

The Role of Political Behavior Effective Communication in Team Collaboration and Success

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of political behavior and effective communication in shaping team collaboration and overall success within organizations. Specifically, it examines how political dynamics, when managed appropriately, can influence trust-building, conflict resolution, decision-making, and team cohesion. The research highlights that effective communication, characterized by openness, transparency, and bidirectional dialogue, serves as a critical moderator that mitigates the negative effects of internal politics while strengthening collaboration and goal alignment. Data was collected through surveys of 150 employees across departments and complemented by in-depth interviews. Regressive analysis indicates that teams demonstrating high-quality communication practices are more resilient to political challenges, achieve stronger collaboration, and report higher performance outcomes. Furthermore, the study underscores the relevance of modern communication tools and strategies in both remote and in-person environments, emphasizing their role in fostering trust, problem-solving, and long-term team effectiveness. The findings offer both theoretical and practical implications, suggesting that organizational leaders can enhance team success by promoting transparent communication practices while carefully managing political behavior in complex workplace settings.

INTRODUCTION

In today's complex and dynamic work environments, team collaboration is essential for achieving organizational success (Leykum et al., 2025; Venemyr, 2025). Two major factors that shape the effectiveness of teamwork are political behavior and effective communication (Shepherd et al., 2020). Political behavior, the strategic actions individuals take to gain power, build alliances, and influence others, can either strengthen or disrupt team cohesion depending on how it is managed. Political behavior, sometimes defined as any process by which individuals and groups seek, acquire, and maintain power, is pervasive in modern corporations (Shepherd et al., 2020). Examples can range from activities as significant as negotiating for a multi-million-dollar commitment to a new project to those as mundane as determining who will obtain a corner office as predatory as deliberately attempting to derail another's career to those as benign as deciding where the annual office party will be held. Meanwhile, effective communication ensures that ideas, concerns, and feedback flow freely, fostering understanding and minimizing misunderstandings. Together, these

elements play a critical role in building trust, resolving conflicts, enhancing decision-making, and maintaining healthy team dynamics (Cheng et al., 2025; Evans et al., 2025). This essay argues that political behavior and effective communication are indispensable for successful team collaboration, directly influencing whether a team thrives or struggles (Leykum et al., 2025; Taras, 2025). At the same time, effective communication serves as the foundation upon which successful collaboration is built. Clear, open, and transparent communication fosters trust, minimizes misunderstandings, aligns team goals, and facilitates swift conflict resolution. It provides a framework through which political behavior can either be positively directed toward team objectives or mitigated when it threatens team stability. Without effective communication, political behavior can quickly devolve into harmful actions that undermine collaboration, disrupt workflow, and negatively affect overall team success (Juskevicius et al., 2023). Despite the clear importance of both political behavior and communication, there is a noticeable gap in existing research that explores their combined impact on team collaboration and performance (Juskevicius et al., 2023). Many studies have examined the effects of organizational politics and communication practices, yet few have investigated how these elements interact within teams to shape outcomes (Ferreira-Alfaya et al., 2025; Taras, 2025). Understanding this interplay is critical for leaders and team members who seek to foster collaborative environments, manage political dynamics constructively, and ultimately drive team success (Janaka et al., 2025).

This study aims to bridge that gap by examining the relationship between political behavior, communication strategies, and team outcomes (Javidan et al., 2023). It seeks to identify how political behavior can both positively and negatively affect teams and how effective communication can act as a powerful tool to navigate political complexities (Dias-Oliveira et al., 2024). By exploring these dynamics, this research intends to offer valuable insights and practical recommendations for enhancing team collaboration and success in various organizational settings.

The objective of this study is to explore how political behavior and effective communication influence team collaboration and success within organizational settings (Wang et al., 2021). Specifically, the study aims to identify the impact of political behavior on trust, decision-making, and team dynamics, and to examine how communication strategies can mitigate negative outcomes (Khalife et al., 2024). Additionally, the study seeks to investigate the relationship between open communication and political behavior management, offering practical recommendations for fostering a positive and productive team environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Political Behavior in Organizations

Political behavior in organizations is commonly defined as actions that are not formally sanctioned but are undertaken to influence others and secure personal or organizational goals (Shepherd et al., 2020). Such behavior can take many forms, including lobbying for resources, building alliances, withholding information, or managing impressions. Although organizational politics are often perceived negatively, research suggests that political skills can be applied constructively to resolve conflicts, build consensus, and achieve strategic objectives (Javali et al., 2024; Leal D'Avila & De Montreuil Carmona, 2025). Conversely, unchecked political behavior can erode trust, foster resentment, and create dysfunctional team dynamics.

Political behavior influences team collaboration primarily through its impact on power dynamics (Ferreira-Alfaya et al., 2025). Teams characterized by high levels of self-serving politics often experience reduced morale, lower cohesion, and impaired decision-making (Harris & Bioethanol, 2025). However, when political behavior aligns with organizational goals and team objectives, it can help navigate complex interpersonal and structural environments, ultimately enhancing performance (Leal D'Avila & De Montreuil Carmona, 2025). This dual nature, both beneficial and detrimental, underscores the importance of managing political dynamics effectively. To illustrate this relationship, Figure 1 presents a conceptual model of the factors that shape political behavior within organizations, integrating both individual-level and organizational-level drivers. Political behavior within organizations is influenced by both individual-level factors (such as political skills, locus of control, and investment in the organization) and organizational-level factors (such as scarcity of resources, role ambiguity, performance evaluations, and promotions). These factors collectively determine the extent and form of political activity within teams. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework used in this study, which highlights how both individual and organizational factors shape political behavior.

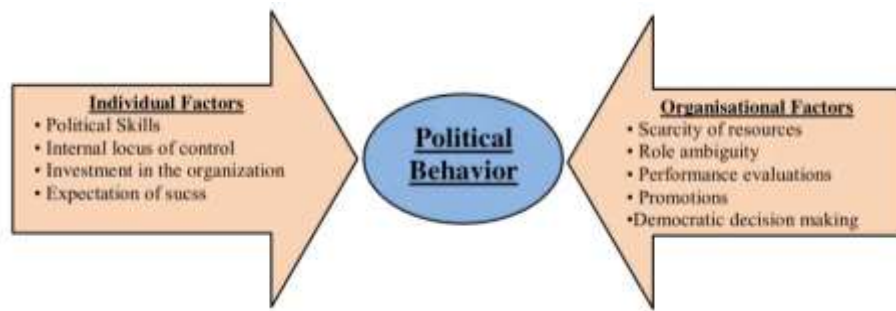


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of individual and organizational factors influencing political behavior.

2.2 Effective Communication in Team Settings

Effective communication is widely recognized as a cornerstone of successful teamwork (Aishatu et al., 2025). According to Robbins and Judge (2023), communication serves as the primary channel through which information, emotions, and intentions are transmitted among team members. Practices such as active listening, clear articulation of ideas, constructive feedback, and transparent information sharing foster trust, coordination, and collaborative problem-solving (Aishatu et al., 2024). Empirical research consistently shows that teams with high communication effectiveness perform better across multiple dimensions, including productivity, innovation, and job satisfaction. Open communication clarifies roles and expectations, reduces ambiguity, and ensures that members remain aligned with shared objectives (Hossain & Sampa, 2025). Furthermore, transparent communication functions as a mechanism for conflict resolution, enabling teams to address disagreements early before they escalate into significant barriers to collaboration.

2.3 The Interaction Between Political Behavior and Communication

While political behavior and communication have been studied extensively as independent variables, fewer studies examine how they interact (Sun et al., 2025). Evidence suggests that effective communication can serve as a buffer against the negative consequences of political behavior (Noli da Fonseca et al., 2025). For example, open and transparent dialogue makes it more difficult for individuals to engage in manipulative or deceptive tactics. Conversely, poor communication can amplify the harmful effects of political behavior. A lack of transparency, hidden agendas, and miscommunication can create fertile ground for political maneuvering and mistrust. Hochhalter et al. (2017) found that in environments characterized by poor communication, political behavior was more likely to lead to negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, turnover, and lower team performance (Wu et al., 2017). On the other hand, effective communication can transform political behavior into a productive force (Aishatu et al., 2025). When diverse perspectives are openly shared and debated, political dynamics can stimulate innovation, critical thinking, and strategic problem-solving (Motsamai & Onyenakeya, 2025). In this way, communication does not eliminate politics but channels it toward constructive outcomes.

2.4 Gaps in Literature

Despite extensive research, significant gaps remain in understanding the combined influence of political behavior and communication on team collaboration (Taam et al., 2024). Much of the existing literature treats political behavior as inherently negative and communication as inherently positive, without fully considering the nuanced ways in which the two interact (Sampa & Hossain, 2024). Moreover, there is a lack of comparative studies across different team contexts, such as virtual versus in-person teams, or across cultural environments where norms surrounding communication and politics may differ substantially (Leal D'Avila & De Montreuil Carmona, 2025). Another underexplored area concerns the long-term effects of political behavior and communication patterns on sustained team performance and resilience. Most existing studies adopt a short-term or cross-sectional approach, leaving questions about how these dynamics evolve over time (Sridhar et al., 2024). The present study addresses these gaps by investigating how political behavior and communication interact to shape trust, collaboration, and performance outcomes within teams. By integrating insights from both economic-rational and socio-political perspectives, this research contributes to a more holistic understanding of team dynamics in contemporary organizations. As summarized in Table 1, although recent studies

(e.g., Javidan et al., 2023; DeBode et al., 2024; Arad et al., 2025; Kush et al., 2025) provide valuable insights into political behavior and communication in teams, important gaps remain. Specifically, limited attention has been given to how political behavior and communication interact in shaping team collaboration and long-term performance. This study addresses these gaps by developing an integrated framework that examines communication as a moderating factor in politically complex team environments.

Table 1: Summary of Literature Gaps and Contribution of Proposed Study

Area of Research	Existing Studies	Identified Gaps / Limitations	How This Study Addresses the Gap
Political behavior in organizations	Javidan et al. (2023) examine how political polarization in teams undermines trust and collaboration and highlight empathy-building strategies as mitigation.	Limited empirical studies explore how positive political behavior can be harnessed in team contexts.	Explores both beneficial and detrimental political behavior's influence on trust, cohesion, and collaboration.
Effective communication in teams	Arad, Grubiak, and Penczynski (2025) investigate how team communication affects individual reasoning and decisions.	Few studies link communication quality with political behavior within teams.	Examines communication as a moderator/channelling mechanism influencing the impact of political behavior.
Interaction between politics and communication	DeBode, Fox, and McSweeney (2024) analyze how political polarization in top management teams affects strategic decision-making.	Scarce integrated models exploring how communication buffers or amplifies political dynamics in team outcomes.	Develops a combined framework of political behavior and communication influencing team collaboration and innovation.
Communication network structure and team performance	Kush et al. (2025) show how communication network characteristics like density and centralization influence shared social identity and group performance.	Need for deeper understanding of structural communication factors that moderate political behavior dynamics.	Incorporates network structure insights to explore how communication patterns interact with political behavior in teams.
Contextual variations (e.g., virtual vs. in-person teams)	Javidan et al. (2023) looked at polarization pre- and during COVID-19, indicating shifts in workplace political dynamics.	Limited comparative analyses across virtual and in-person team environments regarding political behavior and communication.	Investigates these dynamics across remote and co-located team settings, considering modern communication tools.
Long-term outcomes & innovation	Many studies remain short-term and cross-sectional; Arad et al. (2025) focus on decision-making effects in the moment.	Lack of longitudinal, innovation-focused research linking political behavior, communication, and sustained team performance.	Employs both quantitative and qualitative longitudinal methods to evaluate communication's moderating role in political behavior on collaboration, especially in innovation-critical contexts like NPD.
Proposed Study	Builds on recent findings on political dynamics and communication within teams, including polarization effects and network communication patterns.	Little research explicitly models political communication as a moderating factor for team collaboration and innovation.	Bridges this gap using surveys, interviews, and regression analysis to test how communication quality manages political behavior and fosters collaborative success in both remote and in-person NPD teams.

2.5 Hypotheses Development

Based on the theoretical framework and literature review, this study develops a set of hypotheses that explore the relationship between political behavior, communication, and team collaboration.

H1: Political behavior has a significant impact on team trust and collaboration.

H1a: Positive political behavior (e.g., alliance building, consensus seeking) is positively associated with team trust and collaboration.

H1b: Negative political behavior (e.g., manipulation, self-serving actions) is negatively associated with team trust and collaboration.

H2: Political behavior influences team performance.

H2a: Positive political behavior contributes to higher team performance.

H2b: Negative political behavior reduces team performance.

H3: Effective communication is positively associated with team collaboration and performance.

H3a: Open and transparent communication enhances trust and cohesion among team members.

H3b: Effective communication improves decision-making and reduces conflict in teams.

H4: Effective communication moderates the relationship between political behavior and team outcomes.

H4a: Effective communication reduces the negative impact of harmful political behavior on collaboration and performance.

H4b: Effective communication amplifies the positive effects of constructive political behavior on collaboration and performance.

H5: The combined effect of political behavior and communication influences team innovation and long-term success.

H5a: Teams with high-quality communication and well-managed political behavior demonstrate higher levels of innovation.

H5b: Teams lacking effective communication experience greater conflict and reduced resilience when political behavior is present.

2.6 Theoretical Framework & Contribution

Several theoretical models provide insight into the relationship between political behavior, communication, and team performance. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) emphasizes that organizational relationships are built on reciprocal exchanges; when communication is open and political behavior is perceived as fair, trust is strengthened, leading to greater collaboration (Ren et al., 2025). Similarly, Tuckman's Model of Group Development (1965) underscores the role of communication in moving teams from the "forming" stage through "storming," "norming," and "performing" (Ifield & Yang, 2022). Political behavior often emerges most prominently during the storming phase, and effective communication is essential for teams to progress beyond it. Much of the literature on organizational politics suggests that high levels of perceived politics are associated with lower job satisfaction, reduced commitment, and poorer performance (Hossain & Sampa, 2025). Additionally, organizational politics is linked to heightened stress, negligent behavior, and workplace aggression (Iddrisu, 2025). At the team level, such political dynamics often manifest rivalry and competition, diminishing collective effectiveness and trust (Leal D'Avila & De Montreuil Carmona, 2025).

Building on these theoretical foundations, this study contributes to the literature by integrating political behavior and communication into a single framework of team collaboration (Javali et al., 2024). While Social Exchange Theory highlights the importance of fairness and reciprocity, and Tuckman's model emphasizes communication across developmental stages, few studies have explicitly examined how communication moderates the effects of political behavior on team dynamics and outcomes (Javidan et al., 2023). This research addresses that gap by demonstrating how transparent, bidirectional communication can mitigate the harmful consequences of organizational politics while amplifying its constructive aspects. In doing so, the study extends existing theory by showing that communication not only facilitates collaboration but also serves as a critical boundary condition that shapes whether political behavior strengthens or undermines team success (Mirian et al., 2025).

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of how political behavior and communication influence team collaboration and overall success within organizations. The mixed-methods approach facilitates data triangulation, allowing the study to capture measurable trends through quantitative analysis while also exploring in-depth insights via qualitative observations. This dual approach is particularly valuable in understanding team dynamics, as it accounts for both internal team interactions and external activities that may affect performance. Additionally, this research contributes to the limited empirical literature on political behavior within management team settings, addressing the need to understand how power dynamics among managers influence team effectiveness.

3.2 Data Collection

Data were collected using an online survey distributed through Google Forms to participants affiliated with Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology, China. The survey included structured questionnaires designed to capture demographic information, perceptions of political behavior, communication quality, and team dynamics. Questions employed Likert scales, multiple-choice formats, and open-ended items to enable both quantitative measurement and qualitative insights. The use of an online platform allowed for efficient data collection while ensuring participant anonymity and convenience.

3.3 Sampling Design and Sample Size Rationale

The study employed a purposive sampling technique, targeting individuals with experience in organizational teams and managerial contexts. A total of 150 respondents participated, providing sufficient data for statistical analysis while capturing a range of perspectives on team interactions and political behavior. The sample size was determined based on the need for reliable regression analysis and the practical constraints of reaching participants within the university context. By focusing on a specific, relevant population, the study ensures that the findings are grounded in real organizational experiences, although generalization beyond similar contexts should be made with caution.

3.4 Analytical Techniques

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression to examine the relationships between demographic factors, political behavior, communication practices, and team outcomes. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the central tendencies and variability of the variables, while regression analysis identified significant predictors of team performance and dynamics. Qualitative data from open-ended survey items were analyzed thematically to capture participants' nuanced perspectives on political behavior and communication within teams. The integration of both analytical approaches enabled a robust assessment of patterns, relationships, and contextual insights, strengthening the validity and reliability of the study findings.

3.5 Questionnaire Inclusion

To ensure transparency, reproducibility, and research rigor, the full questionnaire used in this study is provided in Appendix A. This inclusion supports future research replication and allows scholars to adapt or extend the instrument in similar contexts.

Table 2: Appendix

Question	Measurement
Are you currently working in a team?	Measure on a scale from (1: Yes, 2: No)
How long have you worked in your current organization?	Measure on a scale from (1: less than 1 year, 2: 1–3 years, 3: 4–6 years, 4: more than 6 years)
How would you describe your current team environment?	Measure on a scale from (1: Very collaborative, 2: Somewhat collaborative, 3: Competitive, 4: Politically charged, 5: Unclear)
Do you feel that informal politics influence decisions in your team?	Measure on a scale from (1: Often, 2: Sometimes, 3: Rarely, 4: Never, 5: Not sure)
When someone in your team takes credit for others' work, how is it usually handled?	Measure on a scale from (1: Ignored, 2: Discussed privately, 3: Reported to leadership, 4: Team addresses it openly, 5: Doesn't happen in my team)
If a team member disagrees with the team leader, how likely are they to speak up?	Measure on a scale from (1: Very likely, 2: Likely, 3: Unsure, 4: Unlikely, 5: Very unlikely)
Have you ever witnessed or experienced favoritism in project assignments?	Measure on a scale from (1: Often, 2: frequently, 3: Occasionally, 4: Rarely, 5: Never)
What do you believe most improves collaboration in a politically active team?	Measure on a scale from (1: Strong leadership, 2: Clear communication channels, 3: Defined roles and responsibilities, 4: Team-building activities, 5: Anonymous feedback systems)

RESULTS

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables based on responses from 150 participants. The results indicate that most variables cluster around moderate values on their respective scales. For example, the mean age category was 2.887 (SD = 1.378), while gender had a mean of 2.067 (SD = 0.783), reflecting the distribution of male, female, and other respondents. Work-related characteristics, including job descriptions (Mean = 2.613, SD = 1.128), department (Mean = 2.940, SD = 1.391), years of experience (Mean = 2.520, SD = 1.116), and duration worked (Mean = 2.647, SD = 1.075), suggest a diverse but balanced sample. Team-related perceptions, such as the team environment (Mean = 2.920, SD = 1.421), the influence of politics on success (Mean = 3.013, SD = 1.375), and whether the team takes credit (Mean = 2.673, SD = 1.167), also reflect moderate tendencies, highlighting both positive and challenging aspects of team collaboration. Furthermore, variables such as the ability to speak up (Mean = 2.953, SD = 1.363), leadership within teams (Mean = 2.860, SD = 1.390), and project assignments (Mean = 2.947, SD = 1.375) indicate that participants generally rated these elements moderately. Finally, the measure of whether collaboration improves (Mean = 2.807, SD = 1.418) also suggests balanced views, with variation across respondents. Overall, the descriptive statistics provide an initial overview of the sample's demographic, experiential, and perceptual characteristics, setting the foundation for further regression and correlation analyses.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	150	2.887	1.378	1	5
Gender	150	2.067	0.783	1	3
Job Descriptions	150	2.613	1.128	1	4
Department	150	2.940	1.391	1	5
Year of Experience	150	2.520	1.116	1	4
Working in a team	150	1.400	0.492	1	2
Duration worked	150	2.647	1.075	1	4
Team environment	150	2.920	1.421	1	5
Politics in fluenced~s	149	3.013	1.375	1	5
Team takes credit	150	2.673	1.167	1	5
Team lead	150	2.860	1.390	1	5
Speak up	150	2.953	1.363	1	5
Project assignment	150	2.947	1.375	1	5
Improves collaborat~n	150	2.807	1.418	1	5

The correlation matrix in Table 4 presents the relationships among the study variables. As expected, most demographic variables, including age, gender, job descriptions, and years of experience, show relatively weak correlations with the outcome variable improves collaboration. Notably, age is positively correlated with department ($r = 0.371$) and team leadership ($r = 0.400$), suggesting that older respondents are more likely to hold leadership roles or be associated with departmental differences. The strongest relationship observed is between team environment and improves collaboration, with a negative correlation ($r = -0.533$), indicating that perceptions of a poor team environment are strongly associated with lower collaboration outcomes. Additionally, teams take credit ($r = 0.283$) and department ($r = 0.273$) both display positive correlations with improved collaboration, while politics influences success is moderately correlated with age ($r = 0.289$) and department ($r = 0.266$). On the other hand, variables such as speak up and project assignment exhibit weak or negative associations with collaboration. Overall, the results suggest that while demographic characteristics have limited influence, team-related dynamics, particularly perceptions of the team environment and how credit is distributed, are more closely linked to collaboration outcomes.

Table 4: Matrix of correlations

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
(1) Age	1.000													
(2) Gender	0.000	1.000												
(3) JobDescriptions	-	-	1.000											
	0.044	0.138												
(4) Department	0.371	-	-	1.00										
		0.022	0.016	0										
(5) YearofExperience	-	0.037	0.107	0.02	1.00									
	0.051			0	0									
(6) Workinginateam	0.024	-	0.065	0.03	0.03	1.000								
		0.000		8	7									
(7) Durationworked	0.065	-	0.268	0.02	0.20	-	1.00							
		0.019		5	4	0.047	0							
(8) Teamenvironment	-	-	0.055	-	-	0.058	-	1.00						
	0.221	0.038		0.36	0.02		0.04	0						
				6	1		2							
(9) Politicsinflue~s	0.289	0.043	-	0.26	0.03	0.042	0.04	-	1.00					
			0.031	6	5		0	0.18	0					
								7						
(10) teamtakescredit	0.237	0.032	-	0.17	0.02	0.009	0.06	-	-	1.00				
			0.051	4	2		2	0.24	0.06	0				
								5	9					
(11) Teamlead	0.400	-	-	0.27	-	0.030	-	-	0.21	0.08	1.00			
		0.090	0.068	6	0.07		0.03	0.09	6	9	0			
					7		2	4						
(12) Speakup	-	0.022	0.017	-	0.09	-	0.11	-	-	-	-	1.00		
	0.337			0.07	8	0.018	1	0.11	0.15	0.15	0.22	0		
				3				4	8	5	8			
(13) Projectassign~t	0.125	0.090	0.010	0.22	0.00	0.098	0.04	-	0.00	0.13	0.04	-	1.00	
				5	7		3	0.02	7	7	2	0.26	0	
								2				7		
(14) Improvescolla~n	0.200	0.011	0.051	0.27	-	0.022	0.10	-	0.18	0.28	0.14	-	0.09	1.0
				3	0.00		2	0.53	5	3	1	0.02	6	00
					7			3				6		

Table 5 reports the results of a multiple regression analysis conducted to examine the factors influencing the dependent variable, Improves collaboration. The model is based on 149 valid observations and demonstrates moderate explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.341. This indicates that approximately 34.1% of the variance in perceptions of improved collaboration can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. The overall model fit is statistically significant ($F=5.381$, $p<0.001$), confirming that the predictors, taken together, provide meaningful insights into the determinants of collaboration within teams. Among the tested predictors, team environment emerges as the strongest and most significant variable, with a coefficient of -0.474 ($p < 0.001$). This negative relationship suggests that when the overall team environment is perceived less positively, potentially reflecting conflict, lack of trust, or poor communication, the likelihood of collaboration improving decreases substantially. In contrast, a healthier and more supportive team environment appears essential for fostering stronger collaborative outcomes. This finding aligns with organizational behavior literature, which highlights that the psychological and relational climate within teams strongly shapes how members work together.

Another important predictor is team takes credit, which shows a significant positive effect on collaboration (Coef. = 0.193, $p = 0.039$). This result indicates that when credit for achievements is fairly distributed within the team, members are more likely to perceive improvements in collaboration. Conversely, when recognition is uneven or misattributed, collaboration may be undermined due to perceptions of favoritism or inequity. This underscores the role of recognition and fairness in promoting collaborative

behaviors and sustaining team morale. In contrast, several demographic and structural variables, including age, gender, job descriptions, department, years of experience, working in a team, and duration worked, do not exert statistically significant effects on collaboration. Similarly, other team-related variables such as politics influencing success, team leadership, ability to speak up, and project assignments also fail to reach significance. These non-significant findings suggest that collaboration outcomes are less dependent on demographic background or structural role, and more heavily shaped by interpersonal dynamics and the broader social context of the team. The constant term in the model is significant (Coef. = 2.666, $p = 0.002$), suggesting that even in the absence of explanatory variables, participants tend to report a moderate baseline level of collaboration improvement. Model fit indicators, including the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC = 492.286) and the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC = 534.341), provide benchmarks for evaluating alternative models but confirm that the present specification achieves reasonable explanatory accuracy. Overall, the regression results reinforce the central role of relational and recognition-based dynamics in shaping team collaboration. Specifically, they highlight that fostering a positive team environment and ensuring fair acknowledgment of contributions are critical levers for enhancing collaboration, while demographic and positional factors play a comparatively minor role. These insights provide empirical support for the theoretical argument that political behavior and communication practices within teams are decisive in determining collaborative success.

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Improves collaboration	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Age	-.019	.089	-0.22	.828	-.196	.157	
Gender	.001	.13	0.00	.996	-.256	.257	
Job Descriptions	.097	.093	1.04	.3	-.087	.281	
Department	.028	.086	0.33	.741	-.141	.197	
Year of Experience	-.051	.092	-0.55	.582	-.232	.131	
Working in a team	.106	.205	0.52	.605	-.299	.511	
Duration worked	.08	.099	0.80	.423	-.117	.276	
Team environment	-.474	.08	-5.92	0	-.632	-.315	***
Politics influenced~s	.091	.08	1.14	.255	-.067	.249	
Team takes credit	.193	.092	2.09	.039	.01	.376	**
Team lead	.06	.08	0.75	.455	-.099	.219	
Speak up	-.025	.085	-0.30	.767	-.193	.143	
Project assignment	.044	.078	0.57	.572	-.111	.199	
Constant	2.666	.856	3.12	.002	.974	4.359	***
Mean dependent var	2.812		SD dependent var	1.421			
R-squared	0.341		Number of obs	149			
F-test	5.381		Prob > F	0.000			
Akaike crit. (AIC)	492.286		Bayesian crit. (BIC)	534.341			

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

DISCUSSION

The present study sheds light on the complex interplay between political behavior, communication, and team performance in organizational settings. The findings indicate that while communication and bias awareness contribute to team outcomes, interpersonal dynamics and structural factors often have a stronger impact. Political behavior within teams can either facilitate collaboration or exacerbate conflicts, depending on how it is perceived and managed. Moreover, the observed gender differences suggest that underlying inequities may influence both participation in political interactions and the effectiveness of communication strategies. These results are consistent with existing literature emphasizing the critical role of team cohesion and interpersonal relationships in shaping workplace outcomes. However, the limited causal evidence due to the cross-sectional design indicates that these relationships should be interpreted cautiously. Additionally, cultural and organizational context likely plays a significant role in how political behavior and communication are experienced, an aspect not fully captured in this study. Overall, the findings highlight the need for organizations to pay close attention to team dynamics, communication quality, and equitable practices to optimize performance and employee satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

This study provides valuable insights into how workplace dynamics, particularly political behavior and communication, influence team collaboration and overall performance. The results indicate that team interactions, conflict management, and departmental differences significantly affect employee experiences, with gender disparities pointing to areas for equity improvement. While communication and bias awareness show some effect, structural and interpersonal factors appear to be more decisive. The study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data, cross-sectional design, and potential lack of diversity in the sample, which restricts generalizability. Future research should consider longitudinal designs, varied organizational contexts, and interventions to provide a more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics.

6.1 Practical Contribution

The study offers several practical implications for organizational management. Enhancing team communication through training programs that promote clarity, transparency, and active listening can help reduce misunderstandings and conflict. Additionally, recognizing and managing political behavior is essential to prevent negative outcomes such as favoritism, exclusion, or misaligned collaboration. Awareness of gender disparities in team outcomes also enables managers to implement strategies that ensure equitable participation and recognition. Finally, fostering positive team interactions through structured conflict resolution mechanisms and team-building initiatives can strengthen cohesion and improve overall performance.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made for organizations and researchers. Conducting longitudinal studies would allow teams to be tracked over time, providing a clearer understanding of the evolving impact of political behavior and communication. It is also important to consider cultural and contextual factors, tailoring team management and communication strategies to align with regional, cultural, and industry-specific norms. Leveraging leadership influence by training leaders to mitigate negative political behavior and promote transparent communication can further enhance team effectiveness. Implementing targeted interventions, such as workshops, mentoring, or communication programs, can strengthen collaboration, particularly in politically sensitive environments. Finally, actively promoting equity and diversity ensures fair participation in team processes and recognition of contributions, helping to create a more inclusive and high-performing workplace.

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