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## Impersonal Trust and Perceived Organizational Politics on Organizational Commitment

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**Abstract:**

*This study aims to analyze the role of impersonal trust in moderating the influence of perceived organizational politics on organizational commitment.*

*The subject of the study is the administrator of Nahdlatul Ulama Jakarta with population of 107 administrators, and the research sample consisting of 82 administrators.*

*The methodology is the structural equation modeling or partial least squares in which the data processing uses the program Smart PLS version 3.*

*The results found that perceived political organization has no effect on organizational commitment. Impersonal trusts positively affect organizational commitment.*

*Impersonal trust have no role in moderating the influence of perceived organizational politics on organizational commitment.*

**Keywords:** *Perceived Organizational Politics, Organizational Commitment, Impersonal Trust, Nahdlatul Ulama.*

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## **1. Introduction**

Organizations consist of two or more interacting, interdependent individuals who have a clear formal structure between its members to cooperate in order to achieve individual and organizational goals (George and Jones, 2011). The values, goals, and interests of individuals and groups within the organization may vary (Pfeffer, 2010). Organizational goals cannot be achieved if members do not want to contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Likewise, the members of the organization will not want to contribute to the achievement of organizational goals when the organization itself does not help members to achieve their goals (Cherrington, 1994).

On the one hand, contributions from members to the organization indicate organizational commitment within the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1991). When an organization is able to help members of the same organization to achieve its goals it means that there is trust from the members to the organization (Vanhala *et al.*, 2011). The existence of different interests or goals of individuals and organizations, if supported by the power within the organization, gives rise to politics within the organization (Vigoda, 2000). Political action will then be assessed subjectively by other members of the organization into political perceptions of the organization (Vigoda, 2000; Bernanthos, 2018; Suryanto *et al.*, 2017; Suryanto and Thalassinou, 2017).

Trust is considered important to reduce the risk of opportunistic behavior, and develop long-term orientation (Indartono, 2009). Trust is expected to provide answers to why or how organizational political perceptions and organizational commitments are related. For further investigation to identify the strength and direction of this relationship, moderation effects are used. It is expected that members of organizations with higher trust are seen to have stronger organizational perceptions and organizational commitment than those with lower scores.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is the largest non-profit religious organization in Indonesia. Non-profit organizations certainly need people who want to serve with sincerity. As a mass organization, members of NU may have interests that are in fact inconsistent with the goals of the organization. Some NU members may have personal goals and believe in NU organizations, that through NU organizations their personal goals will be achieved. It may be that they are gathering strength through the NU organization, not solely for the benefit of NU, but more for personal gain (Zen, 2004). It can be said that the trust of the structural members of the NU organization is high, because of their hope in gaining power within the organization, even more power outside the organization that is more interesting for them belonging to the NU organization. However, if their commitment to the organization is low, they will be more concerned with their own interests rather than the interests of the NU organization. Based on this phenomenon, this study will analyze the role of impersonal trust in moderating the influence of perceived organizational politics on organizational

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commitment, with the focus of the empirical study on Nahdlatul Ulama Branch Managers in DKI Jakarta.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Organizational Commitment**

According to Meyer and Allen (1991) organizational commitment is a behavior that shows the characteristics of relationships between members of the organization and their organization, whose implications will affect whether a member of the organization will survive in the organization or not. Organizational commitment is characterized by three things (Newstrom 2007), a strong sense of trust and acceptance of a person towards the goals and values of the organization, the desire of a person to make the real efforts for the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. There are three components of organizational commitment according to Meyer and Allen (1991) these being: 1) effective commitment referring to the desire to remain in the organization because they support the goals of the organization and are willing to help to achieve those goals because they *want to*; 2) continuance commitment referring to the desire of employees to remain in the organization because of the perceived economic value of staying in an organization compared with leaving the organization, because they *need to*; 3) normative commitment referring to the feelings of employees in which they feel obliged to remain in the organization because they personally feel they have a moral responsibility to the organization, because they feel *ought to*.

### **2.2 Impersonal Trust**

In the organizational context, the object of trust can be in organizations, groups or individuals (Korsgaard *et al.*, 2008). Thus, as a concept, organizational trust is learned by focusing on two things; first, trust in a particular person - a co-worker, and a manager which is called personal belief or interpersonal trust, and second, trust in systems within organizations, called trust in systems or impersonal beliefs (Shockley-Zalabak *et al.*, 2000; Maguire and Phillips, 2008). Trust in an organization in the sense of impersonal trust is an expectation of the employee in the way an organization behaves, with certain credible behavior of the organization's leadership, based on the capability and the fairness of the organization (Vanhala *et al.*, 2011).

### **2.3 Perceived Organizational Politics**

The pioneer of the concept of perceived organizational politics, Mintzberg (1983) defines perceived organizational politics as informal individual or group behavior, clustering, usually divisive, and above all, in technical terms, not legitimately elected, no accepted ideology, nor certified expertise (though it may exploit either of these). Kacmar and Ferris (1991) define perceived organizational politics as the

individual's subjective judgment of the situation he observes in the organization concerning what others do in the organization, or on the political behaviors and policies, or organizational conditions that encourage such behavior. This behavior can influence others to achieve the goals of a person or group within the organization, which may be contradictory to the goals of the organization. Vigoda (2006) argues that perceived organizational politics reflects to a sense of fairness in the distribution of resources, which can create, within the organization, the behaviors that act in the interests of the stakeholders rather than advance the organization.

### **3. Hypothesis Development**

#### **3.1 The Relationship between Perceived Organizational Politics and Organizational Commitment**

If the members of the organization, feel a high level of politics in the organization, then this will have an impact on their organizational commitment. Organizational politics applied by the organization, aims to help them to achieve organizational goals in demanding that members of the organization have a loyal and responsible attitude. In addition, organizational politics also affect organizational commitment, because the organization uses and implements its rules, policies and powers in a political manner to the member of the organization. In such circumstances, if the members of the organization feel depressed and dissatisfied with the organization, this leads to the members not having good organizational commitment or having a low commitment to the organization.

Organizational commitment is affected by the disappointment in the organization. It is closely related to the appropriateness between the value and purpose of each individual within the organization, so that the members of the organization will form a bond with the non-political organization, because then the organization in the long run will meet their needs. Thus, the high level of politics within the organization perceived by members of the organization, will have an impact on the commitment of the organization's members to the organization. Vigoda's research (2000), Chen and Indartono (2011), Utami *et al.* (2014), Butt *et al.* (2013) and Rong and Cao (2015), say that perceived organizational politics negatively affect organizational commitment. Based on the description, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

*H1: Perceived organizational politics negatively affects organizational commitment.*

#### **3.2 The Impersonal Trusts and Organizational Commitment Relationship**

If organizational members have a high level of confidence in their organization, they will be concerned about the future and success of the organization and understand their role in the organization and try to do the best in their role (Boe, 2002). Kliuchnikov (2011), Chen and Indartono (2011) and Utami *et al.* (2014) find that organizational trust is a significant predictor of organizational commitment. Members of the organization need to be confident that their efforts will generate

some benefits for themselves and the organization (Kliuchnikov, 2011). Thus, trust in the organization plays an important role within the organization, especially in creating organizational commitment. Based on the description, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

*H2: Impersonal trust positively affects organizational commitment.*

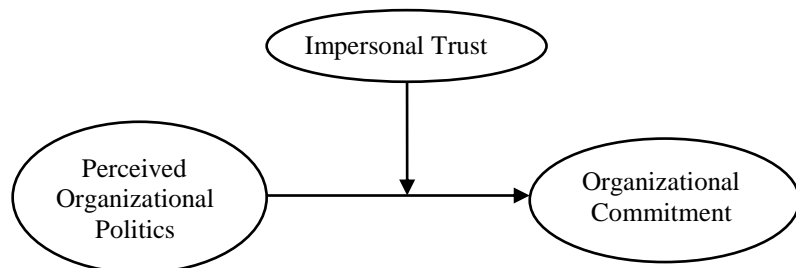
### **3.3 Impersonal Trust moderates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Politics and Organizational Commitment**

Impersonal trusts are understood as evaluating organizational trusts as perceived by employees, namely the belief that the organization will act in a favorable way, or at least not harm them (Tan and Tan, 2000; Maguire and Phillips, 2008). Trust is considered important to reduce the risk of opportunistic behavior and develop long-term alignment (Indartono, 2009). Trust is expected to provide answers to why or how perceived organizational politics and organizational commitments are related. It is expected that employees with higher trust are seen to have stronger organizational perceptions and organizational commitment than those with lower scores. Based on the description, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

*H3: Impersonal trusts play a role in moderating the influence of perceived organizational politics towards organizational commitment.*

Based on the above description, the conceptual framework can be illustrated as shown in Figure 1 below.

*Figure 1. Conceptual Conduct*



## **4. Methodology**

This research is a causal research, to analyze the role of impersonal trust in moderating the influence of perceived organizational politics on organizational commitment. The study was conducted at Jakarta Nahdlatul Ulama Board between April and June 2017. The measurement of organizational commitment variables was taken using measurements from Meyer and Allen (1991). Perceived organizational politics were measured using Kacmar and Ferris measurements (1991) and impersonal trusts measurements were taken using Vanhala *et al.* (2011). The measurement scale used in this research is the Likert scale, with the categories

being: 1) strongly disagree, 2) disagree, 3) neither agree nor disagree, 4) agree, and 5) strongly agree.

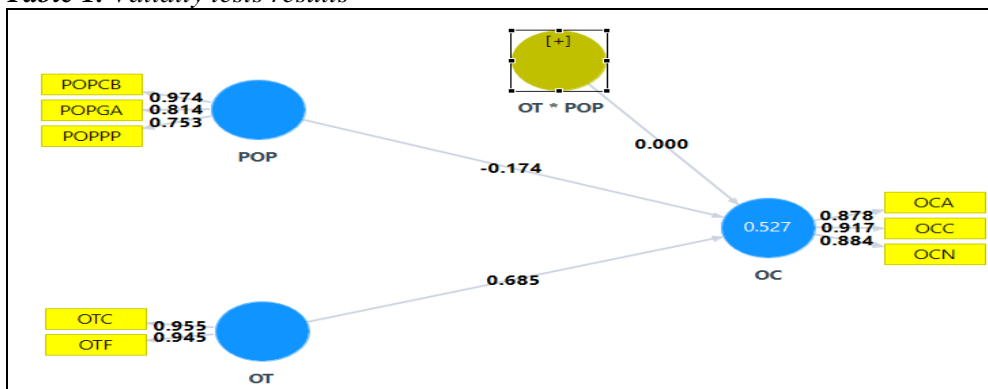
The population in this study is the Tanfidziyah Board in six branches of Nahdlatul Ulama in Jakarta 2014-2019 with 107 people. Methods of data collection used were questionnaire instruments, which were distributed to 107 NU administrators. The number of returned questionnaires which were feasible to use was 82. Furthermore, the data analysis method used in this study is Variance Based Structural Equation Modeling or PLS (Partial Least Square).

## 5. Empirical Analysis and Results

### 5.1 Measurement Evaluation (Outer) Model

*Validity test:* Validity testing is done in two ways for each construct indicator - convergent validity and discriminant validity. According to Chin in Ghozali and Latan (2015), an indicator is said to have good convergent validity if the loading factor value is greater than 0.70. The test results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Validity tests results



*Source:* Primary data processed, 2017.

Based on the test results shown in Table 1 it is seen that each loading factor has a value greater than 0.7, so it can be interpreted that research indicators have a high convergent validity. Table 2 presents the discriminant validity using the average variance extracted.

**Table 2.** Testing Discriminant Validity Using Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	AVE
OC	0.798
OT	0.902
POP	0.726

*Source:* Primary data processed, 2017.

Assessing the validity of the construct with convergent validity can also be done by looking at the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). For a good model AVE must have a value greater than 0.50. Table 2 shows that each variable has an AVE value greater than 0.5, so it can be interpreted that the research indicators have a high convergent validity.

Discriminant validity tests are assessed on the basis of cross loading measurements with their constructs. If the cross-loading indicator with the constructs is greater than the other constructs, then it is said that the discriminant validity is high. From the test results in Table 3, it is seen that cross-loading with each construct has a higher value compared with cross loading with other constructs.

**Table 3.** Discriminant Validity Testing Using Cross Loading

	OC	OT	POP
OCA	0.878	0.472	-0.267
OCC	0.917	0.700	-0.110
OCN	0.884	0.678	0.020
OTC	0.698	0.955	0.063
OTF	0.635	0.945	0.037
POPGB	-0.138	0.016	0.974
POPGA	-0.054	0.126	0.814
POPPP	-0.003	0.160	0.753

*Source:* Primary data processed, 2017.

In addition, discriminant validity can also be measured using the AVE root. If the AVE root is greater than the correlation of latent variables, then it is said to have high discriminant validity. Table 4 shows that the AVE root, 0.893, 0.950 and 0.852, has a value greater than the correlation between the latent variables, so it is said to have high discriminant validity.

**Table 4.** Discriminant Validity Testing Using AVE Root

OT * POP	OC	OT	POP
OC	0.893		
OT	0.703	0.950	
POP	-0.122	0.053	0.852

*Source:* Primary data processed, 2017.

**Reliability Test:** Reliability testing is done with composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability test aims to test the consistency of the instrument in a research model. If all values of latent variables have composite reliability or Cronbach alpha  $\geq 0.7$  it means that the construct has good reliability, or the questionnaire used as a tool in this research has been reliable or consistent as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Reliability Test**

Variable	Cronbachs Alpha	Composite Reliability
OC	0,874	0,922
OT	0,892	0,949
POP	0,854	0,887

Source: Primary data processed, 2017.

From Table 5 we can notice that each variable has a high Cronbach’s alpha and high composite reliability, exceeding 0.7, so it can be interpreted that each variable has high reliability.

**5.2 Structural Model Testing / Hypothesis Testing (Inner Model)**

Inner model testing is the development of concept-based models and theories to analyze the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables which have been described in the conceptual framework. The testing stage of the structural model (inner model) is done with the following steps:

**1. Goodness of Fit Model Test**

To assess the model accuracy, testing is done by looking at the R-square value. The result gained for the R2 value for organizational commitment (OC) is 0.527 and adjusted R2 is 0.512. These results indicate that perceived organizational politics (POP) and impersonal trust (OT) are able to contribute to organizational commitment (OC) by 51.2%. The remaining 48.8% is derived from variables not observed in current research models.

**2. Hypothesis Testing**

The significance of the parameter coefficient can be calculated from the valid indicator. If t arithmetic is greater than t Table, then the hypothesis is accepted. If the opposite happens, then the hypothesis is rejected. In addition, it can also compare the significant value that occurs with the level of uncertainty of 0.05. If the value of significance that occurs (indicated by the value of P Value) is smaller than the 0.05 level of uncertainty, then the hypothesis is accepted. If the opposite happens, then the hypothesis is rejected. From the results of the path coefficient as shown in Table 6 below, the results of the research hypothesis testing are shown.

**Table 6. Hypothesis Testing**

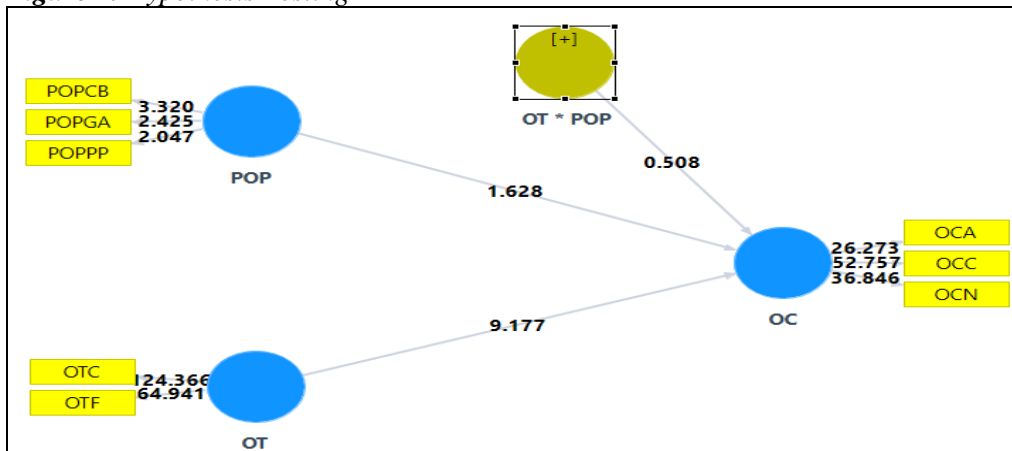
	Original Sample (O)	Standard Error (STERR)	T Statistics ( O/STERR )	P Values
OT * POP -> OC	0.000	0.000	0.508	0.612
OT -> OC	0.685	0.075	9.177	0.000
POP -> OC	-0.174	0.107	1.628	0.104

Source: Primary data processed, 2017.



Hypothesis 1 - Perceived Organizational Politics (POP) has no effect on organizational commitment (OC). This is indicated by the t-statistic value of 1.628 which is smaller than the t Table at the 0.05 level of 1.96. It can also be seen by the magnitude of P Value of 0.104 which is greater than the level of uncertainty 0.05. Hypothesis 2 - Impersonal Trust (OT) has a positive and significant effect on Organizational Commitment (OC). These findings are based on t-statistic value of 9.117 which is greater than the t Table at the 0.05 level of 1.96. It can also be analyzed by looking at the magnitude of P Value of 0.000 which is smaller than the 0.05 level of uncertainty. Hypothesis 3, Impersonal Trust (OT) is unable to moderate the influence of Perceived Organizational Politics (POP) on Organizational Commitment (OC). It is based on t-statistic value of 0.508 smaller than the t Table at the 0.05 level of 1.96. It can also be analyzed by looking at the magnitude of P value of 0.612 which is greater than the 0.05 level of uncertainty (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Hypothesis Testing



Source: Primary data processed, 2017.

## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 The Influence of Perceived Organizational Politics on Organizational Commitment

This study finds that perceived organizational politics have no effect on organizational commitment. This study supports the research of Jam *et al.* (2011), who perceived that organizational politics has no effect on organizational commitment. However, this study differs from that of Vigoda (2000), Chen and Indartono (2011), Utami *et al.* (2014), Butt *et al.* (2013), Rong and Cao (2015), who perceived organizational politics as negatively affecting organizational commitment.

The respondents, who are the members of the NU DKI Branch Office in Jakarta, perceive that the organizational politics in NU is not too negative. It is possible

because NU is a non-profit religious organization whose members are volunteers. Volunteer workers in NU terms means they are willing to progress the NU, they are sincere, so that even if someone is looking for support, ask the other member to support and find the masses, but it is only a few, mainly because of the dynamics from outside the organization, so that the perceived organizational politics is not too negative. In addition, the respondents perceive that the organizational commitment of NU members is relatively high. Therefore, though their organizational commitment is high, it is not caused by the perceived organizational politics that happens in the organization.

## **6.2 The Influence of Impersonal Trusts on Organizational Commitment**

The study finds that the impersonal trust positively affects organizational commitment. This study supports the researches by Utami *et al.* (2014), Baek and Jung (2014), Kliuchnikov (2011), Chen and Indartono (2011), Zeffane *et al.* (2011) and Bouckenoghe (2012), that organizational trust has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

Within the organization of Nahdlatul Ulama, high organizational commitment is influenced more by members' trust in their organization than the existence of political organizational perceptions. Members of the organization are convinced that without having to plot or scheme, NU organization will be capable and will treat the members fairly to achieve the expectations and ambitions of its members.

The problem within the NU organization is finding the funds to conduct operational activities, because in the NU organization there is no fixed source of funds to support any NU activities. However, the board is always confident, for example by making proposals, and submitting them to an institution under the NU name, that the funds will be obtained, so that activities can run. If the funds do not exist, then the activities will be funded automatically from the pockets of the administrators themselves. They believe that now they are indeed struggling for the establishment of this organization and believe that someday they will get something from their current work in the NU organization.

## **6.3 The Role of Impersonal Trusts in Moderating the Influence of Perceived Organizational Politics on Organizational Commitment**

The results find that impersonal trust is not able to moderate the perceived organizational politics on organizational commitment, although impersonal trust has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment. This is probably caused by, in the case of NU organization, not many citizens perceiving the existence of a political game. The active citizens are struggling in NU more because they feel they have an obligation to serve instead of seeking benefit for themselves and the group. Thus, although the impersonal trust of members of the NU organization is strong, it does not have any impact in an attempt to strengthen or

weaken the influence between perceived organizational politics on organizational commitment. NU residents believe that without any deception and as long as they are confident and devoted to NU, they believe that one day they will get a response to what is being done now.

## **7. Conclusions and recommendations**

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that perceived organizational politics has no effect on organizational commitment while impersonal trust has a positive effect on organizational commitment. Impersonal trust does not play a role in moderating the influence of perceived organizational politics towards organizational commitment. Based on this research, there are several suggestions which could be made as follows:

- ✓ When viewed from organizational practices and policies, it is relatively low perceived, which mean that NU organization does not indicate the existence of organizational politics while the behavior of colleagues and freedom of speech is relatively moderate.
- ✓ As a non-profit organization whose members are volunteers, there should be no high levels of organizational politics. There is only the potential that peer co-operation and freedom of speech increases relatively to a society being more democratic.
- ✓ Organizational politics will occur in NU because of dynamics outside the organization and if not vigilant, this condition can lead to intrigues and rifts between members. In its position as a non-profit organization, it will be very easy to cause divisions.
- ✓ As a non-profit organization, it requires sincere members from the community who work for the progress of the organization. This would be interesting to analyze in further research and look at sincere work or personality factors as variables.

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