

A MODERATION STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS AND EMPLOYER BRANDING IN INFLUENCING BRAND CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AND JOB SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

The tourism sector in India, according to the Union budget 2023-24, was identified as one of the four prospects that could transform India in the next twenty-five years. Organizations are complex systems where variables interact in unpredictable ways, often influenced by deeper forces like Perceived Organizational Politics (POP). This study explores whether Employer Branding (EB) can still enhance Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB) and Job Satisfaction (JS) despite the disruptive effects of POP. By examining POP as a moderator, the research sheds light on how EB and politics jointly shape employee outcomes. The findings aim to deepen understanding of JS and BCB, while offering practical and theoretical insights into the power struggle between EB's positive influence and POP's toxic impact. The present work was taken up with the objective of studying how organizational politics and employer branding impacts brand citizenship behavior and job satisfaction. Tools used were, Employer Branding (EB) scale developed by Srivastava et al., (2017) having 11 items; Job Satisfaction (JS) scale by Price and Mueller (1986) having 3 statements; Brand Citizenship Behaviors (BCB), positive word of mouth was measured with a three-item scale by Arnett et al., (2003), and participation was measured with three-item scale by Bettencourt (1997). Perceived Organizational Politics (POP) scale developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997) having 14 items in it. BCB was found to be very strongly influenced by EB (.89, $p < .01$). Similarly, positive relation was found between EB and JS (.89, $p < .01$).

Keywords: Tourism, perceived organizational politics, employer branding, brand citizenship behavior, job satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Tourism sector in India was identified in the union budget 2023-24 as one of the four prospects that has the potential to transform India in the next twenty-five years. World Travel and Tourism Council (2024) projects the contribution of tourism to India's GDP by almost Rs 21 trillion. Tourism sector has a substantial multiplier effect on the economy as mutual reliance of tourism on associated sectors of the economy charts out employment opportunities across industries (Singh, 2022).

In the competitive and fast-growing tourism industry, attracting and retaining talent is vital. Employer Branding (EB) plays a key role by shaping a distinct and appealing organizational image, setting it apart from rivals (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Studies show EB positively influences talent attraction and retention (Chandrasekaran, 2020; Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019).

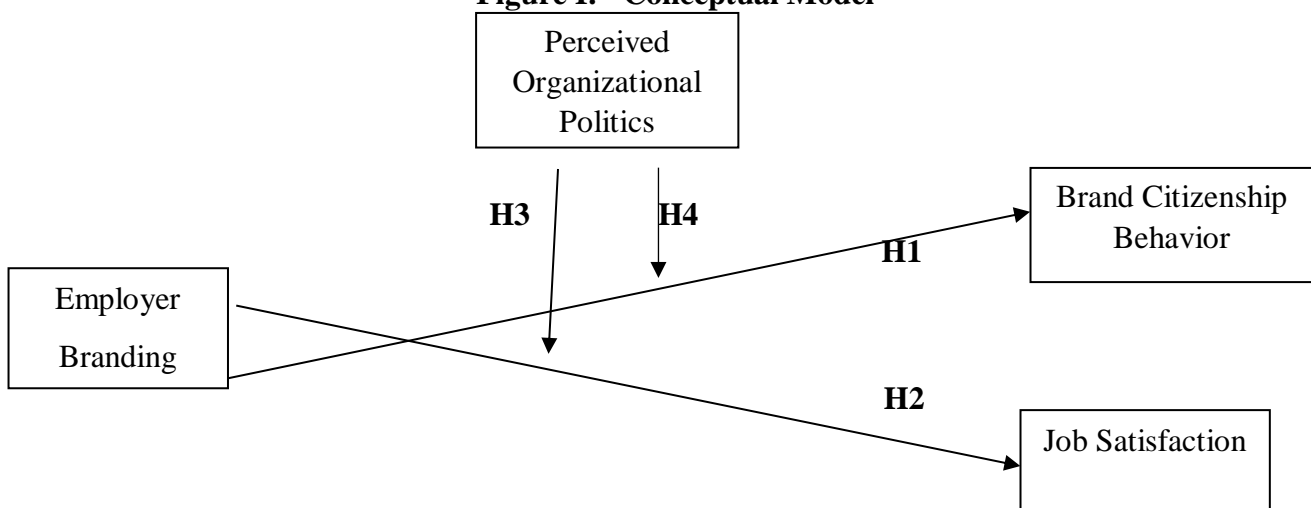
Employer Branding (EB) blends branding, people management, and marketing (Deepa & Baral, 2019), highlighting interdisciplinary learning. In this vein, Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB) merges branding with Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), focusing on employees voluntarily promoting brand identity (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005). Unlike OCB, which supports the organization broadly, BCB targets the brand specifically and positively impacts brand performance through extra-role, voluntary actions (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005; Xie et al., 2014).

Boosting Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB) should be a key goal for tourism sector leaders, as Employer Branding (EB) encourages positive employee attitudes and actions. Based on Social Exchange Theory (SET), employees tend to reciprocate organizational goodwill—like EB—with behaviors that support the brand (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). Tourism includes diverse sub-sectors—hotels, airlines, events, restaurants—where work-life balance is tough, making job satisfaction (JS) crucial. JS, defined by Locke (1976) as a positive emotional response to one’s job, is shaped by factors like pay, growth, colleagues, supervisors, and work conditions (Smith et al., 1969). Appreciation, a healthy environment, and strong management also contribute. Research shows EB positively influences JS, which in turn fosters BCB (Lelono, 2013; Priyadarshi, 2011; Schlager, 2011).

Another area of concern which this work explores is the influence of EB on job satisfaction (JS). JS is the base for any employee performance, and therefore organizational performance. Tahir and Sajid (2019) assert that JS develops a positive state of mind which enhances employee productivity. Any BCB by employees will come into effect only when they are satisfied with their job. EB exercises like providing quality work, fair systems, positive culture and good learning opportunities could be seen as enhancing JS of employees.

Organizations are complex systems where variables interact in unpredictable ways, often influenced by deeper forces like Perceived Organizational Politics (POP). This study explores whether Employer Branding (EB) can still enhance Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB) and Job Satisfaction (JS) despite the disruptive effects of POP. By examining POP as a moderator, the research sheds light on how EB and politics jointly shape employee outcomes. The findings aim to deepen understanding of JS and BCB, while offering practical and theoretical insights into the power struggle between EB’s positive influence and POP’s toxic impact.

Figure I: Conceptual Model



Source: Extant Literature & Author Analysis

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present work was taken up with the objective of studying organizational politics and employer branding in influencing brand citizenship behavior and job satisfaction and the hypotheses constructed were H1: There will be a significant relationship between employer branding and brand citizenship behavior. H2: There will be a significant relationship between employer branding and job

satisfaction. H3: Perceived organizational politics will moderate the relationship between employer branding and brand citizenship behavior. H4: Perceived organizational politics moderate the relationship between employer branding and job satisfaction. The data was collected from the cities of Gautam Buddha Nagar (Greater Noida & Noida), Ghaziabad, New Delhi and Gurgaon (these being most significant in terms of business operations and offices of private sector organizations in India). Data was collected online through Google forms from 350 respondents. After detailed examination, 323 questionnaires were found to be fully correct, hence these were used to run the statistical tests. In the sample, 61.6 percent were males and 38.4 were females with 75% of the respondents being under the age of 45 years (Demographic details are given in Table 1). Data was collected from the employees working in following organizations: Travel agency, Tour operator, Hotel/Accommodation, Event management/MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions), Airlines, Restaurant / Food establishment, online travel agent / Portal.

Tools used were, Employer Branding (EB) scale developed by Srivastava et al., (2017) having 11 items; Job Satisfaction (JS) scale by Price and Mueller (1986) having 3 statements; Brand Citizenship Behaviors (BCB), positive word of mouth was measured with a three-item scale by Arnett et al., (2003), and participation was measured with three-item scale by Bettencourt (1997). Perceived Organizational Politics (POP) scale developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997) having 14 items in it.

Table 1: Demographic Details

Gender	Age (Years)	Tenure (Years)
Male (199)	Below 25(42)	Less than 1(50)
Female (124)	26 – 35(118)	1-4 (155)
	36 – 45(99)	4-8 (64)
	46 – 55(55)	8-12 (26)
	Above 55(9)	12-16 (23)
		Above 16(5)

Source : Authors

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Brown (2015) advocates that validation of a construct can appropriately be done through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in social sciences. Data was uploaded in Amos software to calculate the model fit statistics. The statistics of the fitness of the model is: $\chi^2/df = 3.30$, $p = .00$, the goodness of fit index, $GFI = .75$, $TLI = .90$, $CFI = .90$, $PNFI = .80$. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.08. According to Baumgartner & Homburg (1996) & Doll et al. (1994) if most of fit indices are in the required range but GFI is below .90, the model can be considered. The confirmatory factor analysis validates the model in the study in context of the present theoretical formulation.

According to Podsakoff et al., (2003) common method bias (CMB) is an issue which authors should try to control. Harman's single-factor test is a very common and popular tool that detects CMB (Fuller et al., (2016). The results of Harman one-factor test established no risk of CMB as all the items loaded on a single factor explained not more than 50% of the variation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation Coefficients & Divergent Validity

CONSTRUCT	Mean	SD	EB	BCB	JS	OP
Employer Branding (EB)	3.74	1.12	1			
Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB)	3.70	.95	.89**	1		
Job Satisfaction (JS)	3.75	1.07	.88**	.87**	1	
Perceived Organizational Politics (POP)	2.48	1.12	-.87**	-.81**	-.81**	1

**Correlation significant at 0.01 level (1-tailed).

N = 323

Source : Authors

Table 2 exhibits mean, standard deviations, correlation coefficients & divergent validity of four scales that forms this study. Based on the table above we find that EB has a very strong positive correlation with BCB, $r(323) = .89, p < .01$, and EB has a powerful affirmative relation with JS as well, $r(323) = .88, p < .01$. Thus, both hypothesis 1 and 2 are accepted.

The predictor and the moderator variables were centered and then the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) method was used to check multicollinearity. According to O'Brien (2007) as a common rule of thumb, $VIF > 5$ are taken as base values for too high multicollinearity. In this study, $VIF < 5$ among the predictor variables and is not a cause of concern.

For testing the moderation effect, Process Macro 3.3 version of Andrew Hayes was used. Process Macro is widely used and Hayes et al (2017) has shown its usage and merits for testing moderation effects in research. According to Hayes et al (2017) Process evaluates every equation distinctly, which means that the evaluation of the regression parameters of equation has no effect on the evaluation of the parameters of other equations. Process is also very simple and user-friendly system as it can estimate a complex model with multiple equations through one line of simple code of SPSS/SAS. In SPSS point and click system could be installed which enhances the ease of use over other systems.

OUTCOME VARIABLE: Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB)

Table 3.1 Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.91	.83	.16	518.26	3.00	319.00	.00

Table 3.2 Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.86	.03	115.01	.00	3.79	3.93
ZEB	.50	.06	8.71	.00	.39	.62
ZOP	-.20	.05	-4.44	.00	-.30	-.11
Interaction (ZEB*ZOP)	.18	.03	6.30	.00	.13	.24

N=323, P < .01

LLCI : Lower Limit for Confidence Interval

ULCI : Upper Limit for Confidence Interval

Table 3.3: Conditional effects of focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

ZOP	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.93	.33	.08	4.25	.00	.18	.49
-.43	.43	.07	6.40	.00	.29	.56
1.23	.73	.04	16.29	.00	.64	.82

Source: Authors

To test the third hypothesis, whether POP moderates the relationship between EB and BCB, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted in process macro. These variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in BCB, $R^2 = .83$, $F(3, 319) = 518.26$, $p < .001$. Both the predictor and the moderator are independently significant and most importantly the interaction term ($ZEB * ZOP$) is significant, $b = .18$, $p < .01$ (Table 3.1). Thus, the third hypothesis is accepted.

To understand if the interaction is significant at different values of the moderator, a conditional effects table (See Table 3.2) is generated in process macro. The effects table show that at low levels of organizational politics (-.93), the relation between EB and BCB is positive and significant, $b = .33$, $se = .08$, $p < .001$, at the mean (-.43) the relation is positive and significant and at high levels of OP too the relation is positive and significant, $b = .73$, $se = .04$, $p < .01$ (See Table 3.3). Simple slope analysis (See Figure 2) also revealed that POP moderated the relationship between EB and BCB.

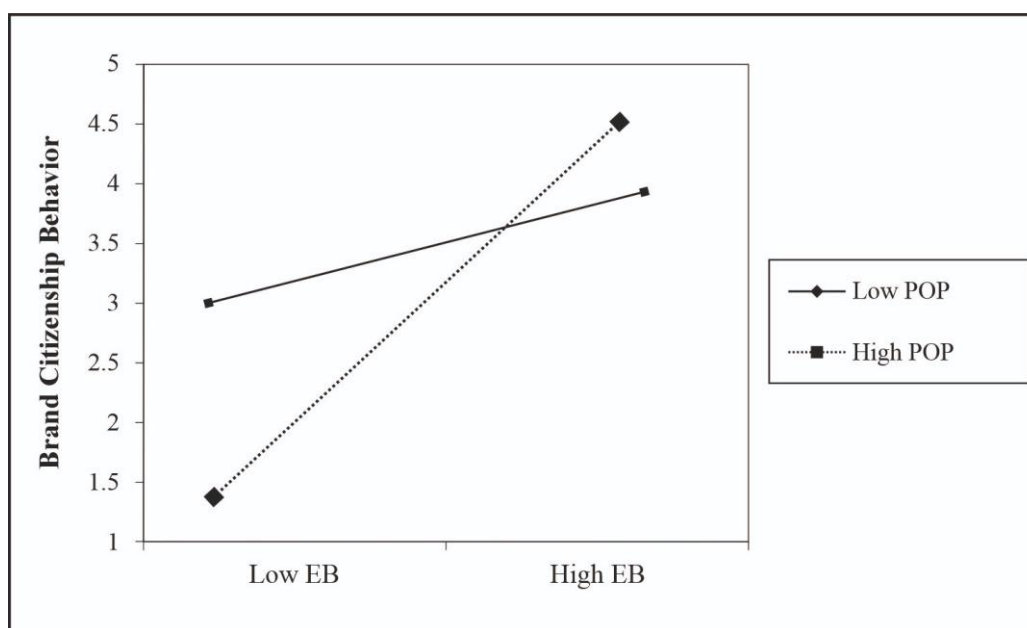


Figure 2: Moderating Effect of Perceived Organizational Politics on Employer Branding & Brand Citizenship Behavior relationship

Source: Authors

Table 4.1 Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.90	.80	.23	431.69	3.00	319.00	.00

Table 4.2 Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.88	.04	95.14	.00	3.80	3.96
ZEB	.61	.07	8.67	.00	.47	.75
ZOP	-.24	.06	-4.34	.00	-.35	-.13
Interaction (ZEB*ZOP)	.14	.04	3.94	.00	.07	.21

N=323, P < .01

Table 4.3 Conditional effects of focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

ZOP	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.93	.48	.09	5.05	.00	.29	.67
-.43	.55	.08	6.81	.00	.39	.71
1.23	.78	.05	14.34	.00	.67	.89

Source: Authors

To test the fourth hypothesis, whether organizational politics moderates the relationship between EB and JS, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed. The variance in JS due to the predictors is significant, $R^2 = .80$, $F(3, 319) = 431.69$, $p < .001$ (See table 4.1). Both the predictor (EB) and moderator (OP) are independently significant, and the main equation to prove moderation (interaction term ZEB*ZOP) is also significant, $b=.14$, $p<.01$ (See Table 4.2). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is also accepted.

The moderator is also significant at different levels of values, which is shown in table 4.3. The result of a simple slope analysis (See Figure 3) indicated that POP moderated the relationship between EB and JS.

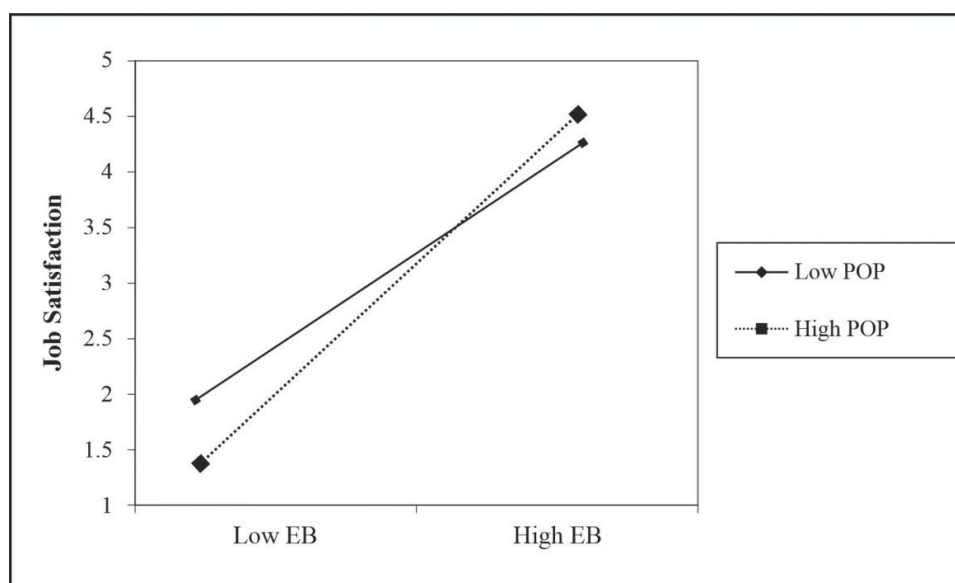


Figure 3: Moderating effect of Perceived Organizational Politics on Employer Branding & Job Satisfaction relationship

Source: Authors

RESULT DISCUSSION

This work examines whether EB has a positive influence over two significant variables in organizational context: BCB and JS. BCB was found to be very strongly and positively influenced by EB (.89, $p < .01$). This is in line with the findings of Safitriet *al.*, (2017). This is also consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of SET. EB efforts will lead to a mutual reciprocation from employees and they will respond with behaviors that will augment and defend the brand.

Similarly, positive relation was found between EB and JS (.89, $p < .01$). This embraces previous findings of Backhaus and Tikoo (2004); Gaddam (2008) & Allen, Bryant and Vardaman (2010). The results corroborate EB efficacy in shaping key employee behaviors which have a significant role in organizational functioning. Job satisfaction is the result of many factors, how organizations operate for the employee is a very critical area of job satisfaction. According to Grant & Ashford (2008) organizational behavior literature establishes the impact positive organizational endeavor on job satisfaction. EB is a modern-day institutional endeavor that influences job satisfaction (Arefin *et al.*, 2015). Branding initiatives facilitate the organization to make the employees satisfied with their job (Punjaisri *et al.*, 2008).

With the organization undertaking EB, various initiatives like quality learning & development programs, work life balance, just procedures, vibrant culture, empowering employees etc will lead to high job satisfaction. Yadav *et al.* (2020) acknowledge that EB negates turnover intentions and enhance employee engagements which are both signs of job satisfaction.

The most fascinating buildup of this work is how would the juxtaposing of EB and POP play out with reference to BCB and JS. This work sets up the battle and asks who triumphs. Between the two contesting forces of EB and organizational politics, which one has more weight in its lineage? It was found that EB's benign presence decisively sweeps away organizational politics. The interaction effect of EB & POP on BCB (see figure 2) clearly shows that at both levels of organizational politics, low and high, BCB is moving higher. Though, when EB is low and organization politics is also low, BCB starts at a higher level, but when organizational politics is high and EB is low, BCB is at its lowest. But interestingly as EB increases, irrespective of low/high politics, BCB surges upwards very strongly. This establishes the preeminence of EB over politics with reference to BCB, which is the dependent variable.

It is likely in an organization that politics would dampen any positive behavior exhibited by employees towards their brand. Employees are less likely to defend and promote the organization brand when they perceive politics playing out in the organization. But significantly this work finds that by imbibing employer branding, organizations can restrict the negative influence of politics, and the employees due to the presence of EB initiatives despite their being politics would indulge in positive behaviors towards the organization as a brand.

With regard to the interaction effect of EB and POP on JS (see figure 3), we find on both levels of organizational politics, low and high, JS is moving higher. Despite the presence of politics, as EB increases so does JS. It is seen that EB is a very strong positive force which has a major influence on JS of employees. Organization politics as found by Miller, *et al.*, (2008) surely dampens JS of employees. Employees are looking for hassle free work environment where merit and integrity prevails. Politics destroys both. In this context EB is a savior and helps in containing the detrimental impact of politics, it also has the positive strength of increasing JS.

In solving, this one of a kind tussle between EB and organizational politics in Indian context, we find EB triumphs over organizational politics. This work contributes in our understanding of both BCB and JS in light of two powerful forces. It also focuses gaze on EB's vitality and strength and gives empirical reason for its continued practice and widespread adoption.

Invariably, research in tourism has been focused on the tourist, stats related to inbound and outbound tourist, destinations they travel to, their spending patterns, and issues related to policy and implementation. Rarely, if any in Indian context has tried to channelized their focus on the employees who work in the organizations that provide services to tourist. This study attempts to perform this neglected task.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Social exchange theory is strengthened with this work. The results indicate that social exchange drives important relationships in organization. As a credible independent variable, EB comes out with flying colors. More significantly as a predictor, organizational politics is known to pull down variables in organization (Miller, *et al.*, 2008), but it is halted in its tracks by EB. It opens up fascinating theoretical scuffle between the two.

The outcome of this work based on the conceptual model bears significant implications for organizations. With employees becoming more skeptical about their job, organization and management in COVID pandemic, BCB and JS will gain more significance. Top management needs to focus on building a strong employer brand to extract higher levels of BCB and enhancing the level of JS. This can be accomplished by managers by being fair to the employees and acknowledging their opinions (Khan *et al.* 2021). Moser *et al.*, (2021) suggests creating robust organizational culture to build EB. Delivering to employees what was promised to them fulfills the psychological contract which according to Dabirian *et al.*, (2017) is critical in developing EB. Managers should focus on these strategies to build and enhance EB.

As politics in organization is inevitable, a striking take-away from this study for top managers is to use EB to negate or dilute the harmful impact of organizational politics. Politics in organizations is largely about individuals working for their own selfish ends, disregarding others and organizational interests. There are aspects of EB which managers should deploy to reduce the negative influence of politics. Creating just practices and systems are an important part of EB that is likely to reduce politics as employees will have clarity and justification in what they and their colleagues are getting (rewards, promotions, learning opportunities etc.). Providing financial and non-financial benefits are an important feature of EB. Good and diverse benefits may help in reducing organizational politics as employee will feel more loyalty for the organization.

Lastly, tourism industry is largely a service-based industry. In this context, Jackson and Sirianni (2009) assert that employee's perception and their treatment by employers will reflect strongly in employee's interaction and dealings with the customer. This is affirmed by Gallardo *et al.* (2009) with regard to JS, especially in context of employees working in the tourism industry.

Further Scope, Limitations and Conclusion

Work in EB can be taken forward by understanding its impact on other important variables in organization. This could become more meaningful and interesting due to corona virus pandemic and its impact on employee, employer and organization. Some key areas for management where the role of EB can be studied are employee stress, organizational trust and organizational commitment. These can be studied as Fulmer *et al.* (2003) contend that EB leads to extremely optimistic workforce attitudes, and Kucherov and Zavyalova (2012) pronounce that fairness and building positive organizational culture is part of EB, and Sullivan (2004) sees EB as understanding the sensitivity of employees. Training and employee development and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are some dimensions of EB which play a vital role in enhancing JS among employees (Marianiet al. 2013; Coldwell, *et al.* 2008), these specific dimensions could be taken up in future studies to understand their relation with other work-related employee outcomes like engagement, commitment and well-being.

To further add strength to this work, more empirical evidences of the impact of EB and organizational politics interaction should be taken up by prospective researchers. Ideally data should be collected from specific sectors or organizations that have politically charged environment like university, colleges etc. A probable question to answer could be: Does EB plays a significant role even when organizational politics is deep rooted?

Due to usage of self-reported method, common method variance can be a possibility, but by using reputable scales to measure variables, it can dilute errors, and trims common method bias. Further the design used is cross-sectional in character, and has the potentiality of being a barrier to candidly declare the direction of causality among the study variables. (See Figure 1). Therefore, the author's advice caution in accepting causation. But extracting rich literature to construct the theoretical framework supports the directions conceived in the model. Lastly, generalizations cannot be done as the study has sectorial and geographical specificity.

Outcomes of this study are interesting and valuable both in theory and practice. Tsui (2004) encourage research that is in contrast to conditions provided by North America and Europe in understanding organizational knowledge worldwide. This work is an important contribution in this direction.

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