

Organizational Machiavellianism and Its Impact on Employees' Passion: A Field Study on a Sample of Electronic Payment Companies in Iraq

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Abstract

The current study aims to examine the impact of organizational Machiavellianism on employee passion in a sample of workers in electronic payment companies in Iraq. The research followed a descriptive-analytical approach and employed a questionnaire as the main data collection tool. The respondents included 132 employees from various managerial levels. Data was analyzed, and hypotheses were tested. The researcher found a negative influence of organizational Machiavellianism on employee passion. The study also found that the dimension with the most significant impact on employees' passion is Amoral Manipulation, while the least influential dimension is the desire to control others. The researcher recommends the surveyed companies to address organizational Machiavellian behaviors diagnosed by promoting a positive organizational climate that rejects such behaviors. This can be achieved through conducting workshops and encouraging reporting of such behaviors.

Keywords: *organizational Machiavellianism, employees' passion, electronic payment companies.*

1. Introduction

Today's world is not the same again as it was yesterday. The rapid changes in the environment, globalization and the advent of the technological age in an eye-catching way have changed many patterns of human resources function from what they used to be and have become more in need of a collection of specific characteristics and processes to differentiate them from other resources and to be able to keep up with those effective changes by Employee passion (Al-Taee & Hussein, 2020). The modern workplace trends indicate that employees are required to utilize and seek a more diverse set of skills than in previous years. Skill diversity is the degree to which work requires a variety of job functions and activities to be performed, involving the use of multiple different skills and talents by employees. (Mahibes & Mahmoud, 2020)

Machiavellianism can be traced back to the philosophical writings of the Italian diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), particularly his book "The Prince." (Genau et al, 2021:1) The term "Machiavellianism" has primarily been used in philosophy and political science. It wasn't until (Christie & Geis 1970) that the concept of Machiavellianism was linked to behavior among individuals. They introduced a series of Machiavellianism scales to measure Machiavellian traits in individuals. (Schyns et

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al.,2019) .(Christie & Geis1970) based their assessment on three sets of values to describe Machiavellian personality: endorsement of manipulative tactics, such as flattery and deception in personal relationships, a cynical view of human nature, viewing others as duplicitous and untrustworthy, and the disregard for traditional ethics (Koo & Lee, 2022).

Throughout history, passion has been associated with various meanings and definitions. This diversity in definitions may be attributed to the term "passion" in everyday life (Serin, 2017). Passion can also connote suffering, as it represents the emotional state one goes through when passionate about something, which can also have an impact or be likened to a state of suffering. In other words, being passionate about something may lead one to experience suffering. Another common definition of passion is that it is a state of intense emotions, whether positive or negative. These intense emotions can include feelings such as anger, hatred, hope, and/or pride. Additionally, the definition of passion can also encompass a strong liking or even love for an activity, thing, or concept. This more contemporary definition of passion suggests more than just love for an activity; it also includes a high appreciation for the activity and a significant commitment to it (Naidoo, 2018). This more contemporary definition of passion suggests more than just love for an activity; it also includes a high appreciation for the activity and a significant commitment to it (Naidoo, 2018).The research problem can be There is a lack of consensus on defining the concept of organizational Machiavellianism and its relationship with employee passion. Also,Previous studies have not clearly determined the extent to which organizational Machiavellianism influences increasing or decreasing employee passion.in addition to There is a relative shortage in identifying dimensions that align with diverse organizational environments, both for organizational Machiavellianism and employee passion.Based on the above, the research questions can be formulated as follows,Does organizational Machiavellianism have an impact on employee passion in the research sample?Is there a scholarly debate among researchers regarding the conceptualization of Machiavellianism and passion in the context of the work environment? What are the reasons behind organizational Machiavellianism, and does it impact employee passion?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organizational Machiavellianism

The workers live in a highly uncertain environment and frequent change. Which require harmony with each other and the provision of social relations of respect and understanding. Which reduces the work load and achieves better performance at different organizational levels (Raheemah et al,2018). Many employees in the workplace exhibit various behaviors, and each of these behaviors has different effects on the working individuals and the organization as a whole. In the ideal scenario, these behaviors align with organizational standards, which consist of organizational rules, languages, and principles. These standards allow workplace participants to perform their duties at an appropriate pace. However, reality is not always ideal. Employee behaviors may deviate from organizational rules when employees lack motivation to align with the organization's expectations, or when social motivations drive them to violate those expectations. Consequently, the consequences of negative behavior in the workplace affect all levels within the organization. Among these behaviors is organizational Machiavellianism.)Al-Taie & Abd Kassar, 2015)

The roots of Machiavellianism can be traced back to philosophical writings in the 16th century when the Italian diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) published his book "The Prince" (1513/1520). This work is one of the early modern works of political philosophy. It offers advice on how to acquire political power and retain it based solely on utility, while ignoring traditional values of trust, dignity, and honor. (Serenko & Choo, 2020) Niccolò Machiavelli argued, in his influential political perspective during the

Renaissance, that politics is amoral, and rational politicians can use any means, regardless of conscience, to achieve and maintain power. (Genau et al., 2021). The concept of Machiavellianism has attracted the attention of many researchers from various fields and disciplines, perhaps due to the multifaceted nature of the Machiavellianism construct. In this regard, this topic has been studied in social sciences (Ibragimov et al., 2018), biological sciences (McHoskey, 2001), psychology (Znakov, 2000), and political science (Femia, 2013). Additionally, this concept has been linked to medical sciences (Verissimo et al., 2022; Oronsky et al., 2016; Kumar, 2019; Bereczkei et al., 2013) and has found a significant place in numerous studies in the field of management (Matthews et al., 2022; Blicke et al., 2020). Furthermore, most of these studies have been applied in various physical and virtual environments (Sanecka, 2021; Brewer et al., 2014; Liu, C., 2003). (Hollebeek et al., 2022) is defined as This is a process through which the manipulator obtains a type of reward greater than what they would have received without manipulation. Here, manipulation refers to a form of social influence aimed at altering the perceptions or behaviors of others through indirect, deceptive, or cunning tactics. "In this context, it is defined as (Erkutlu & Chafra., 2020) (A personality trait that describes a person's inclination toward "distrust of others, engaging in unethical manipulation, seeking control over others, and pursuing self-promotion. Also, (Tang et al., 2008) define a social behavior strategy that involves manipulating others to achieve personal gains, often at the expense of the other party's self-interest. Many researchers have addressed and, from their various perspectives, discussed some of the key characteristics and traits of Machiavellian individuals. For instance, (Christie & Geis, 1970) pointed out that individuals with high levels of Machiavellianism tend to exhibit three main traits, drawing from Machiavellian writings (Dahling et al., 2012): Firstly, they adopt a cynical view of the world and other people, expecting everyone to prioritize their self-interest. Secondly, they are willing to employ manipulative tactics to influence others and achieve desired outcomes. Thirdly, they are entirely willing to deviate from ethical standards when unethical behavior provides a necessary advantage over others.

Certain factors that lead to Machiavellianism in the workplace environment. In this regard, (Belschak et al., 2018) pointed out that a lack of trust is a fundamental characteristic of Machiavellianism, as Machiavellians construct their perceptions of others based on their behavior, making it difficult for them to trust others. Since Machiavellians constantly manipulate others and seek to exploit them, they assume that others are also attempting to control and manipulate them. Consequently, they are not inclined to trust others. Employee trust is closely associated with many significant work-related positions and behaviors. (Gkorezis et al., 2015) indicated that Machiavellianism is associated with numerous outcomes including low organizational citizenship behavior, decreased job satisfaction, increased turnover rates, and heightened non-productive work behavior. (DeShong et al., 2017) found that Machiavellianism is associated with various negative behaviors and outcomes, including low personality strength, psychopathic traits, low emotional intelligence, and low empathy. Additionally, Machiavellianism is linked to professional problems, negative workplace behaviors, decreased job satisfaction, and unsupportive leadership. According to (Hammali & Nastiezaie, 2022), personal and objective factors (such as job position, leadership style, organizational environment, and culture) play a significant role in fostering Machiavellian behaviors. Work pressures have become one of the most prevalent and costly issues in the workplace.

2.2 Employee Passion

Human resources are a fundamental element in the development of any organization. They hold a prominent position and receive significant attention within both goods and service-oriented organizations. These organizations compete to acquire the best expertise, skills, and capabilities, continuously working on their development. This emphasis on human resources stems from the excellence they contribute, helping organizations confront competitive challenges and adapt to internal and external changes. These skills

and knowledge possessed by employees foster creativity and serve as sufficient justifications that enable the organization to achieve its objectives.)Mohammed,2022). (Abd & Khalifa, 2016) has argued that The selection of employees for important positions in human resource management during the recruitment process is crucial. It is the process of choosing the right candidate for the job, considering the qualifications of the selected individual, the desired job requirements, and the characteristics of the organization as a whole. Organizations are now in competition to attract talent and invest substantial amounts of money in recruitment to hire the best candidates. These candidates represent the human resource of the organization, which is considered the foundation for the success of the organization.

The word "passion" is derived from the Greek word "pathos" and the Latin word "patio," both of which carry the meaning of suffering, implying that passion may lead a person to suffering. Although suffer can tint one's perspective on emotion for some, others view passion as strong feelings that can lead to positive outcomes (Morris, 2022:10). Psychologists in the twentieth century, such as Ribot (1907) and Josselyn (1928), noted that passion is merely a temporary mental state, while passion can shape one's lifestyle (Kwai, 2023:25). From a work motivation perspective, the focus on scientific research and theories related to passion began to emerge with the shift towards applying positive psychology in the workplace. In this context, three interrelated streams of passion have emerged in the business environment. These include the "Harmonious Passion" (the Dualistic Model of Passion) (Vallerand et al., 2003), "Work Passion" (Zigarmi et al., 2009), and "Entrepreneurial Passion" (Cardon et al., 2009).

In the context of the Dualistic Model, employee passion is defined as "A strong inclination towards activities that people love, find important, and invest time and energy in" (Vallerand et al., 2003). At the workplace level, work passion is defined as a continuous, positive, and emotionally-driven state of well-being that arises from cognitive and emotional evaluations of work situations, leading to consistent work intentions and behaviors" (Zigarmi et al., 2009). Entrepreneurial passion is defined as "intense, consciously assessable positive feelings that are experienced through engaging in entrepreneurial activities associated with self-defining and identity-prominent roles for the entrepreneur" (Cardon et al., 2009). As for (Kwai,2023: 4), employee passion is defined as a strong desire to engage in an activity where one finds value and a high level of enjoyment, gaining intrinsic satisfaction by dedicating time and effort to it. (Hussain et al., 2021) state that it is a strong internal drive, a positive mindset, a motivation to achieve goals, and receiving evaluations that aid both the organization and individuals in their growth.

(Ibiyeomie,2021) argues that passion is vital for employee creativity, innovation, individual work ethics, organizational goals, and growth. Passion provides the necessary motivation and inspiration for excellence and dedication in work, and a lack of passion for work may render success meaningless or unsatisfactory, thus leading to a decline in ethical values. On the other hand, (Indriasari&Setyorini, 2018) consider employees with a high level of passion for work as a talent for excellence that organizations require, as work passion can drive employees to be more productive, efficient, and diligent, making them valuable assets to the company. According to (Okpu &Basuo,2019) and (Permarupan et al., 2013), eight key factors influence employee passion. These factors must be present in the work environment to enhance employee passion. These factors include purposeful work, collaboration, fairness, autonomy, recognition, growth, rapport with the leader, and camaraderie with colleagues.

Asse and Mhaibes., (2022) argue that Enhancing employee passion can be achieved through the development of a shared vision. It is in the organization's best interest to exchange perspectives on goals, objectives, policies, priorities, and expectations and provide guidance on what needs to change. This is particularly important in rapidly changing environments, where individuals need to distinguish between what should

change and what should remain in the current state. Creating a shared vision is considered one of the core competencies within an organization, and as a result, it will contribute to enhancing passion among individuals. Saaeda et al.,(2020) add that caring for employees in their workplace and providing them with everything that can make them satisfied with their professional lives results in them giving their best. This, in turn, is in the best interest of the organization as a whole. In this context, Husien et al.,(2020) confirms that passionate employees contribute to shaping the organization's strategic vision by adding qualities of simplicity, clarity, depth, and comprehensiveness to this vision. They also assist in achieving the highest level of active participation in the process of formulating and clarifying the strategic vision. The researcher believes that one of the most important traits that individuals passionate about their work should possess is dynamic capabilities. Al-Kubaisi& Ghaleb.,(2019)pointed out that dynamic capabilities help improve memory capacity through stimulating associative learning, which is a process of activating memory by linking old knowledge to new knowledge. These abilities also aid in problem-solving by fostering deductive and inductive thinking. Furthermore, they assist managers and employees in the efficient utilization of resources, improving organizational processes, and facilitating sound decision-making.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research population and sample

The research community comprises 8 companies operating in the field of electronic payment (Iraq Wallet, Al-Arab, Iraq Gate, National Gateway, Al-Amwal, International Network, Al-Alamia, Iraq Arriba, Al-Saqi, Al-Tabadl). It includes individuals working in senior, middle, and executive management positions. A sample of 132 individuals was selected

3.2 Measures

All measures had a 5-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Organizational Machiavellianism: It was measured using a scale consisting of 20 questions, based on (Dahling et al.,2009) scale, which is comprised of four dimensions:)Amoral manipulation, desire for control, desire for status, and Distrust of Others(. The internal consistency reliability results (Cronbach's alpha) 85.3%

Employee passion was measured using a 12-item scale based on (Johri et al,2016)scale, which consists of three dimensions:)work enjoyment, self-motivation, and self-identity(.The internal consistency reliability results (Cronbach's alpha) 98.7%

3.3 Methods

The researchers utilized the descriptive-analytical method after collecting the required data to test the study's hypotheses.

3.4 Research hypotheses

There is a statistically significant impact of organizational Machiavellianism, with its dimensions) Amoral manipulation, desire for control, desire for status, and Distrust of Others(on employee passion.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Validity tests

In this research, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests were used to assess the scale's quality and sample adequacy. The following table(2) shows the test results using the software SPSS V.26

Table 1: KMO & Bartlett's tests

Variables	KMO test	Bartlett's test		
		Chi-Square	Df	Sig
Organizational Machiavellianism	0.890	1187.077	190	0.000
Employee's Passion	0.567	1216.738	66	0.000

The results in Table (1) indicate that all variables and dimensions have met all the requirements of the Bartlett's and KMO tests, as the sample adequacy test results were greater than 0.05.

4.2 Reliability Tests

Reliability tests are used to determine the scale's ability to maintain consistency when the same sample is resurveyed, providing evidence of the research instrument's validity in the pursuit of its established objectives (Liu et al., 2010). Typically, Cronbach's alpha coefficients are used to analyze the scale's reliability by examining the internal item consistency, and statistically acceptable values for Cronbach's alpha should exceed (70%) (Bland & Altman, 1997). Table (2) displays the results of the Alpha-Cronbach test using the SPSS V.26 software.

Table 2: Reliability tests

Variables	Alpha-Cronbach
Organizational Machiavellianism	0.853
Employee's Passion	0.987

The table (2) shows that the scale enjoys a high level of reliability, as the reliability coefficients for the Organizational Machiavellianism variable reached 85.3, while Employee's Passion reached 98.7. Thus, it can be confirmed that the scale is reliable and can be relied upon for measuring the phenomenon repeatedly.

4.3 View sample answers

The table (3) displays the descriptive statistical results of the research.

Table 3

No	Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Organizational Machiavellianism				
1	Amoral Manipulation	2.944	.7586	3
2	Desire for control	3.567	.6104	1
3	Desire for status	3.189	.7574	2
4	Distrust of others	2.935	.7349	4
variable completely		3.1587	.59826	
No	Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Employee's Passion				
1	Work enjoymen	3.5208	.74588	2
2	Self- motivation	3.4072	.61347	3
3	Self- identity	3.5701	.78349	1
variable completely		3.4993	.7089	

The results from Table (3) indicate that the level of agreement among employees in electronic payment companies regarding the Organizational Machiavellianism variable is moderate, with a mean of 3.1587 and a standard deviation of 0.59826. As for the

dimensions, the dimension of the desire for control achieved the highest mean at 3.567 with a standard deviation of 0.6104, while the lowest level of response was observed for the dimension of Distrust of others, with a mean of 2.935 and a standard deviation of 0.7349.

As for the Employee’s Passion variable, the sample's response rate was moderate, with a mean of 3.4993 and a standard deviation of 0.7089. At the dimension level, the dimension of self-motivation achieved the highest mean at 3.5701 with a standard deviation of 0.78349, while the lowest level of response was observed for the dimension of Self-motivation, with a mean of 3.4072 and a standard deviation of 0.61347.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

4.4.1 Test the hypothesis

Table 4: R Square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.916 ^a	.839	.834	.2892694849

Table 5: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	55.213	4	13.803	164.960	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.627	127	.084		
	Total	65.840	131			
a. Dependent Variable: Employee’s Passion						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Distrust of others, Desire for status, Amoral Manipulation, Desire for control						

Table (6) Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.523	.156		41.827	.000
	Amoral Manipulation	-.588	.051	-.630	-11.436	.000
	Desire for control	-.096	.064	-.082	-1.486	.140
	Desire for status	-.209	.045	-.224	-4.651	.000
	Distrust of others	-.097	.049	-.100	-1.977	.050

The table (5) shows the analysis of variance between the research variables at a significance level of 0.05. It is noted that the calculated F-value is higher than the tabular F-value (2.46).

Table (6) indicates a significant inverse effect at a significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for organizational Machiavellianism and its dimensions on employee passion. Specifically, an unethical manipulation increase by one unit leads to a decrease in employee passion by 0.630 units. Similarly, an increase of one unit in the desire for control, desire for dominance, and pursuit of status respectively, leads to a reduction in employee passion by (0.082, 0.224, 0.100) units. The model explains 83.9% of the variance, while the

remaining proportion is attributed to other external factors not included in the regression model.

5. Conclusions

Based on the achieved results, we can conclude that there is a negative impact relationship between organizational Machiavellianism and employee passion. The most influential dimensions are unethical manipulation, followed by the desire for status, lack of trust in others, and the desire for control, respectively. This impact can be mitigated by fostering a positive organizational climate, conducting training workshops, and implementing appropriate mechanisms to report such behaviors.

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