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# Personality, Values and Career Concerns As Individual Antecedents of Workplace Influence Tactics

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**Abstract**

Studies showed that using influence tactics and polical behavior can be beneficial to employees because they affect human resource decisions such as performance evaluation and promotion decisions (Higgins et al., 2003). However, the type and frequency of the influence tactics employees engage in differ. Previous research has indicated employees' personality, motives, needs and career concerns as the employee-related antecedents of political behavior (Steensma, 2007; Zanzi et al., 1991). In the present study, we intended to examine the employee related antecedents of political behavior through invesigating the effects of personality, values and career concerns on the use of influence tactics. For that purpose, 294 full-time employees working in various firms were surveyed using the Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, and Kentle, 1991), Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001), Career Concerns Scale (adapted from Zanzi et al., 1991), and Political Tactics Questionnaire (Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson, 1980). The results of this study showed that, the internal career concern of skill development (learning new techniques, developing competencies, etc.) had stronger positive relations with the influence tactics of coalition and persuasion than the external career concerns (economic concerns), which had a weaker relationship with persuasion and an inverse relation with coalition building. With regard to the personality factors, the individuals who were low in conscientiousness and high in neuroticism were found to be the most engaged with various influence tactics at work. Finally, only the self-enhancement value dimension acted as a moderator between the personality dimension of conscientiousness and influence tactics, such that when this value was highly endorsed, the increase in the conscientiousness levels of individuals decreased their tendencies to engage in influence tactics. Moreover, an opposite relationship was found regarding the moderating effect of self-enhancement on the relationship between the two career concerns of skill development and autonomy on influence tactics. Hence, for those who endorsed self-enhancement at a high level, the presence of these career concerns increased the likelihood of engaging in influence tactics at work.

**Keywords:** Career Concerns, Portrait Values, Big Five Personality Factors, Influence Tactics

# İş Ortamında Kullanılan Etkileme Taktiklerinin Bireysel Öncelleri Olarak Kişilik, Değerler ve Kariyer Hedefleri

## Özet

Araştırmalar, etkileme taktikleri ve politik davranışların performans değerlendirme ve terfi kararları gibi insan kaynakları süreçlerini etkileyerek çalışanlara fayda sağladığını ortaya koymuştur (Higgins ve ark., 2003). Yapılan çalışmalar, çalışanların kişilik özelliklerinin, ihtiyaçlarının ve kariyer hedeflerinin politik davranışın birey kaynaklı öncelleri arasında olduğunu ortaya koymuştur (Steensma, 2007; Zanzi ve ark., 1991). Bu çalışmada politik davranışın çalışan kaynaklı öncellerine ışık tutmak amacıyla kişilik özellikleri, değerler ve kariyer hedeflerinin bu etkileme taktikleriyle ilişkisi mercek altına alınmıştır. Bu amaçla, farklı firmalarda tam zamanlı olarak çalışan 294 kişi Büyük Beşli Kişilik Envanteri (John, Donahue ve Kentle, 1991), Portre Değerler Ölçeği (Schwartz ve ark., 2001), Kariyer Hedefleri Ölçeği (Zanzi ve ark., 1991) ve Politik Taktikler Ölçeğini (Kipnis, Schmidt ve Wilkinson, 1980) doldurmuştur. Analiz sonuçları, içsel bir kariyer hedefi olan beceri gelişiminin (yeni teknikler öğrenmek, yetkinlikleri geliştirmek) dışsal kariyer hedeflerine göre (ekonomik hedefler) koalisyon oluşturma ve ikna politik davranışlarıyla daha güçlü pozitif ilişkiye sahip olduğu görülmüştür. Bunun yanı sıra, düşük sorumluluk ve yüksek nevrotiklik kişilik özellikleri sergileyen çalışanların iş ortamında politik davranışlar sergilemeye en yatkın profiller olduğu araştırma sonuçlarınca ortaya konmuştur. Öz-geliştirme değeri yüksek olan bireylerden yüksek sorumluluk sahibi olanların politik davranış sergileme yaklaşımının azaldığı, bunun aksine, aynı değeri yüksek düzeyde sahip olan ve beceri gelişimi ile özerklik kariyer hedefine sahip bireylerin ise politik davranış sergileme yatkınlığının arttığı görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kariyer hedefleri, Portre Değerler, Büyük Beşli Kişilik Faktöleri, Etkileme Taktikleri

## Introduction

Today's organizations are organic structures in which individuals who have different goals, continually interact and communicate with each other. In these organic structures, individuals display various behaviors in order to attain different outputs. Organizational political behavior is described as employees' set of behaviors towards others in order to influence them and to attain power and resources in line with their benefits or those of their groups that represent them (Kipnis, Schmidt and Wilkinson, 1980).

Until the beginning of 1980's, there were not many systematic and/or empirical studies on organizational political behavior. Within the last 30 years, one of the most important studies on organizational political behavior, which began to attract industrial-organizational psychologists' and behavior scientists' attention, was Kipnis, et al.'s (1980) study. In their study, these researchers aimed to determine the "influence tactics" that define political behavior in organizations. They found eight dimensions of influence which were; ***assertiveness*** (using direct power over the employee in order to reach one's goals), ***ingratiation*** (influencing the target person through compliments etc. in line with one's goals to gain compliance from him/her), ***sanctions*** (using the reward and punishment systems of the organization over the target person in order to achieve one's goals), ***rationality*** (persuasion of the target person through rational suggestions and realistic evidence), ***exchange of favors*** (suggestions to give in return and/or share the benefits in the future if the target person agrees to help the agent do the task), ***upward appeal*** (efforts to make the target person obey one's directions by emphasizing that his/her goals are also supported by the higher management), ***blocking*** (forcing the target person in order to make him/her do what one wants by threatening him/her) and ***coalitions*** (efforts to persuade the target by forming an alliance with other employees). With the conduction of later studies, a new dimension was integrated into the political behavior literature called ***self-presentation*** (Higgins, Judge & Ferris, 2003) which can be summarized as the person's effort to show his/her abilities

and skills as more perfect than they actually are (Jones & Pittman, 1982). Although a lot of other new tactics are determined as additional to the ones that are mentioned above, Kipnis et al.'s (1980) tactics are still considered as up to date and the new studies are regarded as a continuation of these tactics. 8sbcy7

## Antecedents of Workplace Influence Tactics

An examination of the political behavior literature reveals two basic headings under which the antecedents of political behavior can be grouped; namely organizational and personal factors.

Ambiguity, organizational structure, and organizational climate are the most correlated organizational variables with political behavior among others (Parker, Dipboye and Jackson, 1995). Ferris and Kacmar (1992) stated that formalization, centralization, hierarchy and span of control are among the antecedents of political behavior among structural factors. According to the authors, high formalization by decreasing the uncertainty level in organizations also decreases perceptions of political behaviour. On the other hand, with the presence of a high level of centralization (whereby power and authority are concentrated at the top level of the organization), perception of political behaviour may increases among employees.

Among individual characteristics that are correlated with political behavior in the literature are social needs, sources of motivation and Machiavellian personality characteristics (Barbuto, Fritz & Marx, 2002; O'Conner & Morrison, 2001; Barbuto & Reimers, 2002). Moreover, employees' career concerns, gender, and their investment to their organization can also be listed as other individual antecedents (Barbuto & Reimers, 2002; Grams & Rogers, 1990; Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003; Robbins, 2001, Steensma, 2007).

## Influence Tactics and Career Concerns

Observational research by Luthans and his colleagues (Luthans, Hodgetts & Rosenkrantz, 1988) has discovered some relevant differences between the day-to-day behavior of managers who had successful careers (in the sense of rapid advancement) and the behavior of managers who were effective (in the sense of getting the job done and having committed and satisfied subordinates). The observation results yielded the findings that successful managers engaged much more in networking activities which included politicking, and that their rate of success was significantly related to the amount of time spent in these activities. The effectiveness of managers, on the other hand, was not related to these activities, leading Luthans to the conclusion that managers who are successful may be astute politicians but they are not necessarily effective (Zanzi, Arthur & Shamir, 1991).

Studies of organizational and professional careers (Schein, 1978; Derr, 1986) suggest that people can have career concerns other than the aspiration for advancement and promotion. Zanzi et al. (1991), identified four career concerns which are; ***personal success*** (the pursuit of standard indicators of social rank, namely recognition, status and income), ***organizational involvement*** (the career's significance to the employing organization, and how individual talents, developing and training others can affect organizational outcomes), ***skill development*** (an interest in developing personal competencies through finding the kind of work one can do best, or refining technical skills and abilities) and ***autonomy*** (pursuing an absence of rules, and freedom from organizational constraints and close supervision).

The researchers examined the relationship between these four concerns and two categories of political tactics in organizations in a sample of management school alumni. The results showed that, 'external' career concerns of personal success and organizational involvement were more strongly related to political behavior than 'internal' career concerns of skill development and autonomy (Zanzi et al., 1991).

Thus, in line with the previous findings, the following is hypothesized:

***Hypothesis 1:*** The effects of external career concerns (economic concerns) on political tactics will be stronger than that of internal career concerns (skill development and autonomy).

**Influence Tactics and Personality Traits**

Ones (2002) affirms that some personality traits have a main effect on work behaviors in particular and this behavior, in turn, shapes organizational performance. Ones, Viswesvaran, and Dilchert (2005) describe personality traits as enduring dispositions and tendencies of individuals to behave in certain ways. They clarify that personality cannot be simplified to only one solitary construct, but rather, should be acknowledged as a series of individual attributes that consistently distinguish people from one another in terms of their basic tendencies to think, feel, and act in these ways. The well recognized and widely accepted Five Factor Model of Personality (FFM) refers to personality elements that have been discerned through empirical research. Also labeled "The Big Five," the model consists of the five dimensions of openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion/introversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism/emotional stability.

Among the Big Five factors, King, George, and Hebl (2005) speculate that concsientiousness may be an important predictor of workplace behaviors because it provides the organization and direction necessary to produce targeted behaviors. Leary and Kowalski (1990) explained that individuals are more motivated to manage impressions when they view such impressions as instrumental in achieving goals. Thus, in terms of organizational influence tactics, individuals scoring high on conscientiousness should be more likely to use rational persuasion since this tactic is consistent with a careful, practical, thorough and organized disposition. Based on this reasoning, our second hypothesis is:

***Hypotesis 2****:* Employees scoring high on conscientiousness will be more likely to adopt political tactics that emphasize rational persuasion.

Agreeable individuals, labeled through the Big Five as having qualities like empathy, consideration, friendliness, generosity, helpfulness, and optimism, are expected to demonstrate a behaviors in the realm of organizational citizenship. Agreeable individuals appreciate being liked by others and as Bolino (1999) suggests they might be inclined towards ingratiation as an influence tactic, since these individuals seek to be viewed as likable. In line with this reasoning, our third hypothesis is:

***Hypothesis 3:*** Employees scoring high on agreeableness will be more likely to adopt political tactics that emphasize ingratiation.

Extroverts exude energy and enthusiasm, and they tend to be more socially comfortable and assertive than their more reserved counterparts. Therefore, theoretically speaking, their outgoing nature should make them more prone to cooperate and be expressive about their opinions when interarcting with colleagues, and more willing to engage in behaviors that would benefit the organization. Thus, in terms of influence tactics, extraverted individuals should be more likely to engage in persuasion and ingratiation. These tactics respectively require an assertive expression of one's ideas as well as connecting with or engaging others in a positive, friendly and manner which reflects the behaviors of extraverts (Watson & Clark, 1997). Thus, our fourth hypothesis is:

***Hypothesis 4:*** Employees who score high on extraversion will be more likely to adopt political tactics that emphasize ingratiation and persuasion.

King, George, and Hebl (2005) speculated that individuals who are low on emotional stability (high on neuroticism) would be more likely to be consumed by their own anxieties and stress, and in need of help. Well-adjusted, secure individuals are less prone to worry, and it seems valid that this characteristic would enable them to have the presence of mind to behave in a manner that would be of benefit to the organization and be assertive and rational in their interactions with others. Based on this reasoning, our fifth hypothesis is:

***Hypotesis 5:*** Employees who score high in emotional stability will be more likely to adopt political tactics that emphasize persuasion.

Individuals who are high in openness to experience are inclined to have innovative tendencies think outside the box, feel free to challenge the status quo, and are less afraid of accepting new ideas, or moving away from tradition or the current state of affairs. Therefore, it could be deduced that their creative tendencies can be a tool to persuade and influence other people especially in times of change and they could be the ones to rally for the cause instead of resisting. In this study, we aimed to conduct the analyses related with the openness to experience dimension and influence tactics for exploration and did not form a hypothesis regarding this relationship.

**Infleunce Tactics and Values**

The theory of basic human values defines values as desirable, trans-situational goals that vary in importance as guiding principles in people's lives (Rokeach, 1973). By using multi-item responses, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) proposed a typology of values that corresponds to three universal needs of individuals: biological, interactional and societal needs. These researchers derived ten motivationally distinct types of values from those universal requirements: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism. Furthermore, they organized those value types along two bipolar dimensions which lets us summarize the oppositions between competing values. As Figure 1 shows, one dimension contrasts *'openness to change'* and *'conservation'* values. This dimension captures the conflict between values that emphasize independence of thought, action, and feelings and readiness for change (self-direction, stimulation) and values that emphasize order, self-restriction, preservation of the past, and resistance to change (security, conformity, tradition). The second dimension contrasts *'self-transcendence'* and *'self-enhancement'* values. This dimension captures the conflict between values that

emphasize concern for the welfare and interests of others (universalism, benevolence) and values that emphasize pursuit of one's own interests and relative success and dominance over others (power, achievement, hedonism).

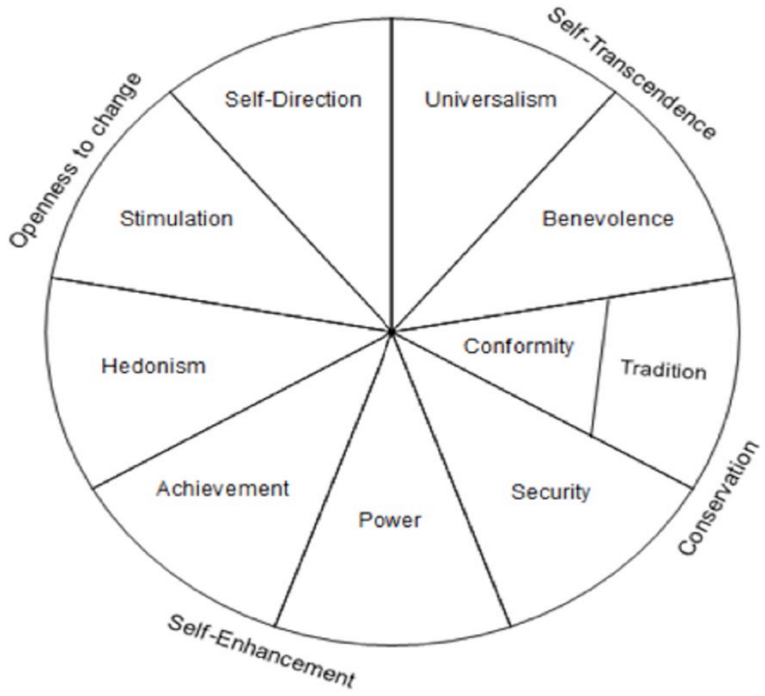



**Figure 1.** Schwartz's Theoretical Model of Ten Values (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000).

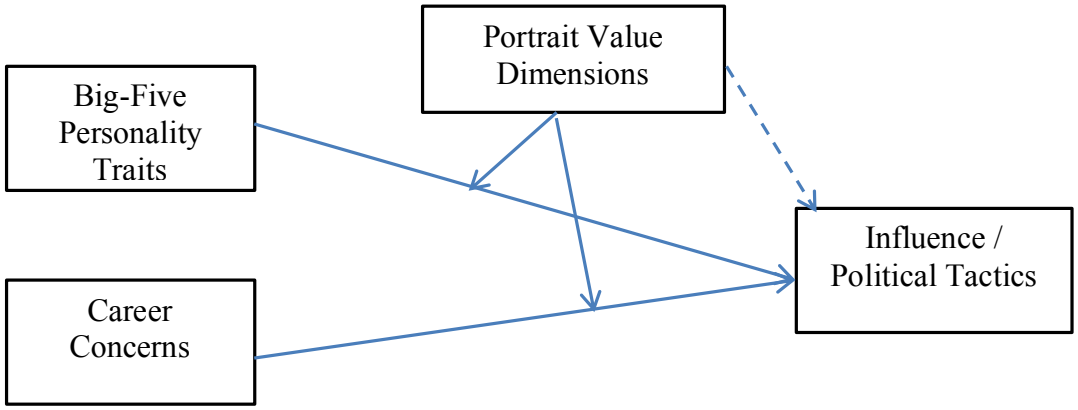
Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss (1999) claimed that work values could be organized corresponding to Schwartz's (1992) four higher order dimensions of universal values: intrinsic, or self-actualization values express openness to change values (including values such as personal growth, autonomy, interest, creativity, challenge, and intellectual stimulation etc.); extrinsic, or security/material values express conservation values (mostly related to the work aspects such as pay, security and work environment); social, or relational values express the pursuit of self-transcendence (relational component includes interacting with people, humanity component includes altruistic or contribution to society); and status, or power values express self-enhancement values (including prestige, authority, influence etc.)

Thus, in line with the above literature review, we hypothesize that among the sample of the present study:

***Hypothesis 6:*** The effects of Conservation and Self-Enhancement work values on political tactics will be stronger than those of Openness to Change and Self-Transcendence values.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the effects of three individual antecedents; namely career objects, personality and values on the political behavior of employees. Moreover, we also aimed to investigate the moderating effect of the value dimensions on the relationship between personality and career concerns and political tactics. The general framework showing the research model of the study is presented below in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: The theoretical model of the research**:




## Method

### Participants

294 full-time employees working in various sectors (e.g.: finance and banking, IT and telecommunications, retail, consultancy, academics and education, production) took part in our study. The demographic characteristics of the participants can be seen on Table 1.

**Table 1: The Demographic Characteristics of the Participants**

| | Mean | Median | Mod | Sd | Range | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age** | 33.55 | 32 | 26 | 8.89 | 44 | |
| **Tenure in Org.** | 5.11 | 3.50 | 1 | 5.46 | 40 | |
| **Tenure in Dept.** | 5.02 | 3.50 | 1 | 5.50 | 40 | |
| **Work Experience** | 10.78 | 8.00 | 2 | 8.6 | 43 | |
| | **Male** | **Female** | **Missing** | | | |
| **Gender** | 121 | 167 | 6 | | | |
| | **Married** | **Single** | **Divorced** | **Missing** | | |
| **Marital Status** | 156 | 120 | 11 | 7 | | |
| | **PhD** | **Masters** | **University** | **High School** | **Compulsory S.** | **Missing** |
| **Education Level** | 28 | 69 | 130 | 51 | 9 | 7 |

**Measures**

**The Big Five Inventory (BFI):** The 44-item BFI is a self-report inventory developed by John, Donahue, and Kentle (1991) and theoretically based on the Big Five Model of the Personality. The Turkish version of the inventory was adapted to Turkish culture with the research of Alkan (2007). A six-point scale ranging from 1 "Totally disagree" to 6 "Totally Agree" was used in our study. The Cronbach α coefficients of the subscales showed satisfactory results when we excluded only a few of the items that decrease the reliability coefficients. The Cronbach α coefficient for Extraversion was found to be .71 excluding item 31; for Agreeableness it was .69 when deleting item 22. Openness subscale was found to be reliable with a Cronbach α coefficient of .79. The reliability coefficients of the neuroticism was calculated as .70 (excluding item 34), and conscientiousness as .74 (excluding items 13 and 3).

**Portrait Values Questionnaire:** The 40-item questionnaire developed by Schwartz et al. (2001) is a well-known measurement tool in Turkey and previously used in different Turkish studies. Participants were asked to evaluate the extend they resemble to the person described in the statement of each item with a 6 point scale ranging between 1 "not like me at all" and 6 "very much like me". The questionnaire was adapted to Turkish culture by Demirutku (2007). In this study the four main dimensions instead of 10 sub-dimensions were taken into consideration since the sub-dimensions yielded low reliability values. The reliability coefficients were found to be satisfactory for Conservation (Cronbach α: .72), Self-Transcendence (Cronbach α: .76) and Self-Enhancement (Cronbach α:. 67). As Cronbach α calculated for Openness to Change was low, we did not use this dimension for further analyses.

**Career Concerns Scale:** To measure the career concerns that motivate employees' behaviors at work, the 19-item questionnaire adapted to Turkish from Zanzi, Arthur and Shamir's study (1991) was used. This scale was used previously in a Turkish sample (Arıkan, 2011). Participants evaluated the items using a six-point scale 1 "not important at all" to 6 "very much important". An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the factor structure of the questionnaire, resulting with the four dimensions of economic concerns, autonomy, skill-development and status. However, the status dimension was found to have a low reliability coefficient and was thus omitted from further analyses. The other three dimensions were found to be reliable and used in further hypothesis testing.

**Influence Tactics Questionnaire:** A 28-item questionnaire was used to measure the influence tactics that the participants use as subordinates to affect their supervisors' behaviors and decisions. The items of the subscales aimed to measure Coalition, Self Presentation, Ingratiation, Upward Appeal and Exchange of Favors were taken from the Turkish version of the Kipnis, Schmidt and Wilkinson's (1980) questionnaire (Çalışkan, 2006) and the items measuring Rationalization and Assertiveness were developed by Arıkan (2011). These last two dimensions were grouped together under the heading of Persuasion for this study. The participants responded to the questionnaire with a six-point scale ranging from 1 "Totally Disagree" to 6 "Totally Agree". The Cronbach α coefficients revealed the subscales to be reliable. The reliability coefficients of the political tactics subscales can thus be presented respectively: Exchange of Favors:.87; Self Presentation:.89; Rationalization and Assertiveness:.73, Ingratiation:.82, Upward Appeal:.84, and Coalition:.80.

**Procedure:** The survey was administered in two ways. 99 of the participants were reached online by using one of the well-known survey services on the web. The link of the survey was sent to various companies with an e-mail explaining the object, scope and the target group of the study. If the employees who received the link accepted participating in the research and also suited the target group, they were asked to click on the link of the survey and to answer all the questions. They were also requested to forward the e-mails to other employees having the similar qualifications. The rest of the data were gathered through paper-pencil version of the survey. The surveys were presented to the participants with envelopes and the completed surveys were gathered after two weeks. After controlling for the data gathering method and concluding that there was no significant difference, the online and paper-pencil data were merged for hypothesis testing.

## Results

**Correlations among the variables:**

As can be seen on Table 3, the Pearson r coefficients for all relations are from low to moderate. It is also apparent from the table that there are also significant and moderate correlations among the political tactics.

**Table 3: The Correlation Table Showing the Relationship among the Variables:**

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **raversion** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **eeableness** | .32** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **scientiousness** | .27** | .53** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **roticism** | -.22** | -.22** | -.37** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **nness** | .41** | .35** | .32** | -.17** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **n. Concerns** | .40** | .33** | .41** | -.06 | .38** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **onomy** | .05 | .06 | .04 | .11 | .22** | .36** | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| **elopment** | .30** | .19** | .24** | -.01 | .24** | .51** | .04 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| **nhancement** | .22** | .17** | .15** | .09 | .13* | .40** | .35** | .17** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| **servation** | .34** | .33** | .30** | .02 | .27** | .53** | .33** | .30** | .48** | 1 | | | | | | |
| **ranscendence** | .38** | .43** | .38** | -.03 | .42** | .58** | .21** | .40** | .29** | .66** | 1 | | | | | |
| **lition** | -.02 | -.17** | -.17** | .27** | -.19** | -.01 | -.03 | .17** | .06 | .00 | .05 | 1 | | | | |
| **ratiation** | .01 | -.14* | -.21** | .20** | -.08 | .01 | .06 | .14* | .09 | -.02 | -.00 | .46** | 1 | | | |
| **vard Appeal** | .01 | -.25** | -.20** | .16** | -.01 | .02 | .09 | .12* | .01 | -.04 | -.13** | .48** | .53** | 1 | | |
| **ionalization** | .26** | .13* | .10 | -.02 | .12* | .31** | .08 | .39** | .14* | .16** | .29** | .35** | .35** | .32** | 1 | |
| **resentation** | -.08 | -.29** | -.28** | .22** | -.19** | -.12 | .00 | -.00 | .09 | -.08 | -.18** | .57** | .61** | .56** | .18** | 1 |
| **. Favors** | -.03 | -.33** | -.36** | .30** | -.08 | -.12 | .21** | -.24** | .20** | -.04 | -.19** | .33** | .52** | .53** | .09 | .64** |

*p<.05, **p<.01

### Career Concerns and Influence Tactics

To test ***H₁,*** Multiple Regression Analyses were conducted by using career concerns as independent variables and each of the tactics as dependent variables. The multiple regression analyses showed that some of the political tactics were affected by career concerns of the participants. Autonomy was found to have a positive association with ingratiation *(β=.126, t=2.122, p<.05)*; and exchange of favors *(β=.217, t=:3.823, p<.01).* Economic concerns *(β=.137, t=2.171, <.05)* were positively related with persuasion and negatively with coalition (β=-.139, t=-2.051, p<.05). Skill-development was positively related with coalition (β=.237, t=3.508, p<.01) and persuasion (β=.316, t=5.008, p<.01), while it was negatively related with exchange of favors *(β=-.254, t=-4.468, p<.01)* These findings are presented on Table 4. Thus, our results reveal that the external career concerns (economic concerns) do not have a stronger effect on political tactics compared to internal career concerns (autonomy and skill-development). Therefore, ***H₁*** was rejected.

**Table 4: Career Concerns and Political Tactics**

| Dependent Variable | Independent Variables | $R^2$ | F | P | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coalition | Skill-Development | .04 | 6.206 | .002 | .237 | 3.508 | .001 |
| | Economic Concerns | | | | -.139 | -2.051 | .041 |
| Ingratiation | Autonomy | .02 | 4.505 | .035 | .126 | 2.122 | .035 |
| Persuasion | Skill-Development | .16 | 27.407 | .000 | .316 | 5.008 | .000 |
| | Economic Concerns | | | | .137 | 2.171 | .031 |
| Exchange of Favors | Skill-Development | .11 | 16.933 | .000 | -.254 | -4.468 | .000 |
| | Autonomy | | | | .217 | 3.823 | .000 |

### Big Five Personality Traits and Influence Tactics

In order to understand the relationship between big-five personality dimensions and influence tactics, multiple regression analyses were conducted. The results denoted that, Conscientiousness was negatively related with ingratiation *(β:-.243, t: .097, p<.05)*, self-presentation *(β:-.151, t: -2.070, p<.05)* and exchange of favors respectively *(β:-.213, t: -3.013, p<.01)*. Similarly, the personality trait of Agreeableness was found to be related inversely with the political tactics of Upward Appeal *(β:-.242, t: -3.963, p<.01)*, Self-Presentation *(β:-.169, t: -2.433, p<.05)* and Exchange of Favors *(β:-.186, t: -2.708, p<.01)* respectively. Extraversion was positively related to the three political tactics it was significantly related to which were, Coalition *(β:.131, t: 1.980, p<.05)*, Persuasion *(β:.258, t: -4.254, p<.01)* and Exchange of Favors *(β:.137, t: 2.225, p<.05)*. Similarly, the personality trait of Neuroticism was also positively related to all of the political tactics it had a significant relationship with which were, Coalition *(β:.247, t: 3.992, p<.01),* Ingratiation *(β:.205, t: .095, p<.05)*, Self-Presentation *(β:.129, t: 2.025, p<.05)* and Exchange of Favors *(β:.205, t: 3.274, p<.01)* respectively. Last of all, the Opennness to Experience personality trait was negatively related with a single political tactic, namely Coalition *(β:-.191, t: -2.912, p<.01).* These regression results can be seen on Table 5.

**Table 5: Personality and Political Tactics**

| Dependent Variable | Independent Variables | $R^2$ | F | P | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coalition | Neuroticism | .10 | 9,135 | .000 | .247 | 3.992 | .000 |
| | Openness | | | | -.191 | -2.912 | .004 |
| | Extraversion | | | | .131 | 1.980 | .049 |
| Ingratiation | Conscientiousness | .06 | 8,462 | .000 | -.243 | .097 | .012 |
| | Neuroticism | | | | .205 | .095 | .032 |
| Upward Appeal | Agreeableness | .06 | 15.702 | .000 | -.242 | -3.963 | .000 |
| Persuasion | Extraversion | .07 | 18.095 | .000 | .258 | 4.254 | .000 |
| Self-Presentation | Conscientiousness | .12 | 11.249 | .000 | -.151 | -2.070 | .039 |
| | Agreeableness | | | | -.169 | -2.433 | .016 |
| | Neuroticism | | | | .129 | 2.025 | .044 |
| Exchange of Favors | Conscientiousness | .19 | 17.883 | .000 | -.213 | -3.013 | .003 |
| | Neuroticism | | | | .205 | 3.274 | .001 |
| | Agreeableness | | | | -.186 | -2.708 | .007 |
| | Extraversion | | | | .137 | 2.225 | .027 |

For testing ***$H_2$, $H_3$, $H_4$*** and ***$H_5$*** and to control whether big five traits create a difference on the use of different influence tactics, independent samples t-tests were conducted. First of all, to differentiate the high and low scorers in each personality dimension, the median of the variables were calculated. By using the median scores of the personality dimensions, the categorized variables of each personality dimension were created. Then, t tests were conducted to these categorized variables as groups. The results of the t-tests are presented on Table 6.

The results point out that, the participants that have lower scores in the conscientiousness dimension were more likely to use coalition *($t_{288=}$2,777, p<.01),* ingratiation *($t_{284}$=3,004, p<.01*), upward appeal *($t_{285}$=2,662, p<.01),* self-presentation *($t_{276,6}$= 3,646, p<.01)* and exchange of favors *($t_{269,4}$=4,288, p<.01).* This finding is in line with $H_2$ which posits that the individuals who are high in conscientiousness would use persuasion tactics which was partly reflected in our results whereby those low in this personality factor chose to engage in influence tactics other than persuasion. Thus, **$H_2$** is partly accepted. According to the results, highly agreeable people had a tendency to use self-presentation ($t_{278,9}$=3,946, p<.01) more and upward appeal *($t_{278,6}$=2,586, p<.01),* and exchange of favors *($t_{278,9}$=3,736, p<.01)* less. There wasn't a significant difference between the high and low scorers of agreeableness and the ingratiation influence tactic, thus **$H_3$** was refuted. Subjects who scored higher on the extraversion dimension were statistically more prone to use persuasion as an influence tactic *($t_{272,5}$=-3,621, p<.01).* However, there wasn't a significant difference between the high and low scorers of extraversion and the ingratiation influence tactic, thus **$H_4$** was partially supported. High neuroticism scorers were also more likely to use coalition *($t_{287,10}$=-4,531, p<.01)*, ingratiation *($t_{284}$=-3,472, p<.01),* upward appeal *($t_{285}$=-3,339, p<.01)*, self-presentation *($t_{285,4}$= -3,435, p<.01)* and exchange of favors *($t_{279,7}$=-4,096,*

*p<.01)* more than their low neuroticism counterparts. This finding is in line with $H_5$ which posits that the individuals who are high in emotional stability would use persuasion tactics which was partly reflected in our results whereby those low in this personality factor chose to engage in influence tactics other than persuasion. Thus, **$H_5$** is partly accepted. In terms of the openness dimension, the participants who had lower scores were more likely to use coalition *($t_{288}$=2,677, p<.01)* and self-presentation *($t_{287}$=2,485,p<.01)* to influence their supervisors.

**Table 6: Comparison of High and Low Score Groups of Personality Variables**

| Personality Trait | Median | Influence Tactic | t | df | p | Group | μ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Extraversion | 4.14 | Persuasion | -3,621 | 272,5 | <.01 | Low | 3,23 |
| | | | | | | High | 3,76 |
| Agreeableness | 4,75 | Upward Appeal | 2,586 | 278,6 | <.01 | Low | 2,75 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,34 |
| | | Self-Presentation | 3,946 | 278,9 | <.01 | Low | 3,46 |
| | | | | | | High | 3,61 |
| | | Exchange of Favors | 3,736 | 283 | <.01 | Low | 2,57 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,02 |
| Conscientiousness | 4,71 | Coalition | 2,777 | 288 | <.01 | Low | 2,85 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,44 |
| | | Ingratiation | 3,004 | 284 | <.01 | Low | 2,95 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,53 |
| | | Upward Appeal | 2,662 | 285 | <.01 | Low | 2,76 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,33 |
| | | Self-Presentation | 3,646 | 276,6 | <.01 | Low | 2,56 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,07 |
| | | Exchange of Favors | 4,288 | 269,14 | <.01 | Low | 2,60 |
| | | | | | | High | 1,98 |
| Neuroticism | 3,14 | Coalition | -4,531 | 287,10 | <.01 | Low | 2,29 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,93 |
| | | Ingratiation | -3,472 | 284 | <.01 | Low | 2,48 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,96 |
| | | Upward Appeal | -3,339 | 285 | <.01 | Low | 2,25 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,79 |
| | | Self-Presentation | -3,435 | 285,4 | <.01 | Low | 2,05 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,53 |
| | | Exchange of Favors | -4,096 | 279,7 | <.01 | Low | 1,97 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,57 |
| Openness | 4,40 | Coalition | 2,677 | 288 | <.01 | Low | 2,84 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,45 |
| | | Self-Presentation | 2,485 | 287 | <.05 | Low | 2,50 |
| | | | | | | High | 2,15 |

**Values and Influence Tactics**

The multiple regression analyses that were conducted to find out about the linear relationship between values and influence tactics yielded significant results regarding two of the main value dimensions of Self-Transcendence and Self-Enhancement. Self-Transcendence had negative associations with Upward Appeal *(β=-.125, t= -2.072, p<.05)*, Self-Presentation *(β=-.230, t=-3.711,p<.01)* and Exchange of Favors *(β=-.265, t= -4.395, p<.01)*, and whereas it was positively related with Persuasion *(β=.304, t= 5.277, p<.01)*. Self-Enhancement was found to be positively related to the two political tactics of Self-Presentation *(β=.170, t= 2.737, p<.05),* and Exchange of Favors *(β=.287, t= 4.748, p<.01).* These regression analyses results can be seen on Table 7. Hypothesis 6 stated that the effects of Conservation and Self-Enhancement work values on political tactics would be stronger than those of Openness to Change and Self-Transcendence values. Our results partly confirm ***H6*** since Self-Enhancement values are positively related with the two political tactics of Self-Presentation and Exchange of Favors. However, the results depict no significant relationship between the Conservation values and political tactics, thus resulting in a partial acceptance of $\mathbf{H_6}$.

**Table 7: Values and Political Tactics**

| Dependent Variable | Independent Variables | $R^2$ | F | P | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Upward Appeal | Self-Transcendence | .02 | 4.293 | .039 | -.125 | -2.072 | .039 |
| Persuasion | Self-Transcendence | .09 | 27.848 | .000 | .304 | 5.277 | .000 |
| Self-Presentation | Self-Transcendence | .06 | 8.310 | .000 | -.230 | -3.711 | .000 |
| | Self-Enhancement | | | | .170 | 2.737 | .007 |
| Exchange of Favors | Self-Enhancement | .11 | 16.256 | .000 | .287 | 4.748 | .000 |
| | Self-Transcendence | | | | -.265 | -4.395 | .000 |

**Values as Moderators**

Moderation analyses were conducted to examine whether the Big Five personality dimensions and career concerns effects on political/influence tactics are moderated by the four main value dimensions of the Portrait Values Questionnaire. To determine the moderating role of values, first we centralized the independent variables (personality dimensions and career concerns), and the moderating variables (value dimensions). Then the interaction terms were calculated by multiplying the independent and moderated variables. The moderated regression analyses were conducted with the centralized dependent and moderating variables and including the interaction term as the third variable in each regression analysis. From the various moderated regression analyses conducted, five of them showed significant moderation effects. The moderating role of values and the related analysis results are depicted on Table 8.

**Table 8: The Moderation Analysis Results**

| Dependent Variable | Independent Variables | R2 | F | P | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coalition | Conscientiousness | .04 | 5.856 | .003 | -.156 | -2.622 | .009 |
| | IntCons&self-enhan | | | | -.129 | -2.157 | .032 |
| Upward Appeal | Conscientiousness | .06 | 8.472 | .000 | -.199 | -3.358 | .001 |
| | IntCons&self-enhan | | | | -.139 | -2.339 | .020 |
| Coalition | Skill-development | .05 | .6.679 | .001 | .157 | 2.656 | .008 |
| | IntSkill-dev&self-enhan | | | | .125 | 2.111 | .036 |
| Persuasion | Skill-development | .17 | 28.951 | .000 | .382 | 6.932 | .000 |
| | Intskill-dev&self-enhan | | | | .115 | 2.087 | .038 |
| Persuasion | Autonomy | .09 | 13.294 | .000 | -.264 | -4.549 | .000 |
| | IntAut&self-enhan | | | | .172 | 2.957 | .003 |

As depicted in Figure 3, the negative relationship between Coalition and Conscientiousness was moderated with the Self-Enhancement value. In other words, as the Conscientiousness of the participants increase, the application of Coalition tactics decrease and this diminishing effect of Conscientiousness was a little bit stronger when the Self-Enhancement value was higher ($R^2$*=.04, F=5,856, p<.01 ,* $\beta_{intcons.selfen}$*:=-.129,* $t_{intcons.selfen}$ *=-2.157, p<.05).*




**Figure 3:** The Moderating Role of Self -Enhancement on the relationship between Conscientiousness and Coalition

The moderating effect of Self-Enhancement on the relationship between Conscientiousness and Upward Appeal can be seen in Figure 4. When Self-Enhancement was higher, the application of Upward Appeal diminishes with the increase in Conscientiousness, although the relationship seemed to be slightly positive for low self-enhancement ($R^2$*:.06, F:8.472, p<.01,* $\beta_{intcons.selfen}$ *=-.139,* $t_{intcons.selfen}$*=-2.339, p<.05* ) .




**Figure 4:** The Moderating Role of Self- Enhancement on the relationship between Conscientiousness and Upward Appeal

As can be seen in Figure 5, Self-Enhancement also moderated the relationship between Skill-Development and the Coalition influence tactic. The higher the Self-Enhancement value, the higher the positive effect of Skill-Development career concern on Coalition formation *($R^2$=.05, F=6.679, p<.01,* $\beta_{intselfdevselfenh}$*: .125,* $t_{intselfdevselfenh}$*=2.111, p<.05).*




**Figure 5:** The Moderating Role of Self- Enhancement on the relationship between Skill-Development and Coalition

Self-enhancement was also found to moderate the relationship between Skill-Development and Persuasion ($R^2$*=.17, F=28.951, p<.01;* $\beta_{intselfdevselfenh}$*=.115,* $t_{intselfdevselfenh}$*=2.087, p<.05*). It was found that, for higher Self-Enhancement, the relationship between Skill-Development and Persuasion was positive; however for low self-enhancement the relationship was negative as it can be seen in Figure 6.

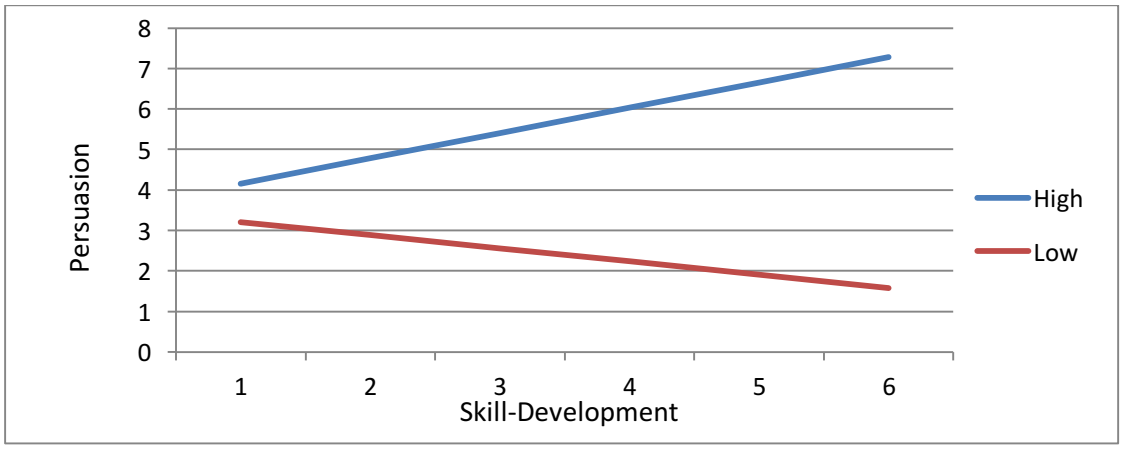



**Figure 6:** The Moderating Role of Self- Enhancement on the relationship between Skill-Development and Persuasion

Last of all, Self-Enhancement was also found to be a moderator between the Autonomy career concern and Persuasion *($R^2$=.09, F=13.294, p<.01,* $\beta_{intselfenhanaouto}$*= -.264,* $t_{intselfenhanaouto}$*=-4,549, p<.01).* For those employees that had a higher Self-Enhancement value, the Autonomy career concern had an incremental effect on the use of Persuasion. However, for low self-enhancement this was not the case as can be viewed from Figure 7.

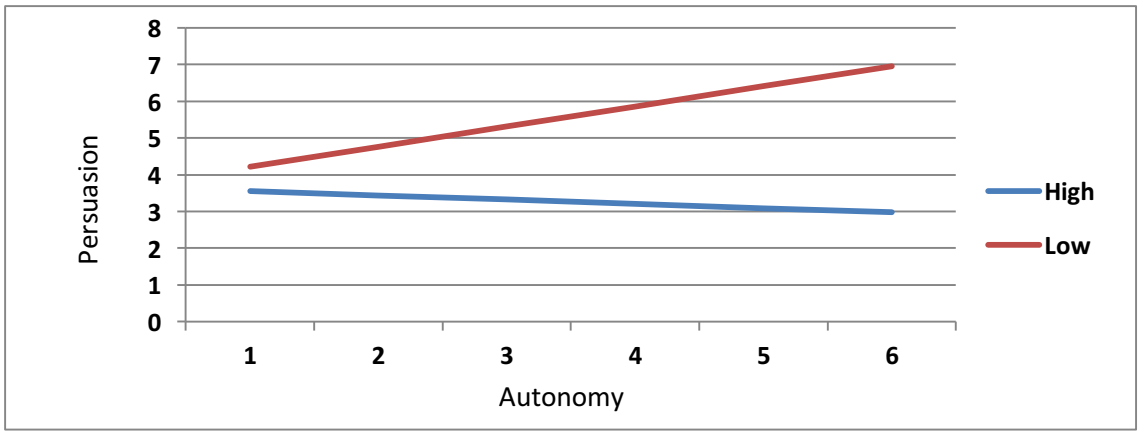



**Figure 7:** The Moderating Role of Self-Enhancement on the relationship between Autonomy and Persuasion

## Discussion

Although there are some studies conducted on the dispositional characteristics of the influencers, they are only a few in number. In the literature, there are studies that have investigated the effects of personality traits or career concerns on influence tactics, however our study seems to be the first to explore the effects of these variables together. Moreover, the portrait values of the influencers was also taken into consideration in this study and tested as both an independent and moderating variable.

When the findings of this study are evaluated generally, we can say that we failed to accept $H_1$ which assumed that external career concerns (promotion, high salaries, status, influencing others) were more strongly related with the use of influence tactics. Our results showed that, the internal career concern of skill development (learning new techniques, developing competencies, etc.) had stronger positive relations with the influence tactics of coalition and persuasion compared to the external career concerns (economic concerns) which had a weaker relationship with persuasion and an inverse relation with coalition building (Table 4). Our sample is composed of individuals who have a high education level (97 out of our 294 participants have a masters degree or higher), which may also explain the stronger relations between the skill development career concern and influence tactics. It seems plausible that individuals with a higher inclination towards continuous learning (as reflected by their advanced degrees) would demonstrate skill development as a career concern. Moreover, those employees in our sample that have a concern for skill development seem to be less likely to use exchange of favors tactics; however they are more likely to use rationalization and assertiveness (persuasion) tactics. Thus, it seems that, in order to develop their competencies and refine their skills and abilities at work, they are more inclined towards using persuasive tactics and building coalitions at work. At this point, it is worth remembering that our results point out that the influence tactics of rationalization and assertiveness cluster together for our sample. This finding is plausible since Turkey is a country high in power distance dimension (Hofstede, 1980). As our study focused on employees' upward influence tactics, using rational persuasion to a supervisor in a high power distance culture also requires being an assertive person. Moreover, autonomy development seems to be positively related with the use of exchange of favors and ingratiation. This might result from the tendency of employees who seek independence at work to have a willingness to deliver favors to their supervisors and engage in ingratiating behaviors in return of being autonomous.

For testing $H_2$, $H_3$, $H_4$ and $H_5$, we conducted independent samples t-tests by categorizing the participants

according to median scores. The results point out that, the participants that have lower scores in the conscientiousness dimension were more likely to use coalition, ingratiation, upward appeal, self-presentation and exchange of favors. **$H_2$** posited that the individuals who are high in conscientiousness would use persuasion tactics which was partly reflected in our results whereby those low in this personality factor chose to engage in influence tactics other than persuasion, partially supporting our hypothesis. As mentioned previously, conscientiousness is associated with achievement and the desire to accomplish goals. There are some individuals, however, who value the achievement of organizational rewards and a favorable organizational image, but personally lack the traditional conscientious characteristics like industriousness and responsibility, in order to achieve the desired goals. These individuals may thus use various political tactics to reap the desired rewards (Phipps, Prieto & Deis, 2015).

The results of our analyses also showed that the participants who score high in the agreeableness dimension tend to use self-presentation tactics more and upward appeal and exchange of favors less than their less agreeable counterparts. **$H_3$** was thus refuted, since we expected that those high in agreeableness would engage more in ingratiation tactics. This shows that the agreeable participants of our study did not prefer indirect ways of politicking to solve their problems rather than actually focusing on finding solutions via self-presentation. It was mentioned previously that agreeable individuals like to "fit in" and be included and they appreciate being liked by others. Individuals may use self-presentation tactics to enable them to be seen through a favorable lens by their supervisors and/or colleagues and thus be viewed as likable.

The results of the analysis regarding extraverted employees revealed that, these individuals have a propensity to use rationalization and assertiveness and these findings are in partial support with ***$H_4$***. Since extraverts tend to be more socially comfortable than their more reclusive counterparts, it is plausible that their outgoing nature makes them more prone to engage in assertive and rational influence tactics at work rather than displaying ingratiating behaviors.

Neuroticism seems to be one of the important dimensions affecting the use of influence tactics at work, being related with various influence tactics for our sample. The results revealed that, employees who have higher scores in neuroticism seem to be involved in political activities such as exchange of favors, self-presentation, ingratiation and upward-appeal significantly more. We did not find significant results between the two groups of neuroticism scores regarding the rationalization and assertiveness influence tactics, which renders partial support to ***$H_5$***. Thus, it is fair to suggest that those individuals high in neuroticism and thus prone to worry and mistrust would display a substantial motive to drive them to impress their supervisors and/or colleagues by engaging in various influence tactics.

Finally, in terms of openness, our exploratory results convey that, the participants scoring low in this dimension tend to use self-presentation and coalition more. In a high power distance culture, these results are comprehensible since trying to influence supervisors directly through rational persuasion and assertiveness is a risky behavior and employees who have higher scores in openness to experience would more probably have a propensity to take this risk (Nicholson, Soane, Fenton-O'Creevy, and Willman, 2005).

When the effects of the portrait values were taken into consideration, our results conveyed that self-transcendence values which entail universalism and benevolence were inversely related to upward appeal, self-presentation and exchange of favors; whereas these values were positively related to persuasive influence tactics. These values have a social focus and thus as stated by Schwartz (2012) serve the interests of others. Therefore, it seems plausible that the individuals who prioritize self-transcendence values would be less liekly to employ hard tactics that involve putting pressure on others (such as exchange of favors). As stated before, for our sample, persuasion entails two influence tactics which are rationality (a soft tactic) and assertiveness (a hard tactic). Thus, a reason why

self-trancendence was positively related self-trancendence could thus be due to the dominance of the rationality factor within the persuasion influence tactic.

Moreover, regarding portrait values, self-enhancement was found to be positively related to the two influence tactics of self-presentation and exchange of favors. Self-enhancement values entail values related with status and power that emphasize being part of a company one is proud to work for as well as advancement and influence in the organisation. This finding which renders partial support for **$H_6$** is also in line with the above literature review which depicts that those individuals with a concern for external personal success are inclined to use political tactics at work. Moreover, as stated by Nonis and Logen (1995), those individuals with a need for power tend to use hard tactics to influence others. In line with this reasoning, in our study, exchange of favors was one such tactic that had a stronger relationship with self-enhancement.

It is interesting to note that, in line with our results, when self-transcendence is high (that is an individual values status, power, achievement etc.), having a conscientious personality trait decreases one's tendency to engage in influence tactics. This could result from the fact that, consciousness individuals' drive to achieve certain goals and their effort to do so doesn't necessitate using influence tactics to arrive at their desired goals. This brings to mind the effective versus successful amangers distinction of Luthans (1988). Perhaps, it is having a conscientious personality that renders one a candidate to be an effective manager. Moreover, our moderation results also yielded that, certain internal career concerns (skill development and autonomy in our case), when the self-enhancement value is high, lead to the usage of certain influence tactics such as persuasion and coalition building in this case. An interesting observation here is that, the self-enhancement value being standard, how a personality trait and internal career concerns lead to different tendencies to use influence tactics. This could be a crucial point that warrants future research attention.

## Conclusion

Our findings helped to widen our perception of the reasons why individuals may use impression management at work, what their motives are and what kind of tactics these motives trigger. When searching for these antecedents, it is important to note that, the relationships between individual dispositions, career concerns, values and political behavior, do not exist in a vacuum. They occur within an organizational environment which is likely to affect them. Some of the employee characteristics are strongly linked with employee performance if the employee works independently. Barrick and Mount (1993) stated that the positive relationship between employees' personality traits like conscientiousness and extraversion and work performance increased if the employees had the chance to work autonomously. Similarly, certain organizational environments are likely to 'license' political behavior or provide opportunities for such behavior more than others. Among such characteristics are organizational size and structure. Research is warranted as to whether larger organizations can be assumed to provide more scope and opportunities for political behavior mainly because power in such organizations is less centralized and more people have control over resources (Pfeffer, 1981) or political behavior is more prevalent in organic organizations than in mechanistic ones (Zanzi,1987) since tasks are less clearly defined and lines of authority less clearly specified.

In line with other studies conducted in Turkey (Ergüder, Esmer, & Kalaycıoğlu, 1991; Imamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu Aygün, 1999), since the liberalism-oriented socioeconomic changes of the 1980s, in the studies conducted

regarding values, the results seem to emphasize a new pathway involving social power, status, recognition, and achievement-oriented self-enhancement. Such power-and achievement-related concerns can be regarded as transitional values in a society undergoing a change from traditionalism to modernism. Similarly, as a result of his study on moral values which encompasses many countries, Esmer (1998) stated that the Turkish society displays mixed and inconsistent values. Esmer's (1998) research results point out that, in Turkey individuals value both security and relationship building at work as well as achievement. This could explain the significance of the two antagonistically motivated values of self-transcendence and self-enhancement in our results.

Finally, we would like to note that, in organizations, managers and decision makers should be conscious of their emplyees' impression management patterns. It is important for the organizations to be fair in the selection and promotion systems and choose the most deserving employee when the time comes instead of the most savvy impression manager. Realizing this distinction would have crucial long term pay offs for organizational justice, work engagement, employee turnover and of course organizational performance depending on what type of people are offered a seat at the strategic levels.

## Limitations

All data used in this study is based on self-reports, which means that the magnitudes of the effects that we reported may have been biased due to common method variance or the wish to answer consistently. Moreover, our study is situational and the results may not be applicable to other circumstances. Finally, because of the present study's cross-sectional design, the causal order between personality factors, values and political behavior remains to be addressed.

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