predictors are considered. For the above two reasons we performed a series of hierarchical regression analyses.

### Regression analyses

Our next step was to examine the independent contribution of each predictor above and beyond the other. We wished to assess the 'usefulness' of each predictor (Darlington, 1968). Hierarchical regression analyses relevant to this question were conducted in two different ways. First, we examined the incremental variance explained by politics when support was initially entered into the regression equation. We then reversed this to look at support when politics was considered initially. These results are also displayed in Table 2. The findings for each outcome variable are briefly discussed below. The two OCB dimensions of compliance and altruism were not related to politics and support and are therefore omitted from further discussion.

Table 2. Study 1 means, standard deviations, internal consistency reliability, and intercorrelations

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Org. support	4.08	1.20	<u>0.94</u>							
2. Org. politics	4.28	1.37	-0.80	<u>0.91</u>						
3. Turnover intent.	3.84	1.65	-0.38	0.47	<u>0.79</u>					
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8. Job involvement	4.35	1.26	0.22	-0.33	-0.36	0.19	0.08	0.21	0.42	<u>0.91</u>

Correlations greater than 0.29 are significant at  $p < 0.05$ , correlations greater than 0.32 are significant at  $p < 0.01$ . Coefficient alphas for each scale are underlined and shown in the diagonal.

*Turnover intentions* When taken together support and politics were related to turnover intentions,  $F(2, 66) = 10.24$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $R^2 = 0.24$ . When support was entered into the equation first, politics explained an additional 9 per cent of the variance. However, although politics could explain beyond support, support could not explain beyond politics (see Table 2).

*Job satisfaction* Perceived politics and perceived support accounted for a full 40 per cent of the variance in job satisfaction. This was, of course, statistically significant,  $F(2, 66) = 21.97$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . When support was entered into the equation first, however, politics was unable to explain a significant increment in  $R^2$ . On the other hand, when politics was entered first, support added a  $\Delta R^2 = 0.15$ . Support explained beyond politics, but politics did not explain beyond support.

*Organizational commitment* The relationship of support and politics to organizational commitment was also quite strong ( $F(2, 66) = 38.80$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $R^2 = 0.54$ ). Moreover, each variable accounted for additional variance above the other. When politics came after support the  $\Delta R^2 = 0.06$ , when support came after politics the  $\Delta R^2 = 0.05$ .

*Job involvement* Overall, politics and support explained a significant amount of the variance in job involvement ( $F(2, 61) = 3.83$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $R^2 = 0.11$ ). However, as shown in Table 2, while politics contributed a significant increment in variance beyond support ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.09$ ), support did not contribute significantly beyond politics.

### Summary

The findings from our first study were mixed. Hypothesis 2 was supported, but (with the exception of turnover intentions) hypothesis 1 failed to get any empirical support. This was surprising, especially given the consistent relationships between support and OCB obtained in previous research. Several possibilities exist, but one immediately suggests itself. During the process of data collection, a few respondents indicated to us that their supervisor might have inadequate knowledge to rate their OCB. We discussed this possibility with a company representative. She maintained that this could be possible. To the extent that this was true, therefore, Study 1 might not have allowed a fair test of the OCB relationship. For this reason, Study 2 attempted to test the relationship of politics and support to positive work behavior by using a self-report measure.

Disregarding the nonsupportive findings, it is also noteworthy that for each dependent measure either politics accounted for additional variance beyond support, or support accounted for additional variance beyond politics. Consistent with the work of Wayne *et al.* (1993), these findings would suggest some utility to treating support and politics as separate constructs. Given this issue, we attempted to replicate these relationships in Study 2. We also examined the associations of politics and support to some additional criterion variables.

## Study 2: Politics and Support Among Part-Time Workers

Our second study was designed to extend the findings of our first. We were especially interested in examining politics and support among part-time workers. Part-time workers make up a growing share of the workforce in many industrialized nations (Kahne, 1985). In fact, according to Nardone (1986), over 20 per cent of the U.S. workforce is engaged in part-time employment. Despite repeated calls for more research, very little has been conducted. Rotchford and Roberts (1982) go so far as to conclude that part-time workers are 'missing persons' in the organizational sciences. Feldman (1990, p. 103) calls the need for more such work 'critical'.

Only a single study (Randall *et al.*, 1994, Study 1) has examined the constructs of politics and support in the context of part-time work. This is especially important as it could be argued that these variables should have a relatively small impact on part-time employees. This might occur because individuals who spend less time at a certain job could have less investment in the surrounding social climate. If such a supposition were accepted, it could have the pernicious consequence of discouraging organizational investments in better social conditions, on the grounds that such investments would have little impact on work outcomes. Nevertheless, it is our contention that part-time workers, like their full-time counterparts, are also interested in politics and support. Although part-time workers may have a somewhat smaller investment in their employers, they should still prefer higher payoffs and fewer threats.

In the present study we put these ideas to the test. In Study 2 we used a sample of students who were also working part-time. We felt that this sample was appropriate as a very large proportion of part-time American workers are under the age of 24 (Nardone, 1986). Of these, many are students (Feldman, 1990). As in Study 1, we examined the relationship of support and politics to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, and turnover intentions. Unfortunately, characteristics of this present sample prevented us from collecting supervisory ratings of OCB. However, we did utilize a self-report measure of positive work behaviors. Additionally, in Study 2 we did not rely exclusively on turnover intentions as a withdrawal measure. Instead, we added a more complete survey of psychological withdrawal. Finally, we extended previous work by examining two additional outcome measures: work stress and antagonistic work behaviors.

### *Hypotheses*

In sum the present study is intended to make two new contributions. First, it extends research on politics and support to a sample of part-time employees. Second, it examines the new criteria of

work stress, psychological withdrawal, and antagonistic work behavior. The present study is a replication and an extension. We generated three hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1:** Psychological withdrawal behaviors, turnover intentions, and antagonistic work behaviors will positively correlate with perceived organizational politics and negatively correlate with perceived organizational support. Positive work behaviors will positively correlate with perceived organizational support and negatively correlate with perceived organizational politics.

**Hypothesis 2:** Job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job involvement will positively correlate with perceived organizational support and negatively correlate with perceived organizational politics.

**Hypothesis 3:** Stress variables of job tension, somatic tension, general fatigue and uneasiness, and burnout will positively correlate with perceived organizational politics and negatively correlate with perceived organizational support.

## *Method*

### **Subjects**

Subjects included 185 employed undergraduate students from an introductory psychology course and an advanced psychology course in a large public western university. It should be noted that although these individuals were recruited only if they worked part-time, the surveys were completed during regular class time or after hours in a psychology laboratory. All participants earned either research or extra credit for their participation. This sample was made up of 58 per cent females. The demographic makeup of this sample was predominantly white, 89.3 per cent. As is the case for many part-time workers, our sample was young. The average age was about 20.5 years old.

### **Measures**

Study 2 utilized the same measures of politics, support, turnover intentions, and commitment that were utilized in Study 1. The five new measures are described below.

*Work behaviors* With a five-point scale ranging from 'never' to 'almost always', participants were asked to report how much they performed 21 on-the-job behaviors. This measure was developed and validated by Lehman and Simpson (1992), and is made up of five factors. These are positive work behaviors, antagonistic work behaviors, physical withdrawal behaviors, and psychological withdrawal behaviors. Unfortunately, the physical withdrawal scale had such low reliability that it was dropped from subsequent analyses.

*Job satisfaction* Overall job satisfaction was measured using Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) Job Satisfaction Scale. For validation evidence see Seashore *et al.* (1982).

*Job involvement* This study used Kanungo's (1982) Job Involvement Scale. Further information can be found Kanungo (1982).

*Work stress* Participants' work stress was measured with items developed by House and Rizzo (1972). Their factor analysis organized 17 statements into three subscales, job tension, somatic

tension, and general fatigue and uneasiness. Responses indicate the extent one 'strongly agrees' (1) to 'strongly disagrees' (7) with these statements being true in their current work environment. Examples include 'I work under a great deal of tension' (job tension), 'I sometimes feel weak all over' (somatic tension) and 'I seem to tire quickly' (general fatigue). Further information on this can be found in Cook, Hepworth, Wall and Warr (1972).

*Burnout* Burnout comes about when the individual has reached a state of emotional and physical exhaustion (Jackson, Schwab and Schuler, 1986). To assess burnout we used a self-report measure developed by Pines and Aronson (1988). It lists statements of physical and emotional states, and asks participants to consider their stress in general, not just in the workplace. Examples from this scale are 'Feeling run-down' and 'Being physically exhausted'. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt that way 'never' (1) to 'always' (7).

## *Results and discussion*

### **Correlational analyses**

The Study 2 coefficient alpha scores, means, standard deviations and intercorrelations among the variables are illustrated in Table 3. The alpha reliabilities ranged from a low of 0.61 to a high of 0.94. According to Nunnally (1978) these are all acceptable for research purposes. Table 3 also suggests that hypotheses 1 and 2 were partially supported. Neither politics nor support was related to positive work behavior. As presented in Table 3, the other criterion variables were all significantly related to politics and support, and in the predicted direction. Organizational politics was positively related to turnover intentions ( $r = 0.29$ ), psychological withdrawal ( $r = 0.26$ ), and antagonistic work behaviors ( $r = 0.23$ ), while negatively related to job satisfaction ( $r = -0.48$ ), and organizational commitment ( $r = -0.36$ ). Conversely, organizational support related to job satisfaction ( $r = 0.60$ ), organizational commitment ( $r = 0.63$ ), and with turnover intentions ( $r = -0.41$ ), psychological withdrawal ( $r = -0.32$ ) and antagonistic work behaviors ( $r = -0.28$ ). Job involvement was not quite significantly related to politics ( $r = -0.18$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ), although it was related to support ( $r = 0.25$ ).

Also shown in Table 3 is supportive data for hypothesis 3. The four stress variables each had significant, moderate correlations with politics and support. As predicted, politics was positively related with job tension ( $r = 0.29$ ), somatic tension ( $r = 0.33$ ), general fatigue ( $r = 0.31$ ), and burnout ( $r = 0.37$ ). Support related negatively to the stress measures of job tension ( $r = -0.27$ ), somatic tension ( $r = -0.24$ ), general fatigue ( $r = -0.23$ ), and burnout ( $r = -0.39$ ).

### **Regression analyses**

Politics and support together significantly predicted all of the work attitudes, most of the work behaviors, and all of the work stress measures. Positive work behaviors was not significantly predicted, so it is excluded from further consideration. As seen in Table 4, the overall  $R^2$  values for the other criterion were of small to moderate size.

*Turnover intentions* The regression equation for both politics and support predicting turnover intentions explained a significant amount of variance ( $F(2, 182) = 18.90$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) with an  $R^2$  of 0.17. When we took support into consideration, politics no longer had a relationship with turnover intentions. However, when politics was entered first, support still explained a significant 9 per cent of the variance.

Table 3. Study 2 means, standard deviations, internal consistency reliability, and intercorrelations

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Org. support	4.85	1.24	<u>0.94</u>												
2. Org. politics	3.63	0.95	-0.60	<u>0.79</u>											
3. Turnover intent.	4.87	1.49	-0.41	0.29	<u>0.66</u>										
4. Psy. withdrawal*	2.64	0.56	-0.32	0.26	0.25	<u>0.70</u>									
5. Positive behavior*	2.95	0.82	0.07	-0.06	0.06	0.00	<u>0.68</u>								
6. Antagonistic beh.*	1.50	0.57	-0.28	0.23	0.12	0.34	0.31	<u>0.62</u>							
7. Job satisfaction	4.31	1.16	0.60	-0.48	-0.51	-0.48	0.18	-0.20	<u>0.93</u>						
8. Org. commitment	3.83	1.26	0.63	-0.36	-0.54	-0.27	0.16	-0.06	0.70	<u>0.83</u>					
9. Job involvement	2.91	1.00	0.28	-0.18	-0.42	-0.27	0.29	0.06	0.55	0.66	<u>0.81</u>				
10. Job tension	3.21	1.40	-0.27	0.29	0.18	0.12	0.23	0.18	-0.19	-0.08	0.15	<u>0.83</u>			
11. Somatic tension	3.10	1.45	-0.24	0.33	0.21	0.20	0.144	0.22	-0.21	-0.138	0.05	0.64	<u>0.78</u>		
12. General fatigue	3.22	1.23	-0.23	0.31	0.20	0.22	0.19	0.17	-0.19	-0.07	0.11	0.60	0.69	<u>0.61</u>	
13. Burnout	3.18	3.18	-0.39	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.09	0.24	-0.39	-0.21	-0.05	0.41	0.49	0.48	<u>0.94</u>

Correlations greater than 0.140 are significant at  $p < 0.05$ , correlations greater than 0.19 are significant at  $p < 0.01$ . Coefficient alphas for each scale are underlined and shown in the diagonal.

\* These items were measured on a five-point scale, all others are on a seven-point scale.

Table 4. Study 2 results of hierarchical regression of outcome variables on politics and support

Outcome measure*	$R^2$ full	Politics, given support, $\Delta R^2$	Support, given politics, $\Delta R^2$
Turnover intention	0.17†	0.00	0.09
Job satisfaction	0.39†	0.02‡	0.15†
Organizational commitment	0.40†	0.00	0.27†
Job involvement	0.08‡	0.00	0.07†
Psychological withdrawal	0.10†	0.01	0.04†
Antagonistic work behavior	0.08†	0.01	0.03‡
Job tension	0.10†	0.03‡	0.01
Somatic tension	0.11†	0.05†	0.00
General fatigue	0.10†	0.05†	0.00
Burnout	0.18†	0.03†	0.04†

\* The  $F$ -ratio of positive work behaviors was not significant, thus, it was excluded from this table.

†  $p < 0.01$ ; ‡  $p < 0.05$ .

*Psychological withdrawal behavior* Politics and support predicted this work behavior with a full model effect size of  $R^2 = 0.10$ . This was significant with an  $F(2, 178) = 10.81$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . When controlling for support, the effect of politics was no longer significant ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.01$ ), but support has a significant effect beyond politics ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.04$ ).

*Antagonistic work behavior* The full regression equation predicting antagonistic work behaviors had a significant effect size of  $R^2 = 0.08$ , ( $F(2, 182) = 8.27$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Once again, when support is considered first, politics' effect on this variable fades ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.01$ ), but support still explains a significant amount of variance beyond politics ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.03$ ).

*Job satisfaction* Politics and support together explained 39 per cent of the variance of job satisfaction ( $F(2, 182) = 57.14$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). With this work variable, politics and support both significantly predicted above and beyond the other. Politics had an  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.02 when controlling for support, and support had an  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.15 when considering politics.

*Organizational commitment* This regression equation had the largest effect size when both the climate variables were considered ( $R^2 = 0.40$ ,  $F(2, 182) = 59.65$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). However, when support was entered first, the relationship with politics decreased to zero. Support still significantly predicted organizational commitment above and beyond politics ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.27$ ).

*Job involvement* This last work attitude measure was more moderately predicted by politics and support with  $R^2 = 0.08$  ( $F(2, 182) = 8.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Politics' effect decreased to  $\Delta R^2 = 0.00$  when support was entered first, while support's relation to job involvement beyond politics remained significant ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.07$ ).

*Job tension* Politics and support predicted this stress variable with an  $R^2$  of 0.10, ( $F(2, 182) = 9.96$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). When support is considered first, politics had a significant  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.03. Support's relation to job tension decreased to a non-significant  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.01.

*Somatic tension* Politics and support together predicted somatic tension ( $R^2 = 0.11$ ,  $F(2, 182) = 11.16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Politics predicts above and beyond support with a change in  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.05, but support's relation decreased ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.00$ ) when politics is considered first.

*General fatigue and uneasiness* This full regression model had an  $R^2$  of 0.10, ( $F(2, 182) = 10.04$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Politics explained 5 per cent of the variance above and beyond support, while the  $\Delta R^2$  for support with politics entered first was zero.

*Burnout* Politics and support predicted this stress variable with an effect size of  $R^2 = 0.18$ , ( $F(2, 182) = 19.57$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Both politics and support explain variance of the burnout variable above and beyond the other; politics had an  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.03, support had an  $\Delta R^2$  of 0.04.

## General Discussion

The present findings suggest that perceived organizational support and politics are important variables for understanding organizational functioning. Consistent with a host of earlier studies, we found that perceived politics and support were both correlated with a variety of work attitudes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job involvement (for reviews of the previous research see Shore and Shore (1995), Ferris and Judge (1991) and Ferris and Kacmar (1992)). Like Ferris *et al.* (1994) and Ferris *et al.* (1993) we also produced evidence that politics is related to work stress. The present findings extended this earlier work, however, by examining a wider range of stress measures, including job tension, somatic tension, fatigue, and burnout. Politics and support (especially politics) were both able to predict all four of these criteria. To our knowledge this was the first study in which politics and support were used together as predictors of work stress. It was found that if an employee perceives the work environment to be political, he or she reports greater levels of anxiety and tension, and lower levels of general health. Conversely, if one perceives a supportive environment, stress levels are less intense. Perceived politics and support were also related to psychological withdrawal and turnover intentions. Although some earlier research investigated turnover intentions (Ferris *et al.*, 1993; Wayne *et al.*, 1993; Randall *et al.* (1994), only a single previous study examined psychological withdrawal behaviors and/or considered politics and support simultaneously (Randall *et al.*, 1994, Study 1). Finally, these were among the first studies to find that politics and support were associated with antagonistic work behaviors. The research reported here is significant in that it examines a wider range of outcome measures than has been investigated previously, and it predicts these criteria using both politics and support together. These observations illustrate the broad impact of politics and support. Together they seem to touch many aspects of work life, including morale, stress, withdrawal, and antagonistic behaviors.

These findings are consistent with the investment model we discussed earlier. It would appear that individuals form global perceptions of their social environment at work. These perceptions revolve around whether or not others are competitively pursuing selfish ends (politics) versus being attentive to the concerns of other people (support). In the case of politics, the work environment is often less helpful and more threatening. This reduces the likelihood that a given employee can meet his or her own needs, thereby creating stress and dissatisfaction. Similarly, the lack of predictability within a political environment makes a long-term investment risky. People are therefore likely to withdraw (both physically and psychologically) and devote less effort to the betterment of the organization. The cost–benefit ratios change, however, when the firm is supportive. In this setting the individual has helpful collaborators, thereby making goal attainment more likely. There are also fewer threats. Taken together, these two considerations should increase morale and decrease stress. Finally, the supportive environment is more stable

and predictable, making it easier for an employee to invest considerable effort with the confidence of a reasonable return.

While the present studies are consistent with our investment model, it should be noted that they in no way comprise a definitive test. There are certainly other means of explaining the current results. Given the promising findings obtained from these two investigations, it would seem reasonable for future research to investigate the investment model in more detail. It is especially important to pay more attention to the hypothesized mediators. In the investment model, these mediators include the role of individual aspirations and environmental predictability. If the investment model is correct, then politics should cause fewer aspirations to be attained and create more unpredictability, while support should have the opposite effects. If future research is supportive of the investment model, then it could offer a powerful mechanism for understanding the dual impacts of politics and support.

Despite this promise, it is also important that we do not neglect other predictions that were not supported. Most importantly, we were unable to predict positive work behaviors in either sample. This finding was especially troublesome, as we utilized different operationalizations in each study. In contradiction to previous research, neither was successful. It is not entirely clear why our predictions were not confirmed. One possibility was sample size. This is not entirely plausible, however. For one thing, the effect sizes involving positive behaviors were generally small. Moreover, they were not consistently in the expected direction. In short, the two OCB measures exhibited small and inconsistent relationships with politics and support. The low relationships to OCB also do not seem to be directly due to scale characteristics. The OCB and self-report positive work behavior measures had adequate reliability, for example.

One likely explanation for this null finding is that support and politics only cause positive work behaviors under certain conditions. When these conditions are absent the relationship does not occur. Such a possibility would suggest the need for more research on this topic. Another possibility might have to do with the nature of this particular sample. Almost all of these individuals worked in tightly structured manufacturing jobs. As Organ (1990) has observed, OCB are those activities that go beyond an individual's formal job duties. They are discretionary. It may well have been the case that the structured work flow that existed here, limited the employee's opportunities to demonstrate self-motivated extra-role behaviors<sup>1</sup>. This could account for the failure to observe a correlation of politics and/or support with OCB.

Theoretically speaking, the most significant finding of the present studies is that politics and support account for additional variance above and beyond the other. This is important given the ambiguous confirmatory factor analytic results. Politics and support can be reasonably modeled with either a one- or two- factor model (Nye and Witt, 1993; Randall *et al.*, 1994). Consequently, the decision to treat the two constructs separately must also be made on the pattern of correlations to external criterion variables. In most cases this additional increment was small. For instance, in the prediction of antagonistic work behavior support only explained 3 per cent of the variance after politics was entered into the regression equation. At other times, however, the increment was more moderate. For example, in the prediction of job satisfaction, support explained 15 per cent of the variance above and beyond politics. In any case, the fact that each adds explanatory power beyond the other suggests that it is useful to treat politics and support as different, though correlated, constructs (Wayne *et al.*, 1993).

When the present findings are juxtaposed with the two studies reported by Randall *et al.* (1994), some interesting patterns emerge. When predicting organizational commitment and job satisfaction, for example, support contributed additional variance beyond politics in all four data

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<sup>1</sup> We thank an anonymous reviewer for making this suggestion.

sets. Similarly, support contributed additional variance to the prediction of turnover intentions in all but one sample (Study 1 in the present report). For the two studies that measured antagonistic work behavior and psychological withdrawal (Study 1 in Randall *et al.* and Study 2 in the present report), support added explanatory power in each. Wayne *et al.* (1993) have noted that findings of this kind could indicate that politics causes support and support, in turn, causes various other outcomes. On the other hand, this causal picture may vary depending on the criterion in question. In the present Study 2, for example, politics contributed additional variance for each of the four stress variables. In short, we have evidence that politics and support may be differentially related to the various criteria.

Of course, correlations lack evidence of temporal precedence, which is necessary to infer causality. Interpreting our results, it is possible that one's personal work attitudes and work behaviors in the organization cause the work environment to be political or supportive, or that stress creates a political environment. Nevertheless, our findings are consistent with causal modeling conducted by Wayne *et al.* (1993) and with various theoretical presentations of these ideas (Shore and Shore, 1995; Cropanzano *et al.*, 1995; Fasolo, 1995; Ferris and Judge, 1991; Ferris and Kacmar, 1992). Despite this, there is a clear need for additional research to unambiguously assess causality.

There are other limitations in addition to the question of causality. One potential concern is that the hypotheses were only supported with self-report measures. This raises the possibility that some of our obtained associations could be due to common method variance. Unfortunately, the problem of method variance cannot be completely ruled out in the present data, since the only nonself-report measure (OCB in Study 1) was not predicted by either politics or support. However, this problem is somewhat mitigated by two important considerations.

First, the obtained associations vary widely in their size and in their pattern. For instance, job satisfaction was strongly predicted, and job involvement was less so. Similarly, support tended to be the better predictor of attitudes, while politics tended to be the better predictor of the stress outcomes. If method variance was the only thing operating, one would expect similar, small to moderate associations across all of the dependent variables. However, this is not what we found. Instead, there were differential relationships and many of them were of substantial magnitude.

Second, this study needs to be considered within the larger context of research on politics and support. Several other studies have examined non-self-report criterion variables (e.g. Shore and Wayne, 1993; Wayne *et al.*, 1993; Randall *et al.*, 1994). This work has tended to obtain findings similar to those observed here. Thus, when we look across the literature we find similar patterns of results regardless of whether one uses self-report or non-self-report outcomes. Given this, it does not seem likely that this would explain all the obtained associations.

Another problem is that the sample size in Study 1 is somewhat small ( $n = 69$ ). Small samples can produce instability in regression coefficients. Thus, our findings might not replicate on a new sample. There are several ways of addressing this problem. According to Murphy (1983, 1984) the best way to address this issue is by replication. If the findings hold in a new sample, preferably one that differs widely from the first, then researchers can have more confidence that their findings are robust. This was the method we used here. In part due to sample size considerations, many of the hypotheses in Study 1 were replicated in larger Study 2 ( $n = 185$ ). Additionally, these predictions were also examined in two other projects reported by Randall *et al.* (1994). When these three studies are taken together, all of the predictions that were supported in Study 1 have been replicated at least once. Given this, we can have greater confidence in the strength of these relationships.

Our data suggest that a supportive, non-political workplace is important, in order to have a committed, satisfied, and healthy workforce. With an increased understanding of how the work

environment affects employees, and the organization as a whole, we can better augment organizational change toward such a workforce.

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