

Honesty-Humility and Perceptions of Organizational Politics in Predicting Workplace Outcomes

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Abstract

Purpose The present study sought to examine whether a personality dimension named Honesty-Humility influences the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics (POP) and workplace outcomes, both attitudinal and behavioral.

Design/Methodology/Approach Data were collected online and cross-nationally from 268 full-time employees from various organizations and occupational backgrounds.

Findings Results indicate that the adverse effect of POP in the workplace is exacerbated for employees who are lower (rather than higher) in Honesty-Humility. Specifically, when perceiving their workplace as political, low Honesty-Humility individuals were more likely to engage in counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior and to experience greater job stress and decreased job satisfaction.

Implications Examining the role of individual differences in POP helps to advance our understanding of the mechanisms that employees use to interpret and react within a perceived politically charged workplace. This study provides further evidence of the deleterious effects of POP in the workplace, especially among low Honesty-Humility individuals. Practical implications of this research focus on

reducing the likelihood of hiring low Honesty-Humility individuals as well as on reducing the opportunity for undesirable behaviors among currently employed individuals.

Originality/Value There is a paucity of research exploring the possibility that individuals may react differently from one another to POP within their workplace and, in turn, experience varying outcomes. The present study helps to fill this gap in the literature by providing novel insights as to the role of personality in predicting perceptions of, and reactions to, organizational politics.

Keywords Perceptions of organizational politics · Honesty-Humility · Counterproductive work behavior · Impression management

For many employees, organizational politics are an inevitable and unavoidable aspect of their workplace experience. Organizational politics are defined as illegitimate, unsanctioned behavior within the workplace that is intended to maximize one's self-interest (Chang et al. 2009). As this type of political environment has been found to negatively influence the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization (Kacmar and Baron 1999), there is growing research interest concerning the extent to which employees' perceptions of such politics affect their work outcomes, both attitudinally and behaviorally. To date, there is strong meta-analytic evidence suggesting that perceptions of organizational politics (POP) are related to an array of negative work outcomes, including counterproductive work behavior (Zettler and Hilbig 2010), feelings of strain and stress, as well as decreased levels of job satisfaction (e.g., Chang et al. 2009; Miller et al. 2008).

Despite the considerable attention that has been given to investigating the main effects between POP and its

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outcomes, there is extensive unexplained variance within these relationships (Chang et al. 2009), suggesting significant reason to expect potential moderators. With this said, there is a paucity of research exploring the possibility that individuals may react differently from one another to POP within their workplace and, in turn, experience varying outcomes. In other words, the relationship between POP and its outcomes may depend on a number of factors related to a person–situation interaction. More specifically, the present study sought to determine the extent to which an individual's level on a personality dimension labeled Honesty-Humility influences the relationship between POP and four outcomes. We investigate this moderating relationship in predicting two behavioral and two attitudinal outcomes: counterproductive work behavior, workplace impression management behaviors, job stress, and job satisfaction. From this, the present research aims to advance our theoretical understanding of the relationship between POP and workplace outcomes. Given the lack of literature examining the role of personality in this relationship, we currently have very little understanding of not only the extent to which employees may differ in their responses to POP but also of how specific personality traits will influence such responses. An investigation of the moderating role of the personality dimension of Honesty-Humility will provide novel insights toward the types of employees who are most likely to react in a negative manner to a politically perceived workplace, including threats to the organization (counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior) and to personal well-being (job stress and job dissatisfaction). The present study is the first to examine the role of Honesty-Humility in the relationship between POP and job stress, job satisfaction, and impression management behavior. While one study to date has previously investigated the role of Honesty-Humility in the relationship between POP and counterproductive work behavior in a German context (Zettler and Hilbig 2010), the present study aims to demonstrate the generalizability of this finding in a diverse sample.

Below, we describe the four outcome variables examined in the present research, the direct relationships that POP is proposed to have with them, and then provide our rationale for how the Honesty-Humility trait interacts with POP in influencing these outcome variables.

POP in Relation to Behavioral Outcomes

Regarding the predictive role of POP in relation to counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior, findings generally indicate that POP is likely to be related to increased levels of counterproductive work

behavior and impression management behavior (i.e., political behaviors).

Counterproductive Work Behavior

Counterproductive work behavior encompasses employee behavior that is intentional and contrary to the legitimate interests of the organization (Gruys and Sackett 2003). Typical examples of such behavior include poor attendance, gossip, and (intentionally) sloppy or slow work. Research examining the relationship between POP and counterproductive work behavior is still in its very early stages. To our knowledge, only one study to date has investigated the link between POP and counterproductive work behavior (Zettler and Hilbig 2010), wherein they found a moderately significant positive relationship between these two variables ($r = .30$). Zettler and Hilbig (2010) presented POP as a situational factor representing an opportunity for counterproductive work behavior. They argued that a workplace perceived to be political reflects a self-serving climate, and thus acts of counterproductive work behavior are likely to be more frequent. Given this environment, employees may feel that they are less likely to endure punishment for engaging in counterproductive work behavior and, as a result, are more likely to participate in such counterproductive behaviors. As a result, POP is expected to relate to higher levels of counterproductive work behavior.

Hypothesis 1 POP will be positively correlated with counterproductive work behavior.

Impression Management Behavior

Impression management behavior at work is one class of political behavior. It is a self-presentation tactic that individuals use in an effort to influence and manipulate the opinion or affective evaluation that others have of them (Barrick et al. 2009). Only a few studies to date have examined POP and impression management behavior concurrently (e.g., Chen and Fang 2008; Harrell-Cook et al. 1999; Kacmar et al. 2007; Zivnuska et al. 2004). Within a political environment, the employees who seem to get ahead are those who engage in strong influence tactics, are members of powerful coalitions, and have connections to high-ranking allies (Chang et al. 2009). As a result, individuals working in such an environment are likely to feel pressure to engage in these rewarded behaviors in order to be successful in their careers. Given this, it should be expected that POP will positively relate to engaging in impression management behavior.

Hypothesis 2 POP will be positively correlated with engagement in impression management behavior.

POP in Relation to Attitudinal Outcomes: Job Stress and Job Satisfaction

Both job stress and job satisfaction possess a central role in many frameworks of POP (e.g., Ferris et al. 1989). Indeed, recent meta-analyses support the notion of a positive relationship between POP and job stress and a negative relationship between POP and job satisfaction (Chang et al. 2009; Miller et al. 2008). In the present study, job stress is defined as “an adaptive response, moderated by individual differences, that is a consequence of any action, situation, or event that places special demands upon a person” (Matteson and Ivancevich 1987, p. 10). Job satisfaction is defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotion state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke 1976, p. 1300).

In highly political organizations, the environment can be quite unpredictable as “the unwritten rules for success change as the power of those playing the political game varies” (Hall et al. 2004, p. 244). Furthermore, Nelson and Burke (2000) have shown that role ambiguity and uncertainty, as well as *a sense of* lack of power, are sources of job stress and lowered job satisfaction. With this said, Vroom’s expectancy theory (1964) provides a strong theoretical rationale as to why this sense of uncertainty in the workplace can lead to negative work attitudes, such as job stress and job dissatisfaction. Expectancy theory emphasizes the role that expectations play in influencing an individual’s psychological processes (such as motivation). There are three key elements underlying expectancy theory: (a) the belief that one’s efforts will lead to the desired performance outcome (expectancy), (b) the belief that the expected level of performance will be met with the desired reward (instrumentality), and (c) the reward granted will be one that is valued by the recipient (valence). According to expectancy theory, positive work attitudes are likely to result when effort is directly related to performance (i.e., expectancy), when performance is directly linked to rewards (i.e., instrumentality), and when employees desire these rewards (i.e., valence). On the other hand, when expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are low, unfavorable work attitudes are likely to result (Rosen et al. 2006; as cited in Brouer et al. 2011). In political environments, employees are often uncertain about performance criteria and what they have to do to get rewarded; decisions surrounding reward allocation are made via political means and are not based on objective indicators (Poon 2003). Accordingly, there is a sense of ambiguity and lack of trust surrounding the link between effort, performance, and reward. Given these characteristics of a politically perceived workplace, it is expected that POP will be associated with increased job stress and decreased job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 POP will be positively correlated with job stress.

Hypothesis 4 POP will be negatively correlated with job satisfaction.

The existing meta-analyses that investigate POP, job stress, and job satisfaction (Chang et al. 2009; Miller et al. 2008) show that the amount of variance that is unexplained by the correction of statistical artifacts is quite substantial, suggesting that moderators exist for the relationships of POP to job stress and job satisfaction.

The Moderating Role of Honesty-Humility

As noted above, meta-analytic evidence suggests that there are likely important moderators of the relationships between POP and a number of attitudinal and behavioral workplace outcomes (Miller et al. 2008). For decades, person–situation interactions received a great deal of attention from researchers (e.g., Tett and Burnett 2003). From such studies, we have observed that not all individuals behave or react in the same manner within a given situation. In the present study, we investigated the notion that individual differences on a personality trait called Honesty-Humility will influence how an employee reacts to a work environment that is perceived to be political.

Honesty-Humility is one of the six major dimensions of personality included in the HEXACO model of personality (see Ashton and Lee 2007), which has been proposed to be an alternative model to the Big Five personality model. One of the most salient characteristics of the HEXACO model is its addition of the Honesty-Humility dimension, which is not adequately assessed by the Big Five Model. Individuals who score low on Honesty-Humility have a tendency to manipulate or flatter others for personal gain, to be interested in or motivated by high social status and wealth, to feel entitled, as well as to feel tempted to bend the rules for personal profit (see Lee and Ashton 2004). Given this description, it is not surprising that low Honesty-Humility is associated with an array of criteria related to unethical behavior and criminal activity (Ashton and Lee 2008; Lee et al. 2008). As low Honesty-Humility individuals have a tendency to cheat, manipulate, and break rules, they are likely to be very sensitive to their physical environments, seeking cues for the opportunity to engage in self-interested behaviors. With this said, a politically charged workplace is often identified by the presence of a number of factors that are consistent with low Honesty-Humility characteristics, such as building oneself up by tearing others down, going along to get ahead, and politically determined pay and promotions policies (Kacmar and Carlson 1997). Taken together, there is theoretical reason

to believe that the trait of Honesty-Humility is particularly relevant in the investigation of POP and its workplace outcomes and that employees' reactions to a political work environment differ depending on one's level of Honesty-Humility. The trait of Honesty-Humility is not particularly strongly correlated with any of the other five personality traits within the HEXACO personality model (see Ashton and Lee 2009), and it is the unique characteristics of this trait that make it the most relevant personality variable in the investigation of the relationship between POP and its outcomes in the workplace.

POP by Honesty-Humility in Predicting Behavioral Outcomes

Interactionist theories, such as trait activation theory (Tett and Burnett 2003), propose that trait-relevant situational cues will facilitate the expression of behaviors consistent with certain traits. For example, Kacmar et al. (2009) examined the role that POP plays in moderating the relationship between core self-evaluations and task performance, using trait activation theory as a grounding framework. These authors found that the relationship between core self-evaluations and task performance was moderated by POP, such that core self-evaluations positively related to performance when POP was low, but negatively related to performance when POP was high. In essence, they “found that low [POP] appears to be a situation conducive and relevant to activating the productive activities of individuals with high core self-evaluations” (p. 1576). Similarly, we use trait activation theory to explain how POP and Honesty-Humility may interact to produce *negative* behavioral outcomes. In particular, we expect that an environment with a strong political climate will provide relevant cues that will activate two classes of behaviors from low Honesty-Humility individuals: (a) counterproductive work behavior and (b) impression management behavior.

We posit that if an employee is low in Honesty-Humility and he or she perceives that self-serving political activities are ubiquitous in his/her workplace, this employee is most likely to engage in counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior for two reasons. First, a politically charged environment provides cues signaling that illegitimate and unsanctioned self-serving activities can be instrumental in getting ahead, something that employees low in Honesty-Humility are willing (and potentially able) to do in the right situation. Thus, low Honesty-Humility employees will react more sensitively to such cues than employees high in Honesty-Humility. Second, in an environment where many people behave in a political manner, employees low in Honesty-Humility may feel that they *need* to participate in these types of activities

more competitively and fiercely simply due to the abundance of political rivals in the workplace. Taken together, these rationales suggest that organizational politics create a situation wherein employees low in Honesty-Humility not only see potential opportunities to get ahead through illegitimate means but also face challenges to execute their manipulative tactics successfully due to fierce competition, both of which could lead them to increase their engagement in these types of behaviors. In short, consistent with trait activation theory, when an individual has high POP, this is a situation that provides trait-relevant cues promoting the expression of low Honesty-Humility behaviors. On the other hand, employees high in Honesty-Humility, who are not strongly predisposed to use such manipulative strategies anyway, would not react as sensitively to the perceived political nature of the organization compared with their low Honesty-Humility counterparts. Although very few studies have examined the interactive effect of POP and Honesty-Humility, one such study has found the predicted interaction effect with regard to counterproductive work behavior from a sample of German employees (Zettler and Hilbig 2010). Therefore, we submit the following two hypotheses.

Hypothesis 5 Honesty-Humility will moderate the relationship between POP and counterproductive work behavior, such that the positive relationship between POP and counterproductive work behavior is *stronger* among individuals who are *low* rather than high in Honesty-Humility.

Hypothesis 6 Honesty-Humility will moderate the relationship between POP and impression management behavior, such that the positive relationship between POP and impression management behavior is *stronger* among individuals who are *low* rather than high in Honesty-Humility.

POP by Honesty-Humility in Predicting Attitudinal Outcomes

As mentioned above, both job stress and job satisfaction have a strong presence as outcome variables within frameworks of POP (e.g., Ferris et al. 1989). Despite the consistent findings that POP tends to relate to greater levels of job stress and decreased levels of job satisfaction, there is less empirical research to suggest how the personality trait of Honesty-Humility might influence these unfavorable relationships. Ferris et al. (1996) proposed that political environments can act as a situation for potential gain (i.e., opportunity) as well as a situation for potential loss (i.e., threat). This suggests that there might be individual differences in the extent to which POP influences various

work attitudes. Given the empirical and conceptual link between political behaviors and (low) Honesty-Humility, it may well be that individual differences in the Honesty-Humility factor moderate the relationships between POP and work attitudes. In this study, we explored this possibility. We pose that there could be two competing theoretical rationales as to how Honesty-Humility moderates the relationship between POP and the attitudinal outcomes. Below, we discuss each of these rationales.

First, low Honesty-Humility individuals may feel they are more able than those higher in Honesty-Humility to succeed in a political environment. Related to this, Honesty-Humility has been found to correlate significantly with individuals' perceived ability to deceive other people successfully (Schneider and Goffin 2012). As such, employees low in Honesty-Humility may likely have greater confidence in the required efforts needed to play the political game as well as in their perceived ability to effectively do so. If this is true, they are likely to view a political workplace as less threatening or even as potentially rewarding. This suggests that working in political environments may not be as distressing for low Honesty-Humility employees as it is for high Honesty-Humility employees. In terms of the potential reactions to POP delineated by Ferris et al. (1996), individuals low in Honesty-Humility may see high POP environments as high in potential for *gain*. According to this rationale, the adverse effect of POP on work attitudes could be attenuated for individuals lower rather than higher in Honesty-Humility.

Second, a contrary and competing possibility is that work attitudes may be influenced more strongly by POP for individuals lower (rather than higher) in Honesty-Humility. In a highly political environment, where the manipulation tactics of a low Honesty-Humility employee are not only common but also expected, low Honesty-Humility employees may feel that they must compete fiercely with their co-workers to come up with more “sophisticated” manipulation strategies and must use them more frequently. Such competitions create a situation wherein low Honesty-Humility employees find it more difficult to locate naïve allies and “victims” and to execute their manipulative strategies successfully. As such, they may perceive a high POP environment as one high in potential for *loss*. In contrast, in a low POP environment, where only few employees are perceived as using political tactics to get ahead, employees low in Honesty-Humility would find it particularly easier to execute such tactics successfully in order to get what they want. This type of environment would be particularly more attractive for low Honesty-Humility employees who are eager to engage in manipulation tactics than for high Honesty-Humility employees who are less interested in using such tactics in any

circumstance.¹ Taken together, it could be that the relationship between POP and job stress and job dissatisfaction will be stronger for employees lower, rather than higher, on Honesty-Humility.

Research Question 1 It is expected that Honesty-Humility will moderate the relationship between POP and job stress; however, the direction of this interaction effect is uncertain. Specifically, will the positive relationship between POP on job stress be *weaker* or *stronger* among individuals who are *low* rather than high in Honesty-Humility?

Research Question 2 It is expected that Honesty-Humility will moderate the relationship between POP and job satisfaction; however, the direction of this interaction effect is uncertain. Specifically, will the negative relationship between POP and job satisfaction be *weaker* or *stronger* among individuals who are *low* rather than high in Honesty-Humility?

In sum, the present study sought to examine whether a personality dimension named Honesty-Humility alters the relationships between employees' POP and workplace outcomes. Given the deleterious effects of POP in the workplace, it is hoped that we can advance our understanding of the mechanisms that employees use to interpret and react within a perceived politically charged workplace.

Method

Participants

The data analyzed for the present study were from 268 full-time employees from various workplace organizations around the world. All participants were members of *The StudyResponse Project*, an online research tool based out of Syracuse University. In total, 500 requests for participation were distributed, from which 288 employees responded, resulting in a response rate of 58 %. Sixteen of these responses were removed due to insufficient data and an additional four responses were excluded from the sample due to not having met the participation criteria (a minimum organizational tenure of 3 months). Hence, the final sample consisted of 268 respondents. The average age of these participants was 40.26 years ($SD = 10.64$), with 50.7 % being female. Twenty-seven different countries were represented as the participants' current residence, with the

¹ We highlight the negative aspects of political behavior in the workplace here to illustrate the link to low Honesty-Humility. However, we should note that some forms of political behaviors could be functional in the organization (see Perrewé et al. 2000).

majority living in the United States (66.2 %), followed by Canada (5.6 %), India (4.4 %), and the United Kingdom (3.7 %). A majority of participants were Caucasian (70.1 %), followed by Black (5.6 %) and South Asian (5.6 %). The participants had worked for their current organization for a mean of 8.60 years ($SD = 6.97$), while having been in their current position for 7.40 years on average ($SD = 6.24$). In terms of organizational hierarchy, 53.3 % of participants were employed at the managerial level (vs. non-managerial level). The top five occupational areas represented by participants were administration, technology, management, education/training, and health/safety. Participants were compensated with a \$10 gift card to a multinational online commerce company.

Measures

Perceptions of Organizational Politics

Participants' perceptions of organization politics were measured using self-reports on the 15-item Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS) validated by Kacmar and Carlson (1997). Sample items include, "People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down," "Telling others what they want to hear is sometimes better than telling the truth," and "Promotions around here are not valued much because how they are determined is so political." Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). In the present study, coefficient α was .85, which is consistent with previous research ($\alpha = .87$; Kacmar and Carlson 1997).

Personality

Although our focus was on Honesty-Humility, we measured and controlled for the main effects of all six HEXACO personality variables. To measure the six HEXACO personality variables, respondents were asked to complete self-reports of the 60-item HEXACO Personality Inventory (HEXACO-60, Ashton and Lee 2009). This measure assesses six personality domains: Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience, with 10 items assessing each of these six domains. A sample item for Honesty-Humility is "If I want something from someone, I will laugh at that person's worst jokes." Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). According to the validation study conducted by Ashton and Lee, coefficient α tends to range between .73 (Emotionality and Extraversion) and .80 (Openness to Experience). In the present study, coefficient α s ranged from .67 (Honesty-Humility) to .79 (Conscientiousness).

Counterproductive Work Behavior

It is important for counterproductive work behaviors to be measured through self-report as this behavior is often performed out of sight from supervisors and co-workers, and thus self-report provides a more accurate and valid assessment in comparison with peer-report methods (Fox and Spector 1999). Bennett and Robinson's (2000) 19-item Workplace Deviance Scale was used. Participants were asked "How often have you..." followed by a series of counterproductive work behavior items. The response scale ranged from 1 (*Never*) to 7 (*Daily*). Sample items are "Acted rudely toward someone at work" and "Dragged out work in order to get overtime." The validation study by Bennett and Robinson reports Cronbach's α for two subscales of this measure: Organizational Deviance ($\alpha = .81$) and Interpersonal Deviance ($\alpha = .78$). In the present study, the α coefficient for the total scale was .97.

Impression Management Behavior

Impression management behavior was measured using Bolino and Turnley's (1999) 22-item scale. The measure asks respondents how frequently within the last 6 months they have used at work each strategy described. An example of one of these strategies is "Stay late so people will know that you are hard working." Respondents answered using a 5-point response scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *always*). Based on the validation study conducted by Bolino and Turnley, α coefficients for the subscales of this measure range from .71 (Self-Promotion and Exemplification) to .89 (Supplication). In the present study, the α coefficient of the total scale was .95.

Job Stress

Self-reports on a 4-item scale developed by Motowidlo et al. (1986) were used to measure job stress. The four items were "My job is extremely stressful," "Very few stressful things happen to me at work" (reverse-coded), "I feel a great deal of stress because of my job," and "I frequently feel stressed because of my work." Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Previous research suggests a coefficient α of .87 (Motowidlo et al. 1986), which is consistent with the present study ($\alpha = .82$).

Job Satisfaction

Overall job satisfaction was measured using self-reports on a shortened version of Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) 18-item measure of job satisfaction. The shortened 5-item version of the scale has been found to be reliable ($\alpha = .80$;

Judge and Klinger 2008). In the present study, coefficient α was acceptable at a level of .82. A sample item is “I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.” Responses were made on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*).

Demographics

Participants were asked their age, gender, position hierarchy (managerial or non-managerial), organizational tenure, as well as organizational size (the number of people employed by their organization). These control variables were included, as previous research suggests that there is reason to believe that they are related to our variables of interest in the regression analyses. First, in terms of *age*, empirical evidence suggests that older individuals may score higher on Honesty-Humility than younger individuals (e.g., Lee and Ashton 2006). Second, related to *gender*, men generally tend to score lower than women on Honesty-Humility (Ashton and Lee 2009). Third, previous research suggests that employees who have been at the organization longer (greater *organizational tenure*), and those at higher levels within the organization (*hierarchy*), tend to perceive greater levels of POP (Ferris et al. 1996). This same study also found that greater amounts of political behavior are exhibited among higher levels within the organization. Lastly, while findings are mixed, there is some evidence to suggest that *organizational size* may influence the degree of perceived politics, as larger organizations may increase ambiguity and uncertainty—both predictors of POP (see Conner 2006).

Results

The means, standard deviations, internal consistency reliabilities, and intercorrelations among study variables are presented in Table 1.² The correlations between POP and the four workplace outcome variables all support the findings of previous research: Employees who perceived their workplace to be highly political were more likely to experience job stress ($r = .31, p < .01$), were less satisfied with their jobs ($r = -.46, p < .01$), and more frequently engaged in counterproductive work behavior ($r = .38,$

$p < .01$) and impression management behavior ($r = .31, p < .01$). Thus, Hypotheses 1–4 were supported.

Moderated Regression Analyses

In order to determine the moderating influence of Honesty-Humility on the relationship between POP and the outcome variables (counterproductive work behavior, impression management behavior, job stress, and job satisfaction), we conducted moderated regression analyses consistent with the procedures of Baron and Kenny (1986).³ The predictor variables (POP and Honesty-Humility) were centered on the mean. A total of four sets of analyses was conducted (one for each of the outcome variables). In step 1, demographic variables were entered, including age, gender, organizational tenure, position hierarchy (managerial vs. non-managerial), and organization size. In Step 2, the remaining five traits of the HEXACO PI-R were entered. Controlling for the effects of all personality variables is consistent with work by Peeters et al. (2006), as well as that by Zettler and Hilbig (2010), which specifically examined the HEXACO personality inventory in the context of POP. In Step 3, the main effects of POP and Honesty-Humility were added. Finally, in Step 4 of the regression analyses, we examined the interaction effect of POP and Honesty-Humility in predicting each of the outcome variables by entering a cross-product term of the two predictors. If the cross-product term was found to contribute significantly to the prediction of the outcome variable, we conducted simple slopes tests, and also plotted the interactions to determine the nature of the effect. When plotting the interaction, relationships were examined at one *SD* above and one *SD* below the mean for high and low Honesty-Humility, respectively. The results of these regression analyses are shown in Table 2.

² At the suggestion of the Editor, we also conducted multiple confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) to determine whether there was significant discriminant validity among the six focal variables (i.e., the four outcome variables, POP, and Honesty-Humility). We tested several models, and the best fit by far was a six-factor model, with each of the six focal variables separated. These analyses further supported the discriminant validity of the focal variables. These CFA results are available upon request.

³ As noted earlier, the data were collected from 27 different countries. As such, the nested nature of the data created the possibility that observations are more highly correlated within country than between countries. If this were the case, an analytical approach accounting for this nonindependence would be desirable. We calculated intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs) for each of the four outcome variables, and found that the ICCs for three of the four outcome variables were not significant (.01, .01, and .00 for impression management behavior, satisfaction, and stress, respectively). However, the ICC for counterproductive workplace behaviors was significant (.13). Upon running a random intercepts model in HLM 7.0, the results for analyses involving CWB very closely mirrored those from the regular multiple regression analyses. As such, we proceeded with multiple regression analysis for all four outcome variables.

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
1. Age	40.26	10.64									
2. Gender	1.49	.50	.05								
3. Tenure (years)	8.26	6.95	.48**	−.05							
4. Position hierarchy	1.47	.50	.10	−.20**	.02						
5. Organization size	4.23	2.31	.02	.06	.16**	.03					
6. Honesty-Humility	3.41	.55	.36**	−.02	.23**	.12*	−.01	(.67)			
7. Emotionality	3.11	.59	−.14*	−.30**	.00	.18**	.03	−.16**	(.73)		
8. Extraversion	3.42	.59	.24**	.09	−.04	−.16**	−.01	.22**	−.34**		
9. Agreeableness	3.24	.61	.20**	.04	.03	−.04	.00	.24**	−.27**		
10. Conscientiousness	3.72	.59	.31**	−.05	.10	.06	−.09	.47**	−.17**		
11. Openness	3.48	.62	.11	.03	−.09	−.04	−.08	.23**	−.20**		
12. POP	3.01	.61	−.12	.05	−.04	−.02	.09	−.29**	.23**		
13. CWB	2.24	1.33	−.26**	.21**	−.05	−.20**	.07	−.47**	.05		
14. IM	2.44	.80	−.35**	.17**	−.19**	−.26**	.09	−.52**	.13*		
15. Job stress	3.08	.90	−.01	−.01	.11	−.18**	.19**	.04	.11		
16. Job satisfaction	4.77	1.29	.20**	−.01	.07	−.05	−.07	.21**	−.26**		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Age	40.26	10.64									
2. Gender	1.49	.50									
3. Tenure (years)	8.26	6.95									
4. Position hierarchy	1.47	.50									
5. Organization size	4.23	2.31									
6. Honesty-Humility	3.41	.55									
7. Emotionality	3.11	.59									
8. Extraversion	3.42	.59	(.76)								
9. Agreeableness	3.24	.61	.47**	(.78)							
10. Conscientiousness	3.72	.59	.36**	.17**	(.79)						
11. Openness	3.48	.62	.44**	.22**	.35**	(.77)					
12. POP	3.01	.61	−.37**	−.28**	−.27**	−.23**	(.85)				
13. CWB	2.24	1.33	−.29**	−.19**	−.58**	−.26**	.38**	(.97)			
14. IM	2.44	.80	−.08	−.01	−.47**	−.18**	.31**	.57**	(.95)		
15. Job stress	3.08	.90	−.13*	−.07	−.02	.01	.31**	.16**	.20**	(.82)	
16. Job satisfaction	4.77	1.29	.49**	.29**	.32**	.15*	−.46**	−.27**	−.18**	−.33**	(.82)

N = 268. Numbers in parentheses along the diagonal indicate internal consistency reliabilities

POP perceptions of organizational politics, *CWB* counterproductive work behavior, *IMB* impression management behavior

Gender: female = 1; male = 2. Position hierarchy: managerial = 1; non-managerial = 2. Organizational size was measured using an 8-point scale

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Counterproductive Workplace Behaviors

In Step 1, age ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .01$), gender ($\beta = .20$, $p < .01$), and position hierarchy ($\beta = -.13$, $p < .05$) each independently predicted counterproductive work behavior. In Step 2, Conscientiousness was negatively and significantly related to counterproductive work behavior ($\beta = -.49$, $p < .01$). In Step 3, POP positively and significantly predicted counterproductive work behavior ($\beta = .19$, $p < .01$),

consistent with Hypothesis 1. In addition, Honesty-Humility was related to counterproductive work behavior ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .01$). Finally, in the fourth step, consistent with Hypothesis 5, the cross-product term of POP and Honesty-Humility contributed significantly to the prediction of counterproductive work behavior ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .01$). To further investigate the nature of these significant interaction effects, we conducted simple slopes analyses. Concerning the relationship between POP and counterproductive work behavior,

Table 2 Summary of regression analyses for Honesty-Humility, POP, and workplace outcomes

	Counterproductive work behavior			Impression management behavior			Job stress			Job satisfaction		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Step 1												
Age	-.04	.01	-.31**	-.02	.01	-.32**	-.00	.01	-.04	.03	.01	.21**
Gender	.53	.16	.20**	.21	.09	.13*	-.09	.11	-.05	-.07	.16	-.03
Organizational tenure	.00	.00	.10	.00	.00	-.04	.00	.00	.09	.00	.00	-.02
Position hierarchy	-.34	.16	-.13*	-.34	.09	-.21**	-.34	.11	-.19**	-.18	.16	-.07
Organization size	.03	.03	.05	.04	.02	.10	.07	.02	.18**	-.04	.03	-.07
	R ² = .14**			R ² = .21**			R ² = .08**			R ² = .05*		
Step 2												
Age	-.01	.01	-.09	-.02	.01	-.22**	.00	.01	.01	.00	.01	.00
Gender	.44	.14	.17**	.24	.09	.15**	-.02	.11	-.01	-.16	.14	-.06
Organizational tenure	.00	.00	.05	.00	.00	-.05	.00	.00	.07	.00	.00	.07
Position hierarchy	-.37	.14	-.14**	-.33	.09	-.20**	-.43	.11	-.24**	.05	.14	.02
Organization size	.01	.03	.01	.02	.02	.06	.08	.02	.19**	-.04	.03	-.07
Emotionality	-.05	.12	-.02	.22	.08	.16**	.18	.10	.12	-.26	.13	-.12*
Extraversion	-.20	.14	-.09	.14	.09	.10	-.30	.12	-.20*	.93	.15	.42**
Agreeableness	-.13	.12	-.06	.12	.08	.09	.02	.10	.01	.14	.13	.06
Conscientiousness	-1.10	.12	-.49**	-.50	.08	-.37**	.08	.10	.05	.36	.13	.16**
Openness	-.08	.12	-.04	-.09	.07	-.07	.17	.10	.12	-.26	.13	-.12*
	R ² = .42**			R ² = .37**			R ² = .12**			R ² = .30**		
	ΔR ² = .28**			ΔR ² = .16**			ΔR ² = .04*			ΔR ² = .25**		
Step 3												
Age	-.01	.01	-.07	-.01	.00	-.18**	-.00	.01	-.03	.00	.01	.02
Gender	.40	.13	.15**	.21	.08	.13**	-.07	.11	-.04	-.10	.14	-.04
Organizational tenure	.00	.00	.09	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.07	.00	.00	.05
Position hierarchy	-.28	.13	-.10*	-.26	.08	-.16**	-.41	.11	-.22**	.00	.14	.00
Organization size	.00	.03	.00	.02	.02	.05	.06	.02	.17**	-.03	.03	-.04
Emotionality	-.14	.12	-.06	.17	.07	.12*	.13	.10	.08	-.18	.13	-.08
Extraversion	-.12	.14	-.05	.18	.08	.13*	-.17	.12	-.11	.76	.15	.35**
Agreeableness	-.03	.12	-.01	.20	.07	.15**	.04	.10	.03	.08	.12	.04
Conscientiousness	-.89	.13	-.40**	-.33	.08	-.24**	.06	.11	.04	.31	.13	.14*
Openness	-.03	.11	-.02	-.05	.07	-.04	.17	.09	.12	-.28	.12	-.13*
POP	.41	.11	.19**	.23	.07	.17**	.47	.09	.32**	-.63	.12	-.30**
Honesty-Humility	-.47	.13	-.20**	-.43	.08	-.30**	.22	.11	.14*	-.08	.14	-.04
	R ² = .48**			R ² = .46**			R ² = .21**			R ² = .37**		
	ΔR ² = .06**			ΔR ² = .09**			ΔR ² = .09**			ΔR ² = .07**		
Step 4												
Age	-.01	.01	-.07	-.01	.00	-.18**	-.00	.00	-.03	.00	.01	.02
Gender	.39	.13	.15**	.21	.08	.13**	-.07	.11	-.04	-.09	.14	-.03
Organizational tenure	.00	.00	.08	.00	.00	-.01	.00	.00	.07	.00	.00	.06

Table 2 continued

	Counterproductive work behavior			Impression management behavior			Job stress			Job satisfaction		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Managerial position	-.30	.13	-.11*	-.27	.08	-.17**	-.42	.10	-.23**	.01	.14	.01
Organization size	.00	.03	.01	.02	.02	.05	.07	.02	.17**	-.03	.03	-.05
Emotionality	-.14	.12	-.06	.16	.07	.12*	.13	.10	.08	-.17	.12	-.08
Extraversion	-.13	.14	-.06	.17	.08	.12*	-.18	.12	-.12	.77	.15	.35**
Agreeableness	-.01	.11	-.01	.21	.07	.16**	.05	.10	.03	.07	.12	.03
Conscientiousness	-.88	.12	-.39**	-.32	.08	-.24**	.07	.10	.04	.30	.13	.14*
Openness	-.05	.11	-.02	-.06	.07	-.05	.16	.09	.11	-.27	.12	-.13*
POP	.49	.11	.23**	.28	.07	.21**	.51	.10	.35**	-.69	.12	-.33**
Honesty-Humility	-.45	.13	-.19**	-.42	.08	-.29**	.23	.11	.14*	-.10	.14	-.04
POP \times Honesty-Humility	-.50	.16	-.15**	-.31	.10	-.15**	-.27	.13	-.12*	.35	.17	.11*
	$R^2 = .50**$			$R^2 = .48**$			$R^2 = .22**$			$R^2 = .38**$		
	$\Delta R^2 = .02**$			$\Delta R^2 = .02**$			$\Delta R^2 = .01*$			$\Delta R^2 = .01*$		

N = 268

POP perceptions of organizational politics

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. All predictors were centered

results indicated that this positive relationship was stronger at lower levels of Honesty-Humility (-1 SD below the mean; $b = .81$, $t_{(244)} = 7.28$, $p < .01$) than at higher levels of Honesty-Humility ($+1$ SD above the mean; $b = .22$, $t_{(244)} = 1.98$, $p < .05$). As predicted, POP was more strongly related to engagement in counterproductive work behavior among individuals scoring lower rather than higher on Honesty-Humility (see Fig. 1). Taken together, the results fully support Hypothesis 5.

Impression Management Behavior

Step 1 of the analyses indicated that of the demographic variables, age ($\beta = -.32$, $p < .01$), gender ($\beta = .13$, $p < .05$), and position hierarchy ($\beta = -.21$, $p < .01$) predicted impression management behavior, such that younger individuals, men, and those in lower-level positions were more likely to engage in impression management. In Step 2, Emotionality and Conscientiousness both significantly predicted impression management behavior ($\beta = .16$, $p < .01$ and $\beta = -.37$, $p < .01$, respectively). In terms of the main effects (Step 3), both POP ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$) and Honesty-Humility ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .01$) were significantly related to this outcome variable, such that higher POP and lower levels of Honesty-Humility were associated with greater use of impression management behavior. The finding involving POP is consistent with Hypothesis 2. Finally, in Step 4, the interaction of POP and Honesty-Humility was a significant predictor of impression management behavior ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .01$). Simple slopes

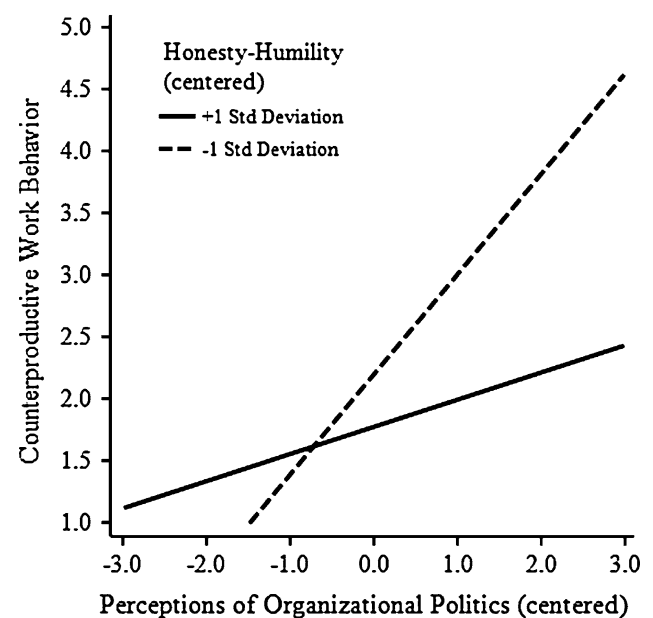


Fig. 1 Interaction between POP and Honesty-Humility in predicting counterproductive work behavior. Note All predictor variables were centered on the mean

analyses revealed a significant and positive slope between POP and impression management behavior at lower levels of Honesty-Humility (-1 SD below the mean; $b = .48$, $t_{(244)} = 6.83$, $p < .01$) and a non-significant slope at higher levels of Honesty-Humility ($+1$ SD above the mean; $b = .11$, $t_{(244)} = 1.53$, $p = .13$). Hence, these results fully support Hypothesis 6. The relationship between POP and impression management behavior varies depending on one's level of Honesty-Humility, such that POP is strongly related to engagement in impression management behavior among individuals scoring lower, but not higher on Honesty-Humility (see Fig. 2). Indeed, POP seems to activate political behavior primarily among those lower in Honesty-Humility.

Job Stress

Analyses in Step 1 indicated that position hierarchy ($\beta = -.19$, $p < .01$) and organization size ($\beta = .18$, $p < .01$) each predicted job stress, such that individuals at lower-level positions and in larger organizations experienced greater job stress. In Step 2, Extraversion significantly predicted job stress ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .05$). In Step 3, the main effects analyses demonstrated that higher levels of POP were associated with greater job stress ($\beta = .32$, $p < .01$), consistent with Hypothesis 3. Additionally, higher levels of Honesty-Humility were also associated with greater job stress ($\beta = .14$, $p < .05$). Finally, the interaction term was significant in predicting job stress ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$). Simple slopes analyses showed that the POP–job stress relationship

was stronger at lower levels of Honesty-Humility ($b = .66$, $t_{(244)} = 6.88$, $p < .01$) compared to at higher levels ($b = .37$, $t_{(244)} = 3.84$, $p < .01$; see Fig. 3). This finding was in line with the potential explanation that individuals low in Honesty-Humility would be more likely to react aversively to a high level of POP (and positively to a low level of POP), as opposed to the explanation that they would feel a greater sense of ability to succeed within a political climate.

Job Satisfaction

Of the demographic variables, only age was significantly associated with job satisfaction, such that older individuals were more satisfied ($\beta = .21$, $p < .01$). In Step 2, job satisfaction was significantly predicted by Emotionality ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$), Extraversion ($\beta = .42$, $p < .01$), Conscientiousness ($\beta = .16$, $p < .01$), and also Openness to Experience ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$). Results from Step 3 demonstrated that POP had a significant main effect on job satisfaction, such that higher POP was associated with lower job satisfaction ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .01$). This finding is consistent with Hypothesis 4. In Step 4, as with job stress, the interaction term was found to be significant in predicting job satisfaction ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$). Simple slopes analyses indicated that this negative relationship was stronger at low ($b = -.91$, $t_{(244)} = -7.52$, $p < .01$) rather than high ($b = -.50$, $t_{(244)} = -4.15$, $p < .01$) levels of Honesty-Humility (see Fig. 4). That is, individuals who are lower rather than higher in Honesty-Humility were more likely to experience job dissatisfaction when perceiving their workplace as political.

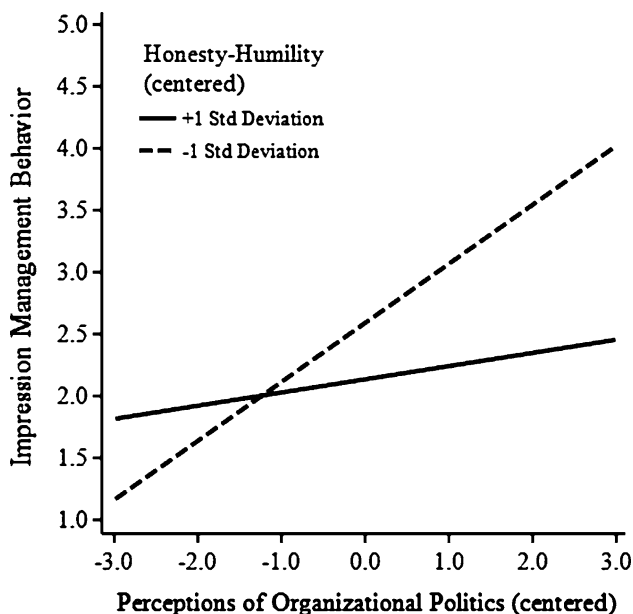


Fig. 2 Interaction between POP and Honesty-Humility in predicting impression management behavior. *Note* All predictor variables were centered on the mean

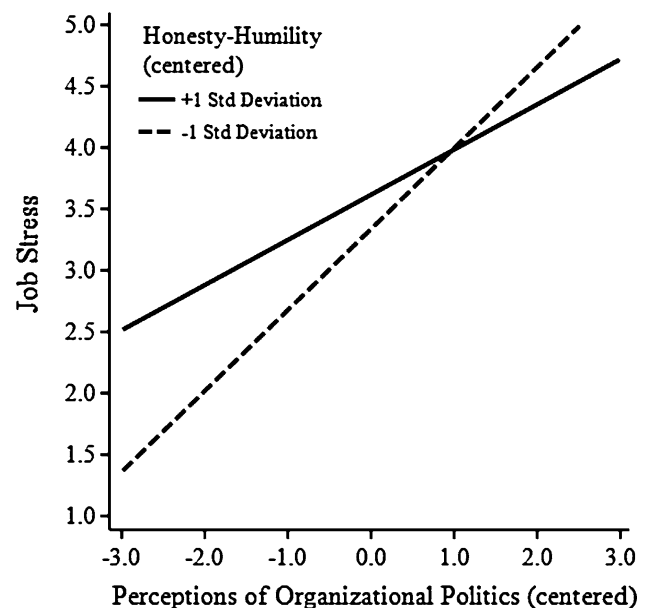


Fig. 3 Interaction between POP and Honesty-Humility in predicting job stress. *Note* All predictor variables were centered on the mean

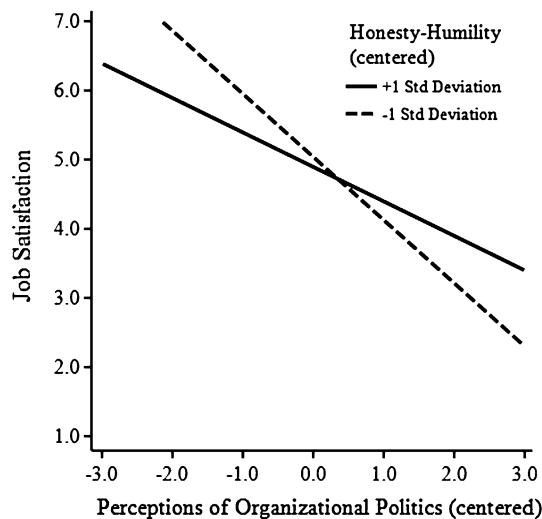


Fig. 4 Interaction between POP and Honesty-Humility in predicting job satisfaction. *Note* All predictor variables were centered on the mean

Discussion

The present study sought to further our understanding of how Honesty-Humility (a personality variable closely related to one's willingness to engage in political activities) might influence employee attitudes and behaviors when perceiving one's organization as political. Despite the extensive existing literature demonstrating that employee perceptions of politics are related to a number of adverse workplace outcomes, there has been little attention given to the possibility that these relationships may be moderated by dispositional tendencies. The interaction between an employee and his/her organization is a dynamic relationship, and therefore personal disposition will influence how employees both perceive and react to POP. While the present study provides further support for the adverse workplace environment associated with POP, it also contributes new knowledge to this literature, such that it explores how this negative impact of POP does not affect all employees equally. In general, the results of the present study suggest that the unfavorable workplace outcomes associated with POP are most likely to be exacerbated for those individuals who are lower rather than higher in Honesty-Humility. Below is a discussion of these findings.

POP in Predicting Workplace Outcomes

Further supporting the existing organizational politics literature, the present study found that POP was positively correlated with job stress, counterproductive work behavior, and impression management behavior, while negatively correlated with job satisfaction. Furthermore, POP was a significant predictor of each of these outcomes when

entered alongside control variables and Honesty-Humility in Step 3 of the multiple regression analyses. As with the meta-analytic findings regarding POP and its outcomes (e.g., Chang et al. 2009; Miller et al. 2008), the present study provides further support for the adverse relationships between POP and employee attitudes and behaviors.

While the relationships of POP to job stress and job satisfaction are quite well established in the literature, there is less research investigating the relationship between POP and counterproductive work behavior and between POP and impression management behavior. The only study, to our knowledge, that has examined the correlation between POP and counterproductive work behavior is that of Zettler and Hilbig (2010). The findings of the present study support theirs, such that employees are more likely to engage in counterproductive work behavior when perceiving their organization as political. In terms of the relationship between POP and impression management behavior, the few studies that provide a correlation of impression management behavior and POP show a positive relationship (e.g., Harrell-Cook et al. 1999), which is in line with what the present study found. As such, the present study provides further evidence for the negative behavioral consequences associated with POP.

Honesty-Humility Moderating the POP–Outcomes Relationships

Honesty-Humility was found to be an influential moderator of the relationship between POP and all four of the outcome variables, both attitudinal and behavioral. As hypothesized, the positive relationships between POP and both counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior were stronger among lower Honesty-Humility individuals when organizational politics were perceived to be high. The former of these findings replicates that of Zettler and Hilbig (2010) and suggests that this effect is generalizable outside of the German sample that they used. The latter finding is a novel contribution to the organizational politics literature. Zettler and Hilbig (2010) argue that POP acts as an opportunity or trigger variable for counterproductive behavior. Seeing that POP is a situational factor and that lower Honesty-Humility individuals are more sensitive to their environments (as they strategically adapt their behaviors to the situation as a means to gain advantages or exploit others), they are thus more likely than their higher Honesty-Humility co-workers to engage in counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior when perceiving politics. In addition, we have also submitted that perceiving a strong political climate in the organization may increase the employees' perceptions of politically driven competitiveness in the workplace, and such

perceptions may in turn lead the employees, particularly those low in Honesty-Humility, to increase the level of the participation in counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior to win out over their political competitors. The two explanatory mechanisms proposed here are not mutually exclusive, and future research can shed more light on the issue by measuring these potentially important mediating variables.

Interestingly, we had posed two research questions for the interactions involving the attitudinal outcomes of job stress and job satisfaction. Although we expected that there would be a significant interaction between POP and Honesty-Humility, there were competing theories indicating that this relationship could have gone in either direction. On the one hand, it was possible that individuals low in Honesty-Humility would be *less* likely to feel the ill effects of POP, finding a politically charged workplace less distressing than would those high in Honesty-Humility due to their greater willingness to utilize political tactics and expectancy to succeed in that environment. In short, one possibility was that low Honesty-Humility individuals would be more likely to see a politically charged environment as one of opportunity. However, this explanation was not supported. Rather, it appears that the deleterious attitudinal outcomes associated with POP tend to be even *stronger* for those low in Honesty-Humility. As such, it seems that rather than seeing a political environment as an opportunity, these individuals may see it as a cost. Interestingly, the pattern of the interactions shown in Figs. 3 and 4 also suggests that low Honesty-Humility employees tend to have more positive work attitudes than their high Honesty-Humility counterparts when POP is very low. This result could be interpreted to suggest that low Honesty-Humility employees tend to see an environment where there are few political rivals with whom to compete (i.e., low POP) as an opportunity. These results are potentially important in understanding how organizational politics influence employees' attitudes, but the robustness of these findings must be examined in future studies.

As noted by one anonymous reviewer, just over half of our sample (53.30 %) consisted of individuals at the managerial level (compared with the non-managerial level). To examine whether our results might differ depending on hierarchical level, we ran regression analyses including a three-way interaction effect of POP, Honesty-Humility, and hierarchy (manager versus non-manager). This three-way interaction effect was not significant in predicting any of the four outcome variables. That is, one's level of hierarchy does not seem to significantly influence the interaction effect of POP and Honesty-Humility in predicting counterproductive work behavior, impression management behavior, job stress, or job satisfaction. It is interesting to note, however, that in comparison with non-

managers, managers tended to score significantly lower on Honesty-Humility as well as report significantly greater levels of counterproductive work behavior, impression management behavior, and job stress. Hence, while there were some noticeable differences between managers and non-managers, the nature of the interaction effects between POP and the four outcomes was not significantly influenced by hierarchical level.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The present study contributes to the POP literature as it used a multicultural field sample of full-time employees to explore new grounds in the organizational politics literature. The present study was not without its limitations, however. First, one potential concern may be that all of the data were collected using self-reports. Many studies have examined the impact of common method bias, its effects, when it is a concern, and how to alleviate its effects (Conway and Lance 2010; Johnson et al. 2011; Podsakoff et al. 2003). Based on these studies, we do acknowledge that common method bias is a complicated concern that should be noted. Despite this, we believe there are a number of reasons why the use of self-reports may be appropriate and less problematic in the context of the present study.

First, consistent with work laid out by Conway and Lance (2010), there are indeed a number of cases where self-reports are the most appropriate and theoretically relevant measurement method. Many of the variables included in the present study are most accurately assessed by the participant him/herself, as the content inquires about one's internal psychological state (i.e., job stress, job satisfaction etc.), behaviors less likely to be publicly displayed (i.e., counterproductive behavior), and unobservable motives behind behavior (i.e., impression management behavior). Regarding our attitudinal measures, "self-reports are clearly appropriate for job satisfaction and many other private events" (Conway and Lance 2010, p. 330). Moreover, with the focal variable of POP, because the construct and theory surround an individual's *perceptions* (rather than actual level of politics), self-reports theoretically make sense as a measurement method. Regarding the measurement of impression management, because the main feature of impression management behavior is the motive (e.g., "arrive at work early to *appear dedicated*"), observer ratings and coder ratings cannot truly capture whether a behavior is impression management. Indeed, past studies have noted a low convergence between self-reports and coder and observer ratings of impression management (Stevens and Kristof 1995), the inadequacy of coder ratings at identifying impression management (Peeters and Lievens 2006), and the necessity of using self-reports to tap

into certain forms of impression management behavior (Levashina and Campion 2007). Finally, much of the research on counterproductive behavior, for example, relies exclusively on self-report (see Berry et al. 2007), as self-reports tend to be more appropriate and practical than peer reports, given that much counterproductive behavior is not observed (Fox and Spector 1999).

Finally, from a statistical perspective, we should mention that although common source variance should inflate the magnitude of the size of the relationships among the study variables, this may not be particularly problematic considering the fact that the primary aim of the present research is to examine moderating effects of Honesty-Humility and POP in predicting the outcome variables. Interestingly, Siemsen et al. (2010) showed that the problem of inflated relationships among the variables due to common method variance tends to increase Type II errors in testing cross-product terms in moderated multiple regression analyses. Other things being equal, therefore, the presence of common method variance makes it more difficult to detect interaction effects. Considering this, it is less likely that significant interaction effects observed in the present research are a result of the biases caused by common method variance.

As with previous studies in this literature (e.g., Harrell-Cook et al. 1999), we examined POP as individuals' perception about their workplace environment. While we agree with the notion that it is an individual's *perceptions* of the environment that influence his or her behavior and attitudes, we believe that it could also be useful to examine group or organizational politics at the corresponding level. That is, it is important to determine, within a given organization or work group, whether there is substantial agreement on the extent to which politics exist within that environment. By examining POP at the group or organizational level, we can gain insight into this research question. Moreover, we could better understand whether the degree of POP within a group coincides with *actual political behavior* within the group. This could be determined by comparing the group mean level of POP to the average amount of actual frequency of impression management and other political behaviors reported.

One final point that deserves attention is the reliability of the 10-item Honesty-Humility scale in the present research ($\alpha = .67$), which fell below the conventionally accepted cutoff value for internal consistency reliability. We should note, however, that it is not uncommon to observe reliabilities below .70 for personality scales measuring broad factors with comparable length (see Costa and McCrae 1992). It is important to note that this level of internal consistency reliability typically does not pose serious threats to the validity of the results. For example, McCrae et al. (2011) showed that more than

40 % of the NEO-PI-R scales did not meet the suggested minimum internal consistency reliability cutoff, but that those scales were found to be as valid as the other scales in the inventory with respect to some criteria involving heritability and consensual agreement (see also Schmitt 1996).

Implications

The present study not only supports some of the existing findings in the POP literature but also provides novel insights as to the role of individual differences in predicting perceptions of, and reactions to, organizational politics. An interesting finding in the present study was that at low levels of POP, the low and high Honesty-Humility individuals do not significantly differ in the frequency in which they engage in counterproductive behavior and impression management behavior. However, when POP was high, low Honesty-Humility individuals engaged in significantly more frequent counterproductive behavior and impression management behavior in comparison with higher Honesty-Humility individuals. With this said, the practical implications of these findings should focus on ways to reduce the high levels of political and counterproductive behavior within a politically perceived environment, especially among low Honesty-Humility individuals. The implications discussed below focus on both the *person*, such as reducing the likelihood of hiring a low Honesty-Humility candidate, as well as on the *situation*, including reducing the opportunity for the undesirable behavior among currently employed low Honesty-Humility individuals.

If we want to reduce the likelihood of hiring low Honesty-Humility individuals, we need a valid assessment tool within the selection process that is able to identify these individuals. Interestingly, however, as we found in the present study, low Honesty-Humility candidates are more likely to engage in impression management behavior. If these individuals also engage in impression management behavior in the employment interview, it could make it particularly difficult to identify them. The engagement in impression management behavior not only makes it challenging to detect the low Honesty-Humility individuals but also possibly results in a hiring preference toward low Honesty-Humility candidates. One strategy that can be used to help deter impression management behavior is to increase interview structure. By having a standardized evaluation process, asking sophisticated questions, and asking a consistent set of questions (Chapman and Zweig 2005), we can reduce the opportunity for engaging in impression management behavior and limit the effectiveness of such behaviors (Barrick et al. 2009). It is also important to focus on the ways in which we can alter the situation, that is, to decrease the POP and reduce the

opportunities for employed low Honesty-Humility individuals to engage in counterproductive work behavior and impression management behavior. Organizational politics tend to thrive in work environments wherein job ambiguity, scarcity of resources, and (low) trust climate are prominent (Poon 2003). Thus, the more prevalent these conditions, the more opportunity there is for employees to engage in political behavior. As low Honesty-Humility individuals tend to be particularly sensitive to their environments, limiting these conditions should assist in reducing their substantive engagement in political behavior. More specifically, the organization should provide employees with a clear understanding of job duties and responsibilities as well as implement a standardized compensation system wherein there are clear expectations of what one must do to be rewarded. Furthermore, fair practices should be used in allocating resources to the various units of the organization. By decreasing ambiguity around job roles and how efforts are related to rewards, and increasing procedural justice of resources, there will be fewer situational opportunities for low Honesty-Humility individuals to engage in political behavior. Indeed, an experimental study by Skarlicki and Latham (1997) suggests there is a positive effect of justice training on perceptions of fairness in the workplace. Skarlicki and Latham (1997) found that employee perceptions of procedural and interactional fairness increased after their leaders had participated in a training program on organizational justice principles. Hence, by increasing perceptions of fairness in the workplace, justice training could be a viable tool in reducing political perceptions and behaviors.

In addition to the practical implications of the present study, an important theoretical implication involves Honesty-Humility as a key personality factor in organizational politics research. Honesty-Humility showed a significant correlation with employees' POP ($r = -.29$). A similar level of correlation has previously been reported in Zettler and Hilbig (2010) using a German sample ($r = -.30$). These observations can be partly explained by a social psychological phenomenon known as "false-consensus," a tendency to generalize their own beliefs, values, and behavioral tendencies to others (Marks and Mullen 1987). Moreover, these results are consistent with the finding that low Honesty-Humility individuals are likely to view the world as a competitive jungle in which one must defeat others in order to survive (Leone et al. 2012). In the organizational setting, low Honesty-Humility employees appear to see their workplace as a hostile one full of people who try to manipulate, deceive, and intimidate others for selfish interests, leading them to perceive higher levels of organizational politics.

The results described above highlight the importance of the Honesty-Humility factor in organizational politics

research. Given that personality traits related to Honesty-Humility are not fully captured by the widely accepted Five-Factor model, it is of particular importance to adopt the HEXACO model of personality in organizational politics research.

Conclusion

The present study sought to examine whether a personality dimension named Honesty-Humility alters the effects of employees' POP on workplace outcomes. Our findings suggest that the negative workplace attitudes and behaviors associated with POP are exacerbated for those employees who are lower in Honesty-Humility. We hope that the present research will encourage further empirical research on the important role of individual differences in how employees perceive and react to organizational politics within their workplace.

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