

[DOI: 10.20472/EFC.2025.027.005](https://doi.org/10.20472/EFC.2025.027.005)

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SELF-EFFICACY ROLE ON EMPLOYEES' CAREER GROWTH MEDIATED BY POLITICAL SKILLS

Abstract:

This study examines the impact of self-efficacy on career growth among Jordanian hotel employees and explores the mediating role of political skills. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 210 participants through an online Google Form survey. The results show a strong positive impact of employees' self-efficacy on specific aspects of career growth. Additionally, the study found that self-efficacy has a positive impact on political skills within the hotel industry. However, contrary to initial hypotheses, the results indicate that while political skills are positively influenced by self-efficacy, they do not mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth.

Keywords:

Self-efficacy, Career Growth, Political Skills, Hotels Industry, Jordan

JEL Classification: L84

Introduction

Career growth refers to the progression and advancement individuals experience in their professional life over time. It involves the development of skills, the acquisition of knowledge, the attainment of higher positions or roles, and the overall improvement in one's career route. The importance of career growth resonates far beyond the realms of professional success. It intertwines with personal fulfillment, financial stability, and the quest for continuous improvement. Research in the realm of career Growth endeavors to understand why certain individuals attain greater success in their professional growth compared to others. This quest to comprehend the factors influencing career success has spurred decades of research and exploration into the dynamics of career growth (Modem et al. 2022). The commonly held belief that hard work, solid knowledge, and positive performance records would certainly lead to career Growth could not be the only explanation (Ferris et al., 2007; Blickle et al., 2011), instead, studies have introduced personal and psychological factors as influential in career Growth (e.g. Brites da Silva et al., 2021). Modem et al. (2022) conducted a literature review covering 25 years of career Growth research and concluded that emotional stability and personality traits can influence career Growth. Positive psychological well-being was also investigated in terms of its impact on career growth. Bogatyriova (2008) argues that people who have successful careers have several common characteristics: orientation towards the result, non-conformism, and self-efficacy. In a related context, Neureiter and Traut-Mattausch (2016) found that psychological factors like low self-esteem, fear of failure, and fear of success can hinder career growth. Research suggests that the fear of success and impostor feelings is linked to concerns about being rejected by peers and immediate circles.

Conversely, individuals with higher self-efficacy tend to attain more significant career success, securing more promotions and demonstrating stronger job performance compared to those with lower self-efficacy levels. Luthans and Peterson (2002) examine how self-efficacy influences career progression, including promotions and advancements, within organizational contexts. Similarly, Pradhan, et al (2021) found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and workplace well-being. Thus, self-efficacy emerges as a crucial factor in career growth (Chen et al., 2022; Pradhan et al., 2021). Conversely, psychological barriers such as low self-esteem and fear of failure have been found to hinder professional advancement, indicating the pivotal role self-efficacy plays in navigating these obstacles and fostering career success.

According to Sibunruang and Kawai (2023), political skills might be an important factor that affects career growth. This idea is also supported by Chen et al. (2022), who discovered a significant correlation between political skills and career success. Politically skilled individuals are socially astute, having a precise understanding of other people's motivations and behaviors. This helps them to interact with others effectively. They are also proficient in networking and identifying key contacts. People with strong political skills strategically cultivate relationships to create opportunities. They proactively build and position themselves within social networks, perceiving relationships as potential pathways for future advantages. Additionally, politically skilled employees possess specific interpersonal abilities that enable them to develop constructive interpersonal relationships and adapt their behavior to different social contexts. This allows employees to make the right impression and build good bonds. Politically skilled individuals have apparent sincerity as they behave in a manner that appears authentic, genuine, and

sincere. This can help employees hide their ulterior motives and instead instill trust. Abbas et al. (2015) also claim that politically skilled employees possess social competencies that can enhance their influence on others. They can read and understand the situation at work and design their attitudes and behaviors to achieve favorable responses. Abbas et al. (2015) claim that politically skilled employees possess social competencies that can enhance their influence on others, they can read and understand the situation at work, and they can design their attitudes and behaviors to achieve favorable responses.

Bozbayindir and Alev (2019) suggested that individuals with high self-efficacy perceptions have higher levels of political skills and are more likely to reach their goals by using their political skills with the people around them. Similarly, Özdemir and Gören (2016) found a correlation between high levels of political skills and elevated self-efficacy perceptions, suggesting that the heightened perception of self-efficacy contributes to the manifestation of proficient political skills.

While numerous studies have separately highlighted the significance of self-efficacy in career growth and the importance of political skills in professional contexts, there's a distinct lack of in-depth investigation into how these two factors intersect to impact career growth. The specific relationship between self-efficacy perceptions and the development of political skills on career growth remains relatively unexplored. This research argues that self-efficacy alone may not explain career growth. Individuals may place themselves in stronger positions if they take advantage of or better utilize their political skills. Better self-efficacy leads to better play of the political game, which in turn enhances their career positions. Investigating the mediating role of political skills could

provide valuable insights into how individuals enhance their career growth. Modem et al. (2022) claim that the political process of obtaining career growth potential is unexplored, and how positive and negative politics impact career growth potential is understudied. They added that research on the determinants of organizational career growth is still scarce.

Overall, researchers argue that self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to execute tasks and navigate challenges, stands as a powerful force shaping an individual's career journey. When coupled with skillful political skills— the art of understanding and influencing others within an organizational context— the potential for career advancement becomes stronger. This article investigates the profound impact of self-efficacy on career progression, exploring how it operates in mediated by political skills, ultimately illuminating the pathways to professional success and growth. The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of employees' self-efficacy role on employees' career growth among Jordanian hotel employees, as perceived by political skills. Specifically, the study aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Determine the impact of hotel employees' self-efficacy role on employees' career growth.
2. Examine the impact of hotel employees' self-efficacy role on employees' career growth.
3. Explore the mediating impact of political skills on the relationship between hotel employees' self-efficacy and career growth.

Literature review and hypotheses development

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is a concept introduced and developed by psychologist Albert Bandura (1997) through the framework of social cognitive theory. He defined it as an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or task accomplishment (Robbins & Judge, 2019). This sort of self-belief affects an individual's activities, efforts, and persistence, making self-efficacy crucial for motivation, performance, and overall success in the hotel industry (Etehad & Karatepe, 2019; Pradhan et al., 2021). In the context of business HR, self-efficacy refers to an employee's belief in their ability to perform their job duties and achieve their goals (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Several factors influence self-efficacy, including past experiences, social modeling, and verbal persuasion. People tend to believe in their ability to succeed more if they have had positive experiences in the past, learn from observing others succeed, and receive positive feedback and reinforcement (Akhtar, 2008; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Heng and Chu (2023) were influenced by Bandura's (1997) research and defined self-efficacy as an individual's beliefs and perceptions about their capability to achieve specific outcomes in particular situations. They suggest that a person's perception of their abilities affects their confidence and proficiency in dealing with challenging circumstances, which ultimately has an impact on their psychological well-being.

Career Growth

Career growth refers to developing an individual's skills, knowledge, and experience over time that can lead to new opportunities and higher-level positions. According to Spector (2021), it can be defined as an enhancement in an employee's position that matches their ability to gain the required skills and improve their performance. Weng et al., (2010) proposed four dimensions for career growth, namely, career goal progress, professional ability development, promotion speed,

and remuneration growth. Career goal progress is the degree to which one's current job is relevant and provides opportunities to achieve one's career goals. Professional ability development refers to acquiring new knowledge, skills, and abilities through education and training that employees require to advance in their careers. Promotion speed is the pace at which the employee has climbed the ladder as opposed to stagnating in the same function for a long time, and remuneration growth is the total compensation received by an employee for performing a job. It includes the base salary and all other forms of financial compensation (Spagnoli & Weng, 2017).

Research on this topic has gathered scholarly attention in recent years (Modem et al, 2022). For decades, scholarly interest has been drawn to the topic of career growth owing to employees' pursuit of personal development and the value propositions offered by employers. However, Weng and Zhu (2020) pose the question of why some individuals are more successful in career advancement than others who have similar backgrounds and KSAs. Ferris et al (2007) challenge the traditional view regarding the role of positive past recorded on career growth. In a related context, Dialoke and Nkechi (2017) claimed that despite receiving training, many employees in different organizations have remained stagnant in their careers, with little evidence of growth. Weng and Zhu (2020) claim that answering the question of why some people climb the career ladder more quickly than others would reveal the underlying mechanisms behind the formation of career growth, but relevant research is limited. Weng and Zhu (2020) suggest that further research is necessary to identify other determinants of career growth and to enrich the theoretical framework connecting career growth with individuals' attitudes and behaviors. In addition to the traditional view of hard work and improving knowledge and skills, self-perception and its influence on career growth have recently received more attention (e.g., da Motta Veiga, 2015; Neureiter & Traut-Mattausch, 2016). Self-efficacy emerges as a crucial factor in career growth (Luthans & Peterson, 2002).

Self-efficacy and career Growth

Hotel industry employees with higher self-efficacy tend to have more confidence in their ability to succeed in hotel industry career growth (Sharma & Akram, 2024). According to Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021), employees with high self-efficacy are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work. They are also more likely to set and achieve challenging goals, be resilient in the face of setbacks, and take on new challenges and opportunities. This mindset drives them to take on more significant challenges, leading to more accomplishments in their careers. Robbins and Judge, (2019) claim that when faced with difficult situations, those with low self-efficacy are more inclined to reduce effort or give up entirely. In contrast, individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to exert greater effort and persist in tackling challenges. This can lead to increased success in their careers. Luthans and Peterson (2002) examine the impact of self-efficacy on career advancement, encompassing promotions and progressions within organizational settings. Likewise, Pradhan et al. (2021) identified a favorable correlation between self-efficacy and overall well-being in the workplace. Judge and Bono (2001) conducted a meta-analysis and examined the impact of core self-evaluations, including self-efficacy, on job satisfaction and performance, providing evidence for the positive relationship between self-efficacy and career outcomes. Akhtar (2008) found a strong relationship between self-efficacy and career growth. Thus, self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their capabilities, is crucial for career advancement. Those with high self-efficacy exhibit greater perseverance, resilience, and motivation, empowering them to set ambitious goals, persist in the face of setbacks, and exhibit proactive behaviors that contribute to career progression in the hotel industry (Sharma & Akram, 2024). Confidence in one's capabilities fosters personal growth and positions individuals favorably for seizing opportunities and advancing their careers. Overall, self-efficacy leads to increased motivation, resilience, and proactive behavior, all of which contribute to career growth in the hospitality industry (Sharma & Akram, 2024). Therefore, it is proposed that:

H1: *Hotel employees' self-efficacy positively impacts their career growth*

Political skills

Political skills are the capacity to understand people and circumstances at work, and to influence others for goal achievement (Ferris et al., 2005). Zellars et al. (2008) stated that political skill is a personal construct consisting of the ability to adjust behaviors to different situations while being sincere, exuding confidence, and influencing others. Ferris et al (2007) added that political skill is characterized as a comprehensive pattern of social competencies, with cognitive, affective, and behavioral manifestations, that have both direct effects on outcomes and moderating effects on predictor–outcome relationships. According to Ferris et al (2007), political skill, then, is about competencies that are manifested in work-relevant situations that reflect both dispositional antecedents and situational variability. Political skills consist of four sub-dimensions, which are social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity (Bozbayindir & Alev, 2019; Ferris et al., 2005). Employees with a high level of social astuteness can understand social interactions well and accurately interpret their behavior and the behavior of others. They are keenly attuned to diverse social settings and have high self-awareness (Ferris et al., 2007). Interpersonal influence allows people to adapt and calibrate their behavior to different situations to elicit the desired responses from others. Further, politically skilled individuals have networking abilities and are adept at identifying and developing diverse contacts and networks of people. Regarding apparent sincerity, politically skilled individuals appear to others as having high levels of integrity and as being authentic, sincere, and genuine (Ferris et al., 2007).

Self-efficacy and political skills

Bozbayindir & Alev (2019) found that self-efficacy had a significant positive relationship with all the sub-dimensions of political skills. They explain the results as general self-efficacy predicts the ability to communicate. In other words, people with a high level of self-efficacy perception communicate more easily with the individuals around them and display behaviors that require political skills. This is because their possession of the ability to communicate effectively, act

sincerely, and adjust their behaviors according to the circumstances is considered to be important. Similar results were found by Özdemir and Gören (2016), who stated that one of the reasons why political skills were discovered at a high level was because self-efficacy perception was at a high level. Thus, Ongel, Taskaran, & Celik (2024) proposed that individuals in the hotel industry with higher self-efficacy tend to excel in different dimensions of political skills due to their confidence, authenticity, adaptability, and enhanced ability to communicate. This proficiency in communication allows them to engage more comfortably with others and build networks. Therefore, it is proposed that:

H2: Hotel employees' self-efficacy positively impacts their political skills.

Political skills and career growth

Another potential factor that could influence career growth is having political skills (Sibunruang & Kawai, 2023). Ferris et al. (2007) suggest that political skill is the mechanism through which goal-directed behavior is activated to achieve interpersonal objectives and outcomes. Ferris et al. (2007) added that political skill is characterized as being essential for effectiveness at work and in successfully dealing with the political realities of organizations. Further, it was found that employees with a high level of social astuteness can make good observations and an accurate understanding of other motivations and behavior, which in turn helps them identify the correct way to interact and fit into different social environments (Bozbayindir & Alev, 2019). People with a high level of interpersonal influence can have a strong influence on others and be convincing. Sibunruang and Kawai (2023) added that politically skilled people possess a distinct interpersonal capability that enables them to present their behaviors in ways that inspire trust and goodwill, leading to favorable interpersonal relationships, as a result, gain access to social resources, including supervisor-focused expressive network resources as well as supervisor developmental feedback. Politically skilled employees have good networking abilities. Sibunruang and Kawai (2023) added that employees high in political skill tend to view

connections formed with other organizational members as opportunities to capitalize on. Subsequently, they proactively engage in building relationships with others; these connections allow for greater access to valuable resources, such as job information, professional advice, and emotional support, thereby equipping individuals with capabilities for growth. Regarding the final sub-dimension of apparent sincerity, Blass and Ferris (2007) pointed out the importance of apparent sincerity in influencing others as desired and stated that the individual's power to influence others would be diminished in the absence of sincerity. Abbas et al (2015) concluded that politically skilled workers can achieve organizational goals because they can read and understand the situation at work, and they can design their attitudes and behaviors to achieve favorable responses.

Finally, Semadar et al. (2006) indicated that political skill was both the strongest predictor of managerial performance and a differentiating factor between top performers and others. Sibunruang and Kawai (2023) suggest that employees can utilize their interpersonal competency, notably political skill, to navigate work and place themselves in stronger positions to attain career growth. Therefore, it is logical to propose that:

H3: Hotel employees' political skills have a positive impact on their career growth.

Self-efficacy, career Growth, and the mediating role of political skills

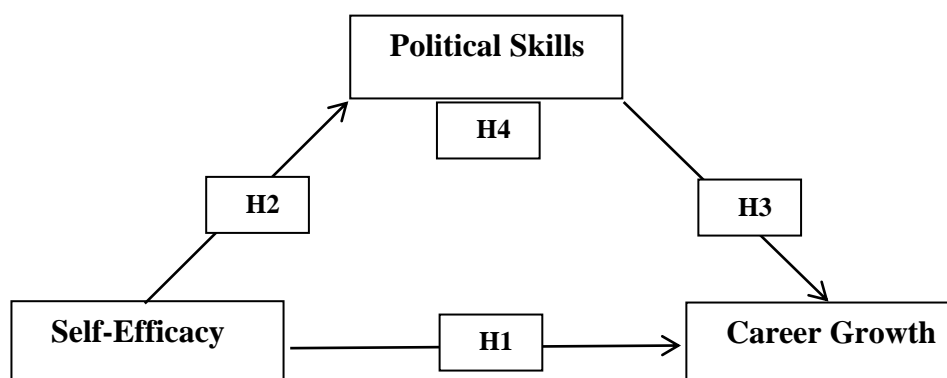
Bozbayindir and Alev (2019) found that self-efficacy had a significant positive relationship with all the sub-dimensions of political skills. They added that individuals display political behaviors in the organizational environment to create the desired impact on others and achieve their personal goals. Abbas et al. (2015) concluded that politically skilled employees possess social competencies that can enhance their influence on others in the organization. They can achieve organizational goals because they can read and understand the situation at work, and they can design their attitudes and behaviors to achieve favorable responses. Ferris et al. (2007) posited that until a couple of decades ago, there existed a prevalent notion that leaders of major

corporations were traditionally selected based on their historical performance records. They agree and emphasize that it is a political skill that allows them to succeed. That is, politically skilled leaders are effective since they astutely read contexts, situationally adapt, and adjust their behavior to create the desired image, leverage their social capital to reinforce their image further, and do all this in a sincere, authentic, and convincing way (Ferris et al., 2007). Similarly, Bozbayindir & Alev (2019) conclude that people with a high level of self-efficacy have higher levels of political skills and are more likely to reach their goals by using their political skills on the people around them. Overall, a significant association between self-efficacy, political skills, and success in organizational settings was identified. It is suggested that individuals with higher self-efficacy tend to exhibit stronger political skills, which in turn enable them to influence others to navigate complex situations, adapt behavior, and build strong social connections authentically, which in turn help and achieve personal goals effectively. Therefore, this research proposes that:

H4: Hotel employees' political skills mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth.

Based on the literature, the following conceptual model extracted to show the relationship between this research dimensions.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Hotel Employees' Self Efficacy, Career Growth, and Political Skills



Methods

Participants

A quantitative method was illustrated in this research, and a structured online questionnaire was employed to obtain and measure the research dimensions of self-efficacy, career growth, and political skills. A convenience sampling approach was used. This research targeted all the employees on all levels who are working in five-star and number 21 hotels with a total of 5460 employees, four-star and number 30 hotels with 3207 employees, and 51 three-star hotels with 1758 employees. In addition, the total number of all employees across all hotel classifications of five, four, and three stars is 10425 employees according to the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2024). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), who proposed that the number of 10425 employees can be demonstrated approximately by a number of 400 responses. Permission was granted from the HR coordinators, and the online Google form questionnaire link was sent to them to distribute the questionnaire to all their employees at all levels in the hotels by email, based on the number of employees in each hotel. A total of 300 responses were returned from participants. 90 responses were removed because of incompleteness by participants. In total, 210 valid and completed responses were used for analysis. In the meantime, the current research sample was chosen for two reasons: first, that hotel sector in Jordan is considered as one of the fastest growing sector, and second reason is that this sector sample aligns with the current research objectives. In addition, ethical consideration was proposed by using a consent form and confidentiality by handling with any sensitive information for this research sample.

Instruments

The questionnaire instrument employed in this research comprised three previously validated and well-established scales, which are Self-efficacy with 10 items. This scale was developed by Schwarzer, & Jerusalem (1995) in Germany. The second scale used in this research, Career

growth developed by Weng et al., (2010), with 15 items divided into four dimensions, which are career goal progress with four items, professional ability development with four items, promotion speed with four items, and remuneration growth with three items. The third scale used in this research is the Political scale with 18 items, which was developed by Ferris et al., (2005). This scale includes four dimensions which are networking ability with six items, interpersonal influence with four items, social astuteness with five items, and the fourth dimension is apparent sincerity with three items. A five-point Likert scale was used, ranging from "1" Strongly Disagree to "5" Strongly Agree.

Research findings

Participants Profile

Based on these research findings, respondents and the profile of the sample represented in table 1 shows that 69.5 percent of respondents were males and 30.5 percent were females. Most respondents were young people aged less than 35 years old 91.9 percent. The majority of the sample were single with 93.3 percent, and only 6.7 percent were married. Considering the level of education of the sample, the majority have bachelor's degrees with 95.7 percent. The sample years of experience from less than 5 years around 83.8 percent. Respondents position is mostly employees at 44.8 percent, supervisors at 26.7 percent, assistant managers at 19.4, and managers were 9 percent. Regarding the workplace, 53.8 percent work at 5-star hotels, 35.7 at a 4-star hotel, and 10.5 work at a 3-star hotels.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics (N=210)

	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	146	69.5
	Female	64	30.5

Age	Less than 35 years	191	90.9
	From 35 years to less than 45 years	10	4.8
	From 45 years and above	9	4.3
Status	Single	196	93.3
	Married	14	6.7
Education	Bachelor degree and lower	201	95.7
	Above bachelor degree	9	4.3
Work Experience	Less than five years	196	83.8
	From 5 years and above	14	16.2
Job Title	Employee	94	44.8
	Supervisor	56	26.7
	Assistant Manager	41	19.4
	Manager	19	9
Hotel Classification	Five Stars	113	53.8
	Four Stars	75	35.7
	Three Stars	22	10.5

Hypotheses Testing

To test the four proposed research hypotheses, H1. Hotel employees' self-efficacy positively impacts their career growth. H2. Hotel employees' self-efficacy positively impacts their political skills. H3. Hotel employees' political skills have a positive impact on their career growth. H4. Hotel employees' political skills mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth. Smart PLS4 was used in the current investigation. Smart PLS4 widely uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques in management research. The data examined the four

research hypotheses. Following a two-step analytical approach, the researchers first conducted the assessment of scale reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity of the measurement scale as shown in Table 1. Then, the researchers evaluated the structural model. The ten items of self-efficacy are interrelated constructs that can be combined theoretically under an overall abstraction of self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). In addition, four dimensions of career goal progress, professional ability development, promotion speed, and remuneration growth are interrelated constructs that can be combined together theoretically under an overall abstraction of career growth (Weng et al., 2010). Moreover, four dimensions of networking ability with, interpersonal influence, social astuteness, and the fourth dimension is apparent sincerity are interrelated constructs that can be combined together theoretically under an overall abstraction of political scale (Ferris et al., 2005). Therefore, the researchers used second order construct approach. It is becoming popular because it leads to the reduction of the model complexity and theoretical parsimony, it allows the operationalization on the basis of the first-order factors aspects which formed the second-order factor. Moreover, it allows working with multiple items that reflect a first-order factor (Esposito Vinzi et al., 2010). The results of Smart PLS4, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques. Table 2 shows the results of the hypothesized structural model, including the R^2 , estimated path coefficients, F square, corrected bias CI, t-values, and p-Value. Based on the model performance statistics, the proposed model has a good fit to the data. Bootstrapping was used to test the significance of each path (White et al., 2003).

H1: Hotel employees' self-efficacy positively impact their career growth. For H1, hotel employees' self-efficacy showed a positive impact with career growth ($\beta = 0.63$, $t = 7.31$, $p < 0.00$), supporting this hypothesis. It was found that hotel employees' self-efficacy has appositive impact and increase employees career growth in the hotel sector.

H2. Hotel employees' self-efficacy positively impact their political skills. For H2, the analysis supported this hypothesis ($\beta = 0.81$, $t = 23.05$, $p < 0.00$), Revealing a positive impact

between employees' self-efficacy and employees' political skills. That means hotel sector employees with a high level of self-efficacy perception communicate more easily with other employees around them and display behaviors that require political skills.

H3. Hotel employees' political skills has a positive impact on their career growth. For H3, the analysis does not support this hypothesis ($\beta = 0.12$, $t = 1.60$, $p < 0.10$), it was found that political skills of hotel employees do not impact their career growth.

H4. Hotel employees' political skills is mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth. For H4, the analysis does not support this hypothesis ($\beta = 0.10$, $t = 1.54$, $p < 0.12$), it was revealed that political skills of hotel employees do not mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth for the employees in the hotel sector as presented in table 1.

Table 2: Results of Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)

Hypothesized Relationship	Path Coefficient	Bias Corrected CI	F Square	T Value	P Values	Conclusion
Self-Efficacy -> Career growth	0.634	-0.004	0.304	7.314	0.000	Accept H1
Self-Efficacy -> Political Skills	0.812	0.001	1.937	23.050	0.000	Accept H2
Political Skills -> Career growth	0.129	0.005	0.013	1.609	0.108	Rejected H3
Self-Efficacy->Political Skills -> Career growth	0.105	0.005	0.304	1.546	0.122	Rejected H4

Measurement model results

For evaluating the convergent validity, which indicates the extent to which the items of a scale that are theoretically related should correlate highly, the researchers tested: (1) the composite reliability (CR) should be greater than 0.70 (Marcoulides & Chin, 2013), (2) the average variance

extracted (AVE) should be greater than 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker 1984), and (3) all item loading should be greater than 0.70 (Marcoulides & Chin, 2013). Table 2 summarizes the item loading, composite reliability, average variance extracted, mean, and standard deviation of the measures of the constructs of our research model. All three criteria of convergent validity were satisfied, as shown in Table 3, the composite reliability ranged from 0.95 to 0.96, and the AVEs from 0.667 to 0.791. The items' loading was all higher than 0.7.

Table 3: Results of Items Loading

Construct	Loading	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-value
Self-Efficacy CR= 0.95 : AVE= 0.696				
I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough <- Self Efficacy	0.842	3.900	1.152	39.186
If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want <- Self Efficacy	0.824	3.867	1.052	30.723
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals <- Self Efficacy	0.818	4.148	1.070	26.410
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events <- Self Efficacy	0.883	4.105	1.009	46.206
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations <- Self Efficacy	0.856	3.876	1.035	39.210
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort <- Self Efficacy	0.864	4.076	1.048	33.522
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities <- Self Efficacy	0.734	4.000	0.976	17.643
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions <- Self Efficacy	0.820	3.938	1.005	26.794
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution <- Self Efficacy	0.843	3.995	0.978	31.929
I can usually handle whatever comes my way <- Self Efficacy	0.847	3.971	0.975	28.531
Career Growth CR= 0.96 : AVE=0.791				
Career goal progress: My current job moves me closer to my career goals <- Career Growth	0.857	3.686	1.186	31.379
Career goal progress: My current job is relevant to my professional goals and career growth (ideal) <- Career Growth	0.872	3.671	1.159	28.245
Career goal progress: My current job sets the foundation for achieving my career goals <-Career Growth	0.899	3.676	1.207	53.131
Career goal progress: My current job provides me with good opportunities to develop my practical abilities <- Career Growth	0.903	3.805	1.255	53.440

Professional ability development: My chances of promotion are fast in the current organization <- Career Growth	0.942	4.114	1.190	100.818
Professional ability development: There is a high probability of promotion in my current organization <- Career Growth	0.849	4.005	1.289	31.530
Professional ability development: Compared to other organizations and similar jobs, my position in the current organization is ideal <- Career Growth	0.902	4.014	1.221	50.714
Professional ability development: Compared with my colleagues, I am being promoted faster <- Career Growth	0.886	4.024	1.251	37.845
Political Skills CR= 0.96 : AVE=0.667				
Networking ability: I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others <- Political Skills	0.815	3.981	1.023	25.454
Networking ability: I am good at building relationships with influential people at work <- Political Skills	0.838	3.919	1.073	29.211
Networking ability: I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work whom I can call on for support when I really need to get things done <- Political Skills	0.808	3.767	1.129	26.375
Networking ability: I spend a lot of time at work developing connections with others <- Political Skills	0.809	3.795	1.134	20.370
Networking ability: I am good at using my connections and network to make things happen at work	0.775	4.043	1.144	12.356
Interpersonal influence: I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me <- Political Skills	0.918	4.100	1.021	72.729
Interpersonal influence: I am able to communicate easily and effectively with others <- Political Skills	0.845	3.819	1.149	38.747
Interpersonal influence: It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people <- Political Skills <- Political Skills	0.882	4.105	1.090	44.664
Interpersonal influence: I am good at getting people to like me <- Political Skills	0.824	4.052	1.088	29.834
Social astuteness: I understand people very well <- Political Skills	0.780	3.957	1.030	26.365
Social astuteness: I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others <- Political Skills	0.726	3.976	0.983	13.946
Social astuteness: I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others <- Political Skills	0.752	3.929	1.023	19.937
Social astuteness: I always seem to instinctively know the right things to say or do to influence others <- Political Skills	0.809	4.252	1.103	25.799
Social astuteness: I pay close attention to people's	0.849	4.357	1.078	39.291

facial expressions <- Political Skills				
Apparent sincerity: When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do <- Political Skills	0.802	4.043	1.200	29.955

Discriminant validity is the extent to which the measure is not a reflection of some other variable. For assessing discriminant validity, this study adopted the criteria suggested by Gefen & Straub (2003). It required the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for a construct to be greater than its correlation with other constructs in the model. Table 4 represents the square root of AVE for each construct, while the off-diagonal elements are correlations between constructs.

Table 4: Fornell-Larcker criterion

	Career growth	Self-Efficacy	Political Skills
Career growth	0.889		
Self-Efficacy	0.739	0.834	
Political Skills	0.644	0.812	0.817

In addition, the researchers tested discriminant validity by running Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) criterion test. Table 5 represents the output of HTMT analysis. The result indicated that all the values in Table 5 are less than 0.85 which means there is no discriminant validity problems according to the HTMT criterion.

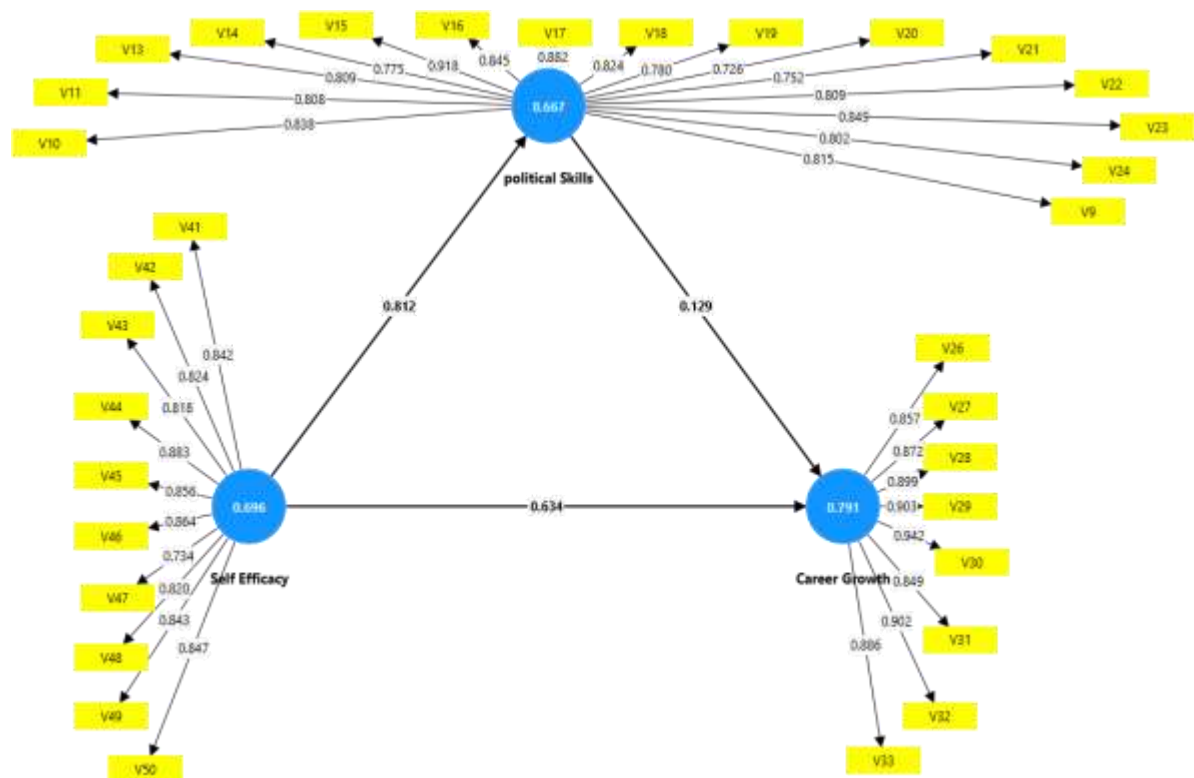
Table 5: Discriminant Validity - Hetrotrait - monotrait ratio (HTMT) - Matrix results

	Career growth	Self-Efficacy	Political Skills
Career growth			
Self-Efficacy	0.767		
Political Skills	0.659	0.839	

Structural model results

The research model assessment was based on hypotheses testing which include path coefficient estimation, the variance explained (R2 value), and statistical significance as shown in figure (2). The factor loading on the second-order factors are ranging between .76–.88, suggest good formation of the second order construct.

Figure 2. The Relationship between the Research Dimensions Self Efficacy, Career Growth and Political Skills



Discussion

The results of this study support the hypothesis that individuals with higher self-efficacy experience greater confidence in their ability to succeed. This confidence translates into increased motivation, resilience, goal-setting, and proactive behaviors, all of which are pivotal in fostering career growth and enhancing overall well-being in the workplace. These findings are consistent

with Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) and Sharma & Akram (2024), who posited that high self-efficacy empowers individuals to be more motivated and engaged in their work. Moreover, researchers such as Luthans and Peterson (2002) and Akhtar (2008) have consistently found a positive correlation between self-efficacy and career advancement, including factors such as promotions and overall career progression. This suggests that self-efficacy not only influences immediate job-related outcomes but also plays a crucial role in long-term career development. Judge and Bono (2001) further argue that self-efficacy is not merely a predictor of career advancement but also contributes significantly to overall job satisfaction and performance. Their insights underscore the broader impact of self-efficacy on various facets of workplace success. Furthermore, Pradhan et al. (2021) highlight a favorable association between self-efficacy and overall well-being in the workplace, emphasizing the holistic benefits of self-efficacy beyond career progression alone.

Accordingly, this study provides robust evidence supporting the hypothesis that higher self-efficacy among employees correlates positively with career growth. By enhancing self-efficacy through targeted interventions and supportive organizational practices, employers can potentially cultivate a more motivated and successful workforce. On the other hand, Abele & Spurk (2009) proposed in their research that career growth had a positive impact on employees' salary, or employees' status, while they found that career growth hurt career satisfaction and career engagement (Pronajaya et al., 2021). Similarly, Ballout (2009) demonstrated in his research findings that career self-efficacy was not significantly related to career success in the banking sector.

Results also indicate that employees with higher self-efficacy not only exhibit greater confidence and authenticity but also excel in the dimensions of political skills. Thus, by fostering self-efficacy through development programs and supportive environments, organizations can potentially cultivate a workforce adept at navigating complex interpersonal dynamics and achieving strategic objectives. Similarly, the proposition that employees' self-efficacy positively

influences their political skills finds strong support in the literature (Ongel, Taskaran, & Celik, 2024). Bozbayindir & Alev (2019) discovered a positive correlation between self-efficacy and all sub-dimensions of political skills. They attribute this finding to the fact that individuals with higher self-efficacy levels tend to possess superior communication abilities. This proficiency enables them to interact effectively with others, demonstrate sincerity, and adjust their behaviors appropriately in diverse social and organizational contexts. Such adaptive communication behaviors are integral to the exercise of political skills, facilitating the building of relationships and coalitions necessary for navigating organizational dynamics. Similarly, Özdemir and Gören (2016) support these conclusions by emphasizing that individuals with strong self-efficacy perceive themselves as capable of influencing others and achieving desired outcomes through their communicative prowess and adaptability. In conclusion, the relationship between employees' self-efficacy and their political skills underscores the importance of enhancing self-efficacy as a means to promote effective communication, adaptability, and interpersonal influence within organizational contexts.

Despite the theoretical arguments suggesting a positive relationship between political skills and career growth, the research results indicate that political skills do not have a positive impact on career growth. Similarly, empirical evidence presents several challenges to the proposed hypothesis. For example, while political skills are touted as essential for navigating organizational dynamics (Ferris et al., 2007), empirical studies such as those by Sibunruang & Kawai (2023) and Semadar et al. (2006) provide mixed or inconclusive evidence regarding their direct impact on career advancement. For instance, Semadar et al. (2006) highlight that while political skill predicts managerial performance, its effect on actual career progression remains ambiguous. This suggests that while political skills may facilitate immediate interpersonal influence, their direct link to sustained career growth is less clear.

From another angle, the emphasis on networking and social astuteness associated with political skills (Sibunruang & Kawai, 2023) might enhance access to resources and relational

benefits, but it does not necessarily translate into tangible career progression. Abbas et al. (2015) note that while politically skilled individuals can influence others effectively, the extent to which this translates into career advancement depends on organizational structures and criteria for promotion, which may not always prioritize political astuteness. Furthermore, Blass and Ferris (2007) underscore the importance of apparent sincerity in influencing others. However, the perception of sincerity, which is crucial for long-term trust and support, may be compromised in highly politically skilled individuals who are perceived as manipulative or self-serving (Abbas et al., 2015). This could potentially hinder rather than promote career growth.

In conclusion, while political skills offer advantages in interpersonal influence and networking within organizations, the direct impact on career growth is nuanced and context-dependent. The rejection of our proposed hypothesis is supported by the complex interplay between political skills and career advancement criteria, as well as the mixed empirical findings regarding their effectiveness in facilitating long-term professional success. Results also indicate no mediating role of political skills on the relationship between self-efficacy and political skills. In this context, while self-efficacy is positively associated with political skills (Bozbayindir & Alev, 2019), and political skills are purported to enhance influence and goal attainment (Abbas et al., 2015), the direct link to career growth is not straightforward. Career advancement often depends on a myriad of factors, including organizational structure, job performance metrics, and specific industry demands, which may not necessarily be influenced solely by political adeptness. Furthermore, Ferris et al. (2007) emphasize that effective leadership through political skills requires authenticity and sincerity in interpersonal interactions. However, the perception of political behavior as manipulative or insincere can diminish trust and hinder long-term career progression. Thus, while political skills may facilitate short-term influence, they may not necessarily lead to sustained career growth if authenticity is compromised. On the other hand, research by Ferris et al. (2007) suggests that traditional career advancement was based on performance rather than political skills alone. Leaders and high achievers often ascend based on

demonstrated results and strategic vision rather than purely interpersonal acumen. This suggests that while political skills may complement other competencies, they do not necessarily mediate the direct relationship between self-efficacy and career growth.

In summary, while self-efficacy may enhance political skills and political skills may facilitate certain aspects of influence and goal achievement within organizations, the hypothesis that political skills mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth is not supported by the current empirical evidence. This highlights the complexity of career progression pathways and suggests that other factors, beyond political skills alone, influence career trajectories. Overall, the rejection of this proposition underscores the need for further nuanced exploration of how various factors interact to influence career trajectories in organizational settings.

Conclusion and Implications

In this research, three main objectives were accomplished. The first objective is to determine the impact of hotel employees' self-efficacy role on employees' career growth, the second objective is to examine the impact of hotel employees' self-efficacy role on employees' career growth, and the third objective is to explore the mediating impact of political skills on the relationship between hotel employees' self-efficacy and career growth. Consequently, all these objectives were achieved and approved by this research finding. The results approved that the first two objectives are applicable in the hotel context and the level of employees' self-efficacy role determine the level of employees' career growth. In addition, results emphasized the impact of impact of hotel employees' self-efficacy role on employees' career growth positively. On the other hand, results discovered that the third objective is inapplicable in the Jordanian hotels by confirming that there is no mediation role of the political skills on the relationship

between employees' self-efficacy and employees career growth in the hotel context. This research examined the role of self-efficacy in career growth and demonstrated the mediated role of political skills. Data from 210 Jordanian hotel employees who participated in this research. Findings pointed out that there is a positive impact of the employees' self-efficacy and two dimensions, career growth and political skills. Moreover, political skills have a positive impact on career growth. On the other hand, results revealed that there is no impact of political skills as a mediator on the relationship between self-efficacy and career growth. Moreover, no significant impact of political skills on career growth was observed.

Practical Implication

As the research findings indicate, self-efficacy among hotel employees can significantly enhance their career growth and political skills. Given the positive impact of self-efficacy on both individual and professional aspects, the hotel business needs to prioritize this quality. Hotel managers who encourage their employees to practice self-efficacy are found to be more effective to enhance their career growth in their hotels. Secondly, the managers need to understand that the employees who believe in their self-efficacy are more willing to be able to improve their career growth and enhance their hotel service quality. Hotel managers have to pay attention to employees' who have low self-efficacy and low political skills. Those employees need training to enhance their communication ability and to learn how to interact with others positively. This training can be done by develop the employees' professional ability by gain them new knowledge, skills, and abilities through education. Thus, this type of training may that advance careers growth of hotel employees.

Consequently, hotel sector employees with a high level of self-efficacy perception can communicate more easily with other employees around them and display behaviors that require political skills. However, the results of this research confirmed that hotel political skills have no impact on the employees' career growth. Thus, managers in the hotel should motivate their

employees to be more creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial to develop their careers which will intensify their performance and hotel quality of service, by empowering employees to be more engaged in their work and career advancement. In addition, focus on their promotions and career progression.

Finally, the findings of this research offer practical implications for hotel management in Jordan and similar contexts. Hotel managements have to foster a supportive environment that enhances employees' self-efficacy by conducting more training on communication, mentorship by an experienced person in a hotel or educational institution, and empowerment initiatives by creating an environment where all employees feel safe and can contribute genuinely, which may significantly boost motivation and career development for all hotel employees.

Limitations and Future Research

This research has several limitations. The population sample of this research was not diverse; therefore, a larger sample may improve the generalization of the implied results. On the other hand, this research offers opportunities for future research. Firstly, a larger sample may help future research have more robust results. Secondly, this research proposed the impact of self-efficacy on career growth in the hotel industry. A future extension of this research would include more dependent variables, such as employees' characteristics, satisfaction, and motivation. Lastly, this research analyzes hotel employees' opinions about career growth. Future research may investigate hotel managers' views about employees' career growth.

Disclosure statement

The authors reported no potential conflict of interest.

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