Journal of Management
Vol. 43 No. 7, September 2017 2252–2280
DOI: 10.1177/0149206314566460

Measuring Political Will in Organizations: Theoretical Construct Development and Empirical Validation

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Political will is widely recognized as an important, yet profoundly underinvestigated, construct that lacks conceptual clarity and valid measurement. To address this lack, we conducted four studies encompassing six samples (N = 925) from three countries (United States, Greece, and United Kingdom) that establish the psychometric properties and nomological network of the Political Will Scale. We demonstrate that the scale exhibits both convergent and discriminant validity with several conceptually related constructs while also determining that political will positively relates to influence and work-related behaviors. As an extension of our findings, political will seems to explain variance over and above political skill in relation to influence tactics, status, and career growth potential. The theoretical implications of this new scale are discussed in relation to organizational politics, leadership, and social change.

Keywords: *political will; political skill; political behavior; motivation; scale development*

Acknowledgments: This article was accepted under the editorship of Deborah E. Rupp. I. Kapoutsis and A. Papalexandris acknowledge the funding they received from the European Union (European Social Fund) and Greek national funds through the Operational Program "Education and Lifelong Learning" of the National Strategic Reference Framework Research Funding Program "The Impact of the Organizational Context on Human Capital Development and Motivation." D. C. Treadway and J. Bentley acknowledge that this research was supported in part by funding from the Center for Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness.

This article was revised after its print publication. The fourth column values in Table 3 have been corrected, as well as related text on pages 2266, 2273, and 2274.

Supplemental material for this article is available with the manuscript on the JOM *website.*

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We have everything we need except political will, but political will is a renewable resource.

—Al Gore, speaking on climate change, July 2009

Political will is an ambiguous term that is often used with reference to the failings of politicians, governments, and social movements (Treadway, 2012). News reports and speeches belying the lack of political will to solve crises of starvation, disease, hunger, and war seem little more than a clarion call to a disengaged collective, the sounding of which in itself acknowledges defeat. While no single person can resolve these catastrophic problems alone, it is the individual who sparks innovation, rebellion, and change. And perhaps it is our inability to effectively understand how an individual's political will originates that prevents us from creating sustainable change in organizations and society.

The use of political will in the popular lexicon demonstrates its societal importance, yet it is still a vastly underdeveloped construct in the organizational sciences. When articulated in academic research, political will is most often positioned as a construct operating at the societal or group level (e.g., Post, Raile, & Raile, 2010). However, it is impossible to ignore the leadership and personal investment on the part of individual actors that contribute to the generation and maintenance of political will at the collective level. With a view to developing a more comprehensive understanding of the way in which individuals, employees, and leaders initiate change, accrue resources, galvanize support, and ultimately achieve success, the current multistudy investigation develops the Political Will Scale (PWS) and distinguishes it both conceptually and empirically from other, related constructs.

Political skill, perhaps the closest of these constructs to political will, has seen rapid growth in interest and investigation. Driven by theoretical and measurement advances (Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005; Ferris, Treadway, Perrewé, Brouer, Douglas, & Lux, 2007), recent organizational politics research has focused almost exclusively on the role of political skill in leadership, stress management, and job performance (see Ferris, Treadway, Brouer, & Munyon, 2012, for a review). Defined as "the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives" (Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005: 127), political skill is what enables employees to read and adjust their behavior to the social context of the organization while appearing self-controlled, confident, and genuine. Because of these abilities, they are capable of developing deep, resource-rich social networks (Ferris et al., 2007). Although critically important to understanding political activity in organizations, this stream of research has not explicitly addressed the individual and contextual conditions that drive actors to invest political skill in attaining goals.

Mintzberg (1983) argued that political skill alone could not predict an individual's success in organizations and that not even an explication of an employee's formal or informal power was sufficient to predict political action. According to Mintzberg, within organizations, "influencers pick and choose their issues, concentrating their efforts on the ones most important to them" (25), and it was this framing that was at the core of his seminal treatise on power in and around organizations. Thus, individual success in the workplace is dictated by not only political skill and power but also, perhaps most importantly, influencers' willingness to expend their social capital in pursuit of their goals, which Mintzberg labeled political will.

Scant subsequent research has attempted to capture the role of an individual's political will in the motivation of influence behavior. The studies that have tried to address individual

political will have done so using indirect proxies of motivation (i.e., need for achievement [nAch], intrinsic motivation; Treadway, Hochwarter, Kacmar, & Ferris, 2005) rather than a unified measure of political will from which generalized conclusions can be drawn regarding motivation, skill, and capital in the political realm. The lack of a cohesive framework and consistent measurement of political will not only limits our understanding of political skill but also ultimately leaves scholars with a less than comprehensive conceptualization of the role of political behavior in performance, stress, leadership, and other work-related outcomes (Treadway, 2012). To remedy this oversight, in the current investigation, we seek to provide the conceptual refinement and empirical measurement necessary to more fully develop our understanding of political dynamics in organizations.

Our multistudy approach is built upon the anecdotal notions of political will offered by Mintzberg (1983) and the conceptual framework presented by Treadway (2012). We agree with Treadway's view of political will as a multidimensional construct consisting of both self-serving and altruistic motives. Specifically, our research expands the politics literature in three important ways. First, the development of the PWS fills a notable gap in the literature and allows for more rigorous empirical testing of not only political will but also political skill, interpersonal power, and political behavior. Second, the establishment of political will as reflecting both self- and other-serving motivations challenges traditional notions of political behavior as being exclusively detrimental to others. By envisaging political motivation as potentially designed to assist others, we offer an initial bridge to explain the transference of individual political will to the collective in situations of organizational or social change. Finally, our evaluation of the relation between political will and political skill suggests important boundary conditions for developing the political skill literature.

Political Will in Organizations

Although the term political will is widely used across disciplines, it is an inconsistently defined construct (Treadway, 2012). At the macrolevel, political will is viewed as "the demonstrated credible intent of political actors (e.g., elected or appointed leaders, civil society watchdogs, stakeholder groups, etc.) to attack perceived causes or effects of corruption at a systemic level" (Kpundeh, 1998: 92). Similarly, political will has been presented as "the extent of committed support among key decision-makers for a particular policy solution to a particular problem" (Post et al., 2010: 659). Inherent among these definitions is a view of political will as residing in the collective, ignoring the motivations of individual actors. While this approach is appropriate for questions of public policy, it fails to explain the individual influence behavior that affects the leadership, which, in turn, creates the collective notions of will. Indeed, it is these motivations which Mintzberg (1983) referred to as political will.

Noting the lack of definitional clarity at the collective level and the absence of a refined definition at the individual level, Treadway distinguished individual-level political will as "the motivation to engage in strategic, goal directed behavior that advances the personal agenda and objectives of the actor that inherently involves the risk of relational or reputational capital" (2012: 533). In contrast to traditional notions of political activity as exclusively dysfunctional for the organization and those within it, Treadway argued that political will operates as a multidimensional construct. These dimensions were positioned as two sets of continuums, each containing the poles of self-interest and social interest, thus challenging traditional notions of political behavior as solely dysfunctional to others.

The first of the two continuums implied that behavior could be activated by either instrumental or relational outcomes. Treadway argued that the *instrumental* dimension of political will "explicitly acknowledges that employees often act in their own self-interest" (2012: 540). These outcomes map directly onto conventional notions of political behavior as being self-serving. However, this tendency does not explain instances in which individuals engage in political behavior to improve relations with others. Thus, according to Treadway, the *relational* dimension of political will suggests that outcomes related to "the content within and around the relationships employees form with their supervisors, coworkers, company, or networks" (541) act as motivations to engage in political behavior.

Treadway (2012) further argued that the instrumental and relational dimensions were affected by opposing forces that reflected the focus of the actor's concern in a given situation. Thus, within the other continuum, he specified that the dimensions of *concern for self* and *concern for others* vied for motivational focus. Actors possessing a high degree of concern for self are preoccupied with the personal achievements that reinforce and develop their own sense of self. Thus,

> the dimension of concern for self is not bound solely by the selfish notions of instrumental gain that traditionally have permeated scholarly definitions of political behavior but focuses more on how the pursuit and attainment of such outcomes serves to integrate into individuals' definitions of self. (Treadway, 2012: 544)

In contrast, the end of this continuum that is devoted to concern for others identifies a motivation to use political behavior to improve the conditions of others instead of focusing on personal achievement. Individuals motivated by this dimension might be inspired to invest their personal capital in defending a colleague from abuse, engaging in voice behavior, or joining a movement for social change.

In Treadway's (2012) view, influencers' concern for themselves or others was not, in itself, sufficient to predict their behavior. Their motivation would result in action only when its salience exceeded that of the personal risk involved in action. Ultimately, an assessment of personal risk acts as a buffer between motivation and action. Thus, according to Treadway, the personal risk dimension of political will "may restrict both the range and likelihood of political behavior" (547).

Although Treadway (2012) does not specifically suggest a measurement model for political will, he clearly articulates that the construct is multidimensional and composed of the five dimensions cited above. Hence,

> *Hypothesis 1:* Political will is a multidimensional construct that is aligned along the dimensions of instrumental, relational, concern for self, concern for others, and risk.

In testing the above hypothesis, and the remainder that follow, the present research was conducted through four studies and follows methods outlined by Hinkin (1998). The first study entailed the development of the PWS through the initial generation of a large pool of potential scale items and the refinement of the items to enhance the substantive validity of the construct. The second examined the psychometric properties of the PWS, the third presented evidence of convergent validity and distinctiveness from related constructs, and the fourth established the criterion-related validity of the PWS.

Study 1: Content Development

Item Generation

To ensure the content validity of the PWS, we produced items using a deductive (i.e., logical partitioning) item-generation approach (Hinkin, 1998). This approach was selected for two main reasons: (1) the authors possess a working knowledge of political will, and (2) the extant literature provides sufficient information on the theoretical foundation of political will. After adopting Treadway's (2012) definition of political will as a guide for item generation, we followed Hinkin's suggestion and developed items that addressed a single issue, were simple, short, comprehensible, and familiar to respondents. This procedure resulted in the generation of 50 items—10 items for each dimension proposed by Treadway.

Initial Item Reduction: Item-Sort Task

An item-sort task was performed (J. C. Anderson & Gerbing, 1991) as recommended by Hinkin (1998) for the early stages of the scale's development. This fostered the deletion of items that were conceptually inconsistent with the construct definition and, hence, assessed the substantive validity of the construct (J. C. Anderson & Gerbing).

Participants and procedure. The substantive validity of the PWS was assessed on a small sample consisting of 26 (11 male, 15 female) university faculty and PhD students. The average age of the participants was 34 years (SD = 7.2). Participants were given a shuffled list of the 50 political will items and items from related constructs, along with the definitions of each construct. They were asked to read the definitions and assign each scale item to the construct that it appeared to assess while keeping in mind that some constructs could have more items assigned to them than others. After their assignment decisions were made for each item, the respondents reviewed these decisions and made any changes they thought necessary. Research suggests that items assigned to their correct constructs demonstrate greater substantive validity than do items assigned to incorrect constructs (Hinkin, 1998).

In addition to the political will items, the questionnaire included measures of intrinsic motivation (Amabile, Hill, Hennessey, & Tighe, 1994), core self-evaluations (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997), Machiavellianism (Mach; Christie & Geis, 1970), risk aversion (Cable & Judge, 1994), and behavioral activation (Carver & White, 1994). These all have implications for motivation and politics (Treadway, 2012).

Results. We computed the proportion of substantive agreement (PSA) and the coefficient of substantive validity (CSV), as suggested by J. C. Anderson and Gerbing (1991). The PSA assesses the proportion of respondents who assign an item to its intended construct, whereas the CSV is an index that reflects the extent to which respondents assign an item to its intended construct more than to any other construct. The values for the PSA and the CSV can range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating a greater degree of substantive validity. To preserve the substantive validity of the scale, we retained only items with a PSA greater than or equal to .75 and a CSV greater than or equal to .70 (for a similar approach, see Linderbaum & Levy, 2010). This resulted in the deletion of 34 items from the originally developed PWS. The resultant pool of political will items was composed of 16 items (see Appendix A in the

supplemental material available online), which were analyzed in Study 2 to establish the dimensionality, psychometric properties, and final version of the PWS.

Study 2: Dimensionality and Distinctiveness of the PWS

Sample 1: Participants and Procedure

Sample 1 consisted of 207 undergraduate students (67.2% response rate) of a large university located in the United States who completed the electronic questionnaire developed for this sample. Respondents had a mean age of 21.6 years (*SD* = 2.8), an average work experience of 3.9 years (*SD* = 3.1), and 42.2% of them were female.

Sample 1: Measures

Political will. The resultant 16 items from Study 1 measured political will.

Social desirability. Social desirability (α = .65) was measured on a 10-item dichotomous scale (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972). A sample item is "I never resent being asked to return a favor."

Affectivity. We used the 20-item Positive (α = .83) and Negative (α = .86) Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Participants rated how they felt "in general, that is on the average" on a variety of negative (e.g., afraid, nervous) and positive (e.g., proud, excited) affective states. Responses were made on a scale from *very slightly or not at all* (1) to *extremely* (5).

Sample 2: Participants and Procedure

Participants for Sample 2 were recruited from Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk. The survey was available only to individuals currently employed and living in the United States who spoke English as their primary language. The survey included five screening questions to gauge attention and language comprehension, and only those individuals who answered the questions correctly were allowed to participate and receive compensation. Of the 777 participants, 406 (52.3%) passed the screening. Mean age in the sample was 32.9 years (*SD* = 9.7), mean work experience was 13.6 years (*SD* = 9.6), and 43.8% were female.

Sample 2: Measures

To measure political will (16-item pool), social desirability (α = .75), and affectivity (positive: α = .90; negative: α = .91), we used the same measures as in Sample 1.

Political skill. Political skill was measured on a 7-point response format ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) using the 18-item Political Skill Inventory (PSI; α = .94; Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005) with four subdimensions (i.e., social astuteness: α = .88; networking ability: α = .94; interpersonal influence: α = .90; apparent sincerity: α = .86).

Political behavior. Political behavior (α = .85) was measured using six items from Treadway, Hochwarter, et al. (2005) on a 5-point response scale ranging from *never* (1) to *always* (5).

Results

To ensure a greater degree of stability and power in this step of the scale's development, we combined Samples 1 and 2 ($N = 613$) to conduct the item, the dimensionality of the PWS, and the method effects analyses. To establish the distinctiveness of the PWS, we used only Sample 2, which included the measures of political skill and political behavior.

Item analysis. An item analysis was conducted to discern the items that best represent political will. First, we examined the corrected item-to-total correlation of the political will items. All items had item-to-total correlations greater than .40 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) and, thus, were retained. Next, we examined the correlations of the political will items with the total score of the social desirability measure and removed items with modest or high correlations (i.e., above .20). This resulted in the elimination of six items (see Appendix A in the supplemental material). The resulting scale contained 10 items.

Dimensionality of the PWS. To assess the factor structure of the 10 political will items resulting from the item analysis, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on two split-half respondent groups randomly selected from the larger data set. With the first group of respondents, we conducted a principal axis factor analysis with direct oblimin factor rotation because we assumed that the political will dimensions would be related. Factors with eigenvalues above the cutoff value of 1 were retained, and .55 (i.e., 30% variance overlap between variable and factor) was the factor loading cutoff criterion (Comrey & Lee, 1992) for item retention. We also eliminated items that cross-loaded on other factors greater than .32 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). On the basis of these criteria, we removed two items (see Appendix A in the supplemental material). The remaining eight items (see Table 1) satisfied the above criteria and were retained for further analysis.

In contrast to Hypothesis 1, our results indicated that a two-factor structure fit the data best. The eigenvalue for Factor 1 was 4.64 and for Factor 2 was 1.03, with 70.9% total variance explained (Factor 1 explained 57.9%, Factor 2 explained 12.9%; see Table 1). Integrating Treadway's (2012) dimensions and our empirical results, the factors were labeled *self-serving* and *benevolent*. The resulting eight-item PWS consisted of four items for each dimension.

A CFA based on the two-factor PWS was performed, with uncorrelated measurement errors, using the second randomly selected group of respondents. All items loaded above .50 to their corresponding latent factor, reliability estimates were above .70 (Self-serving: α = .87; Benevolent: α = .85; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), and average variance extracted was above .50 (Self-serving = .63; Benevolent = .59; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The two-factor model was tested for fit and compared to the fit indices of the one- and the three-factor models. Detailed results from structural equation modeling analyses are presented in Appendix B in the supplemental material. The two-factor model exhibited the best fit, $\chi^2(19) = 58.81$, $p < .001$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .97, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .95, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .08, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) =

Table 1
Factor Loadings of the Exploratory Factor Analysis Results (Study 2)

Description	*M*	*SD*	Factor 1 Self-serving	Factor 2 Benevolent
Doing good for others sometimes means acting politically.	4.50	1.50		.72
I would engage in politics to serve the common good.	4.53	1.57		.79
When I am right I am willing to act politically.	4.44	1.51		.75
I would use political tactics to improve my working conditions.	4.54	1.57		.61
Engaging in politics is an attractive means to achieve my personal objectives.	3.50	1.52	.90	
I would employ political tactics to be in my boss' in-group.	3.73	1.66	.67	
Prevailing in the political arena at work would prove my competence.	3.66	1.66	.73	
I would engage in politics to preserve my self-esteem.	3.52	1.66	.79	
Eigenvalues			4.64	1.03
Percentage of variance explained			57.93	12.92
Cumulative percentage of variance explained			57.93	70.86
Coefficient alpha reliability estimates			.86	.85

Note: N (random split half) = 307.

.04. An examination of method effects (Williams & Anderson, 1994) determined that this two-factor model was only negligibly biased by positive affect, negative affect, and social desirability (constructs commonly found to influence self-reported perceptions in organizational phenomena; Williams, Edwards, & Vandenberg, 2003; see Appendix C in the supplemental material).

Distinctiveness of the PWS. We next examined whether political will is empirically distinct from other constructs to which it is conceptually related. We selected political skill and political behavior for this purpose because they are theoretically associated with political will (Liu, Liu, & Wu, 2010; Treadway, Hochwarter, et al., 2005). We performed the distinctiveness analysis using Sample 2, which, besides the measures mentioned above, included the measures of political skill and political behavior (see Appendix D in the supplemental material for descriptive statistics and interrelations). Specifically, we performed a series of CFAs to test whether the underlying dimensions of political will are distinct from those of the two related constructs. In all models, the measurement errors were not correlated.

To perform the analyses, we first constructed a baseline model that included the two dimensions of political will, the four dimensions of political skill, and political behavior with their corresponding items. This baseline model fit the data well, $\chi^2(443) = 1{,}092.12$, $p < .001$, CFI = .93, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .06, and no items loaded to their corresponding latent factor below the .50 cutoff (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

Next, to determine the distinctiveness of the political will construct, we first tested whether these seven factors were part of a larger construct. To perform this CFA test, we compared the baseline model to a nested model in which the variances between the two dimensions of

political will, the four dimensions of political skill, and political behavior were all constrained to one, thereby forming one overall construct. The baseline model exhibited superior fit, and the chi-square difference between the baseline and the constrained model was statistically significant, $\Delta\chi^2(28) = 4{,}189.19$, $p < .001$. These results suggested that the constructs more accurately reflect the data when not constrained to one combined factor. Second, we examined whether each of the two dimensions of political will were empirically distinct from each dimension of the PSI and from political behavior. This analysis was performed by contrasting the baseline model with the nested models where, one by one, the variance of each dimension of political will was constrained with a dimension of a related construct (e.g., 1 model involved constraining to one the variance of the self-serving dimension of political will and the networking ability dimension of political skill). This procedure resulted in the construction of 10 different nested models. In all 10 cases, the baseline model presented a better fit to the data, and the chi-square difference test was significant, thereby indicating that each of the dimensions of political will is empirically distinct from those of political skill and political behavior.

Finally, to further investigate whether the items of the PWS cross-loaded onto the dimensions of the related constructs, we allowed the PWS items to cross-load, one by one, to a dimension of a related construct (e.g., 1 nested model was constructed by allowing the first item of the self-serving dimension of the PWS to load also to the political behavior latent factor, while another nested model allowed the first item of self-serving to load also on the social astuteness latent factor of the PSI). This resulted in the development of 40 nested models. In all cases, the baseline model presented a better fit to the data where the factor loadings of the PWS items to their corresponding latent factor were higher than the factor loadings to other constructs and the cross-loadings of items to any construct other than the intended one were below .50 and less than half as large as the corresponding primary loadings. These results demonstrate that the loadings of the PWS items to other constructs cannot be considered major secondary loadings.

Overall, these results suggest that the two-dimensional PWS and its corresponding items are distinct from the dimensions of the PSI and from political behavior.

Construct Validity of the PWS

To provide evidence for the construct validity of the PWS, we examined the relationships between the dimensions of the PWS and several theoretically related constructs outlined by Treadway (2012). Specifically, we evaluated the relation of the PWS with the scales used to measure nAch, need for power (nPow), need for affiliation (nAff), intrinsic motivation, Mach, risk aversion, influence tactics, and political skill.

Needs and Motives

Politics can fulfill many types of need. Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) suggests that individuals are intrinsically motivated to engage in actions that facilitate personal growth and that such motivation is heightened when such actions also build competence and autonomy. Behaviors motivated by political will, such as exerting influence, developing rapport, enacting change, or building power and respect, may all enhance an actor's development, competence, and autonomy at work and, hence, may be intrinsically motivating (cf. Treadway, Hochwarter, et al., 2005).

Political will may also fulfill broader needs. Politics, regardless of the beneficiary (i.e., self or others), offer a risky means for actors to achieve goals by competing with others and enhancing their own self-image (Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989), which satisfies a high nAch (Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwick, & Mayes, 1979).

Hypothesis 2a: Intrinsic motivation and nAch each positively correlate with the self-serving and benevolent dimensions of the PWS.

Furthermore, individuals high on nPow have a tendency to dominate and control situations to satisfy personal, rather than social, objectives, often at the expense of maintaining interpersonal relationships (cf. House & Howell, 1992). Therefore, as a central means of gaining personal power over others (e.g., Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1981) that is localized to oneself, politics that directly benefit oneself may satisfy a high nPow (Ferris et al., 2007; Mowday, 1978).

Hypothesis 2b: nPow positively correlates with the self-serving dimension of the PWS.

At the same time, individuals with a high nAff seek attention and recognition from others, want to be respected members of the in-group, and try to build a strong social support base by engaging in benevolent actions. In this respect, while politics that benefit others often involve giving away resources or control with little guarantee of return on one's investment, they more certainly elicit liking and build social reciprocity, which would satisfy a high nAff (Koestner & McClelland, 1992).

Hypothesis 2c: nAff positively correlates with the benevolent dimension of the PWS.

Personal Traits and Behavioral Styles

Politics are a subset of work behavior that may also be elicited by individual traits. Specifically, politics are subjective, ambiguous, and risky, regardless of whether they benefit oneself or others. Individuals with a higher tolerance of risk may be more willing than those who are risk averse to engage in both self-serving and benevolent politics to obtain rewards.

Hypothesis 3a: Risk aversion positively correlates with the self-serving and benevolent dimensions of the PWS.

Politics that primarily benefit oneself often rely on manipulating others to obtain rewards. Individuals with high Mach pursue rewards by actively influencing others in an impersonal and utilitarian manner (Bolino & Turnley, 2003; Christie & Geis, 1970), and their propensity to perceive (Valle & Perrewé, 2000) and use political behavior (Barbuto & Moss, 2006; Ferris, Fedor, & King, 1994) is indicative of self-serving political will (Treadway, 2012). This is in line with Ammeter, Douglas, Gardner, Hochwarter, and Ferris (2002), who argue that Mach is essentially self-serving, rather than benevolent, in nature.

Hypothesis 3b: Mach correlates with the PWS self-serving dimension.

Political Skill and Influence Tactics

Social influence tactics (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1982) are an essential means of enacting politics and exercising power for the sake of fulfilling any type of political end, whether to benefit oneself or others. When acting politically, according to Ferris and his colleagues (Ferris, Davidson, & Perrewé, 2005; Ferris et al., 2007; Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005), politically skilled individuals are more likely to choose influence tactics that are situationally appropriate. Later research has confirmed that politically skilled employees are indeed more effective in obtaining personal objectives from influence behavior (e.g., Treadway, Ferris, Duke, Adams, & Thatcher, 2007). The success of the politically skilled may result in an enhanced propensity to engage in political behavior and, thus, may motivate them to act politically in general.

Hypothesis 4: Political skill, ingratiation, upward appeal, rationality, exchange, coalitions, and assertiveness each positively correlate with the self-serving and benevolent dimensions of the PWS.

Criterion-Related Validity

The final step in validating the PWS is that of determining its relationship to theoretically relevant outcomes (Hinkin, 1998). Politics are associated with a unique set of behaviors and outcomes in the workplace, which both benefit the politically willed and can bring about change in an organization. For this reason, we expect political will to correlate with political behavior, voice behavior, status in the organization, and growth potential of one's career.

Work behavior. Political behaviors exercise the use of tactical influence and the risk of resource investment in order to transcend political inertia and meet objectives (Liu et al. 2010; Mintzberg, 1983; Treadway, 2012). Those who are willing to act politically are likely to use such behavior in order to attain their goals (Treadway; Treadway, Hochwarter, et al., 2005). However, fulfilling one's political will may also require speaking up and attempting to change aspects of an organization (Treadway). Actions associated with voice behavior, such as providing new ideas and recommending adjustments to policies and procedures (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998), may serve political will for the attainment of one's goals (e.g., gaining power by leading a change initiative) or the benefit of others (e.g., enhancing job autonomy for an entire department in order to reduce stress for all).

Hypothesis 5: Political behavior and voice behavior each positively correlate with the self-serving and benevolent dimensions of the PWS.

Career-related outcomes. Being indicative of power and resources (C. Anderson, John, Keltner, & Kring, 2001; Fiske, 2010), personal status in an organization is closely tied to politics (Gandz & Murray, 1980). While past work has examined formal status (i.e., Gandz & Murray), politics are often executed best through informal social influence, which gives reason to believe that politicking can also enhance informal status. Some forms of political behavior (e.g., strategic assertive behaviors; Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984) are consciously enacted to enhance one's broad reputation by persistently shaping others' attributions of one's characteristics. Politically willed individuals may be more likely to engage in such behaviors and target them towards those with whom their role is intertwined, which is essential for effective reputation building (Ferris, Blass, Douglas, Kolodinsky, & Treadway, 2003;

Tsui, 1984) that can enhance one's status. Beyond status, however, the power that results from motivated political behavior can also enhance career growth potential (Liu et al., 2010) and secure resources and relationships for future success.

Hypothesis 6: Status in the workplace and career growth potential each positively correlate with the self-serving and benevolent dimensions of the PWS.

Relative Predictive Capacity of Political Will and Political Skill

As initially suggested by Mintzberg (1983), a person exerting influence must have both the will to engage in political behavior and the skill to effectively execute such behavior. Research on political skill, as measured by the PSI (Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005), has demonstrated that it can enhance the effectiveness of influence behavior (Kolodinsky, Treadway, & Ferris, 2007; Treadway et al., 2007) and the effectiveness of work behavior in meeting political ends, such as gaining power (Treadway, Breland, Williams, Cho, Yang, & Ferris, 2013). Early research by Treadway, Hochwarter, et al. (2005) on political will (i.e., operationalized as intrinsic motivation and nAch) demonstrated that the moderating effect of political skill on the linkage between political behavior and outcome (i.e., emotional labor, in their case) functions as a complement to the direct effect of political will on political behavior.

Because political will is conceptualized as a primary motivator of involvement in political actions and the pursuit of goals through political means (Treadway, 2012), we expect political will to play a more substantial role in motivating political behavior than political skill. It is plausible that, even though individuals are skilled at politicking, they may not be continually motivated to so engage in politics. When they engage, they may do so only situationally when there is an obvious chance of success given their high political skill (as mentioned earlier) but not overall from a broader motivation to act politically.

Hypothesis 7: There will be a positive relationship between both dimensions of the PWS and influence tactics, political behavior, voice behavior, status in the workplace, and career growth potential, beyond the effects of the PSI.

Study 3: Assessment of Construct Validity

Sample 1: Participants and Procedure

Participants in the first sample were 162 master of business administration alumni (a 39% response rate) from a large Greek university. Participants completed an electronic questionnaire in English; all were fluent in English and had an internationally recognized certificate of proficiency in the language (Test of English as a Foreign Language, TOEFL, score of greater than 100 or equivalent).

Sample 1: Measures

Political will. The eight-item PWS developed in Study 2 was used to measure political will and its dimensions. The measure exhibited an excellent fit to the data, $\chi^2(19) = 33.98$, $p < .05$, CFI = .98, TLI = .96, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .04.

Intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation was measured using six items (Warr, Cook, & Wall, 1979) on a 5-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). A sample item is "I take pride in doing my job as well as I can."

NAch. We measured nAch using a five-item measure from the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (Steers & Braunstein, 1976) on a 7-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample item is "I do my best work when my job assignments are fairly difficult."

NAff. We measured nAff using the 10-item Need to Belong Scale (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, & Schreindorfer, 2013) on a 7-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample item for the scale is "I want other people to accept me."

NPow. We measured nPow using the five dominance items from the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (Steers & Braunstein, 1976) on a 7-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample scale item is "I strive to gain more control over the events around me at work."

Mach. We measured Mach using the 5-item scale proposed by Valentine and Fleischman (2003), based on the 20-item Mach IV Scale (Christie & Geis, 1970), on a 5-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). A sample item is "It is hard to get ahead without cutting corners here and there."

Risk aversion. Risk aversion was measured using the eight-item scale of Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, and Welbourne (1999). Responses were obtained on a 5-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). A sample item is "I am a cautious person who generally avoids risks."

Sample 1: Convergent Validity Results

Table 2 shows the demographics, Cronbach's alpha reliabilities (in the diagonal), descriptive statistics, and correlations for Sample 1 in Study 3. Moderate and statistically significant correlations between the dimension scores of the PWS and related constructs provide evidence of construct validity (Hinkin, 1998), while statistically significant differences between the correlations of the dimensions with their related constructs provide further evidence of discrimination between the two dimensions.

Partial support was found for Hypothesis 2a, since self-serving political will was positively and significantly related to nAch and yet only marginally significantly related to intrinsic motivation, while benevolent political will was positively and significantly related to intrinsic motivation and yet only marginally significantly related to nAch. Full support was found for Hypotheses 2b and 2c since self-serving political will was positively and significantly related to nPow, while benevolent political will was positively and significantly related to nAff. In addition, nPow and nAff were not significantly correlated with benevolent and self-serving political will, respectively. Next, in full support of Hypotheses 3a and 3b, both self-serving and benevolent political will negatively and significantly correlated with risk

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 3, Sample 1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	*M*	*SD*
1. Gender	—												1.65	0.48
2. Age	−.21**	—											32.06	6.93
3. Work experience	−.15†	.89**	—										9.31	6.83
4. NAch	−.04	.05	−.01	(.69)									4.75	0.84
5. NAff	−.00	−.14†	−.10	.14†	(.71)								5.48	0.97
6. NPow	−.01	−.07	−.03	.30	.10	(.72)							4.61	0.91
7. Intrinsic motivation	−.14†	−.06	−.09	.19*	.08	.24**	(.67)						4.15	0.53
8. Risk aversion	.03	.02	.01	−.22**	−.11	−.19*	−.06	(.72)					2.78	0.60
9. Machiavellianism	−.17*	.12	.12	.05	−.09	−.02	.30**	.24**	(.70)				3.03	0.68
10. PWS: Self-serving	−.34**	.18*	.13	.18*	.12	.20**	.15†	−.17*	.30**	(.79)			2.99	1.37
11. PWS: Benevolent	−.13	.19*	.12	.15†	.16*	.08	.16*	−.18*	.08	.62**	(.88)		3.98	1.34
12. PWS: Total score	−.26**	.21**	.14†	.19*	.16*	.16*	.17*	−.19*	.21**	.90**	.90**	(.88)	3.49	1.22

Note: $N = 162$. Cronbach's alphas are reported in the diagonal. Gender: male = 1, female = 2. NAch = need for achievement; NAff = need for affiliation; NPow = need for power; PWS = Political Will Scale.

†$p < .10$.

*$p < .05$.

**$p < .01$.

aversion, while the self-serving dimension was positively and significantly related to Mach (the benevolent dimension and Mach were not significantly correlated).

Sample 2: Participants and Procedure

Sample 2 consisted of 115 managers (a 39% response rate) working in a large insurance company in the United Kingdom who completed the questionnaire electronically.

Sample 2: Measures

Political will. As in the previous sample, the eight-item PWS developed in Study 2 was used to measure political will and its dimensions. The measure exhibited an excellent fit to the data, $\chi^2(10) = 43.54$, $p < .01$, CFI = .96, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .05.

Political skill. Political skill was measured using the 18-item PSI (Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005) on a 7-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample item is "It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people."

Influence tactics. The six influence tactics (ingratiation, upward appeal, rationality, exchange of benefits, coalitions, and assertiveness) were measured using Schriesheim and Hinkin's (1990) 18-item revision of the original Profiles of Organizational Influence Strategies (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1982) on a 5-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5).

Sample 2: Convergent and Criterion-Related Validity Results

Table 3 shows the demographics, reliability estimates, descriptive statistics, and correlations for Sample 2 in Study 3. Partial support was found for Hypothesis 4, such that self-serving political will was positively and significantly related to political skill and positively and significantly related to ingratiation, upward appeals, assertiveness, and coalitions and yet only marginally significantly related to exchange of benefits. Moreover, benevolent political will was significantly related to political skill and to all six influence tactics.

To assess the effectiveness of the PWS over and above the effect of the PSI, we performed a regression analysis whereby the control variables and the PSI were entered in the first step followed by the dimensions of the PWS in the second step (see Table 4). For all six influence tactics, the inclusion of both dimensions of the PWS explained variance over and above the controls and the PSI. Specifically, both PWS dimensions were significantly related to rationality, with self-serving having a negative impact and benevolent having a positive one. Furthermore, the self-serving dimension was positively related to upward appeals and the benevolent dimension was positively related to coalitions.

Nonetheless, self-serving and benevolent dimensions were highly correlated (see Table 3); thus, the interpretation of regression weights may have been misleading (Johnson & LeBreton, 2004). As a result, to accurately partition the variance among multiple correlated predictors and assess the contribution of each predictor to the total variance (i.e., R^2), we performed a relative weight analysis for each of the six influence tactics (see Table 4). We constructed

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 3, Sample 2)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	*M*	*SD*
1. Gender	—													1.54	0.50
2. Age	−.23*	—												36.12	8.36
3. Work experience	−.19*	.71**	—											13.86	8.99
4. PSI total score	−.10	.11	.06	(.92)										5.19	0.75
5. Ingratiation	−.02	−.05	−.16	.25**	(.67)									2.99	0.81
6. Rationality	−.13	.08	.04	.33**	.11	(.75)								4.52	0.61
7. Upward appeals	−.16†	.19*	.11	.37**	.34**	.39**	(.85)							3.18	1.02
8. Exchange of benefits	.01	−.10	−.18†	−.10	.39**	−.13	.17†	(.68)						2.21	0.86
9. Assertiveness	.01	−.07	−.08	−.12	.17†	−.30**	.06	.50**	(.72)					2.11	0.74
10. Coalitions	.03	−.07	−.06	.31**	.52**	.36**	.71**	.41**	.07	(.71)				3.26	0.82
11. PWS: Self-serving	−.15	.14	.10	.48**	.27**	.10	.59**	.17†	.20*	.44**	(.92)			3.72	1.27
12. PWS: Benevolent	−.12	.12	.02	.32**	.27**	.26**	.52**	.24**	.23*	.46**	.77**	(.82)		4.03	1.20
13. PWS: Total score	−.15	.14	.06	.43**	.29**	.19*	.59**	.22*	.23*	.48**	.94**	.94**	(.92)	3.88	1.16

Note: $N = 115$. Cronbach's alphas are reported in the diagonal. Gender: male = 1, female = 2. PSI = Political Skill Inventory; PWS = Political Will Scale.
†$p < .10$.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.

Table 4

Results of the Hierarchical Regression and Relative Weight Analyses (Study 3, Sample 2)

	Ingratiation			Rationality			Upward Appeal			Exchange of Benefits			Assertiveness			Coalitions		
Variables	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)
Gender	−0.04	−0.02	0.00	−0.09	−0.10	0.01	−0.08	−0.04	0.00	−0.01	−0.02	0.00	−0.03	−0.00	0.00	0.05	0.08	0.01
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.80)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(5.20)	(0.18)	(0.16)	(1.85)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.79)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.27)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(1.91)
Age	0.09	0.06	0.00	0.02	−0.02	0.00	0.15	0.10	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.00	−0.02	−0.06	0.00	−0.11	−0.17	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(3.36)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.67)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(3.36)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(5.89)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(3.63)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(4.26)
Work experience	−0.24†	−0.22†	0.03	−0.01	0.05	0.00	−0.03	−0.02	0.00	−0.22	−0.19	0.03	−0.06	−0.04	0.00	0.01	0.05	0.02
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(18.60)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.43)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.97)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(20.59)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(3.17)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.91)
PSI total score	0.25**	0.16	0.04	0.32**	0.40**	0.11*	0.35**	0.11	0.06*	−0.09	−0.22*	0.03	−0.12	−0.27*	0.04	0.33**	0.17†	0.05†
	(0.10)	(0.11)	(26.56)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(47.34)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(14.04)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(19.86)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(30.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(18.58)
Self-serving		0.09	0.03		−0.48**	0.03		0.41**	0.20**		0.15	0.03		0.21	0.04†		0.14	0.09*
		(0.10)	(22.65)		(0.07)	(14.12)		(0.10)	(48.72)		(0.10)	(20.57)		(0.09)	(29.69)		(0.09)	(31.38)
Benevolent		0.16	0.04		0.49**	0.07*		0.16	0.12**		0.20	0.04†		0.17	0.04†		0.33*	0.12**
		(0.09)	(28.03)		(0.07)	(32.24)		(0.10)	(31.06)		(0.10)	(32.30)		(0.08)	(33.11)		(0.08)	(42.96)
R^2	.10*	.14*		.12**	.22*		.16**	.39**		.04	.13*		.02	.12*		.11*	.28**	
Adj. R^2	.06	.09		.09	.18		.13	.35		.01	.08		.00	.07		.08	.24	
ΔR^2		.04*			.10**			.22**			.09**			.10**			.17**	

Note: $N = 115$. In Steps 1 and 2, standardized betas are reported, with standard errors in parentheses. In the relative weight analysis, raw relative weights (RW) are reported, with rescaled relative weights in parentheses. PSI = Political Skill Inventory.

†$p < .10$ (90% confidence intervals for relative weights).

*$p < .05$ (95% confidence intervals for relative weights).

**$p < .01$ (99% confidence intervals for relative weights).

confidence intervals around the relative weights by using 10,000 bootstrapped replications (for a detailed description, see Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011).

The results of the relative weight analyses (see Table 4) showed that self-serving political will contributed significant relative variance in two out of the six influence tactics (i.e., upward appeals and coalitions) and marginally significant relative variance for assertiveness. Furthermore, benevolent political will contributed significant relative variance in three influence tactics (i.e., rationality, upward appeals, and coalitions) and was marginally significant in another two (i.e., exchange of benefits and assertiveness). Cumulatively, this analysis highlights the importance of the PWS in predicting influence tactics over and above political skill. Hence, initial partial support was found for Hypothesis 7.

Study 4: Criterion-Related Validity of the PWS

Sample

Initially, 160 employees (a 56.5% response rate) working in a transport and tourism company in Greece completed a survey in English (fluency in English was a prerequisite of employment) by providing ratings on political will, political skill, political behavior, voice behavior, and demographics. Their responses were coded confidentially and were matched with their corresponding supervisors. Approximately 6 months after the employee ratings were collected, the supervisor ratings of employee status in the workplace, career growth potential, task performance, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) were collected from 17 supervisors (an 85% response rate). This procedure yielded 124 matched employee-supervisor responses for analysis. Supervisors' mean age was 38.7 years, average work experience was 16.6 years, average position tenure was 4.4 years, and 35% of them were female.

Measures

Political will. As in the previous study, the eight-item PWS developed in Study 2 was used to measure political will and its dimensions. The measure exhibited an excellent fit to the data, $\chi^2(19) = 23.29$, p = n.s., CFI = .99, TLI = .99, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .03.

Political behavior. Employee-rated political behavior was measured using six items from Treadway, Hochwarter, et al. (2005) on a 5-point response scale ranging from *never* (1) to *always* (5). An example item is "I spend time at work politicking."

Voice behavior. Employee-rated voice behavior was measured using six items adapted from Van Dyne and LePine (1998) on a 7-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample item is "I develop and make recommendations concerning issues that affect this work group."

Status in the workplace. Supervisor-rated employee informal status in the workplace was measured using three items adapted from C. Anderson et al. (2001). Supervisors rated their employees as *low/not* (1) to *high/very* (7) on the amount of their status, influence, and visibility.

Career growth potential. Supervisor-rated employee career growth potential was measured using two items adapted from Bedeian, Kemery, and Pizzolatto (1991) on a 7-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The items were "This employee will attain his/her career goals in this organization" and "This employee is likely to gain growth and development in this organization."

Control variables. We controlled for employee demographics. Employees rated their political skill using the PSI (Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005), and supervisors rated employee OCB (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997) and task performance (Wayne & Liden, 1995). We controlled for both OCB and task performance when analyzing the effects of political will on status and career growth potential because research suggests that past performance can also contribute to both outcomes (Cheng, Tracy, & Henrich, 2010; Feldman & Weitz, 1988; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1993). Since political will and job performance could themselves be related (e.g., politics are linked to better job evaluations; Ferris & Judge, 1991), controlling for performance can reduce the risk of reporting a confounded effect when predicting status and career growth potential from political will.

Results

Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations for the sample in Study 4. Full support was found for Hypotheses 5 and 6, for self-serving and benevolent political will each positively and significantly correlated with political behavior, voice, status, and career growth potential.

To assess the predictive effectiveness of the PWS over and above the effects of the PSI and performance (task and OCB), we followed a similar methodology to the one described in Study 3. In each regression equation, we entered the appropriate control variables in the first step and entered the PWS in the second step. Then we computed the relative weights. The results of the relative weight analysis indicated that both the self-serving and benevolent dimensions contributed significant relative variance in political behavior. Furthermore, self-serving political will contributed significant relative variance in status in the workplace, whereas benevolent political will contributed significant variance in voice behavior and career growth potential (see Table 6). Therefore, the results provide additional partial support for Hypothesis 7.

Last, a test of measurement invariance across countries for the samples (i.e., Study 2, Sample 2: United States; Study 3, Sample 3: United Kingdom; and Study 4: Greece) using multigroup CFA (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000) suggested that the PWS factor structure was valid and invariant across the samples collected (results are displayed in Appendix C in the supplemental material).

General Discussion

The will to engage in political behavior is inherent in many aspects of our work life. Although theory has elucidated the importance of political will in influencing others and managing politics (e.g., Doldor, Anderson, & Vinnicombe, 2013; Treadway, 2012), empirical studies in the organizational sciences literature are scarce (Treadway). We argued that this lack of empirical development and subsequent theoretical stagnation is, in part, due to the

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 4)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	*M*	*SD*
1. Gender	—													1.59	0.49
2. Age	−.12	—												34.57	6.88
3. Organizational tenure	−.09	.50**	—											6.35	5.05
4. PSI total score	.05	.11	.12	(.87)										5.42	0.86
5. Task performance[a]	.06	−.22*	.03	.18*	(.96)									4.78	1.25
6. OCB[a]	−.10	−.19*	−.01	.20*	.68**	(.95)								3.80	0.84
7. Political behavior	.03	.09	.07	.21*	.28**	.23*	(.90)							2.26	0.88
8. Voice behavior	.12	.15	.22*	.59**	.19*	.22*	.35**	(.94)						5.44	0.96
9. Status[a]	.02	−.01	.13	.04	.50**	.50**	.34**	.27**	(.96)					4.49	1.43
10. Career growth[a]	−.01	.21*	.02	.01	.49**	.49**	.27**	.17†	.66**	(.96)				4.50	1.45
11. PWS: Self-serving	.13	−.06	−.05	.14	.16†	.06	.54**	.20*	.26**	.19*	(.90)			2.58	1.37
12. PWS: Benevolent	.20*	.03	−.01	.28**	.26**	.20*	.53**	.35**	.25**	.26**	.72**	(.82)		3.37	1.36
13. PWS: Total score	.18†	−.02	−.03	.22*	.22*	.14	.57**	.29**	.27**	.24**	.90**	.94**	(.91)	2.98	1.28

Note: $N = 124$. Cronbach's alphas are reported in the diagonal. Gender: male = 1, female = 2. PSI = Political Skill Inventory; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; PWS = Political Will Scale.
[a]Supervisory rated (Time 2 = 6-month time lag).
†$p < .10$.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.

Table 6
Results of the Hierarchical Regression and Relative Weight Analyses (Study 4)

	Political Behavior			Voice Behavior			Status			Career Growth Potential		
Variables	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)	Step 1	Step 2	RW (%RW)
Gender	0.03	−0.06	0.00	0.11	0.08	0.01	0.06	0.05	0.00	−0.00	−0.04	0.00
	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.57)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(2.43)	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.43)	(0.23)	(0.24)	(0.64)
Age	0.07	0.07	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.10	0.11	0.00	−0.13	−0.15	0.03
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(2.09)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(2.20)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(1.64)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(8.34)
Organizational tenure	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.015	0.16	0.03†	0.10	0.11	0.02	0.09	0.11	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.76)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(7.71)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(3.87)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(1.63)
PSI total score	0.20*	0.08	0.02	0.56**	0.51**	0.28**	−0.10	−0.12	0.01	−0.09	−0.13	0.01
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(5.34)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(69.12)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(1.26)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(2.01)
Task performance	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.31**	0.27*	0.14**	0.27*	0.24*	0.12**
							(0.12)	(0.12)	(36.17)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(35.16)
OCB	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.33**	0.36**	0.15**	0.30**	0.28**	0.13**
							(0.18)	(0.18)	(40.23)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(38.12)
PWS: Self-serving		0.36**	0.18**		−0.04	0.02		0.28*	0.04*		0.01	0.02
		(0.07)	(50.43)		(0.08)	(4.22)		(0.12)	(11.46)		(0.13)	(4.31)
PWS: Benevolent		0.25*	0.15**		0.22†	0.06*		−0.09	0.02		0.19	0.03*
		(0.08)	(40.81)		(0.09)	(14.31)		(0.13)	(4.94)		(0.14)	(9.79)
R^2	.05	.35**		.38**	.41**		.33**	.38**		.31**	.34**	
Adj. R^2	.02	.32		.36	.38		.29	.33		.27	.29	
ΔR^2		.30**			.03*			.05*			.03†	

Note: $N = 124$. In Steps 1 and 2, standardized betas are reported, with standard errors in parentheses. In the relative weight analysis, raw relative weights (RW) are reported, with rescaled relative weights in parentheses. PSI = Political Skill Inventory; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; PWS = Political Will Scale.
†$p < .10$ (90% confidence intervals for relative weights).
*$p < .05$ (95% confidence intervals for relative weights).
**$p < .01$ (99% confidence intervals for relative weights).

absence of a valid measure of the construct. The primary aim of the present research was to develop and test a reliable and valid measure of political will. On the basis of the methodological steps proposed by Hinkin (1998), a cross-national, multisample investigation was conducted, which resulted in the development of the two-dimensional, eight-item PWS.

Using data from different cultural and organizational settings, we found that the PWS exhibited excellent reliability and strong interitem correlations. Additionally, apart from examining the factor structure of the construct, we investigated whether the PWS was subject to method effects and found that, although these effects were present, they were negligible. Finally, our findings suggest that the measurement of political will is invariant across samples and, therefore, that all the respondents perceived the scale as conceptually similar. But even though our results suggest that the measure may be culturally invariant, more stringent testing is warranted.

After developing the scale, we examined the relationship of the two dimensions, self-serving and benevolent, of the PWS with other theoretically related constructs. The results generally confirmed their convergence to, and discrimination and distinctiveness from, related constructs and also revealed unique differences between the two dimensions. In terms of needs, self-serving political will was related to individuals' nAch and nPow, while benevolent political will was related to their nAff and general intrinsic motivation. In terms of personal and behavioral tendencies, both dimensions were negatively related to risk aversion, while only self-serving was related to Mach. These findings support our theoretical development of the dimensions of political will wherein self-serving is a type of self-focused motivation, while benevolent is a type of other- and organization-focused motivation.

Testing further, we then confirmed the relationships between political will and other political constructs, including political skill, political behavior, and social influence tactics. Here we found that both dimensions of the PWS were significantly related to political skill and only the benevolent dimension was related to rationality and exchange tactics, yet both dimensions were related to political behavior, as well as ingratiation, upward appeals, assertiveness, and coalition tactics. Moreover, both dimensions related to upward appeals, coalitions, and political behavior above and beyond the effects of political skill, while the benevolent dimension did the same in relation to rationality. These findings confirm past work suggesting that political will begets political behavior (Mintzberg, 1983; Treadway, 2012) and influence tactics and that it does so in a way that complements political skill and uniquely affects some forms of political action.

The findings also highlight important differences between the two dimensions of political will. Benevolent political will, it seems, embraces more tactics that benefit the target of influence (e.g., reasonably explaining an argument, showing facts or data, exchanging benefits and building reciprocity) beyond mere ingratiation, while self-serving political will focuses mainly on tactics that primarily benefit the self by forcing others to act (e.g., asserting one's stance, drawing on power from superiors, drawing on power from groups).

Examining the nature of politics in the workplace may offer some insight into the reason for some of our hypotheses, as referenced in the preceding three paragraphs, not being supported. Specifically, the stronger link of benevolent political will, rather than self-serving political will, to rationality, exchange, and intrinsic motivation may be due to the heightened levels of self-threat triggers (Campbell & Sedikides, 1999) involved with politics, such as ambiguity (Ferris et al., 1989) or difficulty in choosing the correct political behavior in a

given situation (e.g., the effectiveness of impression management; Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). It is possible that such self-threat is activated only in response to the potential for direct personal loss or lack of goal fulfillment rather than when engaging in politics to benefit others. This may cause a heightened self-serving bias, which induces emotional reactivity that buffers rational thinking (e.g., Roese & Olson, 2007) and the logically equitable exchange of benefits (Babcock & Loewenstein, 1997), while also reducing the intrinsic motivation to continue in the political process. The nAch may be stimulated, however, by such high self-threat scenarios, since such stimulation can enhance risk and the potential personal payoff for achieving goals that may also be perceived as more difficult than equivalent formalized goals.

Returning to our results, we find evidence that both self-serving and benevolent political will are related to workplace behavior and outcomes, namely, voice behavior, informal status at work, and career growth potential, even when controlling for the effects of performance. Interestingly, different dimensions of political will were responsible for enhancing variance in those behaviors and outcomes beyond that accounted for by political skill. Status was enhanced by self-serving political will, which aligns with the focus of this dimension on building personal power and gaining influence on the basis of oneself, while voice and career growth potential were enhanced by benevolent political will, as they both involve investing in one's organization or profession rather than solely in one's innate self.

Implications for Theory and Future Research Directions

Collectively, our results present several notable contributions to the literature on power and politics. Most obviously, the development of the PWS offers scholars the opportunity to more comprehensively and precisely develop models of political behavior. Despite Mintzberg's (1983) explication of the value of both political skill and political will, the literature has been dominated by studies that model the benefits of political skill—almost uniformly ignoring the impact that a person's motivation may have on his or her success in an organization. As previous scholars have noted (e.g., Mintzberg; Treadway, 2012), and our results empirically demonstrate, it is a person's political will that is most critical in determining engagement in political activity. Thus, the PWS allows for increased sophistication in previous integrative notions of political will and political skill offered by Treadway and his colleagues (Treadway; Treadway et al., 2004; Treadway, Breland, Williams, Yang, & Williams, 2012) by providing a uniform conceptualization of the content of the construct in which to ground further theory development and testing.

Although Treadway (2012) articulated that political will was a multidimensional construct, his purpose was not to create a measure of political will but rather to explain the underlying processes that produce functional versus dysfunctional political behavior. We extrapolated from his writings that political will may operate within a five-factor structure. Our data supported two emergent factors, benevolent and self-serving, that reflect the overarching themes of Treadway's work: that political behavior may be both self-serving and self-sacrificing. This is in direct contrast to traditional notions of political activity in organizations in which political behavior, by its very nature, is viewed as self-serving and potentially harmful to others. Thus, most notable within the two-factor structure is the existence of benevolence as an independent factor and one that predicts political behavior.

The concept of benevolence in political motivation provides the ground for a much broader understanding of politics in the workplace and in society. Weber (1946) suggested that individuals called to politics as a profession tended often to have their motivation sustained by a cause. This calling to serve a greater, common good echoes our concept of benevolence and helps us better understand the selfless individual (e.g., voice behavior) and aggregate action (i.e., social change movements). Each of these constructs is grounded not in self-interest but in the interests of others. Without the two-dimensional view of the construct, scientists have limited ability to explain the emergence of leadership and political will within social change, using a political view of organizational functioning. Yet few could argue that political behavior is not central to leadership and the development of coalitions for change.

Therefore, we argue that benevolent political will can explain political activity in situations of individual oppression and leadership in organizational change. Congruently, a final contribution of this multistudy investigation is that this measurement of political will allows for the future integration of conceptualizations by organizational scientists at the individual level with political scientists' notions of the collective political will. In the aggregate, political will is discussed as the collective commitment to change a policy or course of action. Inherent in these viewpoints is the challenging of the status quo of organizations and societies and, thus, the need to operate beyond established bounds.

A final implication stems from our findings about the predictive capability of political will versus political skill. If, as evidenced in our research, political will is a dominant predictor of political activity, then we refine the theory related to political skill. To date, political skill has been developed largely without considering motivation. What we now see is that those who are politically skilled are not compulsive in their behavior: political skill has to be activated. This refinement encourages further exploration of the interaction between situational context and political will and of the way in which this interaction consequently precipitates the activation of political skill. This provides new evidence that political skill operates as a self-regulatory mechanism in the workplace, helping employees to choose, more wisely, the directions in which to invest their social capital.

More directly framing political skill as a self-regulatory mechanism between political will and political behavior reconciles Treadway's (2012) view of risk as an aspect of political will. He described the risk dimension as restricting political behavior and discussed the cognitive evaluation that politically motivated individuals must go through to assess the costs and benefits of their potential action. Thus, our results suggest that Treadway's conceptualization was underspecified in not incorporating political skill, as a risk appraisal factor, when actors are motivated by either benevolent or self-serving forces or both.

Strengths and Limitations

This multistudy approach has several strengths that merit attention. The PWS was developed and tested by means of a rigorous methodological approach that incorporated multiple samples, countries, organizations, and occupations. Furthermore, it included several tests to ensure that the scale was not biased by method effects that relate to affectivity and social desirability. The PWS was also found to be empirically distinct from political skill and political behaviors and an extensive set of similar constructs.

There are, however, limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, most samples relied on cross-sectional data and do not allow for causal inferences of the effects of political will on work and political behavior, no matter how theoretically reasonable. Although the aim of this investigation was to assess the validity of the construct, and, in this case, causality is less of an issue, future research should apply longitudinal designs to examine the antecedents and outcomes of political will. Second, reliability estimates in the measurement of some constructs (i.e., nAch, ingratiation, and exchange of benefits) were below the suggested threshold of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). We believe that this does not pose a serious threat, however, because they were still within the acceptable range of .60 to .70 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006) and are comparable in the coefficients alpha with values reported in other studies (e.g., Ferris, Treadway, et al., 2005; Treadway, Hochwarter, et al., 2005).

Implications for Practice

Burgeoning research on political skill in organizations has provided compelling evidence that the ability to navigate the social context of organizations is critical to employees' job performance (Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, & Shaw, 2007; Kolodinsky et al., 2007; Treadway et al., 2007), stress reduction (Harvey, Harris, Harris, & Wheeler, 2007; Perrewé, Zellars, Ferris, Rossi, Kacmar, & Ralston, 2004; Treadway, Ferris, Hochwarter, Perrewé, Witt, & Goodman, 2005), and leadership effectiveness (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter, 2004; Treadway et al., 2004). Given this evidence, the development of political skill has been discussed as an important aspect of executive (Perrewé et al., 2004) and employee development (Ferris, Davidson, & Perrewé, 2005) and also a consideration for employee selection (Blickle & Schnitzler, 2010).

However, if political skill is realized through the use of influence behavior (Ferris et al., 2007), then given the dominance of political will in predicting the use of influence behavior demonstrated in our investigation, it is likely that the effectiveness of political skill is predicated on a person's motivation to use influence in the workplace. Indeed, research has shown that the choice of an individual's networking behavior within and outside their workplace is affected by both motivation and political skill (Treadway, Breland, Adams, Duke, & Williams, 2010). Thus, it would seem prosperous for organizations to assess the political will of individuals as they might their political skill and attempt to match aspects of the job or work climate with a potential employee's personal motivations.

Conclusion

Politics have been in the researchers' spotlight for some time and have been accepted as a practical condition reflecting complex and dynamic informal processes in organizations to challenge the existing status quo, to establish favorable situations, or simply to negotiate work and career outcomes. To this end, Pfeffer (1981) and Mintzberg (1983) introduced two notions, political skill and political will, that promised to provide a better understanding of the nature and consequences of political activity in organizations. Despite the recent progress in establishing the political skill construct as a critical resource for effectively navigating in the workplace, political will has not received equal attention because it reflects a more abstract notion.

In this multistudy investigation, we view political will as the primary motivator for mobilizing personal and organizational resources to achieve political goals. The two-dimensional nature of the measure taps two fundamental aspects of political motivation, namely, the self-serving and the benevolent. We hope that this investigation, with the development of the new PWS, will enable future researchers to expand the field of organizational politics and provide insights into the effects of political will in the workplace as a necessary starting point for initiating meaningful changes for the self and others.

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