

## THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS ON WORK OUTCOMES: A COMPARATIVE AND MODERATING ANALYSIS ACROSS GENERATIONS X AND Y

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### Abstract

This study examines the relationships between perceived organizational politics (POP) and job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing, and self-efficacy among Generation X and Generation Y employees, and further tests whether generation functions as a boundary condition in these relationships. Data were collected from 312 white-collar employees working in manufacturing firms in Istanbul and Kocaeli, Türkiye, and analyzed through correlational, regression-based, group-comparison, and moderation procedures. The findings indicate that POP is positively associated with job stress and negatively associated with job satisfaction and self-efficacy. POP also has a positive but weak relationship with cyberloafing. Generation Y employees report higher levels of job satisfaction and cyberloafing than Generation X employees, whereas no significant generational differences are observed for POP, job stress, or self-efficacy. Moderation results show that generation does not significantly condition the relationships between POP and job stress, job satisfaction, or cyberloafing; however, the negative relationship between POP and self-efficacy is stronger among Generation Y employees. By integrating attitudinal, behavioral, and psychological outcomes, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of employee responses to politically perceived organizational climates across generational cohorts.

**Keywords:** Cyberloafing, Job satisfaction, Job stress, Perceived organizational politics, Self-efficacy.

**Article Type:** Research Article

## ALGILANAN ÖRGÜTSEL POLİTİKANIN İŞ SONUÇLARI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ: X VE Y KUŞAKLARI ARASINDA KARŞILAŞTIRMALI VE DÜZENLEYİCİ BİR ANALİZ

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### Özet

Bu çalışma, algılanan örgütsel politikanın (AÖP) X ve Y kuşağı çalışanları arasında iş stresi, iş doyumu, sanal kaytarma ve öz yeterlilikle ilişkisini incelemekte ve kuşağın bu ilişkilerde bir sınır koşulu olarak rol oynayıp oynamadığını test etmektedir. Veriler, İstanbul ve Kocaeli’nde faaliyet gösteren imalat işletmelerinde çalışan 312 beyaz yakalı çalışandan toplanmıştır; ilişkisel, regresyon temelli, grup karşılaştırmalı ve moderasyon analizleriyle değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, AÖP’nin iş stresiyle pozitif, iş doyumu ve öz yeterlilikle negatif ilişkili olduğunu göstermektedir. AÖP ile sanal kaytarma arasında ise pozitif fakat zayıf bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Y kuşağı çalışanları X kuşağı çalışanlarına kıyasla daha yüksek iş doyumu ve sanal kaytarma düzeyleri bildirirken, AÖP, iş stresi ve öz yeterlilik açısından anlamlı kuşak

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farklılıkları görülmemiştir. Moderasyon sonuçları, kuşağın AÖP ile iş stresi, iş doyumu ve sanal kaytarma arasındaki ilişkileri anlamlı biçimde koşullandırmadığını; buna karşın AÖP ile öz yeterlilik arasındaki negatif ilişkinin Y kuşağı çalışanlarında daha güçlü olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışma, tutumsal, davranışsal ve psikolojik sonuçları bütüncül biçimde ele alarak politik olarak algılanan örgütsel iklimlere verilen çalışan tepkilerinin kuşaklar bağlamında daha ayrıntılı anlaşılmasına katkı sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Algılanan örgütsel politika, iş doyumu, iş stresi, öz yeterlilik, sanal kaytarma.

**Makale Türü:** Araştırma Makalesi

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary organizations, competitive advantage depends not only on financial, technological, and physical resources but also on how employees interpret organizational processes and respond to those interpretations. When decisions about promotion, rewards, resource allocation, and performance evaluation are perceived as opaque or interest-driven, employees may experience the work environment as uncertain, unfair, and difficult to control. For this reason, perceived organizational politics (POP) has become a central construct in organizational behavior research for explaining employee attitudes, psychological resources, and workplace behaviors (Ferris et al., 1989; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991; Vigoda, 2000).

POP refers to employees' perceptions that organizational decisions are influenced by personal interests, power relations, and informal alliances rather than by merit, performance, or objective criteria. As such perceptions intensify, employees may conclude that advancement within the organization depends less on competence and contribution and more on political behavior. This type of work climate can weaken trust, increase strain, reduce satisfaction, and encourage psychological or behavioral withdrawal from the organization (Chang et al., 2009; Miller et al., 2008).

The consequences of POP are therefore not limited to traditional attitudinal outcomes such as job satisfaction or job stress. Politically perceived work environments may also shape employees' behavioral choices and personal resources. In digitally mediated workplaces, one possible behavioral response is cyberloafing, defined as the use of the internet or digital technologies for non-work purposes during working hours. At the same time, political climates may undermine self-efficacy by weakening employees' belief that effort, competence, and performance will be recognized (Bandura, 1997; Blanchard & Henle, 2008; Lim, 2002).

A generational perspective may further clarify these relationships. Generations are commonly understood as cohorts shaped by similar historical, social, economic, and technological conditions, which may influence work values, expectations, and organizational responses (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Mannheim, 1952). Generation X is often associated with stability, work experience, and job security, whereas Generation Y is commonly linked to expectations for flexibility, feedback, personal development, and meaningful work (Costanza et al., 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge et al., 2010). These differences raise an important empirical question: Do employees from different generations perceive and respond to political organizational climates in the same way?

At the same time, the generational literature is contested. Differences attributed to generation may overlap with age, tenure, career stage, occupation, organizational context, and cultural conditions (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Rudolph et al., 2021). Thus, generation should not be treated as a fixed explanatory category that automatically produces uniform employee responses. A more cautious approach is to examine generation both as a comparison variable and as a potential boundary condition that may strengthen or weaken the association between POP and employee outcomes.

Accordingly, this study examines the relationships between POP and job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing, and self-efficacy among Generation X and Generation Y employees. It also tests whether the two cohorts differ in the main variables and whether generation moderates the relationships between POP and work outcomes. In doing so, the study integrates psychological, attitudinal, and behavioral outcomes and offers a broader empirical account of POP in the workplace.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Generation Theory, Generation X, and Generation Y

The concept of generation refers to a group of individuals born within a particular historical period and exposed to similar social, economic, technological, and cultural conditions. From a generational theory perspective, individuals are shaped not only by biological age but also by formative events and social transformations experienced during key periods of life (Mannheim, 1952). Members of the same cohort may therefore show similar tendencies in work values, sources of motivation, and organizational expectations. However, such similarities should be interpreted as empirical tendencies rather than as rigid categories that homogenize all members of a generation.

Generation X generally refers to individuals born between 1965 and 1980 and is frequently associated with independence, responsibility, job security, and accumulated work experience (Howe & Strauss, 1991; Tulgan, 2009). In organizational settings, Generation X employees are often described as relatively familiar with formal structures and hierarchical rules, and they are believed to value stability and task responsibility (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Still, the assumption that Generation X employees are necessarily more resilient to organizational adversity is an oversimplification, because position, tenure, industry, and organizational climate may also shape their work attitudes.

Generation Y, often referred to as Millennials, includes employees born between 1981 and 1996 in the operational classification used in this study. This boundary is consistent with widely used generational definitions that distinguish Millennials from Generation Z, which begins in 1997 (Dimock, 2019), and it is also compatible with applied generational research in organizational settings (Twenge et al., 2010). Generation Y employees are generally described as placing greater emphasis on individual development, career advancement, feedback, flexibility, and meaningful work (Ng et al., 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). Their stronger familiarity with digital technologies also makes cyberloafing particularly relevant in generationally oriented workplace research.

Although prior research suggests that Generation X and Generation Y employees may differ in work values and expectations, the size and consistency of these differences remain debated (Costanza et al., 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011). For this reason, the present study treats generation as an empirically testable comparison variable rather than as a deterministic causal mechanism. This approach allows the study to evaluate whether meaningful differences exist between the two cohorts in POP and work outcomes without assuming that such differences are universal or context-free.

### 2.2. Perceived Organizational Politics

Perceived organizational politics refers to employees' judgments about the extent to which organizational decisions, resource allocation, promotion and reward systems, performance evaluations, and interpersonal relations are shaped by fairness, transparency, and objective criteria (Ferris et al., 1989; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). In organizations perceived as highly political,

employees may believe that formal rules and merit-based principles are weakened and that outcomes are influenced by personal interests, power relations, and informal connections (Pfeffer, 1981; Vigoda, 2000).

The effects of POP are closely related to how employees interpret organizational events. When decisions are perceived as unpredictable or unfair, employees may view the work environment as threatening and difficult to control. Such perceptions can increase strain, reduce positive attitudes toward the job, and foster withdrawal-oriented responses. Meta-analytic evidence has shown that POP is associated with a wide range of employee attitudes, psychological strain, and workplace behaviors (Chang et al., 2009; Miller et al., 2008).

POP may also influence employees' personal resources. In political work environments, employees may question whether competence and effort are sufficient for success. When employees believe that outcomes depend more on informal influence than on performance, their sense of personal effectiveness may weaken. POP should therefore be understood as a broader organizational context variable that affects not only work attitudes but also employees' beliefs about their own capacity to succeed (Harris et al., 2007; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

### **2.3. Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, Cyberloafing, and Self-Efficacy**

Job stress refers to psychological strain that arises when employees perceive workplace demands, role expectations, time pressure, or uncertainty as exceeding their available coping resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In politically perceived organizations, employees may feel that rules are inconsistently applied and that desired outcomes cannot be secured through effort alone. Such perceptions reduce control and predictability, two conditions that are central to the cognitive appraisal of stress.

Job satisfaction reflects employees' overall evaluation of their job, work conditions, and work experience (Locke, 1976; Spector, 1997). Employees are more likely to be satisfied when they perceive their organization as fair, supportive, and predictable. Conversely, when promotion, reward, and performance evaluation processes are perceived as political, positive job evaluations are likely to decline. Nevertheless, the strength of this relationship may vary across contexts, depending on how employees interpret or adapt to political behavior in their workplace.

Cyberloafing refers to the use of the internet or digital tools for personal, non-work-related purposes during working hours (Lim, 2002). This behavior should not be understood only as a matter of individual self-control; it may also reflect employees' perceptions of organizational fairness and reciprocity. Social exchange theory suggests that employees who feel unfairly treated may reduce their work-related contributions or engage in withdrawal behaviors (Blau, 1964). From this perspective, politically perceived environments may create a climate in which cyberloafing becomes more likely.

The spread of digital technologies has made cyberloafing a more visible and complex workplace behavior. Some research suggests that brief digital breaks may support recovery and mental replenishment, whereas excessive or uncontrolled cyberloafing can undermine time management and productivity (Koay & Soh, 2019; Lim & Chen, 2012). The managerial issue, therefore, is not merely to prohibit digital use but to create fair and trust-based work environments in which digital behavior is governed by clear and legitimate expectations.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in the ability to perform tasks and cope successfully with difficulties (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Employees with stronger self-efficacy tend to show greater persistence, resilience, and confidence in their capacity to influence work outcomes

(Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). In contrast, politically perceived environments may weaken self-efficacy by signaling that competence and effort are not sufficient for success.

## 2.4. Development of Hypotheses and Research Model

The hypotheses were developed by conceptualizing POP as employees' appraisal of organizational processes in terms of fairness, transparency, and objectivity. Ferris et al. (1989) and Kacmar and Ferris (1991) emphasized that organizational politics involves the interpretation of decision processes through personal interests, power relations, and informal influence. As POP increases, employees may perceive the work environment as less predictable and may believe that promotion, performance evaluation, and resource allocation depend more on political behavior than on merit. POP is therefore expected to shape employees' psychological reactions, work attitudes, and workplace behaviors (Chang et al., 2009; Miller et al., 2008; Vigoda, 2000).

The relationship between POP and job stress can be explained through uncertainty and reduced control. According to the cognitive appraisal approach, stress increases when individuals interpret work demands as threatening and as exceeding their coping resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In highly political environments, employees may experience stronger stress because they believe that rules are applied inconsistently and that their efforts will not be rewarded objectively. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was developed:

H1: Perceived organizational politics is positively and significantly associated with job stress.

Job satisfaction is a core work attitude that captures employees' affective and evaluative orientation toward their job (Locke, 1976; Spector, 1997). When POP increases, employees may perceive promotion, reward, and evaluation systems as less fair and less transparent. Prior studies indicate that POP is generally associated with unfavorable employee attitudes (Chang et al., 2009; Cropanzano et al., 2001; Miller et al., 2008; Vigoda, 2000). Based on this reasoning, the second hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H2: Perceived organizational politics is negatively and significantly associated with job satisfaction.

Cyberloafing may be interpreted as a behavioral response to the work environment. Employees who perceive the organization as unfair or politically driven may reduce their level of contribution or disengage through non-work-related digital activities (Askew et al., 2014; Blanchard & Henle, 2008; Koay & Soh, 2019; Lim, 2002). Drawing on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), the following hypothesis was developed:

H3: Perceived organizational politics is positively and significantly associated with cyberloafing behavior.

The relationship between POP and self-efficacy can be understood through perceived control and personal effectiveness. In political environments, employees may believe that performance outcomes are not determined by competence or effort. Such a perception can weaken the belief that one can successfully influence work-related outcomes. Because self-efficacy is grounded in beliefs about personal capability and control, the following hypothesis was developed:

H4: Perceived organizational politics is negatively and significantly associated with self-efficacy.

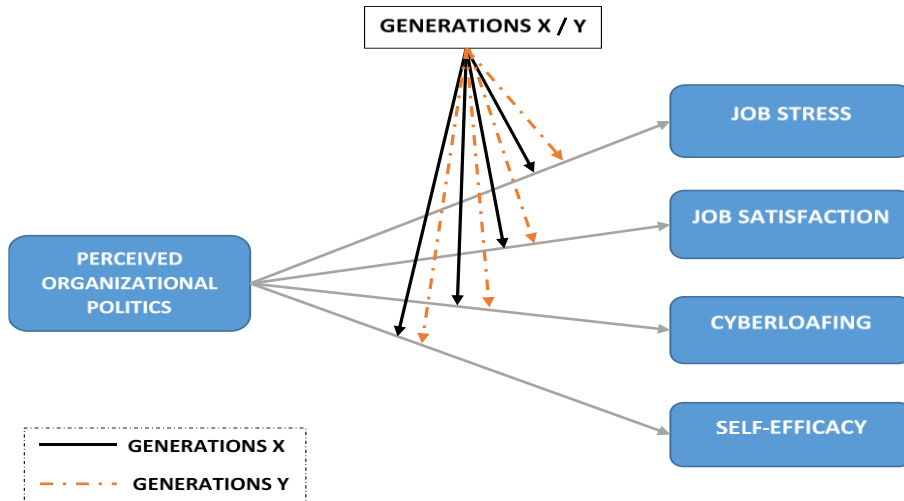
Generation was included to examine whether employees from Generation X and Generation Y differ in POP and work outcomes. Although prior literature identifies potential generational differences in work values, it also cautions against treating these differences as universal or fixed (Costanza et al., 2012; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Rudolph et al., 2021).

Accordingly, H5a–H5e propose that Generation X and Generation Y employees differ significantly in POP, job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing, and self-efficacy.

The study also examines whether generation moderates the relationship between POP and work outcomes. Generation X employees may interpret political environments through the lens of stability, organizational norms, and long-term employment, whereas Generation Y employees may react more strongly when political climates appear to restrict feedback, development, fairness, or career progress (Deal et al., 2010; Ng et al., 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). Therefore, H6a–H6d propose that generation moderates the relationships between POP and job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing, and self-efficacy.

Finally, gender, marital status, and tenure were examined as supplementary group comparison variables outside the main research model. These variables may shape employees' work experiences, career stage, and evaluations of the organizational environment. Therefore, H7 proposes that the study variables differ by gender, H8 proposes differences by marital status, and H9 proposes differences by length of employment. The research model is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Research Model**



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Research Design and Sample

A quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational, and comparative research design was adopted. A cross-sectional design enables the examination of relationships among variables at a specific point in time, but it does not allow strong causal inference (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). Therefore, the results were interpreted within a relational and explanatory framework. Ethical approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Gebze Technical University (Approval Date: April 30, 2026; Session/Decision No: 2026/08-02).

The sample consisted of 312 white-collar employees working in manufacturing firms in Istanbul and Kocaeli, Türkiye. The inclusion criteria were being a white-collar employee, actively participating in working life, and falling within the age or birth-year ranges used to classify Generation X and Generation Y. Data were collected voluntarily through a structured online questionnaire. A convenience sampling method was used because participation depended on

accessibility and voluntary response from white-collar employees in manufacturing firms. Of the participants, 123 were classified as Generation X and 189 as Generation Y.

Generational classification was based on the age or birth-year information reported by participants. Participants coded as categories 1 and 2 in the dataset were classified as Generation Y, whereas participants coded as categories 3 and 4 were classified as Generation X. Thus, Generation Y represents employees born between 1981 and 1996, and Generation X represents employees born between 1965 and 1980. These boundaries were used as operational classifications aligned with the structure of the dataset and should not be interpreted as absolute or deterministic cohort divisions.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Research Sample**

Variable	Category	Overall n (%)	Generation X n (%)	Generation Y n (%)
Gender	Male	168 (53.8)	79 (64.2)	89 (47.1)
	Female	144 (46.2)	44 (35.8)	100 (52.9)
Marital status	Single	117 (37.5)	7 (5.7)	110 (58.2)
	Married	195 (62.5)	116 (94.3)	79 (41.8)
Length of employment	1-5 years	77 (24.7)	0 (0.0)	77 (40.7)
	6-10 years	74 (23.7)	0 (0.0)	74 (39.2)
	11-15 years	59 (18.9)	24 (19.5)	35 (18.5)
	16 years and above	102 (32.7)	99 (80.5)	3 (1.6)

### 3.2. Measurement Instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of scales with established use in the literature. The first section included demographic questions on gender, marital status, generation or age group, and length of employment. The second section measured perceived organizational politics, job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing behavior, and general self-efficacy. All scale items were rated on a five-point Likert-type response format, with higher scores indicating higher levels of the relevant construct. The questionnaire was administered in Turkish. Previously validated Turkish forms were used where available; for items originally developed in English, semantic equivalence was reviewed through a forward-translation and back-translation procedure, a commonly used technique for cross-cultural research instrument adaptation (Brislin, 1970), before data collection.

Perceived organizational politics was measured with the 12-item scale developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997). The scale assesses perceptions of political behavior, self-interest-oriented relationships, unfair practices, and informal influence in organizational decision-making. A sample item is: "Employees in this organization engage in various political behaviors to protect their own interests."

Job stress was measured with the 7-item scale developed by House and Rizzo (1972) and adapted to the Turkish context by Efeoğlu (2006). The scale captures psychological strain related to workload, role ambiguity, time pressure, job responsibility, and working conditions. A sample item is: “Issues related to my job create a considerable amount of stress for me.”

Job satisfaction was assessed with the 5-item short form originally developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) and shortened by Yoon and Thye (2002). The scale measures employees’ overall satisfaction with their jobs and positive evaluations of their work. A sample item is: “Overall, I am satisfied with my job.”

Cyberloafing was measured with the 14-item scale developed by Örucü and Yıldız (2014), based on the work of Lim (2002), Blanchard and Henle (2008), and Özkalp et al. (2012). The scale assesses the frequency of using the internet and digital tools for personal purposes during working hours, including behaviors such as checking personal e-mail, using social media, online shopping, and accessing entertainment content.

Self-efficacy was measured with the 10-item General Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Schwarzer, Mueller, and Greenglass (1999). The scale captures general perceived self-efficacy rather than job-specific or task-specific occupational self-efficacy; therefore, it assesses individuals’ broad confidence in dealing with difficulties, solving problems, and achieving goals across situations. A sample item is: “When I encounter difficult situations, I believe that I can find solutions.”

### 3.3. Data Analysis

Reliability analysis and exploratory factor analysis were conducted in the first stage of data analysis. The suitability of the dataset for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett’s test of sphericity. Descriptive statistics, skewness-kurtosis values, and normality assumptions were then examined. Because skewness and kurtosis values were generally within the  $\pm 2$  range, the distributions were considered acceptable for parametric analyses (George & Mallery, 2010; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014).

Relationships among the variables were examined using Pearson correlation analysis. Simple regression analyses were conducted to test the relationships between POP and work outcomes, with POP specified as the focal predictor and job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing, and self-efficacy specified as outcome variables. Independent samples t-tests and Mann-Whitney U tests were used together to evaluate differences between Generation X and Generation Y. For the moderation analyses, POP was mean-centered, generation was dummy-coded as 0 = Generation X and 1 = Generation Y, and the interaction term was computed by multiplying the centered POP score by the Generation Y dummy variable ( $POP \times Generation Y$ ). The interaction term was entered into regression models together with the main effects of POP and generation. Supplementary analyses were also conducted for gender, marital status, and length of employment.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Factor Analysis Results

Table 2 presents the reliability and exploratory factor analysis results. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ranged from .899 to .967, exceeding the .70 threshold commonly accepted for internal consistency in social science research (Nunnally, 1978). The KMO value of .926 and the significant Bartlett’s test result,  $\chi^2 (1128) = 15508.021, p < .001$ , indicate that the data were

suitable for factor analysis. The total explained variance was 69.189%, supporting the adequacy of the measurement structure for subsequent analyses.

**Table 2. Reliability and Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of the Scales**

Scale	Number of Items	Factor Loading Range	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Perceived Organizational Politics	12	.463-.789	.927
Job Stress	7	.446-.727	.899
Job Satisfaction	5	.760-.816	.967
Cyberloafing	14	.402-.836	.922
Self-Efficacy	10	.611-.870	.948
Overall factor solution	—	KMO = .926; Bartlett's $\chi^2(1128) = 15508.021, p < .001$	Total variance explained = 69.189%

*KMO = Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure;  $\chi^2 =$  Bartlett's test of sphericity.*

#### 4.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 3 reports the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables. POP is positively and strongly correlated with job stress ( $r = .692, p < .01$ ). It is negatively correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = -.659, p < .01$ ) and self-efficacy ( $r = -.500, p < .01$ ), and positively but weakly correlated with cyberloafing ( $r = .114, p < .05$ ). These findings suggest that POP is more closely related to psychological and attitudinal outcomes than to cyberloafing in this sample.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation Matrix**

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Perceived Organizational Politics	2.69	0.74	—			
Job Stress	3.09	0.83	.692**	—		
Job Satisfaction	3.61	1.00	-.659**	-.700**	—	
Cyberloafing	1.97	0.66	.114*	.060	.150**	—
Self-Efficacy	4.07	0.58	-.500**	-.240**	.480**	-.090

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

#### 4.3. Regression Analyses

Table 4 presents the simple regression results. POP positively and significantly predicts job stress ( $B = .77, p < .001, R^2 = .479$ ), indicating a strong explanatory role for political perceptions in employee stress. POP also negatively and significantly predicts job satisfaction ( $B = -.89, p < .001, R^2 = .434$ ) and self-efficacy ( $B = -.39, p < .001, R^2 = .250$ ). The effect of POP on cyberloafing is positive and statistically significant, but the explained variance is very small ( $B = .10, p = .045, R^2 = .013$ ); therefore, this result should be interpreted as a weak but significant association rather than as a strong explanatory effect.

**Table 4. Results of Simple Regression Analyses on the Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Politics and Work Outcomes**

Dependent Variable	B	t	p	F	Model p	R <sup>2</sup>	Result
Job Stress	.77	16.874	<.001	284.530	<.001	.479	Supported
Job Satisfaction	-.89	-15.432	<.001	238.042	<.001	.434	Supported

Dependent Variable	B	t	p	F	Model p	R <sup>2</sup>	Result
Cyberloafing	.10	2.011	.045	4.052	.045	.013	Supported (weak effect)
Self-Efficacy	-.39	-10.172	<.001	103.491	<.001	.250	Supported

POP = perceived organizational politics; R<sup>2</sup> = explained variance.

#### 4.4. Generational Interaction and Differences Between Generations

To test the moderating role of generation, POP was treated as the focal independent variable, generation was coded as a dummy variable (0 = Generation X; 1 = Generation Y), and a mean-centered POP × Generation Y interaction term was included in the regression models. As shown in Table 5, generation does not significantly moderate the relationships between POP and job stress, job satisfaction, or cyberloafing. However, the interaction is significant for self-efficacy (B = -.25, SE = .08, 95% CI [-.40, -.10], p = .002). This finding indicates that the negative relationship between POP and self-efficacy is stronger among Generation Y employees than among Generation X employees.

**Table 5. Generation × Perceived Organizational Politics Interaction Tests**

Dependent Variable	B (POP × Gen Y)	SE	95% CI	t	p	F	R <sup>2</sup>	Result
Job Stress	.13	.09	[-.05, .31]	1.40	.162	49.32	.492	Not supported
Job Satisfaction	-.14	.12	[-.38, .10]	-1.17	.244	42.88	.458	Not supported
Cyberloafing	-.08	.10	[-.27, .11]	-0.84	.399	11.66	.187	Not supported
Self-Efficacy	-.25	.08	[-.40, -.10]	-3.18	.002	20.16	.284	Supported

Generation X was treated as the reference category; Generation Y was coded as the comparison category. POP was mean-centered before the interaction term was computed. SE = standard error; CI = 95% confidence interval.

Table 6 presents the mean comparisons between Generation X and Generation Y employees. No significant differences are found for POP, job stress, or self-efficacy. In contrast, Generation Y employees report significantly higher job satisfaction and cyberloafing than Generation X employees. The cyberloafing difference is consistent with the possibility that Generation Y employees' stronger familiarity with digital technologies may make non-work-related digital behavior more frequent; however, this interpretation should be treated as contextual rather than deterministic.

**Table 6. Difference Analyses for Generation X and Generation Y**

Variable	Gen X Mean ± SD	Gen Y Mean ± SD	t-test p	MW p	Effect Size	Result
Perceived Organizational Politics	2.71 ± 0.74	2.68 ± 0.74	.686	.510	d = 0.05	Not supported
Job Stress	3.06 ± 0.84	3.10 ± 0.82	.682	.597	d = -0.05	Not supported
Job Satisfaction	3.43 ± 1.03	3.73 ± 0.96	.012	.004	d = -0.30	Supported Y > X
Cyberloafing	1.72 ± 0.55	2.14 ± 0.67	<.001	<.001	d = -0.66	Supported Y > X
Self-Efficacy	4.04 ± 0.52	4.09 ± 0.62	.462	.181	d = -0.08	Not supported

MW = Mann-Whitney U test; d = Cohen's d.

#### 4.5. Supplementary Findings and Hypothesis Results

Table 7 summarizes the hypothesis testing results. Supplementary analyses show that the study variables do not differ significantly by gender within either generation. Marital status comparisons reveal significant differences in job stress, job satisfaction, and cyberloafing among Generation Y employees, whereas only cyberloafing differs significantly within Generation X. The latter finding should be interpreted cautiously because the number of single participants in Generation X is limited. Regarding length of employment, no significant differences are observed within Generation X, while stronger differences in job stress and more limited differences in job satisfaction and self-efficacy emerge within Generation Y.

**Table 7. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results**

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Statement	Main Finding	Result
H1	POP is positively related to job stress.	B = .77; p < .001; R <sup>2</sup> = .479	Supported
H2	POP is negatively related to job satisfaction.	B = -.89; p < .001; R <sup>2</sup> = .434	Supported
H3	POP is positively related to cyberloafing.	B = .10; p = .045; R <sup>2</sup> = .013	Supported; weak effect
H4	POP is negatively related to self-efficacy.	B = -.39; p < .001; R <sup>2</sup> = .250	Supported
H5a	Generations differ in terms of POP levels.	t p = .686; MW p = .510	Not supported
H5b	Generations differ in terms of job stress.	t p = .682; MW p = .597	Not supported
H5c	Generations differ in terms of job satisfaction.	Y > X; p = .012 / .004	Supported
H5d	Generations differ in terms of cyberloafing.	Y > X; p < .001	Supported
H5e	Generations differ in terms of self-efficacy.	t p = .462; MW p = .181	Not supported
H6a–H6c	Generation moderates the relationship between POP and stress, satisfaction, and cyberloafing.	Interaction p > .05	Not supported
H6d	Generation moderates the relationship between POP and self-efficacy.	B = -.25; p = .002	Supported
H7	Variables differ according to gender.	p > .05 in all comparisons	Not supported
H8	Variables differ according to marital status.	Significant differences in some variables	Partially supported
H9	Variables differ according to length of employment.	Limited/specific differences in Generation Y	Partially supported

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships between POP and job stress, job satisfaction, cyberloafing, and self-efficacy among Generation X and Generation Y employees. The findings show that POP is strongly and positively associated with job stress. This result is consistent with the argument that political work environments increase uncertainty, distrust, and loss of control (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Miller et al., 2008; Vigoda, 2000). When employees believe that decisions are shaped by power relations and personal interests, they are more likely to interpret the workplace as threatening and stressful.

The negative relationship between POP and job satisfaction is also theoretically meaningful. When promotion, reward, and performance evaluation practices are perceived as unfair or non-transparent, employees' positive evaluations of their jobs are likely to decline. This finding is consistent with prior evidence linking POP to less favorable employee attitudes (Chang et al., 2009; Harris et al., 2007). It also reinforces the importance of fairness, transparency, and reciprocity in sustaining job satisfaction.

The cyberloafing result requires a more cautious interpretation. Although POP significantly predicts cyberloafing, the explained variance is very low, indicating a weak but statistically significant relationship. This suggests that politically perceived environments may contribute to withdrawal-oriented digital behavior, but cyberloafing is not explained by POP alone. Digital work habits, workload, technology-use norms, supervision, and individual self-regulation may also shape this behavior (Koay & Soh, 2019; Lim, 2002; Lim & Chen, 2012).

A particularly notable finding is the negative relationship between POP and self-efficacy, together with the significant moderating role of generation in this relationship. In political organizational climates, employees may believe that their skills and efforts are not objectively recognized. Such a belief can weaken perceived personal effectiveness. The stronger negative association among Generation Y employees may reflect this cohort's stronger expectations for fair feedback, development opportunities, and objective career progression.

The generational comparison results show no significant differences between Generation X and Generation Y in POP, job stress, or self-efficacy. However, Generation Y employees report higher job satisfaction and cyberloafing. The job satisfaction result may reflect contextual features of the sample, whereas the cyberloafing result may be related to greater digital familiarity among Generation Y employees. Still, these findings should be interpreted carefully because apparent generational differences may also reflect age, tenure, career stage, working conditions, and the observed demographic imbalance between cohorts in marital status and length of employment (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Rudolph et al., 2021).

The study contributes to organizational behavior research by examining multiple consequences of POP within a single empirical framework. Rather than focusing on one outcome, it considers psychological strain, job attitude, digital withdrawal behavior, and personal efficacy together. In addition, examining generation both as a comparison variable and as a moderator responds to calls for a more cautious and evidence-based approach to generational research.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of fair, transparent, merit-based, and trust-oriented management practices. Managers should clarify the criteria used in promotion, reward, and performance evaluation decisions and communicate these criteria consistently. Because the self-efficacy of Generation Y employees appears to be more vulnerable to political climates, organizations should provide regular feedback, visible development opportunities, and objective career paths. Cyberloafing should also be managed through balanced

policies that combine clear expectations with attention to fairness, workload, and organizational trust.

This study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design prevents causal conclusions. Second, because the data were collected through self-report measures, common method bias may be a concern. Third, the use of convenience sampling and the focus on white-collar employees working in manufacturing firms in Istanbul and Kocaeli limit the generalizability of the findings to other sectors, regions, and blue-collar employees. Fourth, generation overlaps with age, tenure, and career stage. In addition, Generation X and Generation Y employees in this sample differ notably in marital status and length of employment, which makes it difficult to attribute all observed group differences solely to generational membership. Therefore, findings related to generational differences should be interpreted with caution.

Future research could use longitudinal designs to examine how POP shapes work outcomes over time. Multi-source data and diverse sectoral samples would also help clarify whether the observed relationships remain stable across organizational settings and cultural contexts. In particular, the moderation finding for self-efficacy suggests a promising direction for research on how political organizational environments influence employees' personal resources. Overall, the study demonstrates that POP is a consequential workplace experience that shapes not only employee attitudes but also behavioral responses and perceptions of personal capability.

#### STATEMENTS/DECLARATIONS

**Ethics Statement:** Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Gebze Technical University (Approval Date: April 30, 2026; Session/Decision No: 2026/08-02). In case of detection of a contrary situation, Journal of International Management Research and Applications has no responsibility and all responsibility belongs to the author (s) of the study.

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