The Mediating Role of Job Burnout in the Effect of Organizational Politics on Turnover Intention: A Study on City Center Hotels in Egypt

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Abstract

This study aimed at examining the mediating role of job burnout in the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention among employees of city center hotels in Egypt. The mixed-mode survey administration, combining paper and web-based self-administrated questionnaires, was used to collect the required data. The total number of collected questionnaires was 153, however only 140 of them were valid for the statistical analysis. The results revealed that organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on both turnover intention and job burnout. Moreover, job burnout was found to have a significant positive effect on turnover intention. Furthermore, the results pointed out that job burnout partially mediates the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention. Some managerial implications were presented regarding organizational politics, turnover and job burnout that could help hospitality practitioners minimizing such issues in their organizations.

Keywords: organizational politics, turnover intention, job burnout, city center hotels, Egypt.

1. Introduction

Organizational politics has witnessed an increasing interest by business management scholars over the last four decades. However, it is still an inevitable phenomenon that exists in all organizations (Arefin, Alam, Islam & Molasy, 2020; Yilmaz, 2014). The danger of organizational politics lies in its detrimental effects on

organizations and employees, as it leads the employees to perceive their workplace as unfair and unjust (Albloush, Ahmad, Yusoff & Mat, 2019). In addition, organizational politics has been found to have many determinantal effects on employees' job outcomes, such as employees' performance (Albloush et al., 2019; Umer & Salman, 2018), job satisfaction (Al Jisr, Beydoun & Mostapha, 2020; Chan & James, 2020; Labrague et al., 2017), organizational commitment (Umer & Salman, 2018; Utami, Bangun & Lantu, 2014; Yang, Pandey, Liao & Dobson, 2017), job burnout (Basar & Basim 2016; Labrague et al., 2017), and turnover intention (Al Jisr et al., 2020; Arefin et al., 2020; De Clercq, Fatima & Jahanzeb, 2021).

Almost all employees in all fields were exposed to political incidents and had to deal with (Kacmar and Carlson, 1997; Labrague et al., 2017). The case is not different in the hospitality industry, which is considered a breeding ground for organizational politics due to the limited resources (e.g., low salaries, limited promotions, inadequate training), and the unfair practices (e.g., unfair performance appraisal, favoritism) that are widespread in hotel sector. Such inadequate resources and unfair practices push employees to behave politically to serve and maximize their self-interests, which in turn increases the perception of organizational politics in the organization (Daskin & Tezer, 2012; Karatepe, Babakus & Yavas, 2012; Yilmaz, 2014). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of studies that investigate the organizational politics, its antecedents, and consequences in the hospitality industry (e.g., Arefin et al., 2020; Chan & James, 2020; Karatepe, Kim & Lee, 2019) especially in Egypt (e.g., Khairy, 2019). Thus, this study aimed at examining the effect of organizational politics on one of the major challenges that

face hospitality practitioners, which is turnover intention; the last step before the actual turnover (Mobley, 1977). The study also aimed at responding to the scholars' calls (e.g., Chang, Rosen, Siemieniec & Johnson, 2012; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010) for conducting studies to explore different mediators that could explain how and why organizational politics affects job-outcomes indirectly. Hence, it aimed at examining the mediating role of job burnout in the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention among employees of city center hotels in Egypt. Job burnout was chosen as a mediator, since it usually happens among employees who deal directly with guests, such as hospitality industry employees (Kim, Shin & Umbreit, 2007; Sowmya & Panchanatham, 2011; Walters & Raybould, 2007). Moreover, it is one of the consequences of organizational politics (Basar & Basim 2016; Labrague et al., 2017), and one of the antecedents of turnover intention (Lee & Shin, 2005; Wen, Zhou, Hu & Zhang, 2020; Yavas, Karatepe & Babakus, 2018).

The specific objectives of this study are to examine the following effects among employees of city center hotels in Egypt:

1. the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention,

2. the effect of organizational politics perception on job burnout,

3. the effect of job burnout on turnover intention, *and*

4. to investigate whether job burnout mediates the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Formulation

2.1 Organizational Politics

Organizational politics, which is defined as manipulative behaviors of individuals to influence other people in the organization, either directly or indirectly, through informal means to gain power, achieve personal goals or maximize self-interest on the expense of others, or even on the expense of the organization itself (Gallaghe & Laird, 2008; Witt, Andrews & Kacmar, 2000), was firstly presented in the academic literature by Burns (1961). He likened the organization to a microcosm of a country as cooperative systems assembled of the usable attributes of people. He also asserted that organizations are social systems in which, people always compete for advancement, and to do that they may make use of others. Such use of others in any competitive situation could be identified as a political behavior. Thereafter, the construct of organizational politics and its definitions have been studied (Table 1).

Accordingly, it is noticed that there are common elements among the definitions of organizational politics. Firstly, the main goal of organizational politics is to *obtain and maximize self-interests* (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey & Toth, 1997; Delle, 2013; Ferris, Russ & Fandt, 1989; Gallaghe & Laird, 2008; Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson & Anthony, 1999; Pfeffer, 1981; Poon, 2004; Rosen et al., 2009; Witt et al., 2000; Zhonghua & Chen, 2014) regardless of the well-being of others or the organization. Secondly, organizational politics is *attempts to influence* other members in the organization (Cropanzano et al., 1997; Drory, 1993; Ferris et al., 1989; Mayes & Allen, 1977; Poon, 2004; Rosen et al., 2009; Witt et al., 2000; Zhonghua & Chen, 2014), especially decision makers, who provide

rewards and promotions or those who can achieve the self-interests of the actor. Nevertheless, not all influence attempts relate to organizational politics. Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) differentiated between two uses of influence in organizations. They claimed that when people influence others, such as subordinates to improve their productivity and morale, the use of influence here is related to leadership. On the other hand, when people influence others, such as subordinates, colleagues or superiors to obtain self-interests, this use of influence is related to organizational politics. Thirdly, organizational politics is an *informal and divisive behavior* of individual or group that is not sanctioned by the organization (Delle, 2013; Drory, 1993; Dubrin, 2001; Gallaghe & Laird, 2008; Mayes & Allen, 1977; Mintzberg, 1983; Poon, 2004; Witt et al., 2000). Sometimes these behaviors are described as manipulative because they are geared to protect or develop individual's professional career when interests are conflicted. Finally, it is about *gaining power* (Dubrin, 2001; Pfeffer, 1981) in order to influence decision makers and to obtain and maximize self-interests as mentioned previously. According to Kumar and Ghadially (1989), people who practice organizational politics usually follow three overlapping strategies; (1) strategies for gaining power, (2) strategies for impressing and influencing bosses, and (3) strategies for career advancements.

2.1.1 Perception of Organizational Politics

Perception is the process of selecting, organizing and interpreting the sensory impressions that individuals feel (Robbins & Judge, 2013; Rong & Cao, 2015). People perceive organizational politics depending on their experience and judgement, and this perception may not be necessarily the

objective reality (Ferris et al., 1989). People who are negatively affected by organizational politics, perceive it as negative, whereas others who benefited from politics, perceive it as positive (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992).

Table 1: Definitions of Organizational Politics

Author(s)	Definition
Mayes & Allen (1977)	"The management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means".
Pfeffer (1981)	"Those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes".
Mintzberg (1983)	"Individual or group behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial, typically divisive, and above all, in the technical sense, illegitimate-sanctioned neither by formal authority, accepted ideology, nor certified expertise".
Ferris et al. (1989)	"The influence process which is geared towards maximizing self-interest".
Drory (1993)	"Behaviors that occur on an informal basis within an organization and involve intentional acts of influence that are designed to protect or enhance individuals' professional careers when conflicting courses of action are possible".
Cropanzano et al. (1997)	"Social influence attempts directed at those who can provide rewards that will help promote or protect the self-interests of the actor".
Kacmar et al. (1999)	"Actions by individuals, which are directed toward the goal of furthering their own self-interests without regard for the well-being of others or their organization".
Witt et al. (2000)	"Phenomena in which organizational members attempt either directly or indirectly to influence other members by means not sanctioned by formal standard operating procedures or informal norms, in an attempt to achieve personal or group objectives".
Dubrin (2001)	"Informal approaches to gaining power through means other than merit or luck".
Poon (2004)	"Those actions not officially approved by an organization taken to influence others to meet one's personal goals".
Gallaghe & Laird (2008)	"Selfish and manipulative behaviors of people within organizations who use unapproved means to achieve their goals at the expense of others or the organization. However, the self-interest of people could either be extended or short-term depending on the time or period of their goals".
Rosen, Harris & Kacmar (2009)	"Indulging in activities of influence with the intent of increasing one's or a group's interest".
Gull & Zaidi (2012)	"Activities that permit people in an organization to achieve goals without going through the appropriate channels".
Delle (2013)	"A behavior, formal or informal that is motivated by self-interest, executed with the sole purpose to satisfy individual interest now or in the future".
Zhonghua & Chen (2014)	"A social influence process in which organizational members engage in opportunistic behaviors with the purpose of maximizing their self-interest".

Accordingly, perception of organizational politics is described as individuals' observation about others self-interested activities and the workplace environment as political and unfair from their point of view (Ferris, Harrell-Cook & Dulebohn, 2000; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). In academic researches, perception of organizational politics is used as a measure of organizational politics, because organizational politics should be interpreted as a subjective evaluation not an objective one. In addition, people behave according to their perception of reality not reality itself. Although political behaviors may be objective and noticeable, perceptions of these behaviors vary substantially across people, situations and time (Aryee, Chen & Budhwar, 2004; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Gull & Zaidi, 2012; Hochwarter, Kacmar, Perrewé & Johnson, 2003; Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991; Yilmaz, 2014). Kacmar and Ferris (1991) generated three dimensions for perception of organizational politics as follows; (1) general political behavior, which explains the self-serving behaviors of individuals to gain valued outcomes, such as stabbing people in the back to look good in front of others; (2) go along to get ahead, which describes the lack of action by people, such as remain silent in order to get ahead and secure valued outcomes; and (3) pay and promotion policies, which describes how decision makers behave politically through unfair decisions or unclear policies, such as determining raises and promotions according to favoritism rather than merit.

2.1.2 Perception of Organizational Politics in Hotels

The hotel sector is characterized by discrimination due to the unfair actions that are practiced by hotel executives in employees' hiring, performance appraisal, promotion, and disciplinary procedures (Daskin & Tezer, 2012). Hotels, as any other organizations, are a place where some employees may engage in political behavior and get undeserved job opportunities (Yilmaz, 2014). This is because of some characteristics and unfair practices that are widespread in hotel sector, such as low salaries, limited promotions, inadequate training, shift patterns, unfair performance appraisal, seasonality, work-family conflict, favoritism, and high employees' turnover. Such characteristics and unfair practices increase the employees' tendencies to engage in political behaviors to serve, protect and maximize their self-interests, which in turn increases the perception of organizational politics among employees (Cleveland et al., 2007; Daskin and Tezer, 2012; Deery, 2008; Karatepe, et al., 2012; Karatepe & Uludag, 2008; Kong, Cheung & Zhang, 2010; Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ilhan & Buyruk, 2010; Poulston, 2008; Wan, 2010; Watson, 2008; Yilmaz, 2014). Moreover, employees who work in political workplace, where such characteristics and unfair practices are rampant, are prone to work-related strain (Ross, 2005).

2.1.3 Consequences of Organizational Politics

Organizational politics is harmful to the organization as it makes the employees feel that the workplace is unfair and unjust (Albloush et al., 2019). In turn, it leads to a lot of detrimental effects on organizations and employees. Several previous studies have been conducted in various sectors, including hospitality, emphasized the negative effects of organizational politics on both organizations and employees. These negative relationships mean that the higher the level of perceived organizational politics the lower the level of these outcomes. These outcomes include; *Job performance* (Abbas,

Raja, Darr & Bouckenooghe, 2014; Albloush et al., 2019; Arefin et al., 2020; Atinga, Domfeh, Kayi, Abuosi & Dzangi, 2014; Karadal & Arasli, 2009; Umer & Salman, 2018; Vigoda, 2000), *job satisfaction* (Abbas et al., 2014; Al Jisr et al., 2020; Atinga et al., 2014; Chan & James, 2020; Gull & Zaidi, 2012; Karadal & Arasli, 2009; Khalid & Ishaq, 2015; Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot, 2014; Labrague et al., 2017; Saleem, 2015; Vigoda, 2000; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010), *organizational commitment* (Atinga et al., 2014; Khalid & Ishaq, 2015; Umer & Salman, 2018; Utami et al., 2014; Vigoda, 2000; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010; Yang et al., 2017), *work engagement, innovative work behaviors* (Agarwal, 2016; James, 2021; Karatepe, 2013), *perceived organizational justice* (Aggarwal, Nobi, Mittal & Rastogi, 2021; Kaya, Aydin & Ayhan, 2016), *firm's ability to reach the market*, *firm's growth rate* (Garbuio & Lovallo, 2017), *organizational citizenship behavior* (Arefin et al., 2020), and *employees' proactive behavior* (Rasyid & Marta, 2020).

On the other hand, perception of organizational politics has been found to have a positive relationship with other work outcomes, as the higher the level of perceived organizational politics the higher the level of these outcomes. These work outcomes include; *psychological withdrawal behaviors* (Cropanzano et al., 1997), *organizational workplace deviance* (Haq, 2011), *job neglect* (Vigoda, 2000), *impression management behaviors* (Yilmaz, 2014), *moral disengagement, social loafing* (Erbaş, 2017)*, workplace victimization* (Amponsah-Tawiah & Annor, 2017), *job stress* (Daskin, 2013; Labrague et al., 2017; Landells & Albrecht, 2019; Poon, 2003; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010), *work–family conflict* (Arefin et al., 2020),

emotional exhaustion (Chan & James, 2020), *job burnout* (Advani, Jagdale, Garg & Kumar, 2005; Basar & Basim 2016; Huang, Chuang & Lin, 2003; Labrague et al., 2017; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010), and *turnover intention* (Abbas et al., 2014; Agarwal, 2016; Al Jisr et al., 2020; Arefin et al., 2020; Atinga et al., 2014; Basar & Basim 2016; Daskin & Tezer, 2012; De Clercq et al., 2021; Haq, 2011; Huang et al., 2003; Karatepe, 2013; Khalid & Ishaq, 2015; Labrague et al., 2017; Kaya et al., 2016).

2.2 Turnover Intention

Employee turnover represents a critical problem and a challenging issue to the hospitality industry, as it reached 86.3% in 2021 as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022). High turnover has detrimental effects on employees' job performance and can damage the consistency of service, which is the key to customer retention. In addition, employee turnover can cost significant losses to the organization (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017; James, 2011; McGinley, Hanks & Line, 2017; Yao, Qiu & Wei, 2019). Moreover, the level of employee turnover is considered among the important factors that define the success of the organization, because the less the turnover rate the superior the hotel is among the competitors (Akova, Cetin & Cifci, 2015). Thus, employee turnover has been a concern of the hospitality practitioners and academia. According to Mobley (1977), the intention to leave is the last step before the actual turnover. Also, a study conducted on the hospitality industry revealed that turnover intention is positively related to actual turnover (Afsar, Shahjehan & Shah, 2018). Hence, turnover intention should be addressed at early stages (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

The construct of turnover intention is used to describe the employee's intent and willingness to voluntarily leave his current organization in the near future, as soon as a new suitable opportunity is found outside the organization (George & Wallio, 2017; Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016; Yavas et al., 2018). This is because when employees are dissatisfied with their job for any reason, their desire to stay in the organization starts to decline (Yavas et al., 2018). Having a high turnover intention among employees leads to a negative perception about the management, as it indicates that employees feel uncomfortable and stressed in their working environment (Asgharian, Anvari, Ahmad & Tehrani, 2015). In addition, the employees who intent to leave their current job may direct their efforts to find a new one, in turn, they may not give enough attention to their current responsibilities (Vigoda, 2000). Therefore, turnover intention may have as much negative effect as actual turnover (Kaya et al., 2016). In order to properly manage voluntary turnover, organizations' management need to understand and determine the factors that influence it at early stage in an attempt to prevent it and reduce its effects on the organization (Attiah & AbouDahab, 2017; McGinley et al., 2017; Yao et al., 2019).

Many studies in several disciplines have been conducted to find out various factors that influence turnover intention. Some of these factors have negative relationship with turnover intention; as the higher the level of these factors the lower the level of turnover intention. These factors may include; *job satisfaction* (Asgharian et al., 2015; Atef, El Leithy & Al-Kalyoubi, 2017; Chan & James, 2020; Kim, Im & Hwang, 2015; Jung & yoon, 2017; Samengon et al., 2020; Tziner, Rabenu, Radomski & Belkin, 2015),

organizational support (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017), *organizational justice* (George & Wallio, 2017), *organizational commitment* (Atef et al., 2017; Fernet, Tre´panier, Demers & Austin, 2017; Kim et al., 2015; Samengon et al., 2020), *empowerment, nonmonetary recognition, competency development, fair organizational rewards, information-sharing practices* (Paré & Tremblay, 2007), *social support, job autonomy* (Kim & Stoner, 2008), *emotional intelligence* (Asad, Saleem & Durrani, 2014), *engagement* (Agarwal, 2016; Karatepe, 2013; Lee & Shin, 2005; Lin & Liu, 2015), *working environment, performance appraisal* (Hossain, Roy & Das, 2017), *perceptions of fellow workers' warmth and competence* (Abd El-Aty & Deraz, 2018; Bufquin, DiPietro, Orlowski & Partlow, 2017; Yang, Wan & Fu, 2012), *financial and non-financial rewards* (Akgunduz, Gok & Alkan, 2019; Cao, Chen & Song, 2013; Gieter & Hofmans, 2015), *co-worker trust* (Su, 2014), *trust in supervisor*, and *on-the-job embeddedness* (Afsar et al., 2018; Ampofo & Karatepe, 2021).

On the other hand, some factors were found to have positive relationship with turnover intention; as the higher the level of these factors the higher the level of turnover intention. These factors may include; *job burnout* (Ahmad & Afgan, 2016; Back, Hyun, Jeung & Chang, 2020; Basar & Basim 2016; Lee & Shin, 2005; Wen et al., 2020; Yavas et al., 2018), *perception of organizational politics* (Al Jisr et al., 2020; Arefin et al., 2020; Daskin & Tezer, 2012; De Clercq et al., 2021; Karatepe, 2013; Labrague, et al., 2017), *interpersonal conflict* (Haq, 2011), *role conflict* (Kim et al., 2015), *work-family conflict* (Chen, Ayoun & Eyoun, 2018; Karatepe & Baddar, 2006; Karatepe & Sokmen, 2006), *work-*

leisure conflict (Mansour & Tremblay, 2016), *job stress* (Ahmad & Afgan, 2016; Samengon et al., 2020; Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016; Wen et al., 2020), *emotional labor* (Back et al., 2020), and *emotional exhaustion* (Chan & James, 2020).

2.3 Job Burnout

Job burnout is defined as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that often happens as a psychological reaction to long-lasting stressors that face the employees at work (Karatepe et al., 2012; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The burnout phenomenon was firstly described by Greene (1961) in his novel 'A Burnt Out Case'. The novel tells the story of a distressed architect, who leaves his job and withdraws to the African jungle and diagnosed as burnt-out case. The phenomenon was also described in many other fictional and nonfictional literatures that revolved around excessive fatigue and losing passion at work. Later on, scientific researchers started to conduct systematic studies of job burnout (Maslach, 2003; Maslach et al., 2001). The initial studies of job burnout were conducted in the 1970s by Freudenberger (1974), a consulting psychiatrist in a free clinic, and Maslach (1976), a social psychological researcher who was interested in studying workplace emotions.

Job burnout is considered the biggest occupational hazard of 21st century as it is contagious and transfers rapidly from one to another within the organization (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). In addition, when employees experience job burnout, they become emotionally exhausted and unable to provide effective and meaningful contributions to their work and

organizations (Schaufeli, Leiter & Maslach, 2009). Job burnout is a form of occupational stress and represents a response to persistent emotional and interpersonal stressors at work. Moreover, it is a worldwide social problem occurs among many occupations especially human services ones. This is because human services employees often spend a lot of time dealing with people. This continues interaction, especially when solving problems, puts them in a chronic stress that can drain their emotions and cause burnout (Maslach, 2003; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Thus, burnout develops gradually and could be a metaphor for energy draining. Nevertheless, job burnout is not exclusively occurred among human services occupations, as almost all occupations have some interpersonal contact (Maslach, 2003; Schaufeli et al., 2009). In hospitality industry, job burnout is considered an issue of importance. This is because hospitality industry is a labor-intensive industry and its work involves direct contact among employees and guests. In addition, the limited resources and the unfair practices that are widespread in hospitality industry serve as stressors that could push to undesirable outcomes, such as organizational politics, which, in turn, lead to job burnout (Kuruüzüm, Anafarta & Irmak, 2008).

2.3.1 Multidimensional Model of Job Burnout

Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed a multidimensional model for job burnout. The model consisted of three dimensions namely; (1) Emotional Exhaustion, (2) Depersonalization, and (3) Reduced Personal Accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is the core dimension and the most obvious aspect of the burnout syndrome and represents the strain dimension jon of burnout. It refers to feelings of

strain, chronic fatigue, and emotional depletion resulting from overtaxing work. Evidence suggests that emotional exhaustion antecedes the occurrence of depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. Furthermore, some stressors affect the individual's burnout through this dimension (Nuallaong, 2013). Regarding depersonalization, it represents the interpersonal context dimension in burnout. It refers to employee attempt to put distance between himself and service recipients and considering them impersonal objects. As for reduced personal accomplishment, it represents a self-evaluation dimension of burnout. It refers to the feeling of insufficiency and the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively (Maslach et al., 2001).

The most widely used tool to measure the three dimensions of job burnout is Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) that developed originally by Maslach and Jackson (1981). It is the common instrument that used internationally in the studies of job burnout (Maslach, 2003). The first version of MBI is the MBI-Human Services Survey that was originally designed for people who work in human services and health care jobs (Maslach, 2003; Maslach et al, 2001). Then, Maslash and her colleagues developed a second version of MBI that was slightly revised version for people who work in educational occupations (the MBI-Educators Survey). Recently, due to the increasing interest in burnout within occupations that are not clearly interacted with people, Maslash and her colleagues developed a general version of MBI to be used by any occupation namely; the MBI-General Survey (Maslach, 2003; Maslach et al, 2001). The MBI consists of 22 items that are written in a form of statements about one's feelings or attitudes; e.g., "I feel burned out

from my work" (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). The 22 items are divided into three subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. These titles were applied for the first two versions of MBI to reflect the focus on occupations where workers had a high interaction with others, such as clients, patients, and students. While in the MBI-General Survey, the three subscales of job burnout are conceptualized slightly broader and become: exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy (Maslach et al, 2001).

Other burnout instruments were developed to assess job burnout, such as the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen & Christensen, 2005), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou & Kantas, 2002), and the Spanish Burnout Inventory (Gil-Monte & Olivares Faúndez 2011). However, the MBI continues to be the gold standard to measure job burnout because the concept of job burnout agrees with the MBI, and vice versa (Milićević-Kalašić, 2013; Schaufeli et al., 2009).

2.3.2 Risk Factors for Job Burnout

Risk factors are causes that increase the employees chance of experiencing job burnout (Aydemir & Icelli, 2013). These risk factors are divided into two groups; individual factors and situational factors (Maslach et al., 2001). Individual factors are related to the person itself, whereas situational risk factors are external to the individual and related to the job characteristics and working conditions (Aydemir & Icelli, 2013). According to Maslach et al. (2001), individual factors include demographic characteristics (e.g., age, marital status and level of education) and personality characteristics (e.g.,

hardiness, locus of control, neuroticism and perfectionism). On the other hand, situational factors include such factors as work overload, role conflict, role ambiguity (Maslach et al., 2001), breakdown of the community, insufficient reward, involvement with people (Aydemir & Icelli, 2013), and organizational politics (Basar & Basim 2016; Huang et al., 2003; Labrague et al., 2017; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010).

2.3.3   Consequences of Job Burnout

Previous studies revealed that job burnout increases healthcare costs that lead to substantial loss of workdays each year (Gabriel & Liimatainen, 2000). In addition, it has harmful and undesirable consequences on many job outcomes. Some of these outcomes have negative relationship with job burnout as the higher the level of burnout the lower the level of these outcomes. These variables may include; *job satisfaction* (Low, Cravens, Grant & Moncrief, 2001; Tziner et al., 2015), *job performance* (Kuruüzüm et al., 2008; Low et al., 2001), *employee engagement* (Lee & Shin, 2005), *organizational citizenship behaviors* (Liang, 2012), and *organizational commitment* (Ciftcioglu, 2011). On the other hand, job burnout has been found to have a positive relationship with other work outcomes, as the higher the level of burnout the higher the level of these outcomes. These outcomes may include; *absenteeism* (Bährer-Kohler, 2013; Kuruüzüm et al., 2008)*, familial disharmony* (Kuruüzüm et al., 2008), *depression* (Carod-Artal & Vázquez-Cabrera, 2013; Shani & Pizam, 2009), and *turnover intention* (Ahmad & Afgan, 2016; Back et al., 2020; Basar & Basim 2016; Lin & Liu, 2015; Lu & Gursoy, 2016; Scanlan & Still, 2013; Wen et al., 2020; Yavas et al., 2018).

2.4 Hypotheses Formulation

Based on literature review, turnover intention was found to be one of the detrimental effects of organizational politics. In addition, it is a strong predictor of actual turnover which is a considerable problem in the hospitality industry. Moreover, there were many calls for conducting studies that investigate how and why organizational politics affects job-outcomes through indirect relationships instead of just examining the possibility of a direct effect. Therefore, there is a need to assess the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention in hotels, and to investigate how this effect occurs. Since job burnout is one of organizational politics consequences, and it is also one of the of turnover intention antecedents; thus, it could be a mediator in the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention.

The study hypotheses could be formulated as follows:

H1. Employees' organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on their turnover intention.

H2. Employees' organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on their job burnout.

H3. Employees' job burnout has a significant positive effect on their turnover intention.

H4. Job burnout mediates the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention.

3. Methods

3.1 Sample Selection and Data Collection

The target population of the study was the employees of city center hotels in Egypt. Thus, the study focused on four- and five-star hotels in Alexandria and Cairo. Four- and five-star hotels were chosen as the majority of them are managed by chains, either international or domestic, and considered full-service hotels. This type of hotels provides a wide range of services that require a large number of skilled staff who should be retained to maintain the service level and the chain image. Thus, these hotels would pay great attention to the antecedents that may affect employees' retention such as organizational politics. Moreover, Alexandria and Cairo were chosen as they have the largest number of city center hotels in comparison to other cities.

Since there were no official mean to know the exact total number of hotels' employees, the researchers depended on the number of four- and five-star hotels in Alexandria and Cairo to define the study population. According to the official website of the Egyptian Hotel Association (EHA), the total number of the four- and five-star hotels in Alexandria and Cairo was 16 and 32, respectively (EHA, 2022). In Alexandria, all hotels were included in the sample due to their small number. In proportion to Alexandria hotels, the numbers of Cairo hotels were selected. Thus, a simple random sample of 16 four- and five-star hotels was selected from Cairo hotels to be contacted. In conclusion, the sample was consisted of 32 hotels.

Mixed-mode survey administration, that combined paper and web-based self-administrated questionnaires (Bryman, 2012), was used to collect the required data for the study. The distributed questionnaire was translated into Arabic language to be easily understood by employees at all levels. The research team contacted human resource managers of the selected hotels to set appointments. Nine hotels refused to participate in the study and the other 23 hotels agreed to distribute the questionnaire among their employees. During the meetings, the team explained the purpose of the study and assured the confidentiality of collected data. In addition, human resource managers were asked to randomly distribute 10 copies of the questionnaire among employees after explaining the purpose of the study. The total number of collected questionnaires were 153, out of which only 140 were valid for statistical analysis.

3.2 Measures

The questionnaire was designed in four sections. The first section aimed at collecting the demographic data of the respondent. The second section aimed at measuring the employees' perception of organizational politics. A scale developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997) was adapted to measure organizational politics perception. In addition, some statements were added from the scale developed by Ferris and Kacmar (1992). All statements were measured using 5-point Likert scale, as (5) indicating "strongly agree". The third section of the questionnaire aimed at measuring the employees' turnover intention. A scale developed by Vigoda (2000) was adapted to measure the employees' turnover intention. The scale's statements were measured using 5-point Likert scale, as (5) indicating "strongly agree". The final section aimed at measuring the employees' job burnout. A scale developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) was adapted to measure the employees' burnout. The scale's statements were measured using 5-point Likert scale, with (1) indicating "never", while (5) indicating "always".

Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the questionnaire reliability and to assess the internal consistency of its items. As shown in Table 2, Cronbach's Alpha values for questionnaire constructs are higher than 0.7 which indicates a good level of reliability.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha for Questionnaire Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha
Organizational Politics Perception	.862
Turnover Intention	.875
Job Burnout	.872
All Constructs	**.942**

To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, a draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by human resource managers of two four- and five-star hotels in Alexandria. Subsequently, another draft of the questionnaire was piloted to a sample of ten employees working in a five-star hotel in Alexandria to ensure the face validity and the approximate time spent in responding to the questionnaire (ten minutes). All comments that were obtained at the pre-testing stage were taken into consideration; as some statements were rephrased to be clearer.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

SPSS (v. 25) was used to analyze the study data. Firstly, the frequencies and percentages of respondents' profile items were calculated. Secondly, the linear regression analysis and PROCESS macro for SPSS and SAS (v. 3.5) were used to test study hypotheses.

4. Results

4.1 Respondents' Profile

Table 3 illustrates the respondents' profile.

Table 3: Respondents' Profile (n=140)

Variables	Freq.	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	91	65.0
Female	49	35.0
Age		
20 to less than 30 years	56	40.0
30 to less than 40 years	56	40.0
40 to 50 years	21	15.0
Older than 50 years	7	5.0
Marital Status		
Married	68	48.6
Not Married	72	51.4
Educational Level		
M.Sc.	4	2.9
Bachelor	105	75.0
High School	31	22.1
Tenure		
less than 1 year	15	10.7
1 to less than 5 years	69	49.3
5 to 10 years	28	20.0
More than 10 years	28	20.0

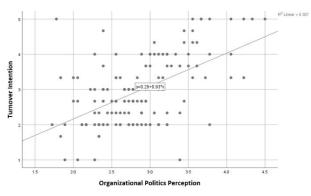*Note.* (n) refers to the number of respondents

The respondents' profiles include age, gender, marital status, educational level, and tenure. It can be observed that 65% of respondents were males, while 35% were females. The majority of respondents were between 20-29 years old and 30-39 years old. Each group represents 40% of the total number. Then, respondents aged from 40 to 50 years representing 15%, and the least proportion was for the respondents aged over 50 years (5%). Regarding the marital status, 51.4% of respondents were not married, while 48.6% were married. Most of respondents were college graduates (75%), while 22.1% of them had completed high school, and the rest of respondents (2.9%) held M.Sc. degree. As for the tenure, the majority of respondents spent 1 to less than 5 years (49.3%), followed by respondents who spent 5 to 10 years and those who spent more than 10 years. Each group represents 20% of the total number. Lastly, respondents who spent less than 1 year represents 10.7%.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

To test the first three hypotheses (*H1. Employees' organizational politics*

*perception has a significant positive effect on their turnover intention; **H2**. Employees' organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on their job burnout; **H3**. Employees' job burnout has a significant positive effect on their turnover intention*), linear regression analysis was used as presented in table 4.

Regarding the first hypothesis (**H1**), the regression analysis proved that organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on turnover intention (F=61.108, *p*=.000). Moreover, results revealed that organizational politics

perception explains 31% of variance that happens in the turnover intention (R^2=.307). In addition, results showed that beta coefficient is significant (β=.934, *p*=.000) which means for every 1-unit increase in organizational politics perception, turnover intention will increase by .934. Thus, hypothesis one (**H1**) is supported and the

regression equation could be as shown in figure 1:

Figure 1: Scatter Plot for Correlation between Organizational Politics Perception and Turnover Intention

Concerning the second hypothesis (**H2**), the regression analysis manifested that organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on job burnout (F=81.893, *p*=.000). Moreover, results revealed that organizational politics perception interprets 37% of variance that happens in the job burnout (R^2=.372). Furthermore, results showed that beta coefficient is significant (β = .513, *p*=.000) that means for every 1-unit increase in organizational politics perception, burnout will increase by .513. So, Hypothesis two (**H2**) is supported and the regression equation could be as shown in figure 2:
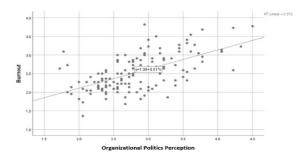

Figure 2: Scatter Plot for Correlation between Organizational Politics Perception and Job Burnout

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of Study Variables

Variables	R	R^2	F	Sig.	β	t	Sig.
Turnover Intention (Dependent Variable)							
Constant					.294	.848	.398
Organizational Politics Perception	.554	.307	61.108	.000**	.934	7.817	.000**
Job Burnout (Dependent Variable)							
Constant					1.083	6.587	.000**
Organizational Politics Perception	.610	.372	81.893	.000**	.513	9.049	.000**
Turnover Intention (Dependent Variable)							
Constant					-.177	-.508	.612
Job Burnout	.613	.376	83.274	.000**	1.230	9.124	.000**

Note. **p-value is significant at the .01 level.

As for the third hypothesis (**H3**), the regression analysis showed that job burnout has a significant positive effect on turnover intention (F=83.274, *p*=.000). Besides, results revealed that burnout elucidates 38% of variance that happens in the turnover intention (R^2=.376). Additionally, results showed that beta coefficient is significant (β=1.230, *p*=.000) that means for every 1-unit increase in emotional exhaustion, turnover intention will increase by 1.230. Accordingly, Hypothesis three (**H3**) is supported and the regression equation could be as shown in figure 3:
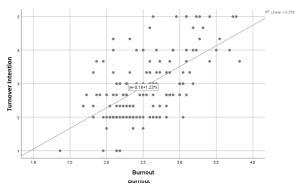

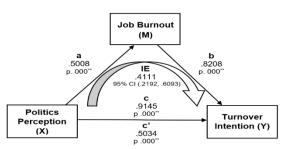**Figure 3:** Scatter Plot for Correlation between Job Burnout and Turnover Intention

To test the fourth hypothesis of the study (**H4.** *Job burnout mediates the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention*), a mediation analysis was conducted using bootstrapping of 5000 samples at a confidence interval (**CI**) of 95% (figure 4 & table 5). Demographic variables (gender, age, marital status, educational level, and tenure) were controlled for this analysis. PROCESS macro for SPSS and SAS (v. 3.5) was used to conduct the mediation analysis, and to get the three coefficients of **a** (β=.5008, *p*=.000), **b** (β=.8208, *p*=.000), and **c'** (β=.5034, *p*=.000). The latter coefficient (c') represents the direct effect of organizational politics perception (**X**) on turnover intention (**Y**) and it is significant as the *p* value <.01. The indirect effect (**IE**) of X on Y through job burnout (**M**) is also significant (β=.4111, 95% CI=.2192 to .6093), because zero does not fall between the lower and upper limits of the confidence interval. Thus, job burnout acts as a mediator in the effect of perceived political behavior on turnover intention. The significance of both the direct and indirect effect of politics perception on turnover intention means that the mediation of job burnout is a partial mediation, as it does not fully prevent the direct effect. Hence, **H4** is partially supported.

Table 5: Burnout Mediation in the Effect of Organizational Politics Perception on Turnover Intention

Direct Effect of Politics Perception (X) on Turnover Intention (Y)						Indirect Effect of Politics Perception (X) on Turnover Intention (Y) through Burnout (M)			
Coefficient	SE	t	Sig.	LLCI	ULCI	Coefficient	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
.5034	.1403	3.5888	.000**	.2259	.7808	.4111	.0996	.2192	.6093

Note. X = Predictor Variable, Y = Outcome Variable, M = Mediator, LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Interval, ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Interval, **p-value is significant at the .01 level.

Note. a = Direct Effect of X on M, b = Direct Effect of M on Y, c' = Direct Effect of X on Y, IE = Indirect Effect of X on Y = a*b, c = Total Effect of X on Y = (DE + IE), **p-value is significant at the .01 level.

Figure 4: The Mediating Role of Job Burnout in the effect of Organizational Politics Perception on Turnover Intention

5. Results Discussion

As for the first hypothesis (**H1**), results confirmed that organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on turnover intention. This could be interpreted as the perception of organizational politics pushes employees to be unconfident about each practice and behavior happens in the organization. In addition, they lose the trust in their superiors and colleagues, and become frustrated. These distrust and frustration represent a stressor to employees, which eventually, push them to leave their organizations. Because not all employees have the ability to leave, they start to withdraw psychologically and search for new opportunities elsewhere with an intent to quit. This result was confirmed by other studies in hospitality industry (Arefin et al., 2020; Daskin & Tezer, 2012; Karatepe, 2013). Also, it was confirmed by other studies conducted in other fields than hospitality (e.g., Al Jisr et al., 2020; De Clercq et al., 2021). On the other hand, this result was contradictory to the study of Delle (2013) who found no significant relationship between organizational politics and turnover intention among employees of banks, telecommunication and insurance companies in Ghana.

Regarding the second hypothesis (**H2**), results manifested that organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on job burnout. This result could be explained by relating organizational politics perception as a stressor with job burnout as a response to persistent stressors at work. When an employee realizes that others are promoted and got rewards depending on other criteria than merit, he will feel frustrated and perceive his work environment as political. Especially, when his hard work is not appreciated. If this employee's perception of politics lasts for long time, he will eventually feel burned out. This result was confirmed by other studies (e.g., Advani et al., 2005; Basar & Basim, 2016; Labrague et al., 2017; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010) in which perception of organizational politics was found to have a significant positive effect on job burnout.

Concerning the third Hypothesis (**H3**), results proved that job burnout has a significant positive effect on turnover intention. This result could be explained as when the employee becomes burned out, he feels emotionally drained, indifferent to his colleagues and guests, in addition to his feeling of inefficacy. These feelings lead him to feel uncomfortable and unattached to the workplace. Thus, he thinks in leaving his current organization and work in another comfortable environment. This result was affirmed by other scholars in the field of hospitality industry (e.g., Wen et al., 2020; Yavas et al., 2018) who conducted their studies on front-line employees of four- and five-star hotels in South China and three-, four-, and five-star hotels in Ankara, Turkey, respectively. In addition to other studies that were conducted in fields other than hospitality (e.g., Ahmad & Afgan, 2016; Back et al., 2020; Lu & Gursoy, 2016).

As for the fourth Hypothesis (**H4**), the study findings confirmed that job burnout partially mediates the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention. This means politics perception affects turnover intention both directly and indirectly through burnout. The role of job burnout as a mediator could be explained by relating the results of the previous three hypotheses with each other. When an employee finds others gain rewards and get promoted due to their political behavior or favoritism, he perceives his workplace as political. Eventually, he will experience job burnout as a response to the stress of perceiving politics. After the employee is burned out, he will feel uncomfortable in his organization and start to search for job opportunities elsewhere. This result was confirmed by Huang et al. (2003) who conducted his study on the employees of Ministry of Finance in Taiwan and found that job burnout partially mediates the relationship between organizational politics perception and turnover intention. Nevertheless, politics perception still has the chance to lead to turnover directly without passing through the job burnout or may be through other mediators than job burnout such as engagement as reported by Agarwal (2016). Rasoolimanesh, Wang, Roldan and Kunasekaran (2021) asserted that it is not meaningful to claim full mediation because, from the practical point of view, it is very hard to identify and examine all the possible mediators. In addition, it is impossible, especially in social science, for one mediator to fully explain the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Thus, the chance should be given to other new mediators to be explored which, in turn, enriches the concept.

6. Conclusion and Implications

The study aimed at examining the mediating role of job burnout in the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention among employees of city center hotels in Egypt. Thus, the effect of organizational politics perceptions on both turnover intention and job burnout was examined in addition to the effect of job burnout on turnover intention. Finally, the mediation analysis was conducted. The results revealed that organizational politics perception has a significant positive effect on both turnover intention and job burnout. Moreover, job burnout was found to have a significant positive effect on turnover intention. Furthermore, the findings pointed out that job burnout partially mediates the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention. Hence, management of hotels should pay great attention to organizational politics and job burnout as they lead to the turnover intention. This is because turnover intention is the last step before the actual turnover which is a major problem faced by the hospitality industry.

Regarding the organizational politics, each dimension of it could be fought in its opposite way. The first dimension 'General Political Behavior' could be diminished by precluding toxic employees who behave politically to gain self-interests at the expense of others. management should keep the same distance from all employees in order to avoid the perception of favoritism. When certain group of employees are more preferred than others, other employees start to feel a sense of unfairness and jealous that leads to politics perception. The second dimension 'Go Along to Get Ahead' could be diminished by enhancing employees' engagement. All employees should be encouraged to express their opinions frankly, even if they are opposite to those of managers. This sharing of thoughts makes the employees feeling that they are a part of

the organization. In addition, it would diminish the behavior of some employees who remain silent to secure their own benefits. The third dimension 'Pay and Promotion Policies' could be diminished by enhancing employees' trust in the organization. When employees trust their organizations, they become certain that their work will be evaluated and rewarded honestly, which reduces their politics perception. Thus, pay and promotion policies should be determined and implemented accurately and communicated to all employees at all levels. Furthermore, pay raises and promotions should be done according to worthiness not favoritism or self-preferences.

Unfortunately, employers in developing countries, to great extent, do not pay attention to job burnout. Although, it has very detrimental effects on employees and work outcomes. Especially in hotels, since hotels employees are more prone to it due to the special nature of the hospitality work and the dealing with different kinds of guests. Hence, management should provide comfortable work environment for employees through some procedures, such as providing flexible shifts and working hours, specific description of tasks, work breaks, and fair distribution of workloads. In addition, training programs should be provided for employees on how to deal with work stress, and emotional exhaustion. Moreover, training programs regarding time management and how to deal with different kinds of guests are very important to enhance the ability of employees to handle such issues. Furthermore, management should enhance the interpersonal relationships in the organization, for example, by encouraging social activities that everyone in the organization can participate in, which in turn enhance the social support as well. Finally, job

engagement is the magical word for preventing job burnout, as it characterizes by energy, efficacy and involvement, which are, respectively, the three contradictory words of the three dimensions of job burnout (emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment and depersonalization). Concerning the turnover intention, periodical meetings should be held with the employees to know their needs and discuss any problems that could lead them to think of leaving the organization.

7. Future Research
Due to the lack of the studies that investigate the organizational politics in hospitality industry, especially in Egypt, some directions for the future research in the hospitality field would be suggested. Future research could investigate other mediators in the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention, such as perceived organizational justice, supervision incivility, and work-family conflict. In addition, examining variables that could serve as a moderator in the effect of organizational politics perception on turnover intention, such as employees' engagement, job stress, perceived organizational justice, and job satisfaction. Also, the effect of organizational politics on other different variables could be examined, such as employees' proactive behavior, organizational commitment, perceived organizational justice, job performance, and job satisfaction. Finally, it is recommended to conduct the current study on hotels of other geographical areas in Egypt, on other hotel types, or on other sectors of hospitality industry such as restaurants.

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