

INTERNAL WHISTLEBLOWING AND PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS, PRESSURE, AND PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Main Objectives: This study examines the influence of organizational political perceptions of internal whistleblowing intention, specifically investigating the role of professional commitment on the pressure felt by employees within the framework of the conservation of resources theory. **Background Problems:** Previous research has focused on what factors can increase internal whistleblowing intention, while there are contextual factors that cannot be ignored, specifically the state of the working environment that may hinder such intention. **Novelty:** This research investigates a different phenomenon from the point of view of an environment that creates a negative perception while also linking it to the professional commitment to the impact of internal whistleblowing intentions. **Research Methods:** This study employs a questionnaire-based survey method targeting employees of banks affiliated with the Association of Stated-Owned Banks in Indonesia. The sample consists of 115 participants and the data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). **Findings/Results:** The findings of this research suggest that employees' views on organizational politics and the corresponding pressure hinder their willingness to report violations. Nevertheless, a strong level of professional dedication does not lessen the impact of organizational politics on perceived pressure. This underscores the necessity for organizations to cultivate a cooperative atmosphere that can diminish the adverse perceptions of organizational politics. **Conclusion:** This research carries particular importance, notably within the financial industry, illustrating how the interactions among organizational politics, pressure, and professional commitment influence employees' tendency toward internal reporting of misconduct. Further, this research enriches the discourse on internal whistleblowing, providing a richer conceptualization of its determinants from both environmental and situational perspectives.

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies in the literature have examined the factors influencing an individual's inclination to engage in internal whistleblowing. Internal whistleblowing intention refers to the intention to report fraudulent behavior or violations of morals or laws to superiors within an organization (Park et al., 2005). According to previous research, many positive factors drive this intention: Leaders' ethics (Mkheimer et al., 2022), moral identity, job satisfaction (Gupta & Bhal, 2021), culture (Rajeevan, 2020), favorable attitudes, and perceived behavioral control (Alleyne et al., 2018). However, there are contextual factors that prevent an individual's intention to speak out. These contextual factors can significantly weaken or even obstruct an individual's intention to engage in internal whistleblowing. Lee and Xiao (2018) identify the organizational political environment as a critical factor that is intricately linked to work-related behaviors like decision-making, promotions, and rewards (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Malik et al., 2019; Vigoda, 2000). Organizational politics, often perceived negatively, is characterized as strategic maneuvers aimed at maximizing self-interests in ways that may conflict with organizational objectives and the interests of others (Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Vigoda, 2000). This environment stems from competition over limited company resources (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997), prompting individuals to compete for valuable assets such as salary increments, promotions, and budgets (Drory, 1993; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Kumar & Ghadially, 1989), frequently at the detriment of others, driven by personal and group interests (Vigoda, 2000).

Political dynamics within an organization give rise to perceptions of organizational politics, influencing individuals' subjective assessments of how colleagues' and supervisors'

political behaviors serve their own interests (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997). According to Lie et al. (2023), the workplace environment significantly shapes psychological behaviors, impacting both employee engagement and retention, and driving these perceptions. Such perceptions subsequently lead to a sense of pressure, characterized by the apprehension of potential future threats associated with reporting violations (Latan et al., 2019). Various threats, such as job termination, unfair treatment by superiors, and reputational harm, often discourage individuals from challenging the status quo. This reluctance is fueled by the stress employees experience (Huang, Chuang, & Lin, 2003; Karatepe, Babakus, & Yavas, 2012), where the stress related to potential resource losses—including decision-making power, salary, and promotional opportunities—can significantly impact their work activities.

According to the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), stress emerges when there is a risk of resource loss or diminution. A key tenet of this theory is that the impact of resource loss is more pronounced than that of resource gain. Environmental conditions posing a risk to personal resources can create pressure, leading to self-protection behaviors (Hobfoll, 1989). Given that internal whistleblowing intention is a voluntary behavior that requires enthusiasm and commitment to carry out, feelings of pressure tend to discourage individuals from engaging in whistleblowing (Cheng et al., 2017). Similar sentiments were expressed by Gundlach, Douglas, and Martinko (2003) and Henik (2015) who argued that organizational political perceptions leading to pressure would compel whistleblowers to choose silence and refrain from whistleblowing. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of perceptions of organizational politics on employees' intentions to engage in internal whistleblowing,

considering the mediating role of pressure. It is important to note that further research is needed to understand the mechanisms through which perceptions of organizational politics impact whistleblowing intentions (Cheng et al., 2017; Culiberg & Mihelic, 2017).

Additionally, this study incorporates employees' professional commitment which refers to a strong desire to fulfill the goals and values of a particular profession (Lu et al., 2002). Previous studies (Chen & Lai, 2014; Malik et al., 2019) have found that professional commitment can mitigate the negative effects arising from perceptions of organizational politics. However, contrasting results were obtained by other studies (such as Cheng et al., 2017), suggesting that professional commitment becomes more pronounced when employees have high organizational political perceptions. This inconsistency in findings prompts this research to treat professional commitment as a moderating variable. It posits that, in scenarios where individuals exhibit strong professional commitment, the detrimental impact of organizational politics perceptions, particularly in terms of pressure, might be mitigated (Yang & Xu, 2020). Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand the effect of professional commitment on employees, considering the pressure they experience in relation to their whistleblowing intentions (Latan et al., 2019; Singh & Gupta, 2015; Goulet & Singh, 2002).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

1. Perceptions of Organizational Politics and Internal Whistleblowing Intentions

Organizations that prioritize self-interest or specific groups often fail to provide a comfortable and secure environment for potential whistleblowers. In such companies, employees

tend to receive benefits based on their proximity or "special relationship" with supervisors, community interests, or subjective factors. Consequently, organizations tend to disregard good intentions, ethical behavior, and the contributions of employees to the organization (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Chang, Rosen, & Levy, 2009; Cheng et al., 2017). This situation leads employees to subjectively perceive that individuals within the organization act in favor of certain groups, disregarding the efforts of other employees. As a result, employees lose confidence that the organization will act fairly, even if they choose to blow the whistle (Ferris et al., 1996; Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Beugre & Liverpool, 2006). This highlights the high risk faced by potential whistleblowers.

Moreover, individuals are more inclined to engage in internal whistleblowing when they hold positive beliefs about the outcomes of such actions. If individuals believe that their intention to blow the whistle internally will be welcomed and appreciated fairly by the organization, they are more likely to have the intention to do so. However, organizational political dynamics within the workplace can erode this confidence. Employees facing such dynamics often anticipate negative repercussions, such as social ostracization, demotion, or termination, as noted by Seifert et al. (2010). These perceptions of a non-supportive environment, driven by various conflicting interests, lead to a negative view of their surroundings. In line with the conservation of resources theory, such an environment is seen as a threat to the sustainability of personal resources, inducing stress and prompting protective actions. Employees may thus choose to safeguard their resources, including expertise, reputation, promotion prospects, and salary (Hobfoll, 1989), by avoiding whistleblowing. This reluctance is essentially a self-protective measure against potential resource loss,

manifesting in a decreased intention to report violations.

Previous research conducted by Malik et al. (2019) examined the role of perceptions of organizational politics in knowledge hiding, which involves deliberately concealing information or knowledge requested by others. The study found a positive relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and knowledge hiding. In other words, as perceptions of organizational politics become more prevalent in the work environment, employees are more inclined to intentionally withhold requested information. When it comes to an individual's intention to engage in internal whistleblowing, knowledge hiding acts as a deterrent, as individuals may refrain from disclosing violations through internal whistleblowing.

Similar findings were reported in a study conducted by Cheng et al. (2017), which revealed a negative relationship between employees' perceptions of colleagues' and supervisors' self-interest and their intention to engage in internal whistleblowing. In other words, as employees perceive a greater degree of selfishness among their colleagues and supervisors in the work environment, their intention to engage in internal whistleblowing weakens. Based on the above description, the first hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H1: Perceptions of organizational politics have a negative impact on internal whistleblowing intention.

2. Perceptions of Organizational Politics and Pressure

A work environment rife with conflicts of interest and prevailing egos can undermine employees' self-confidence, especially when their achievements are overshadowed by others prioritizing personal career advancement

(Cropanzano et al., 1997). This atmosphere cultivates a heightened perception of organizational politics, subsequently becoming a source of stress and pressure. Such conditions often lead to the development of negative attitudes and behaviors among employees (Ferris et al., 1989).

This study examines the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and pressure, defined as the burden stemming from potential future threats associated with reporting violations (Latan et al., 2019). In environments where organizational politics are perceived, particularly where certain individuals' interests are dominant, these perceptions reflect employees' subjective evaluations of their circumstances. The stronger these perceptions, the more pronounced the presence of selfishness within the organizational environment. Such an environment often leads to adverse effects, with pressure being a significant consequence for employees, as investigated in this study.

Employee pressure is often associated with concerns about multiple potential threats, including unfair treatment by superiors, challenges in fulfilling job responsibilities (Rosen et al., 2006), coercion to silence, and the risk of termination (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005; Parmerlee & Near, 1982). Furthermore, there is the looming threat of reputational damage in a politically charged environment (Latan et al., 2019), where conflicts and aggression manifest in self-serving behaviors such as rumor-mongering, verbal insults, and slander (Hochwarter, Witt, & Kacmar, 2000; Rosen, Harris, & Kacmar, 2009). These behaviors erode interpersonal trust (Kumar & Ghadially, 1989) and, as per the conservation of resources theory, threaten the loss of vital resources like reputation and position, consequently elevating stress levels (Hobfoll, 1989).

This stress precipitates various pressures that impact individual actions. Therefore, it is expected that perceptions of organizational politics positively correlate with the pressure experienced by employees, suggesting that the more prevalent self-interested behaviors are within the organizational environment, the greater the resultant negative consequences (pressure) for employees. Based on the description, the second hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Perceptions of organizational politics have a positive effect on the employee's pressure.

3. Pressure and Internal Whistleblowing Intentions

Pressure refers to the sense of burden associated with anticipated future threats as a result of reporting violations (Latan et al., 2019). This encompasses fears of being terminated, treated unfairly, facing reprisals, and suffering reputational damage. Such fears lead to stress and exhaustion among potential whistleblowers (Huang et al., 2003; Karatepe et al., 2012), often resulting in a preference for silence over exposing organizational wrongdoings. Moreover, supervisors may retaliate against whistleblowers for various reasons, including their fear of whistleblowing claims, which may imply their inability to maintain compliance and order within their divisions or departments (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005). Consequently, driven by self-preservation and the fear of negative consequences, potential whistleblowers may opt to refrain from whistleblowing activities (Öhman & Mineka, 2001).

The conservation of resources theory posits that the threat of resource loss significantly influences individual behavior, particularly in terms of self-protection against potential losses (Hobfoll, 1989). The theory further asserts that the risk or fear of losing resources has a more profound impact than the benefits gained from

acquiring them. In essence, the distress associated with loss is often more intense and challenging to reconcile than the satisfaction derived from resource acquisition. Consequently, individuals are predisposed to prioritize the protection and retention of their existing resources. This inclination manifests in the context of internal whistleblowing, where individuals under stress may be more likely to avoid whistleblowing activities as a strategy to protect their resources and mitigate the risk of potential losses.

Chen and Lai (2014) identified that social pressure significantly influences an individual's intention toward internal whistleblowing. Echoing this, Macgregor and Stuebs (2014) observed a negative impact of pressure on such intentions. Latan et al. (2019) further corroborated these findings, demonstrating that the negative effect of perceived pressure on whistleblowing intention often surpasses any perceived benefits. Consequently, pressure is a pivotal factor in shaping individuals' decisions to report violations, especially in environments characterized by uncertainty. This leads to the formulation of the third hypothesis:

H3: Employee pressure has a negative effect on internal whistleblowing intention.

4. The Mediating Role of Pressure in the Relationship between Perceptions of Organizational Politics and Internal Whistleblowing Intentions

Previous studies have explored the role of negative emotions as a mediating variable in various contexts, such as subordinates' inclination to retaliate against supervisors' abusive behavior (Kim & Shapiro, 2008), consumer dissatisfaction and intention to repurchase (Y. Lu, Lu, & Wang, 2012), and incidents of violence and employee intention to resign (Li, Chao, & Shih, 2018). These studies

suggest that negative emotions can help researchers understand the underlying mechanisms influencing individuals' behavioral intentions.

Workplace politicization, characterized by unfavorable conditions, personal disfavor, egoistic behaviors, and the pursuit of self-interest by certain individuals (Ferris et al., 1989; Goulet & Singh, 2002), cultivates negative perceptions among employees. These perceptions, known as organizational political perceptions, encapsulate employees' subjective evaluations regarding the degree to which their colleagues and supervisors engage in self-serving actions within the organizational environment (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997).

As personal interests become increasingly dominant within the organization, perceptions of organizational politics also grow stronger (worse), thereby potentially eroding employee trust in the organization. This lack of trust leads employees to question the organization's appreciation of their actions, including internal whistleblowing (Cheng et al., 2017). Conversely, whistleblowers experience pressure, such as the fear of future retaliation, which can have detrimental effects. This pressure can manifest as the risk of reputational damage, dismissal from the company, the spread of rumors and slander, and even retaliation from superiors for various reasons (Latan et al., 2019; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005; Parmerlee & Near, 1982; Hochwarter et al., 2000; Rosen et al., 2009). These circumstances contribute to feelings of frustration, stress, and fatigue, ultimately dissuading individuals from intending to engage in internal whistleblowing (Rosen et al., 2009).

Furthermore, pressure can generate fear, instilling a desire to protect oneself from potential harm (Öhman & Mineka, 2001). This motivation leads employees to remain silent

about violations occurring within the organization. Previous research conducted by Cheng et al. (2017) highlighted the negative impact of perceptions of organizational politics on internal whistleblowing intentions, confirming that such perceptions exert a detrimental effect. However, further research is necessary to elucidate the mechanisms through which perceptions of organizational politics influence internal whistleblowing intentions via employees' experience of negative emotions, including pressure. Based on the description above, the fourth hypothesis is as follows:

H4: Employee pressure mediates the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and internal whistleblowing intentions.

5. The Role of Professional Commitment in Moderating the Impact of Perceptions of Organizational Politics on Pressure

Professional commitment in the context of this study refers to an employee's dedication and loyalty to their profession. It is hypothesized that professional commitment can weaken the impact of employee perceptions of organizational politics on pressure. This is because individuals with a strong professional commitment are more attuned to their environment (Ghani et al., 2020), and they are inclined to take action when confronted with violations of professional norms, principles, or duties, even in politically charged work environments (Connelly et al., 2012). According to the conservation of resources theory, one type of resource is an internal resource or a resource that is owned by an individual (Hobfoll, 1989). These resources can take the form of optimism, self-esteem, a sense of mastery, and professional commitment. Committed employees tend to give their best efforts to develop their potential by becoming experts in certain professions, which involve

belief, acceptance, goals, and professional values (Aranya et al., 1981; Elias, 2006). This potential is often included in one’s own skills and abilities to convince individuals to be able to act according to their own capacities (Tornikoski & Maalaoui, 2019).

Hence, it is suspected that employees with high professional commitment are better equipped to withstand the pressures stemming from high perceptions of organizational politics.

H5: Professional commitment moderates the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and employee pressure; When professional commitment is high, the positive impact of perceptions of organizational politics on employee pressure will be diminished.

The hypotheses of the study are systematically presented in the research model depicted in Figure 1.

METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS

This study adopts an individual-level unit of analysis to explore employees' intentions toward

internal whistleblowing. It specifically targets employees from banks affiliated with the Association of State-Owned Banks in Indonesia (HIMBARA). The criteria are permanent employees who work at banks that are members of the Association of State-Owned Banks (HIMBARA) and employees with a minimum work period of 1 year. The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners highlighted in 2019 that the financial and banking sector is particularly susceptible to losses from fraudulent activities, underscoring the importance of this industry for such research. Focusing on HIMBARA-affiliated banks, which have documented internal whistleblowing systems in their annual reports, allows for a relevant and impactful investigation. The selection of employees across various positions and responsibilities enhances the study’s applicability, as these individuals are in positions to observe and report potential violations within their organizations, aligning with insights from Miceli and Near (2005).

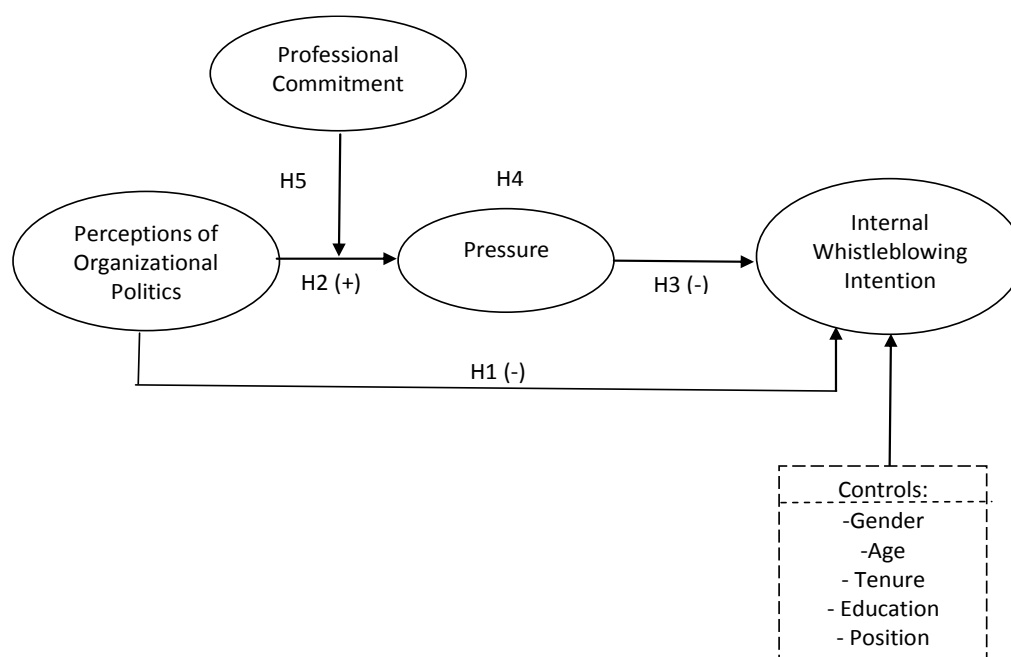


Figure 1. Research Model

Data collection for this study was conducted through an online questionnaire-based survey, which is divided into two sections. The first section gathers demographic information from participants, with measures in place to ensure anonymity and encourage honesty and openness in responses. This strategy is designed to accurately capture the diverse perspectives of the respondents. The second section presents statements tailored to the respondents' specific situations, asking them to rate their level of agreement on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 signifies 'very unlikely/strongly disagree' and 5 indicates 'very likely/strongly agree.'

The initial pool of respondents comprised 123 individuals. After identifying and excluding 8 outliers, the study proceeded with a final sample size of 115 respondents. The demographic breakdown of this sample reveals a gender distribution of 34% male and 66% female. The majority of respondents are aged between 20 and 30 years, with job experience varying from 1 to 8 years.

Measurements

Internal Whistleblowing Intentions (IWI): Based on Park, Rehg, and Lee (2005), this construct assesses intention to report to superiors in the organization regarding fraudulent behavior, or actions that violate morals or wrongdoing. The measurement begins with an introductory question: "If you found an error at your workplace, what would you do?" Respondents rate their decision-making extent using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = very unlikely, 5 = very likely). This construct comprises four statements aimed at gauging various reporting intentions, including direct reporting to a supervisor, notifying upper management, utilizing official reporting channels, and adhering to internal procedures.

The Cronbach Alpha value for this construct is 0.71, and the Composite Reliability is 0.80.

Perceptions of Organizational Politics (POP): Following Kacmar and Carlson (1997), POP evaluates an individual's subjective evaluation of the extent to which the political behavior of coworkers and supervisors in an organizational environment acts in a self-serving manner. The measurement begins with an introductory question: "To what extent is the following statement appropriate to your work circumstances?". Respondents rate their agreement using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The construct encompasses three dimensions: political behavior, which includes two specific statement items; goal achievement strategies, covered by seven statement items; and policies on salary and promotion, which are explored through six statement items. The Cronbach Alpha value for this construct is 0.73, and the Composite Reliability is 0.85.

Pressure (PR): Adapted from Latan et al. (2019), PR measures feelings of distress about potential future threats after reporting violations. The measurement begins with a preliminary question: "To what extent do you feel pressure if you report a violation?" Respondents rate their agreement using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = very unlikely, 5 = very likely). This construct is detailed through four statement items: the risk of being dismissed, experiencing unfair treatment, the fear of retaliation, and the potential for reputational damage. The Cronbach Alpha value for this construct is 0.86, and the Composite Reliability is 0.90.

Professional Commitment (PC): Following Chang and Choi (2007), PC captures the psychological attachment to one's profession. The measurement begins with a preliminary question: "To what extent are the following statements appropriate to your situation?"

Respondents rate their agreement using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The measurement consists of five statement items, including pride in one's profession, a sense of belonging to the profession, affirmation of the current career as the right choice, the strength of the professional bond with the company, and confidence in continuing the professional journey. The Cronbach Alpha value for this construct is 0.87, and the Composite Reliability is 0.91.

Control Variables: This research incorporates five control variables: education, age, gender, length of work, and position. These variables are selected to account for and control external factors that may influence the causal relationships explored within the hypotheses, thereby enhancing the robustness and comprehensiveness of the empirical model (Curtis, Conover & Chui, 2012; Erkmen, Çalışkan, & Esen, 2014; Alleyne, Hudaib, & 2018; Zhang et al., 2009; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005; Reg et al., 2008). Such control is essential for isolating the effects of the primary variables under investigation, minimizing potential

confounding influences, and ensuring more accurate and unbiased results in the analysis of causal relationships (Cooper and Schindler, 2014).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study utilizes Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), as advocated by Kock (2018) and Hair et al. (2014), for its analysis. PLS-SEM is a suitable analytical approach for estimating multiple latent variables concurrently and capturing the interconnections among them. By utilizing PLS-SEM, this study aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the relationships and their effects within the proposed model.

Table 1 details the descriptive statistics, showcasing the mean, standard deviation, and correlation matrix for the variables under study. These statistics offer valuable insights into the distribution and relationships among the variables under investigation, providing a basis for further analysis and interpretation.

Table 1. Mean, standard deviation, correlation of constructs

Construct Laten	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Internal Whistleblowing Intention (IWI)	4.07	0.17	0.72								
2. Pressure (PR)	3.02	0.14	0.01	0.84							
3. Professional Commitment (PC)	3.85	0.14	0.20**	-0.08	0.82						
4. Perception of Organizational Politics (POP)	3.01	0.45	-0.04	0.52***	-0.03	0.81					
5. Gender	0.34	0.48	0.10	0.21**	0.05	0.12	1.00				
6. Age	3.06	0.94	-0.11	0.02	0.06	-0.21**	0.27***	1.00			
7. Education	2.89	0.50	0.09	-0.05	-0.10	0.05	-0.08	-0.04	1.00		
8. Tenure	5.20	0.92	-0.05	0.15	0.04	-0.02	0.18**	0.69	-0.01	1.00	
9. Position	1.15	0.48	0.03	0.09	-0.05	-0.04	-0.09	0.25**	0.11	0.23**	1.00

Note: Diagonal line (Bold) is the root AVEs of correlations between constructs of AVE
n = 115; *** sig. $p < 0.01$; ** sig. $p < 0.05$

The constructs' mean values surpassed the moderate threshold of 3.0, signaling a general agreement among respondents toward the measured constructs. Discriminant validity was evaluated through the correlation matrix in Table 1, using the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values as a benchmark. With AVE square root values exceeding the 0.50 threshold, the study demonstrated discriminant validity, further substantiated by these values surpassing the inter-construct correlation coefficients, aligning with the criteria set by Hair et al. (2014).

Convergent validity assessment followed the guidelines of Hair et al. (2014), considering loading factors ≥ 0.70 (with $p \leq 0.05$) as evidence of validity. Indicators with loadings ≤ 0.40 were eliminated, whereas those between 0.40 and 0.70 were retained if they enhanced the AVE. This led to the exclusion of certain items, notably those questioning the encouragement of honest opinion expression, the acceptance of dissenting ideas, the absence of 'politics' in salary and promotion decisions, and inconsistencies in raises and promotions with organizational policies. The constructs' reliability was

confirmed to be satisfactory, with composite reliability values of ≥ 0.70 for all constructs.

Analysis of Structural Model

The structural model analysis focused on evaluating the model's fit through various metrics, including the Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-Squared (ARS), Average Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF), and the Tanenhaus Goodness-of-fit (GOF). A model demonstrates minimal suitability with a value of ≥ 0.10 , medium suitability at ≥ 0.25 , and high suitability at ≥ 0.36 (Kock, 2018).

The results of the model fit assessment revealed that the APC and ARS met the significance criterion of $p < 0.05$ and the AVIF criterion of < 3.3 . Specifically, the APC value was 0.17, the ARS value was 0.20, and both were significant at $p < 0.01$. The AVIF value was 1.15, indicating a good fit for the model. The structural model, depicted in Figure 2, explored the mediation mechanisms and the relationships between perception of organizational politics (POP), internal whistleblowing intention (IWI), pressure (PR), and professional commitment (PC) as a moderating variable.

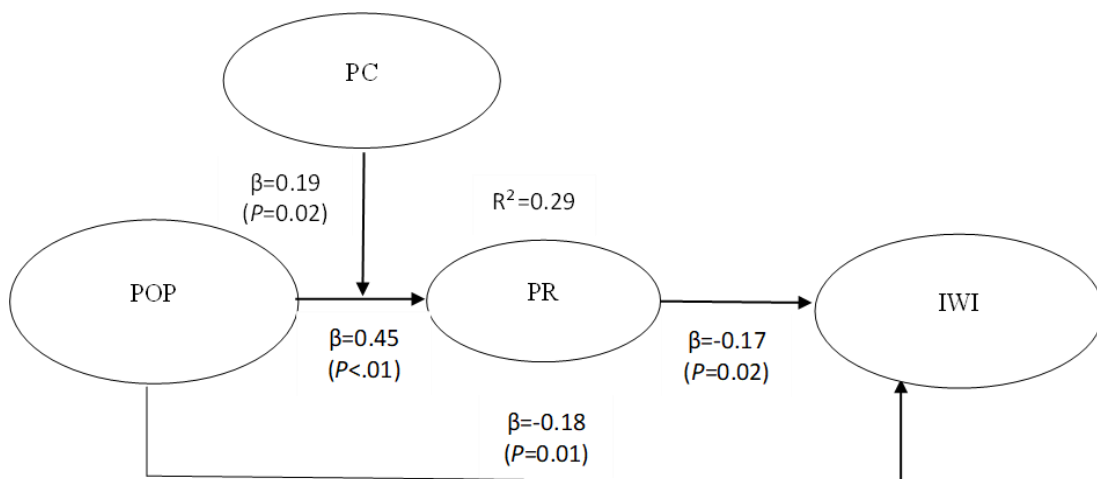


Figure 2. The Result Full PLS Model

The results of the path analysis are presented in Table 2 and depicted in Figure 2. The findings revealed a negative effect of POP on IWI ($\beta = -0.18, p = 0.01$), providing support for hypothesis H1. Additionally, POP had a positive effect on PR ($\beta = 0.45, p < 0.01$), supporting hypothesis H2. Furthermore, PR had a negative effect on IWI ($\beta = -0.17, p = 0.02$), confirming hypothesis H3.

Table 2. The results of the analysis of the structural model

Construct	Path-to (β and p -value)	
	PR	IWI
Full Model		
POP	0.45***	-0.18**
PR		-0.17**
PC*POP	0.19**	
R²-squared (Adjusted)	0.29	0.09
Q²-squared	0.30	0.15
Effect Sizes		
PR		0.04
POP	0.23	0.03
PC*POP	0.06	
Control Variable		
Gender		0.17**
Age		-0.14*
Education		0.06
Tenure		0.15**
Position		0.08

Note: n = 115; sig *** $p = <0.01$; sig ** $p = <0.05$. Internal Whistleblowing Intention (IWI), Pressure (PR), Professional Commitment (PC), Perception Of Organizational Politics (POP).

The mediation hypothesis (H4) suggests that the pressure experienced by employees mediates the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics and their intention to engage in internal whistleblowing. Hair et al. (2017) recommend analyzing the contemporary mediation model proposed by Zhou, Liu, Chen, & Zhao (2018) which relies on the path coefficients and p-values of direct and indirect relationships. If both the direct and indirect relationships are significant, partial mediation is present.

In the table, the p-values of the direct relationship (H1: $\beta = -0.18, p = 0.01$) and the indirect relationships (H2: $\beta = 0.45, p < 0.01$ and H3: $\beta = -0.17, p = 0.02$) are significant, indicating partial mediation. Given the mix of positive and negative path coefficients, a competitive mediation model is identified. Consequently, pressure is confirmed to partially mediate the effect of organizational politics perceptions on internal whistleblowing intention, affirming H4.

Hypothesis H5 examines the moderating effect of professional commitment on the relationship between organizational politics perceptions and employee pressure, positing a weakening effect under high professional commitment. The interaction term (PC*POP) shows a significant path coefficient ($\beta = 0.19, p < 0.05$), initially supporting H5. Yet, Figure 3 illustrates an increase in the positive influence of organizational politics on employee pressure with higher professional commitment levels, leading to significant but unsupported findings for H5. Thus, all current hypotheses, aside from hypothesis 5, are supported by the study's findings.

DISCUSSION

This study delves into the influence of employees' perceptions of organizational politics on their intentions to partake in internal whistleblowing within a banking context. It elucidates that a work environment rife with politics, driven by the interests of specific individuals or groups, fosters negative employee perceptions, thereby increasing the likelihood of silence in the face of violations. Such negative perceptions within the workplace significantly affect employees' psychological states (Risgiyanti et al. 2023). These perceptions manifest as pressure, characterized by fears of job loss or reputational damage, prompting

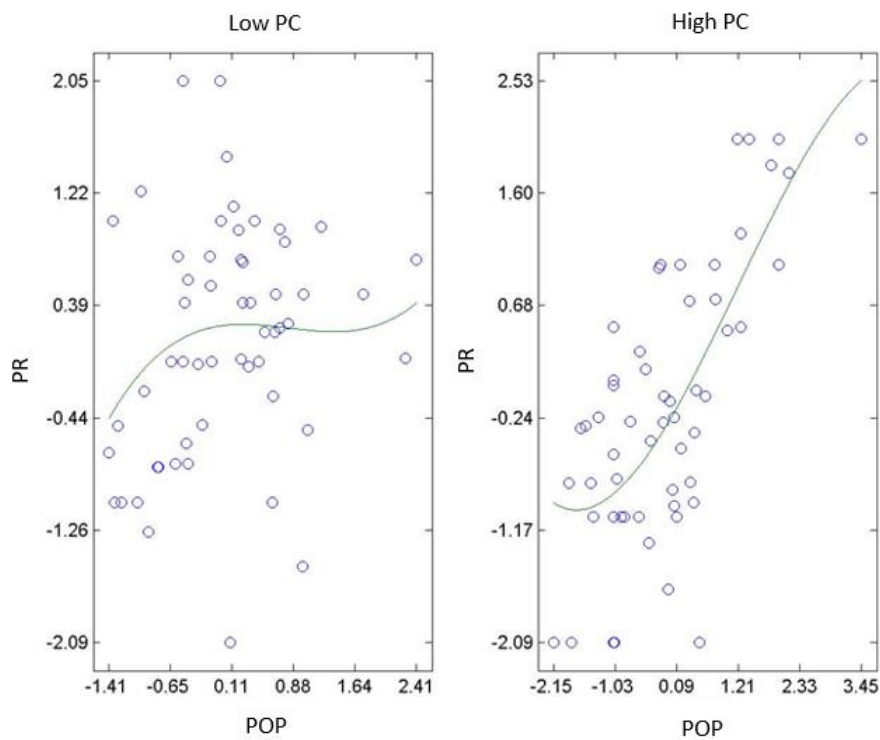


Figure 3. Interaction between perception of organizational politics and professional commitment in predicting employee pressure

employees to favor silence over reporting misconduct as a form of self-protection (Ohman & Mineka, 2001). This is supported by research highlighting the detrimental impact of organizational politics on pressure, which in turn negatively affects whistleblowing intentions.

A noteworthy finding is the partial mediation of pressure in the relationship between organizational politics perceptions and whistleblowing intentions, indicating that, while pressure is a mediating factor, organizational politics also directly influences whistleblowing intentions. Thus, pressure is not the sole determinant of whistleblowing behaviors.

This study further underscores how the perception of organizational politics triggers pressure concerning career and reputation, dissuading internal violation reporting. This dynamic is reflective of the conservation of resources theory, positing that individuals prioritize protecting their resources, with resource loss having a more profound psycho-

logical impact than resource gain (Hobfoll & Ford, 2017). Such resources include reputations, which employees are cautious not to jeopardize through unethical actions (Na, Lee, & Yu, 2023). Additionally, the degree of pressure experienced by employees can vary based on individual characteristics, including personality (Byrne et al, 2015).

Contrary to expectations, this study reveals that high professional commitment amplifies the impact of organizational politics on pressure. This contradicts earlier findings by Malik et al. (2019) which suggested a mitigating effect of professional commitment on the influence of organizational politics. A strong professional commitment reflects an individual's profound engagement with their profession and a keen awareness of the potential hazards posed by political behaviors in the workplace. Consequently, employees with a significant sense of professional commitment may be more vigilant in assessing the risks of retaliation and other

negative outcomes arising from organizational politics, as suggested by Lord & DeZoort (2001). This heightened sensitivity could explain why employees deeply committed to their professions perceive greater pressure in politically charged environments. In addition, research conducted by Al-Rawashdeh et al., (2024) found that professional commitment may act independently of skepticism in shaping audit outcomes. This indicates that while professional commitment is essential for employees, the effects on individuals differ.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

Theoretically, this research enriches the discourse on unethical disclosure and internal whistleblowing, framing it within the work environment's perceptions and the conservation of resources theory. Moreover, this study emphasizes the pivotal role of the organizational environment in shaping employees' perceptions and, consequently, their intentions toward internal whistleblowing.

This study's empirical investigation supports the proposed hypotheses with the notable exception of the fifth hypothesis which yielded significant but unexpected results. Contrary to initial expectations and previous findings by Malik et al. (2019), this study discovered that high professional commitment actually amplifies the influence of organizational political perceptions on perceived pressure. This outcome aligns with the observations made by Cheng et al. (2017). This suggests that employees with strong professional commitment may more acutely evaluate the risks associated with organizational politics, potentially heightening perceived pressure.

This study sheds light on the perception among employees in the banking industry that their work environment poses a threat to their

personal resources, prompting them to adopt behaviors aimed at safeguarding these assets. This phenomenon is explained through the lens of the conservation of resources theory. Furthermore, this research reveals that a strong sense of professional commitment does not diminish the pressure experienced as a result of organizational politics. This finding underscores the critical need for companies, particularly in the banking sector, to cultivate a collaborative environment. Such an environment could significantly diminish the adverse perceptions of organizational politics, thereby potentially increasing employees' propensity to engage in internal whistleblowing. By addressing the negative influences of perceived organizational politics and pressure, companies can foster a more conducive atmosphere for whistleblowing activities. Furthermore, professionalism and honesty are values that should be developed together by a safe reporting mechanism.

While offering valuable insights, this study's findings are subject to limitations that merit caution in interpretation. Firstly, the study's sample is restricted to employees in state-owned banks which may restrict the generalizability of the results to employees in other organizational contexts. Secondly, the study acknowledges a limitation regarding the survey. Respondents may have exhibited a tendency to provide neutral responses, particularly when it came to expressing their perceptions of organizational politics. Despite the researchers' efforts to ensure confidentiality and emphasize the absence of right or wrong answers, this tendency may have influenced the data collected.

Reflecting this study, future research should also challenge the notion that pressure uniformly discourages internal whistleblowing. There are certain conditions where pressure discourages individuals from reporting violations through internal channels, but there are also specific

circumstances where pressure acts as a motivating factor for employees to not remain silent when witnessing violations within the organizational environment. Further investigation into the dual nature of stress-related emotions in this context could elucidate the conditions under which pressure might positively or negatively affect whistleblowing intentions. It should also extend beyond the banking sector to explore the dynamics of organizational politics and internal whistleblowing across different industries. Such inquiries would deepen our understanding of the intricate interplay between organizational environment, employee perceptions, and whistleblowing behaviors.

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