

# **Nursing in a Developing Country's Context: Examining Perception of Politics as an Underlying Mechanism Mediating between Emotional Intelligence and Work Outcomes**

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## **Abstract**

Nursing demands a very high degree of emotional composition and is also quite sensitive to the perception of politics. Therefore, it is imperative to study the interplay of the perception of politics between emotional intelligence (EI) and numerous job outcomes that effectively determine the nursing practices. These outcomes could be in the form of job satisfaction, turnover intention, negligent behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, and absenteeism. To examine this relationship, sample data were collected from 313 nursing staff working in hospitals and other health care units in Pakistan. A structured questionnaire was used to measure each variable on a five-point Likert scale. The sample data was collected using non-probability sampling technique. Furthermore, to test the mediation effect, Preacher and Hayes process macro model 4 was used. The findings revealed that (EI) was inversely related to the perception of politics in the nursing sector. It was also indicated that the relationship between (EI) and various job outcomes was mediated by the perception of politics, except turnover intention that was excluded from the analysis owing to its low reliability. Finally, the recommendations and future research directions are documented at the end of the study.

**Keywords:** developing country, emotional intelligence, job outcomes, nursing, perception of politics

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## Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays quite an important role on work floor. Employees with higher EI are an important requirement of successful organizations. These individuals are in a better position to coordinate effectively with their staff and patients, regulate their emotions, and exhibit the requisite technical abilities. Previous research is evident to the fact that the employees who demonstrate robust job outcomes in general possess excellent emotional competencies (Spencer & Spencer, [1993](#)).

Just as EI is an important element for organizational success, politics, on the other hand, also constitutes an inevitable part of the organizational setting. Work environment characterized by politics leads towards feelings of injustice along with deprivation and inequity from employees' perspective. These types of environments may potentially cause disappointment in workers and various job outcomes are expected to be negatively affected (Vigoda, [2000](#)). Literature also revealed the presence of emotional intelligence is also related to job outcomes. However, very little has been explored about the role of mediating variables between EI and employee work behavior/attitude. Several variables, such as job complexity, job satisfaction, turnover intention, and organizational learning capability etc. are the potential mediators and could be related to the perception of politics (Kacmar & Ferris, [1991](#); Randall et al., [1999](#); Hochwarter et al., [2000](#)).

EI, perception of politics, and various job outcomes are highly pertinent to the nursing sector. Nurses have a high degree of responsibility and accountability at workplace (Choudary, [2010](#)). They face high intensity of emotional stress owing to the nature of their job during day/night shifts and in handling emergency cases. Beauvais et al. ([2011](#)) suggested that nurses outrank physicians by confronting more tensed situations due to more responsibilities in the hospitals. Furthermore, being very less authoritative in health care hierarchy, they psychologically feel very burdened.

The ineluctable function of EI carries great significance for the physicians, surgeons, and nurses who render their services in health-care (Kooker et al., [2007](#); Kosmas & Vlachos, [2012](#)). Nurses frequently have to deal with certain traumatic circumstances which tend to arouse their

emotions, such as delivery of newborns, surgeries, to provide first aid to injured, and sickness. The most excruciating situation for them is the treatment of serious patients who expire afterwards. Thus, they are inclined to overcome nerve racking situations owing to their stressful work environment. The job description of nurses carries high responsibility of patients' treatment, as in the case of minor negligence which may even cost human lives. Therefore, they are also bound to perform their duties in a very perfect manner.

The current study utilized a nursing sector to analyze the EI and mediating role of intervening variables, such as perception of politics and its effects on different outcomes at workplace (Petrides & Furnham, [2006](#)). Thus, the conceptualization and testing of such an integrated comprehensive framework was used to examine the antecedents and various outcomes. This process not only carries significant practical implications, however, it would also be helpful to shape the future studies in the nursing sector. Moreover, to study the under researched phenomenon in a developing country's context, that is, Pakistan, the current study also offered a unique, revelatory, and a learning research site with valuable findings. Therefore, it was an attempt to investigate the effect of EI on individual workplace outcomes. Additionally, the perception of politics has been considered as an underlying mechanism to explain the effect of EI on workplace outcomes.

## Literature Review

### Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Perception of Politics in the Health Sector

EI has been defined as “the ability to perceive accurately, to appraise, and express emotions. It refers to the ability to access and/or generate feelings while facilitating thought process. Furthermore, it also refers to understanding emotions and emotional knowledge and to regulate them to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer et al., [1997](#), p.15 ) (See **Table 1**). The previous research, attempted to investigate the association between EI and job outcomes (Gross, [1998a](#); Wong & Law, [2002](#)). The researchers aimed to relate this concept with various organizational behaviors (Wong & Law, [2002](#)). They proposed that employees having

greater EI are capable to modify their perceptions regarding their work setting. Based on this argument, it may be argued that highly emotionally intelligent employees may perform differently as compared to those who have low EI. Consequently, it would impact the work environment in a different way.

Different scholars have identified perception of politics as an important component which requires significant attention at work setting (Mayes & Allen, [1977](#); Pfeffer, [1981](#), [1992](#); Mintzberg, [1983](#)). The current study adopted Kacmar and Ferris's ([1991](#)) definition of the "Perceived Organizational Politics" defined as 'an individual's perceptions of others' and self-interested acts or behaviors. These acts are frequently associated with the manipulation of organizational policies and often include coercive tactics even at the expense of others for short-term gains. These behaviors are perceived as subversive and contradict with the interests of other individuals and the organizations" (Vigoda, [2000](#)). People accord different meanings to organizational politics; however, it is an inevitable component of the organizational work environment (Abbas et al., [2014](#)). Politics occur, when people in the organization compete for resources to maximize self-interest with political skills (Pfeffer, [1981](#)). In the presence of politics, employees perceive work environment as non-supportive which may not be according to their desires (Vigoda & Kapun, [2005](#)).

Literature indicated that the perception of politics significantly affects job outcomes in terms of both desirable and undesirable results (Ferris et al., [1989](#)). Some other scholars also studied the implications of perception of politics in organizational setting (Meisler & Vigoda, [2014](#)). For instance, scholars in meta-analysis argued that perception of politics was inversely related to job satisfaction and affective commitment (Chang et al., [2009](#)). Moreover, their findings also revealed that perception of politics was significantly associated with strain and intention to quit. Some other researchers (Cropanzano, [1997](#)) also examined the effect of organizational politics on work behavior, attitude, and stress. They concluded that POP was associated with various work attitudes, among which job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job involvement were highlighted. Miller et al. ([2008](#)) conducted a meta-analysis which showed that employees' perception of politics in organization was negatively related with positive

work outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, they found insignificant relationship with in-role job performance. Few studies investigated that perceived politics impact career success, job satisfaction, turnover intention, job effectiveness, performance, and negligent behavior (Kumar & Ghadially, [1989](#); Valle & Perrewé, [2000](#); Blickle et al., [2011](#); Blickle & Schnitzler, [2010](#); Jawahar et al., [2008](#); Meisler & Vigoda, [2014](#)). These studies were conducted in a variety of public and private sectors; however, examination of perception of politics in nursing is yet to be done.

## **2.2 Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Perception of Politics**

Gross ([1998b](#)), Meisler, and Vigoda ([2014](#)) investigated that the perceived organizational politics tend to bridge the relationship between EI and job outcomes, that is, job satisfaction, turnover intention, and negligent behavior. The current paper aimed to contribute sufficient body of knowledge in the domain of EI and perception of politics. It was carried out by the examining the interplay between EI and perception of organizational politics. The behaviors that arouse emotions mediate the relationship between perception of politics and various behavioral and attitudinal outcomes (Liu et al., [2006](#)). As Rosen et al. ([2009](#)) argued that emotional experiences impact the perception of politics in terms of work outcomes. Previous literature related to EI and perception of politics is also available, however, there still remains a gap, as very little is known about the interplay between perception of politics and its effects on different outcomes.

In another empirical work, Vigoda and Meisler ([2010](#)) explored the existing dimension and the relationship between EI Along with the perception of politics, however, different work outcomes were also investigated. The empirical evidence of EI from the public sector explored that it was not significantly related to perception of politics. Furthermore, the results reflected inconsistency in terms of the perception of politics as the mediator in between EI and work outcomes. A difference in the level according to Vigoda and Kapun ([2005](#)), and implications of Miller et al. ([2008](#)), regarding the perception of politics in the public with regard to the private

sector were observed as well. Therefore, the current study attempted to consider public and private sector health organizations.

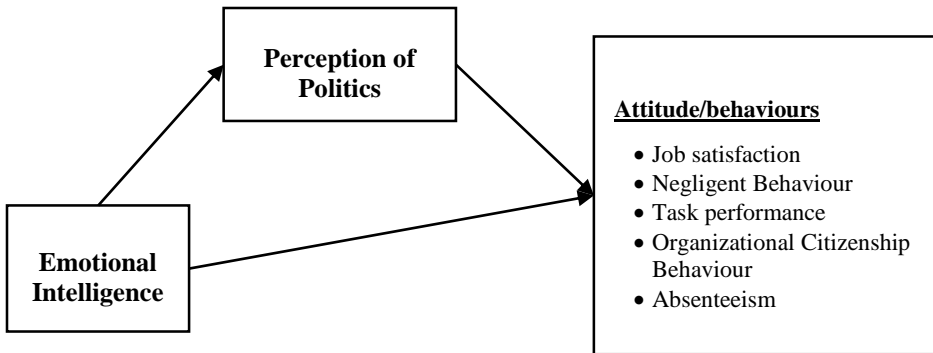
The harmful effects of the perception of politics across different cultural settings were also studied (Abbas et al., [2014](#)). Vigoda ([2001](#)) revealed that British employees responded highly with turnover intention to perceived politics than Israeli employees. And authors related to this difference with high power distance culture. Therefore, the perception of politics appears to be highly context dependent and findings about perception of politics in western context may not be generalized to developing country's context, such as Pakistan. Hofstede ([1983](#)) provided firm footings to this idea unlike other cultural settings, where Pakistan is ranked high on power distance with high uncertainty avoidance and lack of control on work environment (Hofstede, [1983](#)).

Studies examined the linkage between EI and perception of politics, whereas job outcomes came up with different rather mutually conflicting results. For instance, Rosen et al. ([2009](#)) suggested that emotions do have their effects on perception of politics. While Vigoda and Meisler ([2010](#)) found that EI was not significantly associated with perception of politics. Likewise, Meisler and Vigoda ([2014](#)) established that perception of politics mediates the interplay between EI and several job outcomes. Although they ([2010](#)) found no mediating effect of perception of politics between EI and various outcomes at workplace. Apparently, scholars found difference in the level of effects of perception of politics in various contexts for instance, public and private (Meisler & Vigoda, [2014](#); Vigoda & Kapun, [2005](#); Miller et al., [2008](#)). Such contrasting results allowed this set of variables to be studied in developing country's context. Moreover, there is a dearth in literature that tested these variables' relationships in highly relevant nursing sectors.

## **The Model**

### **Figure 1**

*The Mediating Role of Perception of Politics between EI and Job Outcomes*



This model is based on Affective Event Theory (AET) proposed by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996). This theory states that emotions play a crucial role to determine how employees deal with positive and negative workplace situations. AET attempts to explain that the behavior of employees occurs as a result of emotions, starting with the development of events and ending with behavioral outcomes. In this model, perception of politics was reduced in the presence of high EI which consequently enhanced employees' job satisfaction and lowered the negligent behavior alongwith absenteeism. Employees having higher EI were more inclined to recognize that perceptions may affect emotions as well. EI is also helpful to measure the underlying reasons for generating emotions, so it may be argued that employees high on EI have a robust idea regarding the events that tend to evoke emotional responses. Such an understanding of the past emotional events may be helpful to avoid pondering over stress bound situations and would resultantly nullify the negative implications. On the contrary, employees low on EI may not have any idea of the devastating emotional repercussions by thinking about past annoying events (Meisler & Vigoda, 2014).

In the nursing sector, EI is a matter of significant importance. A person with high EI keenly observes the happenings in his/her surroundings, has a good control on his/her desires and needs, uses his/her will power, and has tendency for teamwork. Furthermore, he also has the capacity to figure out problems by making a blend of his/her cognitive and emotional powers, takes good care of his relations on work floor and family, and also has

internal locus of control. Therefore, if a nurse succeeds to analyze the emotional state of patients, the treatment could be done in a satisfactory and effective way. Conversely, an individual with low EI may surrender to his aroused emotions, would fail to harness the negative emotions, and may not tackle his/her personal life efficiently. Furthermore, the lack of EI may put an individual in a jeopardy which might result in a failure to pursue the goals of his/her life. It could lead to misapprehension of the social principles and cultural values resultantly. Similarly, such a person would fail to analyze and understand the emotional state of patients which in turn, may lead to dissatisfaction for both, patients and nurses. The degree of EI directly influences self-reliance and business growth. Individuals who own and have reached emotional maturity contribute positively to the flourishing of institutions. Whereas, individuals with high emotional quotient are in a good position to determine what they want and what others want and therefore, have better relationships. Additionally, they are also good at expressing their ideas. Previous research suggested that EI remained a key predictor in areas, such as academic performance, job performance, negotiation, leadership, emotional labor, trust, work–family conflict, and stress (Ashkanasy & Daus, [2002](#); Jordan et al., [2002](#)). Therefore, the relationship between EI and job outcomes is mediated by perception of politics.

### **Perception of Politics, Emotional Intelligence (EI), and Job Satisfaction**

“Job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience” (Locke, [1976](#)) (Please See **Table 1**). In health sector, job satisfaction is an important phenomenon and cannot be overlooked, as it is more prone to emotional sensitivities. Physicians and nurses with high EI are supposed to act differently while regulating their moods and emotions. Consequently, they may have a better degree of complacency and fulfilment at their workplace. They are expected to be highly skillful at controlling their own emotions in such circumstances as compared to the individuals who lack the quality of EI. Nurses with high EI possess the skills to identify the feelings of disappointment and frustration along with the reasons of their occurrences. They may later on mold their emotions and formulate strategies that help them cope with their



negative effects (Cooper & Sawaf, [1997](#)). On the other hand, nurses who have low EI find it difficult to regulate their emotions when they are confronted with stressful and complicated circumstances which are quite normal and is the routine work in the health sector. Consequently, their behaviors are shaped in an imbalanced way which may arouse negative feelings, acting as barriers in their job satisfaction. Furthermore, the medical staff with high EI may support teamwork by tapping their ability to understand, assess, and handle other emotions simultaneously. It also serves as a positive contribution to boost up the confidence and morale of the group, enhancement of team efficiency, and individual satisfaction at the workplace (Shimazu et al., [2004](#)). In health care sector, the significant positive influence of EI on job satisfaction of medical staff was analyzed, corroborated in seven university hospitals in Turkey (Güteryüz et al., [2008](#)). The similar outcome was expected in the nursing sector of Pakistan and therefore, it has been supposed,

*H1*: Perceived politics mediates the relationship between EI and job satisfaction.

### **Perception of Politics, Emotional Intelligence (EI), and Negligent Behavior**

The form of behavior where employees only show physical presence at their workplace while being absent psychologically is considered to be a negligent behavior (Vigoda & Kapun, [2005](#)). The effects of negligent behavior in health sector are intolerable. Employees with low EI are usually unable to understand what they and their patients feel in a certain situation. Moreover, they may also lack the capacity to regulate their emotions in case of perception of politics, which may lead to behaviors that are not compatible with their job description. Due to low EI and perception of politics, their minds get indulged thinking about the unfair procedures, favoritism, and lose control of situations. Therefore, they are physically present, but are mentally absent while dealing a patient. The argument in the current research found its support from the extant literature which suggests that the employees in political environment also generate negative sentiments. Such sentiments may result in their negligent behavior (Rusbult & Lowery, [1985](#); Farrell & Rusbult, [1992](#); Vigoda, [2001](#), [2002](#)). The employees who only show physical presence while remaining

psychologically absent may adapt negligent behavior (Vigoda & Kapun, [2005](#)). This type of attitude results in dissatisfaction with unproductive activities which may also lead to misbehaviors (Vardi & Weitz, [2004](#)). The delay in work assignments and paying less attention to work represents their negligent behavior (Vigoda & Kapun, [2005](#)). Employees with high EI would not let themselves reach such mental state as they keep regulating their emotions at the workplace. Furthermore, previous study showed that the perception of politics exhibited a positive association with undesirable work outcomes, such as intentions to quit, negligent behavior, and workplace ostracism (Chang et al., [2009](#); Karim et al., [2021](#)). On the basis of afore stated arguments it has been hypothesized that,

*H2: Perceived politics mediates the relationship between EI and negligent behavior.*

### **Perception of Politics, Emotional Intelligence (EI), and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)**

Previous literature has established the relationship of EI and OCB (Carmeli & Josman, [2006](#); Wong & Law, [2002](#)). EI encourages empathetic behavior by permitting employees to know others' emotions and respond them in a better way. Such behaviors play an important role in health sectors where nurses work in hospitals to meet patient's needs. Physicians and nurses are able to identify when and which degree of assistance and counseling is required for the better treatment of their patients. Medical staff with high EI is able to understand that the emotional interactions play an effective role to deal with serious patients. By regulating their emotional outlooks and due to the experience to display their emotions in a positive way, employees with greater EI are expected to employ cooperative behaviors and additional activities that ensure better customer handling (Carmeli, [2003](#)).

Motowidlo et al. ([1986](#)) proposed that EI is highly helpful to reduce the conflicts among colleagues and could be a source to increase OCB, which is positive pro-social behaviors. It is also observed that workers with high EI have an impregnable tendency to involve in behaviors excluding their job description, participate on their free will, and dedicate their selves by exhibiting excellent OCBs (Isen et al., [1987](#); Organ & Konovsky, [1989](#);

Abraham, [1999](#); Wong & Law [2002](#); Cartwright & Pappas, [2008](#)). Perception of politics, being a stressor, would prevent nurses from exhibiting behaviors that may assist larger societal and psychological environment. On the basis of above statements, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

*H3*: Perceived politics mediates the relationship between EI and organizational citizenship behavior

### **Perception of Politics, Emotional Intelligence (EI), and Task Performance**

The term task performance may be defined as “the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organizational technical core” (Borman & Motowidlo, [1997](#)). Emotionally intelligent employees may comparatively understand the technical areas of any task efficiently and would adept to its technical parts (Carmeli & Joseman, [2006](#)). In the same way, nurses who are emotionally intelligent are capable to perform their tasks in an efficient way. They understand how to bring effectiveness in their tasks by cooperating with each other. Moreover, nurses with high EI are good at building their relationships on work floor and in their social circle. On the other hand, adverse emotional reactions triggered by perception of politics may reduce the overall performance and efficiency. On the basis of these nurses play an active role that contributes to the organization's technical core. Therefore, it has been expected that:

*H4*: Perceived politics mediate the relationships between EI and task performance.

### **Perception of Politics, Emotional Intelligence, and Absenteeism**

In organizations the issue of absenteeism is common which causes a high cost. It has direct financial costs (e.g., “statutory sick pay, replacement costs, and overtime costs”). This conundrum of absenteeism has a negative effect on the performance of individual and group (Hassan & Wright, [2014](#); Hackett, [1989](#); Tharenou, [1993](#); Viswesvaran & Ones, [2002](#)). The current study identified that nurses who have a better grasp on their emotions and feelings would avoid absenteeism as they are aware of the consequences of

their absence. Health sector is quite absenteeism sensitive as physicians and nurse's absence may cause serious casualties for instance, death of a critical patient. Conversely, perception of politics which is considered as a driving force of undesirable job attitudes may potentially push nurses towards absenteeism by lowering their EI. Additionally, a recent study conducted by Lartey et al. (2021) related to nurses and midwives in Ghana found that EI did not predict emotional exhaustion. Therefore, on the basis of above arguments it has been expected that:

H5: Perceived politics mediates the relationship between EI and absenteeism.

**Table 1**

*Definitions and Sources of Key Constructs*

Construct	Definition	Source
Emotional Intelligence	“The ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.”	(Meisler & Vigoda, 2014; Salovey & Mayer, 1997).
Perception of Politics	“Perceived organizational politics is an individual's perceptions of others' self-interested acts or behaviors; these acts are frequently associated with the manipulation of organizational policies and often include coercive tactics even at the expense of others for short-term gains.”	(Kacmar & Ferris, 1991).
Job Satisfaction	“Job Satisfaction is “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences”	(Locke, 1976, p. 1300)
Negligent Behavior	“Behavior where employees shows only physical presence at workplace while they are absent psychologically.”	(Vigoda & Kapun, 2005)

Construct	Definition	Source
Task performance	“Task performance can be defined as the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organization's technical core either directly by implementing a part of its technological process, or indirectly by providing it with needed materials or services.”	(Borman & Motowidlo, <a href="#">1993</a> )
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	“Organizational citizenship behaviors refer to employee acts that support the broader social and psychological environment in which tasks are carried out in organizations.”	(Organ, <a href="#">1997</a> )
Absenteeism	“The phenomenon of absenteeism from workplace is an expression of employees’ withdrawal behavior and can be seen as a measure of one form of organizational dysfunction.”	(Dilts et al., 1985)

## Methodology

The current study was based on quantitative method and employed survey strategy. Data was collected through survey questionnaire. This method has been further presented in detail. Survey strategy is considered suitable when higher validity and generalizability are needed (Yin, [2014](#)).

## Sample

The current study aimed to focus on the nursing sector of a developing country, that is, Pakistan. Therefore, nurses serving in public and private sector hospitals were considered as unit of analysis. The sample was primarily composed of 313 nurses providing their services in different hospitals using convenience sampling technique. Since the total population figure was not known despite several requests to the officials of these surveyed hospitals. Total 450 questionnaires were distributed both in English and Urdu as per the preference of respondents. The academic purpose of the study was properly communicated via cover letter before data collection in order to assure the nursing staff regarding the objective of the study. They were informed that data would be used in aggregate form, whereas anonymity and confidentiality would be fully assured in order to

minimize the common method bias. A questionnaire accompanied the cover letter that solicited information not only on the variables involved in the study, however, also the demographic information of the respondents. All the nurses who willingly opted to participate were taken into confidence that the responses would only be used for research purposes. None of the participant was asked to write his credentials in the form of name, organization etc.

### **Context of Study**

It is important to study the role of EI in health sector as it could be highly detrimental and influences individual performance negatively (Abbas et al., [2014](#)). The performance of nurses needs to be highly efficient as they have to deal with patients. Any event of careless behavior among nurses may be highly risky in terms of patients' wellbeing and overall quality of care. Physicians and especially nurses have a high degree of responsibility and accountability at workplace (Choudary, [2010](#)). Nurses work in an environment which is highly exposed to emotional stress and fatigue in terms of working in tight day/night shifts, handling emergency cases. Nurses have to deal with daily activities, such as birth, surgery, illness, and death with events bound with emotions. Thus, nursing staff has to manage nerve racking situations owing to the work environment, and additionally, they are required to perform their duties in a very perfect manner. Treatment of patients with high responsibility is of maximum importance, given that not performing their duties to perfect level could even cost patient's lives. Therefore, it is important and of high relevance to study this phenomenon in the health sector.

### **Measures**

#### ***Emotional Intelligence***

For EI, (WLEIS) of Law (Wong and Song, [2004](#); Wong & Law, [2002](#)) was used for measurement purpose.

#### ***Perception of Politics***

To measure perception of politics, the most reliable eight items scale of Kacmar and Carlson's ([1997](#)) was used.

### ***Job Satisfaction***

Schriesheim and Tsui's (1980) six-item scale was used to record responses of employees to determine their job satisfaction.

### ***Negligent Behavior***

To measure the negligent behavior, four-item scale of Vigoda and Meisler (2010) was used.

### ***Organization Citizenship Behavior***

To measure the organization citizenship behavior, 20 item-scale was used by Podsakoff et al. (1990).

### ***Task Performance and Absenteeism***

Another 3 item-scale by Pulakos et al. (2000) was used to measure task performance, whereas to measure absenteeism, 4 item-scale of Eisenberger et al. (2000) was used.

### **Control Variables**

ANOVA test was used to associate job outcomes (job satisfaction, negligent behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, and absenteeism) across demographic variables. Results revealed significant differences in negligent behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance across qualification. Whereas, significant differences were recorded in job satisfaction and absenteeism across experience. Therefore, control variables for the current study were qualification and experience.

### **Research Approach and Data Analysis**

Quantitative approach was used to investigate this phenomenon, since the aim of current study was to find test existing theory using deductive method. Moreover, research choice selected for this study was mono-method in order to effectively address the research objectives. Survey method as a research strategy was used to gather the data from respondents.

Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 23, while mediating effect was checked through macro process by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Additionally, in order to check the indirect effect, bootstrapping technique

was used to assess the significant mediation effect of POP in association between EI, behavioral, and attitudinal outcomes at workplace.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

Total sample size in the current study was 313, wherein the total male population was 20(6.4%), while total female population was 293(93.6%). With regard to age group, 30 to 40 ages were 175(56%), while 31 to 40 ages were 138(44%). Similarly, qualification of respondents was 294(94%) having bachelor's degree and 19(6%) were having master's degree. Experience of nurses was 206(66%) who had 1 to 5 years, while 107(34%) were having 6 to 10 years of experience.

### Reliability Analysis

Cronbach alpha has been used to determine the instrument consistency, whether the instrument provides consistent findings or not. Literature says that the instrument yielding Cronbach value of .70 and above is considered as a good tool. However, the researchers may also use tools yielding Cronbach value of .60 (Hair et al., [2006](#)). The alpha values for each variable is given in the table below.

**Table 2**

#### *Reliability Analysis*

Variable	Number of items	Alpha values for each variable
Emotional Intelligence	16	.633
Perception of Politics	8	.969
Job Satisfaction	6	.949
Negligence Behavior	4	.874
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	20	.930
Task Performance	3	.849
Absenteeism	4	.759

### Harman's Single Factor Test

Mono method choice was used to collect the data from respondents using survey method. Therefore, it was necessary to detect common



method variance in the data and to determine if there exists any systematic measurement error. In order to identify the problem of CMV, Harman's single factor test was applied. Results revealed that the variance of first factor was 41.67% which was significantly lower than the required limit of 50%. Therefore, it may be safely inferred that there was no issue of common method variance in the current study.

**Table 3***Correlations*

	Mean	SD	Qualification	Experience	EI	POP	_JS	NB	OCB	TP	_AB
Qualification	3.0607	.23917	1								
Experience	1.3419	.47509	-.014	1							
EI	4.0753	.33450	.000	.120*	1						
POP	3.39781	.22406	.146**	-.115*	-	.713**1					
_JS	2.73061	.09225	-.174**	.112*	.672**	-.950**1					
NB	2.9209	.96219	.219**	-.076	-	.446**	.763**	-.821**1			
OCB	3.4923	.71822	-.259**	.089	.567**	-.877**	.922**	-.887**1			
TP	3.2971	.95674	-.200**	.091	.501**	-.790**	.858**	-.845**	.900**1		
AB	3.7460	.70497	-.008	.152**	.666**	-.759**	.684**	-.381**	.532**	.426**1	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 represents the correlation matrix of control variables, EI with perception of politics, behavioral, and attitudinal outcomes. The table shows that EI is negatively and significantly correlated with perception of politics ( $r = -.713$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), positively correlated job satisfaction ( $r = .672$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Significantly and negatively associated with negligence behavior ( $r = -.446$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), significantly associated with organizational citizenship behavior ( $r = .567$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), positively correlated with task performance ( $r = .501$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and finally positively associated with absenteeism ( $r = .666$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 4**

*Mediating Effect of Perception of Politics between EI and Job Satisfaction*

Variable	B	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Emotional Intelligence → Job Satisfaction (c path): Total effect	2.1930	.1372	15.9853	.0000	1.9231	2.4629
Emotional Intelligence → Perception of Politics (a path)	-2.6091	.1455	-17.9324	.0000	-2.8954	-2.3228
Perception of Politics → Job Satisfaction (b path)	-.8545	.0226	-27.7509	.0000	-.8991	-.8100
Emotional Intelligence → Job Satisfaction controlling for perception of politics (c' path): Direct effect	-.0366	.0828	-.4413	.6593	-.1995	.1264
<b>Indirect effect of Emotional intelligence on Job satisfaction (Bootstrap)</b>						
Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI			
2.2295	.1213	1.9873	2.4704			
<b>Normal theory tests for indirect effect (Sobel test)</b>						
Effect	SE	Z	P			
2.2295	.1377	16.1932	.0000			

Notes: Bootstrap sample size= 5000; LLCI: Lower Limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval, SE: Standard Error

Table 4 shows direct, indirect, effect, and total effect among EI, perception of politics, and job satisfaction. The total effect is positive and significant at ( $t= 15.9853$ ,  $p< 0.001$ ). However, the direct effect of EI with job satisfaction is insignificant when controlled for perception for politics ( $t=-.4413$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). In addition, to examine the indirect effect, bootstrapping method is used with 5000 resample size and 95% confidence

interval along with Sobel test to find the significance of indirect effect. The results are significant as the Sobel test ( $z=16.1932$ ,  $p< 0.0000$ ) are significant and the lower and upper internal of bootstrap results does not contain zero (LLCI= 1.9873, ULCI= 2.4704). Consequently, the results obtained from bootstrapping technique corroborate with the results of Sobel test. Therefore, H1 is accepted confirming the full mediation, as the direct effect became insignificant after controlling for POP.

**Table 5***Mediating Effect of Perception of Politics between EI and NB*

Variable	B	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Emotional Intelligence → Negligence behavior (c path): Total effect	-1.2822	.1460	-8.7816	.0000	-1.5695	-.9949
Emotional Intelligence → Perception of Politics (a path)	-2.6091	.1455	-17.9324	.0000	-2.8954	-2.3228
Perception of Politics → Negligence behavior (b path)	.7116	.0402	17.7077	.0000	.6326	.7907
Emotional Intelligence → Negligence behavior, controlling for perception of politics (c' path): Direct effect	.5745	.1471	3.9066	.0001	.2851	.8639
<b>Indirect effect of Emotional intelligence on negligence behavior (Bootstrap)</b>						
Value	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI			
-1.8567	.1361	-2.1314	-1.6003			
<b>Normal theory tests for indirect effect (Sobel test)</b>						
Effect	SE	Z	P			
-1.8567	.1475	-12.5900	.0000			

Notes: Bootstrap sample size= 5000; LLCI: Lower Limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval, SE: Standard Error

Table 5 shows direct, indirect effect, and total effect among EI, perception of politics, and negligent behavior. The total effect is negative and significant at ( $t = -8.7816$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The direct effect of EI with negligent behavior is significant when controlled for perception for politics ( $t = 3.9066$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). In addition, to examine the indirect effect, bootstrapping method was used with 5000 resample size and 95% confidence interval along with Sobel test to find the significance of indirect effect. The results are significant as the Sobel test ( $z = -12.5900$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) are significant and the lower and upper internal of bootstrap results does not contain zero (LLCI=  $-2.1314$ , ULCI=  $-1.6003$ ). Consequently, the results obtained from bootstrapping technique corroborate with the results of Sobel test. Therefore, H2 is accepted confirming partial mediation as the direct effect became insignificant after controlling for POP.

**Table 6**

*Mediating Effect of Perception of Politics between EI and OCB*

Variable	B	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Emotional Intelligence → Organizational citizenship behavior (c path): Total effect	1.2167	.1003	12.1282	.0000	1.0193	1.4141
Emotional Intelligence → Perception of Politics (a path)	- 2.6091	.1455	- 17.9324	.0000	- 2.8954	- 2.3228
Perception of Politics → Organizational citizenship behavior (b path)	-.5639	.0225	- 25.0296	.0000	-.6083	-.5196
Emotional Intelligence → Organizational citizenship behavior, controlling for perception of politics (c' path): Direct effect	-.2547	.0824	-3.0891	.0022	-.4169	-.0925
Indirect effect of Emotional intelligence on Organizational citizenship behavior (Bootstrap)						

Value	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
1.4714	.0947	1.2900	1.6652

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Normal theory tests for indirect effect (Sobel test)			
Effect	SE	Z	P
1.4714	.1010	14.5696	.0000

Notes: Bootstrap sample size= 5000; LLCI: Lower Limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval, SE: Standard Error

Table 6 shows direct, indirect effect, and total effect among EI, perception of politics, and organizational citizenship behavior. The total effect is positive and significant at ( $t= 12.1282$ ,  $p< 0.001$ ). The direct effect of EI with organizational citizenship behavior is significant when controlled for perception for politics ( $t= -3.0891$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). In addition, to examine the indirect effect, bootstrapping method was used with 5000 resample size and 95% confidence interval along with Sobel test to find the significance of indirect effect. The results are significant as the Sobel test ( $z=14.5696$ ,  $p< 0.001$ ) are significant and the lower and upper internal of bootstrap results does not contain zero (LLCI= 1.2900, ULCI= 1.6652). Consequently, results obtained from bootstrapping technique corroborate with the results of Sobel test. Therefore, H3 is accepted confirming partial mediation as the direct effect became insignificant after controlling for POP.

**Table 7**

*Mediating Effect of Perception of Politics between EI and TS*

Variable	B	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Emotional Intelligence → Task performance (c path): Total effect	1.4322	.1404	10.2019	.0000	1.1560	1.7085
Emotional Intelligence → Perception of Politics (a path)	- 2.6091	.1455	- 17.9324	.0000	- 2.8954	- 2.3228

Perception of Politics → Task performance (b path)	-.6887	.0384	-	.0000	-.7642	-.6132
			17.9436			
Emotional Intelligence → Task performance, controlling for perception of politics (c' path): Direct effect	-.3647	.1405	-2.5965	.0099	-.6411	-.0883
Indirect effect of Emotional intelligence on Task performance (Bootstrap)						
Value	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI			
1.7969	.1354	1.5446	2.0741			
Normal theory tests for indirect effect (Sobel test)						
Effect	SE	Z	P			
1.7969	.1418	12.6742	.0000			

Notes: Bootstrap sample size= 5000; LLCI: Lower Limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval, SE: Standard Error

Table 7 shows direct, indirect effect, and total effect among EI, perception of politics, and task performance. The total effect is positive and significant at ( $t= 10.2019$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The direct effect of EI with task performance is significant when controlled for perception for politics ( $t= -2.5965$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In addition, to examine the indirect effect, bootstrapping method was used with 5000 resample size and 95% confidence interval along with Sobel test to find the significance of indirect effect. The results are significant as the Sobel test ( $z=12.6742$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) are significant and the lower and upper internal of bootstrap results does not contain zero (LLCI= 1.5446, ULCI= 2.0741). Consequently, results obtained from bootstrapping technique corroborated with the results of Sobel test. Therefore, H4 is accepted confirming partial mediation as the direct effect became insignificant after controlling for perception of politics.

## Table 8

### *Mediating Effect of Perception of Politics between EI and AB*

Variable	B	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
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Emotional Intelligence → Absenteeism (c path): Total effect	1.4045	.0891	15.7634	.0000	1.2292	1.5798
Emotional Intelligence → Perception of Politics (a path)	- 2.6091	.1455	- 17.9324	.0000	- 2.8954	- 2.3228
Perception of Politics → Absenteeism (b path)	-.3321	.0292	- 11.3638	.0000	-.3896	-.2746
Emotional Intelligence → Absenteeism, controlling for perception of politics (c' path): Direct effect	.5381	.1069	5.0316	.0000	.3277	.7485
Indirect effect of Emotional intelligence on Absenteeism (Bootstrap)						
Value	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI			
.8664	.0928	.6967	1.0636			
Normal theory tests for indirect effect (Sobel test)						
Effect	SE	Z	P			
.8664	.0904	9.5881	.0000			

Notes: Bootstrap sample size= 5000; LLCI: Lower Limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval, SE: Standard Error

Table 8 shows direct, indirect effect, and total effect among EI, perception of politics, and absenteeism. The total effect is positive and significant at ( $t= 15.7634$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The direct effect of EI with absenteeism was significant when controlled for perception for politics ( $t= 5.0316$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). In addition, to examine the indirect effect, bootstrapping method was used with 5000 resample size and 95% confidence interval along with Sobel test to find the significance of indirect effect. The results are significant as the Sobel test ( $z=9.5881$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) are significant and the lower and upper internal of bootstrap results does not contain zero (LLCI=.6967, ULCI= 1.0636). Consequently, results obtained from bootstrapping technique corroborate with the results of Sobel test. Therefore, H5 is accepted confirming partial mediation as the direct effect became insignificant after controlling for perception of politics.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Nursing demands very high degree of emotional composition and intelligence. Similarly, this profession is also very sensitive to the perception of politics. Although, EI and perception of politics are highly relevant to the nursing sector; still, literature in this sector is virtually non-existent. Therefore, a need was felt to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between EI, perception of politics, and job outcomes in the nursing sector of Pakistan.

It was hypothesized that EI influences the way organizational politics is perceived. Subsequently, it was perceived that organizational politics mediates the influence of EI on five of the attitudinal and behavioral outcomes included in the current study. These outcomes include job satisfaction, negligent behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, and absenteeism. The findings suggested that negative correlation prevails between EI and perception of politics. Furthermore, it was established that perception of politics mediates the association between EI and job satisfaction, negligent behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, and absenteeism. It needs to be noted that the findings of the current study are in congruence with the past literature which confirmed the association of EI and perception of politics (Meisler & Vigoda, [2014](#)). The current study also confirmed the assumed relationship between the two variables.

In line with the previous studies of Vigoda and Meisler ([2010](#)) and Meisler and Vigoda ([2014](#)), it was suggested that EI plays a key role to shape the perception of politics. Emotions potentially contribute to the perception of politics (Meisler & Vigoda, [2014](#)). The current study suggested that organizational politics gives rise to intense feelings, anger, and frustration. Therefore, a nurse with high EI would be in a better position to cope-up with anger, feelings of unfairness, stress, and frustration.

High EI is the only key to overcome negative feelings evoked owing to perceived organizational politics. As per the findings, EI is inversely associated with the perception of politics, which suggests that a nurse with high EI would grapple the perception of politics and would not lead to unfruitful consequences at workplace. Similarly, job satisfaction on the part



of such nurses, even if they perceive organizational politics, would be high. Lack of EI in health sectors may cause dissatisfaction and compel the nurses to move towards undesirable outcomes. These outcomes include less satisfaction, negligent behavior, turnover intention, and absenteeism. Furthermore, lack of EI would also prevent desirable outcomes, such as OCB, innovation, creativity, and task performance.

### **Implications**

The current study carries implications for both theoretical and managerial sides. Theoretically, it confirmed the mediation of perception of politics between EI and work outcomes. Additionally, the mediation of perception of politics between EI and job outcomes, such as job satisfaction and negligent behavior was already known. However, job outcomes, such as organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, and absenteeism are new contributions of the current study. It also offers a useful insight to understand the underlying mechanism through which EI influences job outcomes based on an affective event framework. These findings extend the previous findings of Meisler and Vogoda (2014), who found a mediating role of perception of politics between EI and job outcomes (job satisfaction and negligent behavior only in developed country's context).

Employees at workplace setting compete each other for resources and in doing so, they reflect their particular interests. Employees' self-interest engenders politics at workplace. It may not be conceived as a bad thing only at workplace, rather it might be positive as well. Positive politics is necessary for the survival of organization and contributes significantly in the success and organizational innovation (Abbas et al., 2014). However, when an employee violates other's rights with self-interest, then it results in negative organizational politics. It is worth mentioning that the current study only brought into account the negative consequences of organizational politics. Negative organizational politics result in stress, anxiety, and negative emotions regarding the organization. Consequently, negative feelings occur in work setting that decrease job fulfilment, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance which increases absenteeism and negligent behavior. This response behavior is also affected by employees' EI (Shrestha & Baniya, 2016).

The concept of perception of politics has caught the attention of scholars and practitioners, recently. The current study focused specifically on the significant impact of EI on various job outcomes along with the mediation effect of perception of politics. The results indicated that nurses must be highly emotionally intelligent as they are confronted with stressed situations. It was found that due to perceived politics nurses suffer from negative emotions which may lead towards undesirable job outcomes. In the health care sector, it is recommended that highly emotionally intelligent nurses should be recruited and EI evaluation should be made an integral part of the selection process. Moreover, hospital management in developing countries should focus to create an environment that is based on justice, equality, merit, and transparent procedures, so that negative perception of politics could be avoided.

In the light of findings, it is suggested that the top managers in health care sector must pay attention to the EI of nurses by initiating training programs in order to help them understand and respond to emotions. This may also help them to successfully handle the stressors, such as organizational politics. Since politics is an inevitable part of hospitals, therefore, recruitment programs at both public and private hospitals should aim to hire nurses with high EI. There are numerous tests which could be conducted during the selection process of new nurses.

## **5.2 Future Research Directions**

The current study observes certain limitations of its own. Firstly, its design permitted the collection of information on a cross-sectional basis instead of longitudinal basis that may have needed more time period and resources. Therefore, it was unable to capture the feelings and emotions before, during, and after the critical situations. Although, Harman single factor test was used to identify common method biasness, still, future studies should collect data in a time lagged manner to avoid common method bias. Besides, the data should be dyadic, rather than self-reported. The data for the current study was collected only from hospitals in Pakistan. However, several contextual factors embedded in a variety of organizational cultures, such as individualism and collectivism mentioned by Riaz et al. (2012), vary across different countries, which may also affect the relationships among these variables. Therefore, in future, a detailed comparative case study analysis,

involving several different countries could be carried out to better understand the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, the current study used job satisfaction, negligent behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, and absenteeism as job outcomes. While, the upcoming researchers should include other outcomes, such as affective organizational commitment (Naeem et al., [2017](#)) and perceived job performance (Waheed et al., [2018](#)) into their research.

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