Politics and the Workplace: An Empirical Examination of the Relationship between Political Behavior and Work Outcomes

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The relationship between politics and the work setting has not received much conceptual and empirical attention in the literature. However, continuing concern for understanding the origins and consequences of political participation, and growing interest in studying and developing democracy at work, brought the topic into the 1990s (Sobel, 1993). The few studies on the relationship between the two spheres have focused on the influences of workplace experiences on one’s political attitudes and behaviors, particularly on political participation. Several explanations have been advanced for the relationships between work and politics. For example, Almond and Verba (1963) argued that the workplace is close in time and in kind to the political sphere. Work occurs contemporaneously with politics, and both work and politics are formally structured. Roles within work train occupants to perform political roles because experiences of self-direction or conformity at work inculcate congruent values and orientations. The reinforcing nature of participation or nonparticipation at work molds employees’ dispositions to the respective habit of participation or nonparticipation elsewhere. Peterson (1990) used the “spillover effect” theory to explain how the workplace is related to politics. According to this theory, participation in the workplace makes people feel more self-confident, more interested in larger affairs, and more skilled in political exchanges. The end result will be a more efficacious and participant citizen in the normally defined world of government-related politics. Delli, Sigel, and Snyder (1983) found that employees who were less satisfied with the job were more alienated politically, participated less in the political process, and had less trust in the political system compared to those who were more satisfied.

These studies assumed, however, that work affects politics; that is, one’s experiences in the workplace affect one’s political behavior. The literature has not considered that the relationship also might work in the opposite direction; that is, political behavior of employees will affect their behaviors and attitudes at work. Such a possibility was mentioned by Sobel (1993), who argued that intense participation in politics...
might influence work participation. One reason Sobel suggested for such a relation-
ship is that some people participate in both spheres because of a personal predisposi-
tion to seek authority and activity. This issue, which has not been scrutinized in the
public administration literature, has both conceptual and practical implications.

In light of the growing research showing that the relationship between work and
nonwork is bidirectional (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Kirchmeyer, 1992, 1995),
this study examines the relationship between political behavior and work outcomes
(actual performance as measured by supervisor's evaluation, job satisfaction, organi-
izational commitment, and participation in decision making). The contribution of this
article is fourfold. First, it examines the relationship between politics and work from a
viewpoint overlooked in the literature—that politics affects work. Second, it examines
this relationship by controlling for demographic variables such as gender and age.
Third, it tests the possibility that the relationship between politics and work is not di-
rect but rather more complex, being strongly influenced by gender. This possibility is
tested in light of clear evidence that political behavior differs for males and females
(Peterson, 1990). For this purpose, several interactions of political behavior with gen-
der are tested. Fourth, the article applies valid and established scales to test the prece-
ding research questions against previous research that relied on secondary data and ap-
plied results from one or two items to measure a given variable (Sobel, 1993).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Several conceptual frameworks have been proposed for the relationship between
political behavior and behavior at work. One line of argument is based on the relation-
ship between work and nonwork domains. Accordingly, one's attitudes and behaviors
regarding nonwork aspects such as family, leisure activities, and membership in social
clubs can affect one's attitudes and behaviors in the work setting (Near, Rice, & Hunt,
1987). Following this line of thinking, Peterson (1990) and Sobel (1993) described the
relationship between work and politics as based on a spillover effect where participa-
tion in one arena allows an individual to gain certain skills and the self-confidence nec-
essary to participate in other areas of social life.

Sobel (1993) argued that political participation is a learned social role whose edu-
cative function consists of practice in democratic skills. The more individuals partici-
pate, the better able they become to do so. In short, participation breeds participation,
and intense participation in politics may influence participation in work. Sobel's find-
ings from a national American sample supported this argument by showing positive
and modest relationships between forms of political participation and variables such
as job and work participation, supervisory responsibility, and authority.

The spillover effect has particular importance in light of the long debate regarding
the relationship between political science and public administration as reflected in a
recent paper of Whicker, Strickland, and Olshfski (1993). One of the important re-
search directions at the interface of public administration and political science pro-
posed by Whicker et al. is to learn how the political environment influences continuity
of goals and policy in public organizations. In line with this, a recent study of Wilson
(1995) found support for the relationship between politics and organizational commit-
ment of top executives in the federal government. Testing the relationship between
Two main forms of nonwork-to-work spillover are identified in the literature: positive and negative spillover. Sieber (1974) classified four types of positive spillover from nonwork to work. First, certain role privileges or rights are institutionalized within each role along with certain duties. Therefore, the greater the number of roles accumulated, the greater the number of privileges that can be enjoyed. For example, a person who has a formal position in a political party enjoys much higher status and informal privileges at the workplace. A second type of positive spillover, overall status security, stems from the idea that role strain can be buffered by participation in another role. Sieber argued that alternative relationships afford compensatory affection, moral support, emergency resources, and perhaps even assistance for renewal of effort in the original role. Resources for status enhancement and role performance are a third type of positive spillover; that is, the byproducts of one role are invested in other roles so that the expanding resources outweigh the costs of meeting role demands. For example, personal contacts made outside of work, such as in community services, and certain information available only through nonwork experiences can be valuable resources for successful work functioning. A fourth spillover of multiple role participation is personality enrichment or development. Sieber cited tolerance gained through the recognition of discrepant viewpoints, flexibility required in adjusting to the demands of diverse role partners, and the feeling of being appreciated by these various partners as among the benefits arising from wide and varied roles.

Positive nonwork-to-work spillover is only one side of the coin. Interdomain conflict, an expression of negative spillover, has emerged as a popular area of research (Frone et al., 1992). Conflict stemming specifically from nonwork-to-work spillover would include, for example, that time spent in nonwork domains depletes the time available for work, that tension and anxiety produced in nonwork domains reduce performance at work, and that behaviors required in nonwork domains reduce performance at work, and that behaviors required in nonwork domains are inappropriate for work (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ORIENTATIONS**

Graham (1986, 1991) summarized and presented a typology of political behavior and orientations. It is based on three categories of citizenship behaviors formulated by classical philosophy and modern political theory (Aristotle, 1962; Cary, 1977; Janowitz, 1980; Pateman, 1970; Plato, 1892; Walzer, 1970), and it is applied here. The first category is obedience or respect for orderly structures and processes. Citizens are responsible for obeying existing laws, which also protect them. For example, laws may require that citizens pay taxes, drive on a designated side of the road, refrain from violating others' rights, and at times even risk their lives in military service. Because behavior and attitudes at work represent more of an informal contribution, the expectation is that it will be affected more by informal behaviors. Therefore, this study did not deal with obedience, which is a formal aspect of political behavior.

The second category is loyalty, which involves the expansion of individual welfare functions to include the interests of others, the state as a whole, and the values it embodies. This category includes uncompensated contributions of effort, money, or
property; protecting and/or enhancing a state's good reputation in the eyes of outsiders; and cooperating with others to serve the common interest rather than seeking a free ride.

The third category, participation, concerns participation in governance. Citizens-as-rulers assist in implementing the law (e.g., by holding or electing others to executive positions) and in adjudicating violations (e.g., by serving on juries). They also participate (directly or through representatives) in changing laws to respond to new facts and in evolving an understanding of the common interest. As a result, political behavior includes devoting time and effort to the responsibilities of governance, keeping well informed, sharing information and ideas with others, engaging in discussions about controversial issues, voting in whatever manner is provided under the law, and encouraging others to do likewise.

Based on the preceding typology, four dimensions of political behavior were tested. The first is participation in political activities. Here the expectation was that people who are more involved in political activities such as voting, sending support/protest messages to politicians, taking part in political demonstrations, and signing petitions on political issues will be more involved in the work setting. This expectation is based on Sieber's (1974) argument that such spillover provides resources for role performance; that is, the experience and expertise that are gained by participating in political activities might provide good tools to make it easier to demonstrate higher levels of performance at work (Peterson, 1990; Sieber, 1974; Sobel, 1993). Also, following the trait explanation, it is argued that people who are politically active evince a personality type: They are more involved, they care, and they are committed to their environment. People who do more than is formally required in their civic setting probably will be more active in organizational life and, consequently, demonstrate higher levels of work performance.

**Hypothesis 1:** Political participation will be positively related to work outcomes.

The second dimension of political behavior tested is participation in community activities. This form is considered as an important dimension of the political sphere (Almond & Verba, 1963). Some people might decline to participate in political activities because they dislike or are indifferent to politics. Such people might direct their tendencies toward a closer and perhaps more personal domain such as the community. The expectation is that people who are active in their community will demonstrate higher levels of performance than will those who are not active in their community. The rationale is similar to the one described for political participation, although Sieber's (1974) explanation of personality enrichment or development also might be relevant here. For example, the tolerance gained through the recognition of discrepant viewpoints might be helpful in similar situations in the work setting.

**Hypothesis 2:** Community involvement will be positively related to work outcomes.

A third dimension of political behavior to be tested is civility. Here the focus is on behaviors that show care, kindness, compassion, and consideration toward other citizens, in particular those who need the support of others. People who demonstrate such
Civility are expected to exert higher levels of performance, in particular because
civility seems to represent an altruistic behavior outside the work environment. Sie-
ber’s (1974) explanation of personality enrichment or development provides a ration-
ale for the way in which civility will be related to performance. The sensitivity, kind-
ness, and consideration people gain and learn in the civil setting also will be reflected
in the work setting.

Hypothesis 3: Civility will be positively related to work outcomes.

The fourth dimension, faith in citizen involvement, is different from the previous
three in that it represents more of an orientation than a behavior. But as Peterson (1990)
argued, political orientations are an important dimension of political behavior because
they shape people’s political attitudes and actions. Faith in citizen involvement is
defined here as the extent to which people believe that by being involved, they can
influence the political system (Schussler, 1982). Those who believe that they can have
some say in the political system and are capable of influencing it might be expected to
transfer such an orientation to the work setting as well. A spillover of faith in citizen
involvement to the work setting will result in higher levels of activities in the work-
place in an attempt to change things there as well. Work performance represents such a
set of activities.

Hypothesis 4: Faith in citizenship involvement will be positively related to work outcomes.

THE EFFECT OF GENDER ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AND WORK OUTCOMES

The finding that men are more likely than women to participate in politics is one of
the most thoroughly substantiated in the social sciences (Milbrath, 1965; Peterson,
1990). Research has shown that females are less politically effectual and less involved
in politics (Peterson, 1990). Data supporting this proposition come from at least nine
countries (Milbrath, 1965). Although economic and social modernization is slowly
eroding this gender difference (Milbrath, 1965), females still are expected to be found
less politically involved, particularly in Israeli society, which is generally more con-
servative than North American society. Therefore, it can be expected that this relation-
ship will operate differently for males and females. Accordingly, the relationship be-
tween variables representing political participation and work outcomes is expected to
be stronger for males than for females.

Hypothesis 5: The relationship between political behavior variables and work outcomes will
be stronger for males than for females.

WORK OUTCOMES

Up to now, this article has treated work outcomes as one general concept. However,
as mentioned in the introductory paragraphs, four dimensions of work outcomes are
tested separately. Each of them is an established and frequently studied concept in
management literature. The main difference among the four outcomes is that one of
them represents actual behavior, namely performance, and the other three are
important work attitudes such as participation in decision making, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Performance is the most frequently studied concept in management literature and public administration literature. Most of the concepts developed in public administration and management literature were developed to predict and explain levels of performance. Naturally, the hypotheses presented here aim to predict this behavior. In addition, three important work attitudes are tested here. As noted earlier, participation in decision making was presented by Sobel (1993) as a key concept that connects work and politics. Therefore, such participation seems to be a concept that can be related to political participation and orientations. People who are involved in their civil setting probably will be involved in their organizational setting as well, and this involvement will be demonstrated in their higher involvement in the decision-making process in the organization. Moreover, their participation as citizens probably has provided them with more skills and experiences that may assist them in decision-making processes in the organization (Peterson, 1990; Sobel, 1993).

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction in a general sense as a "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 1300). Job satisfaction has emerged as the most studied work attitude (Griffin & Bateman, 1986), mainly because it was and still is assumed to be related to important work behaviors such as turnover, absenteeism, and performance (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Whereas much research has tested a variety of antecedents to job satisfaction, very little has tested the relationship between political behavior and this important attitude. A possible relationship between political behavior and attitudes and job satisfaction was proposed by Peterson (1990), who explained such a relationship by the spillover effect. Our study empirically tested the relationship between political behavior and job satisfaction.

Another work attitude that frequently is researched is organizational commitment, defined as the strength of attachment to an organization and reflecting a psychological state more than overt behavior (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Organizational commitment was found to be an important resource of public organizations (Romzek, 1985; Romzek & Hendricks, 1982) and is tested as another work outcome in its relationship to political behavior.

Whereas the general hypothesis of this research is that the direction and intensity of the effects of political participation and orientations will be equal for all work outcomes mentioned previously, political behavior is expected to be more firmly related to the three attitudes than to actual performance. The reasons are, first, that attitudes usually are better explained than actual behaviors and, second, that the three attitudes examined here are in themselves important determinants of performance (Griffin & Bateman, 1986; Mowday et al., 1982) and sometimes are considered as mediators between given antecedents and work outcomes (Mowday et al., 1982). Therefore, it might be expected that they will be affected by political behavior more strongly than will actual performance, which is affected very strongly by variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and participation in decision making.

**Hypothesis 6:** Political behavior will be more strongly related to work attitudes than to actual performance.
METHOD

SUBJECTS AND PROCEDURE

Data were collected from a sample of employees in one of the major public health organizations in Israel, which agreed to our request to take part in this study. Some of the clinics in the north of Israel that had not participated in any other study during the previous year were asked by the organization's head office to cooperate. A total of 345 questionnaires were distributed in 16 clinics to administrative and medical personnel, and 200 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 58%. Supervisors in each of the clinics provided the performance data for the employees. A breakdown of respondents by occupation showed that 31% of the sample were physicians, 35% were nurses, and 34% were clerical or administrative workers. In addition, 82% of the sample were female and 84% were married. The average age of the respondents was 45 years ($SD = 10.3$). The average tenures in the clinics and in the organization were 10.26 years ($SD = 7.1$) and 14.9 years ($SD = 8.5$), respectively. Finally 38% of the sample held B.A. degrees or higher. The demographic characteristics of the sample were quite similar to those of the employees of all the clinics in the north of Israel—79% females, 82% married, average age 45 years, average tenure in the organization 15 years, and 40% with B.A. degrees or higher.

MEASURES

Dependent Variables

Performance. The participating clinic supervisors were asked to evaluate each of their employees on a list of seven items. They indicated, on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always), how often each employee (a) performed essential duties successfully, (b) completed assigned duties adequately, (c) fulfilled responsibilities specified in the job description, (d) fulfilled the supervisor’s expectations, (e) met formal performance requirements of the job, (f) conserved and protected organizational property, and (g) adhered to informal rules devised to maintain order. All seven items were combined to generate the performance scale, a procedure applied to all scales applied in this research.

Participation in decision making. This variable was defined as the extent to which staff members participated in setting the goals and policies of the entire organization and was measured by four items adopted from Aiken and Hage (1966). Respondents reported how frequently they usually participated in decisions on the following issues: (a) promotion of any of the professional staff, (b) adoption of new policies, (c) adoption of new programs, and (d) hiring of new staff. The scale ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

Job satisfaction. Respondents indicated how satisfied they were with six aspects of their job: current job, coworkers, supervisors, current salary, opportunities for promotion, and work in general. The scale for these questions ranged from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). This measure was developed by Schriesheim and Tsui.
(1980). Note that the reliability in this sample (.71) is quite similar to the one reported by Tsui, Egan, and O’Reilly (1992) in an American sample (.73).

**Organizational commitment.** This variable was measured by the most commonly used measure of organizational commitment, the attitudinal Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) introduced by Porter and Smith (1970). The scale, also known as the Porter et al. measure (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974), is “the most visible measure of affective commitment [and] has enjoyed widespread acceptance and use” (Griffin & Bateman, 1986, p. 170). In its shortened nine-item version, the measure reflects the three dimensions of the definition of commitment suggested by Porter et al. (1974): (a) a desire to retain membership in the organization, (b) a belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization, and (c) a willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization. Mowday et al. (1982) and Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) showed the well-proven psychometric properties of this measure. Sample items for this measure include the following: (a) “I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization,” (b) “I really care about the fate of this organization,” (c) “I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for the organization,” and (d) “For me, this is the best of all possible organizations to work for.” The scale for this measure ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**Independent Variables**

**Political participation.** Political participation “refers to those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they make” (Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 2). This variable was measured by nine items, based on similar measures developed by Almond and Verba (1963) and Milbrath and Goel (1977). Respondents were asked to report the frequency of their involvement in the following political activities: (a) membership in a political party, (b) keeping informed about politics, (c) sending support/protest letters to politicians, (d) writing letters on political issues to different newspapers, (e) taking part in demonstrations or political meetings, (f) engaging in political discussions, (g) explaining the importance of the democratic process to one’s children, (h) being a candidate for public office, and (i) signing petitions on political issues. Respondents were asked to indicate on a 3-point scale how active they were on each activity, with 1 = I never was active, 2 = I was active in the past, and 3 = I am active today. The total score for each respondent was calculated by summing up the responses for each item.

**Community involvement.** This variable represents one’s attempts to influence and contribute to the community. The measure was developed for this study by a logic similar to that of the political participation scale, and it included six items: (a) being a member of a voluntary organization in the community, (b) being a member of any tenants committee, (c) being a member of a parents-school committee, (d) taking part in community cultural activities, (e) writing letters to the mayor or to other local officials about different issues, (f) writing letters to the local newspaper regarding community affairs. The scale for each item was the same as that for the political participation variable.

**Civility.** This measure indicates how far one meets positive norms expected from good citizens in society. Six items representing such behaviors were adopted from a
scale developed by Conover, Crewe, and Searing (1993). However, factor analysis and reliability analysis showed that only two of the items can form an interpretable scale with acceptable reliability. The two items are (a) “When someone weak is carrying heavy luggage, I generally offer my assistance” and (b) “When an old person boards a bus, I usually offer him or her a seat.” The scale for the two items ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Faith in citizen involvement. This measure represents attitudes toward one’s potential influence on the political system and was measured by the nine-item scale developed by Schussler (1982). Sample items include the following: (a) “The average citizen has considerable influence on politics,” (b) “The government is generally responsive to public opinion,” (c) “By taking an active part in political and social affairs, the people can control world events,” and (d) “The average person has a great deal of influence on government decisions.” Responses were made on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Reliability of the scale in this sample was .72, which is similar to the one found by Schussler (p. 135) in a national American sample (.71).

Control Variables

These demographic variables were applied as control variables in this research. The demographic variables included two dichotomous variables: gender (0 = male, 1 = female) and country of origin (0 = born in Israel, 1 = not born in Israel). They also included the education variable, which was measured as an ordinal variable on a scale from 1 (partial high school education) to 5 (master’s or higher degree). The age variable was measured as a ratio variable. All the control variables included here are variables demonstrated in theory and research to be related to political behavior (Milbrath, 1965) and work outcomes (Mowday et al., 1982).

PROCEDURE

Data Analysis

The research hypotheses were tested by hierarchical regression analysis conducted in the following steps. In Step 1, the control variables (education, country of origin, gender, and age) were entered into the equation. In Step 2, the four political behavior variables (political participation, community involvement, civility, and faith in citizen involvement) were entered. These first two steps tested Hypotheses 1 to 4. In Step 3, four two-way interactions were entered into the equation (Political Participation × Gender, Community Involvement × Gender, Civility × Gender, and Faith in Citizen Involvement × Gender) to test Hypothesis 5 regarding the interaction effect of gender. The final equations tested Hypothesis 6.

Findings

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and the intercorrelations of the research variables. The data indicate reasonable psychometric properties of the measures used in
Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Pearson’s r Correlations, and Cronbach’s Alphas for the Variables

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<td>5. Political participation</td>
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<td>6. Community involvement</td>
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<td>7. Civility</td>
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<td>12. Performance</td>
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Note. Cronbach’s alphas are in parentheses.
*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
this study. The somewhat low reliability of the political participation, community involvement, and civility variables could be attributed to the fact that they measure reported behaviors in a given domain, not attitudes. When factor analyses of the political participation and community involvement variables were performed, the reliability of the full scales was found to be higher than that of any combination of their factors. The correlations among the independent variables are quite low and indicate the absence of multicollinearity. This should be noted because despite the fact that most of the variables in this study were based on self-report data (which allows source bias or general method variance), the low correlations among the independent variables demonstrate the absence of common method variance in these data.

Table 2 presents the results of the regression analyses for work outcomes as the dependent variables and the control and political behavior variables as the independent variables. In Step 1 in each of the regressions, the control variables were entered into the equations. Note the inconsistent effect of the control variables. They had a strong effect on organizational commitment, with three of them (education, country of origin, and age) having a significant effect and alone explaining 21% of the variance; on the other hand, the control variables had no effect on participation in decision making and had a weak effect on performance and job satisfaction. Only gender had a significant effect on performance, and country of origin on job satisfaction, explaining 5% and 6% of the variance, respectively.

In Step 2, the four political behavior variables were entered into each of the equations. The findings show that none of the four political behavior variables had a significant effect on performance. This finding rejects Hypotheses 1 to 4 for the performance variable. For job satisfaction, the results of Step 2 showed a positive and significant effect of faith in citizenship involvement; namely, those with higher faith in citizenship involvement had higher job satisfaction. This finding supports Hypothesis 4 for the job satisfaction variable. For organizational commitment, the results of Step 2 show that two political behavior variables, civility and faith in citizenship involvement, had a positive effect on commitment. This finding supports Hypotheses 3 and 4 for the organizational commitment variable. In the case of participation in decision making, the results of Step 2 show a significant and positive effect of the community involvement and faith in citizenship involvement variables. This finding supports Hypotheses 2 and 4 for participation in decision making. Note that the contribution of the political behavior variables is beyond the effect of the control demographic variables.

In the final step, the interaction variables were entered. With two outcome variables, an interaction effect was found. The more interesting one was with the political participation variable. Although none of the political behavior variables was significant in Step 2, the inclusion of the interaction variables caused a significant main effect of the political participation variable and a significant interaction effect of Gender × Faith in Citizenship Involvement. More interesting was the direction of the effect of the political participation variable, which was negative; that is, more political participation decreased the level of performance. This finding was not anticipated in Hypothesis 1 and, in fact, contradicts it for the performance variable. The interaction effect found for performance was plotted and is presented in Figure 1. This shows that the relationship between faith in citizenship involvement and performance was stronger for females and was quite constant for males. This finding contradicts
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*Note.* t values are in parentheses.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
Hypothesis 5, which predicted the opposite. Another interaction effect was found for the organizational commitment variable. In this case, the interaction of gender was with the political participation variable. This interaction was plotted as well and is presented in Figure 2. The pattern of this interaction is similar to the previous one and indicates a closer relationship between political participation and organizational commitment for females. This interaction also contradicts Hypothesis 5. Overall, the findings of Table 2 show that variance explained by the independent variables varied for each of the dependent variables. Relatively much variance was explained for organizational commitment (32%). The lowest explained variance was for actual performance (12%), as expected in Hypothesis 6. The explained variance for job satisfaction was 14% and for participation in decision making was 15%.

Finally, it should be noted that all data analyses were performed separately for males and for females to control for the possibility of gender bias. Because the research sample consisted of a large proportion of females ($n = 164, 83\%$), we decided to conduct separate regression analyses for males and for females. The regression analysis for females yielded similar results to those based on the total research sample. For example, political participation was positively related to employee performance ($\beta = -.17, p < .05$ for females; $\beta = -.16, p < .05$ for the total sample), community involve-
ment was positively related to participation in decision making ($\beta = .22, p < .01$ for females; $\beta = .23, p < .01$ for the total sample), and faith in citizenship involvement was positively related to job satisfaction ($\beta = .25, p < .01$ for females; $\beta = .27, p < .001$ for the total sample) and to organizational commitment ($\beta = .22, p < .01$ for females; $\beta = .25, p < .01$ for the total sample). The separate analysis for males yielded nonsignificant relationships between variables representing political behavior and work outcomes, probably because the number of males in the sample was low ($n = 36, 17\%$).

Furthermore, we decided to perform $t$ tests for the differences between males and females with the political behavior and dependent variables. The findings revealed one significant difference between males and females in the political behavior variables: Males participated more in politics than did females (mean = 1.8 vs. 1.6, $p < .001$). As for the dependent variables, the findings revealed that females were more committed than males (mean = 3.7 vs. 3.4, $p < .01$), participated more in decision making (mean = 4.4 vs. 4.0, $p < .05$), were more satisfied with work (mean = 3.7 vs. 3.4, $p < .05$), and performed better at work (mean = 4.4 vs. 4.1, $p < .05$). The differences found in the $t$ test findings imply that perhaps in a larger male sample, significant differences would have been found in the regression analyses. Future research should consider this possibility.
Discussion

The findings of this study showed, in general, that political behavior is related to important behaviors and attitudes in the work setting. The relationship can be defined as modest but consistent. It is modest because the political behavior variables did not explain a large portion of the variance of the four work outcomes. It is consistent because all work outcomes were related to one or more of the political behavior variables, and this relationship held beyond the effect of the control variables. One should note that the political behavior variables were not expected to explain a large portion of the variance because research shows that the four outcome variables studied here are more strongly related to work situational variables (Griffin & Bateman, 1986; Mowday et al., 1982). Yet, the findings here show that variables that represent political behavior should be included in future models of work outcomes because they do add to our understanding of behavior at work.

One of the contributions of this article was the testing of important work outcomes by using concepts not frequently used in management research. Very little research exists on the relationship between political behavior and work outcomes examined from the perspective of political theory. Preliminary conceptual arguments for testing such relationships were proposed by Graham (1991), who suggested that some forms of citizenship behaviors can be demonstrated in the organizational setting. The findings here showed that variables representing political behavior were useful in predicting important work outcomes. These findings are in line with those of Kirchmeyer (1992), who found that resources made available for work by participating in community activity positively affected organizational commitment. Kirchmeyer also found that time commitment to community work positively affected job satisfaction. These findings, together with the findings of the present research, support the expansion or spillover hypothesis, according to which individuals tend to cope with increasing organizational and extra-organizational role demands by responding positively to them (Randall, 1988). Adding new roles liberates a source of energy for the individual, and rather than having to pay for extensive social involvements, individuals may come away from new involvements more enriched and vitalized. The positive relationships between political behavior variables and work outcomes indicate that more political involvement increases job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and participation in decision making. In sum, the findings of this study show the usefulness of concepts adopted from one discipline, political science, to another, organizational behavior.

However, the relationship between political behavior and work outcomes seems to be complex, as demonstrated in two important findings. First, the findings here seem to represent a mixture of positive and negative spillover. Whereas the positive relationship of civility, community involvement, and faith in citizenship involvement with all work outcomes except performance represents positive spillover, the negative relationship of political participation with performance represents a negative one. This negative effect shows that strictly political involvement seems to have negative consequences for behaviors and attitudes at work. It would be interesting to explore possible explanations for this finding. What is so different in political involvement from community involvement and from faith in citizenship involvement that it results in opposite effects on work attitudes and behaviors? Is it that people are involved in politics
because they are looking for an entirely new role, one that will compensate for what they perceive as negative experiences at work? In such a case, is involvement in politics so different from community involvement? How? Future research should deal with these questions conceptually and empirically.

Second are the findings regarding the interaction effects. Performance is one of the most studied outcomes in the management and administration literature. This study showed that the relationship between political behavior and performance is not direct but rather a complex interaction effect. Performance was affected by an interaction of gender with faith in citizenship involvement and by a main effect of political participation, as can be seen in Step 3 of Table 2. The moderator effect of gender was quite obvious in light of the strong theories and findings that show that political behavior differs for males and females. However, the direction of this effect was unpredictable. Whereas the expectation was that the relationship between political behavior and work outcomes would be stronger for males, it was found to be stronger for females, and the weak slope for males indicates that this relationship was consistent for males. This finding shows that the spillover effect operated more strongly for females. The skills, confidence, and experiences females acquire in the political setting are more helpful for them in the work setting than they are for males. In light of this interesting finding, future research should attempt to replicate it and to develop and test theories that consider other possible moderators that might interact with political behavior in their effect on work outcomes.

The results of this study support Kirchmeyer's (1992) conclusion that to truly understand the individual at work, one must consider not only his or her work life but also his or her life away from work. Near et al. (1987) concluded that extra-work conditions greatly affect reactions to work. Our study supports their conclusion and their argument that if living conditions directly affect attitudinal/behavioral reactions to the job, then efforts to improve reactions to the job by improving working conditions might have limited success. It might be necessary to consider changes in off-the-job conditions to improve the experienced quality of working life. Future research should further explore the effect of nonwork on work. Whereas the work outcomes studied here are important, research also should test the relationship between political behavior and other outcomes. For example, the strong relationship between political behavior and organizational commitment suggests that turnover should be tested as one of the outcomes. The reason is that organizational commitment is strongly related to turnover, and one can expect that turnover also will be related to political behavior. Absenteeism is another outcome that should be tested in the future regarding its relationship to political behavior.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Finally, several limitations of this study should be mentioned. First, and most important, the data were not collected in a North American setting, whereas most research regarding work outcomes seems to have been done in that setting. Therefore, the results might be affected by cultural and structural factors unique to the Israeli setting. For example, the Israeli political system is markedly different from the American one, and it is possible that political behavior has different effects in different cultures.
Therefore, this research should be replicated in other settings before firm conclusions can be made. Second, the design of this research is cross-sectional, and any conclusions regarding causality should be treated with caution. Future research regarding the relationship between politics and work would benefit from a longitudinal research design that would be able to resolve the nature of this relationship; that is, does politics affect work more strongly than work affects politics, or is the relationship perhaps bidirectional?

Despite its limitations, this study's findings have demonstrated the usefulness of examining work outcomes from a conceptual framework developed in another discipline—political science. Research regarding work outcomes up to now has concentrated mostly on situational determinants. The relatively low variance that has been accounted for in most of this research has shown that more work is needed in this area. The contribution of this study lies in its pointing to some new directions for better explaining these important behaviors.

References

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