

# Handling Power and Politics

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What do you mean by Power and politics?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....



# “POWER” Fact Check!

- People who have power deny it,
- People who want it try not to look like they're seeking it,
- Those who are good at getting it are secretive about how they do so.

# Power and Politics

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**Power** refers to the ability or capacity to **influence the behavior of others, control resources, and make decisions that affect others**

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**Politics** can be seen as **the practices** or tactics used to express and achieve interests, exert influence, and accumulate power.

# Power Bases (French and Raven Model, 1959)

Legitimate  
Power

Reward  
Power

Coercive  
Power

Expert  
Power

Referent  
Power

# Legitimate Power

Derived from the official position or role within the governance structure.  
For example, a senior in an organization has legitimate power due to his leadership position in the organization.

# Reward Power

Based on the ability to confer rewards or benefits, such as funding for projects, promotions, or recognition. This power helps motivate and control the actions of others within the community/ organization.

# Coercive Power

Involves the ability to impose sanctions, penalties, or punishments. This type of power is often less desirable as it can breed resentment but is sometimes necessary to enforce rules and regulations.



# Expert Power

Stems from possessing specialized knowledge or expertise that others in the community do not have. For instance, a panchayat officer with advanced training in sustainable agriculture practices holds.

# Referent Power

Gained through personal traits that inspire trust, admiration, or loyalty.

This could be due to charisma, integrity, or interpersonal relationships with community members

# Power Manifestation



Activity 1: Identify the type(s) of powers  
lie with key players!!!

## Scenario

In a rural panchayat, there is a significant debate over the allocation of funds received from a recent government grant. The panchayat has two major proposals to consider:

- Building a new community health center.
- Expanding the existing irrigation system to support local agriculture.

## Key Players:

1. Panchayat President (Sarpanch)
2. Local Farmer's Cooperative Head
3. Health Committee Chair

- Panchayat President (Sarpanch): **Holds legitimate power**, responsible for leading the discussion and making the final decision.
- Local Farmer's Cooperative Head: **Possesses referent and expert power** due to deep knowledge of agricultural needs and respect among the farming community.
- Health Committee Chair: **Has expert power** linked to public health and welfare, advocating for the health center.

## Manifestation of Power:

- **Legitimate Power:** The Sarpanch uses their official capacity to set the agenda for the meeting, focusing on how the grant can best serve the community's long-term needs. They must balance the power dynamics between competing interests.
- **Expert Power:** Both the Farmer's Cooperative Head and the Health Committee Chair present data and expert opinions on the benefits of their respective projects. Their expert knowledge influences the panchayat members' perspectives and decision-making.
- **Referent Power:** The Farmer's Cooperative Head has earned the community's trust and respect through years of advocacy and success in improving agricultural outputs, which gives their arguments considerable weight.
- **Reward Power:** The Sarpanch hints at future community benefits from each project, such as improved health services or increased agricultural productivity, which could lead to higher income for local farmers. This potential for rewards influences the community's support for each proposal.
- **Coercive Power:** While less desirable, the Sarpanch also subtly indicates that choosing one project over another could lead to reduced support in other areas, emphasizing the need for careful consideration of all community needs.

# Source of Power in Local Governance



Constitutional  
and Legal  
Authority



Social Norms  
and Cultural  
Influence



Economic  
Resources  
control



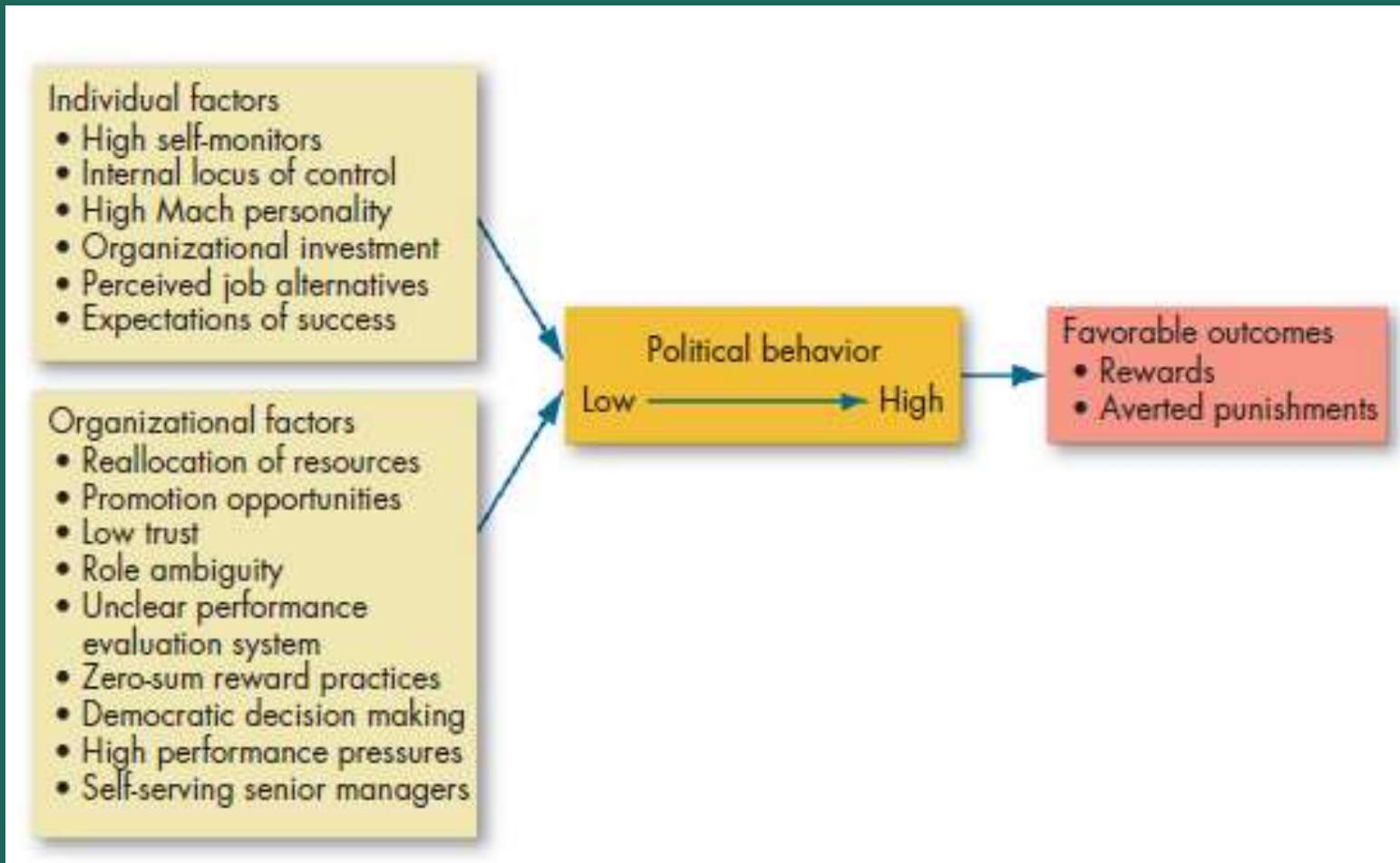
Informational  
control



Networks and  
Alliances



# Causes and Consequences of Political Behaviour





# Activity2: List the political behaviors you usually noticed among your colleagues?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

# Politics is in the Eye of the Beholder

“Political” Label	“Effective Management” Label
1. Blaming others	Fixing responsibility
2. Apple polishing	Demonstrating loyalty
3. Covering your rear	Documenting decisions
4. Creating conflict	Encouraging change and innovation
5. Whistle-blowing	Improving efficiency
6. Ambitious	Career minded
7. Opportunistic	Astute

*Source:* Based on T. C. Krell, M. E. Mendenhall, and J. Sendry, “Doing Research in the Conceptual Morass of Organizational Politics,” paper presented at the Western Academy of Management Conference, Hollywood, CA, April 1987.

How do you  
respond to  
power and  
politics?



# Activity 3: Conflict Resolution Over Land Use

In a rural panchayat, a dispute has arisen over the proposed construction of a new community center, which would require the repurposing of a currently used public grazing field. The field is popular among local shepherds and farmers for grazing their livestock, but the community center is seen as essential for providing a venue for educational programs, health camps, and social gatherings. Two groups have formed with opposing views:

**Community Development Advocates:** This group includes young parents, teachers, and health workers who argue that the community center would provide much-needed space for educational and health services, which are currently lacking.

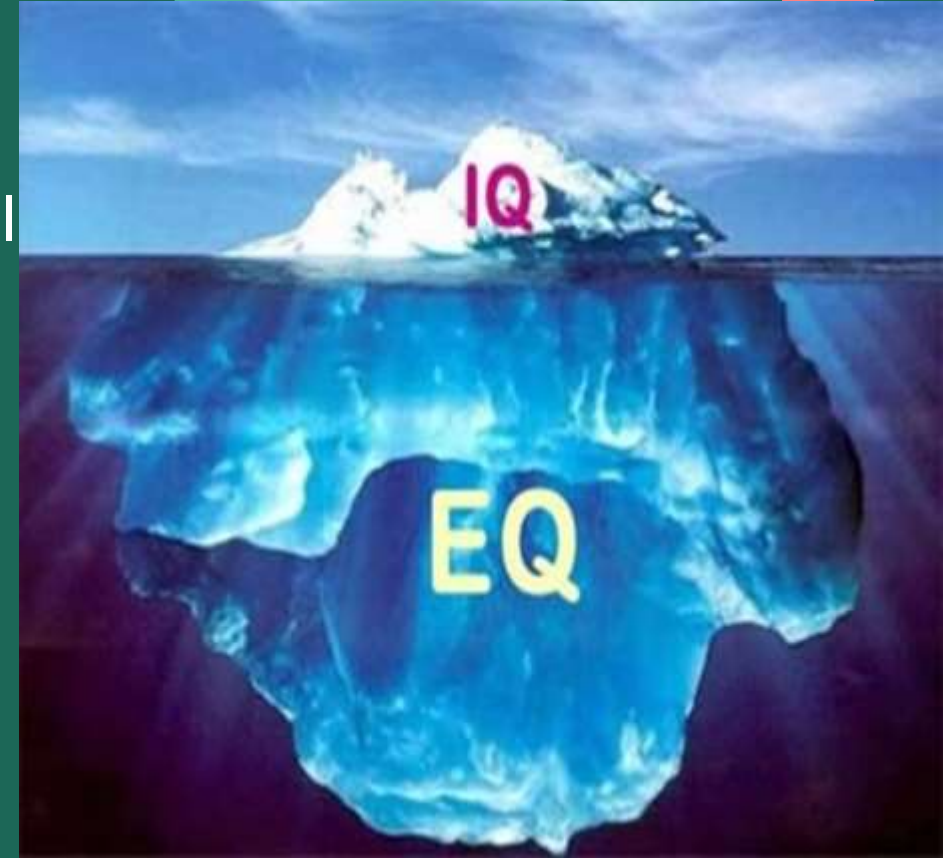
**Local Farmers and Shepherds:** This group is concerned that losing grazing land will negatively impact their livestock and, subsequently, their livelihoods. They propose that alternative locations should be considered for the community center.

# Emotional Intelligence

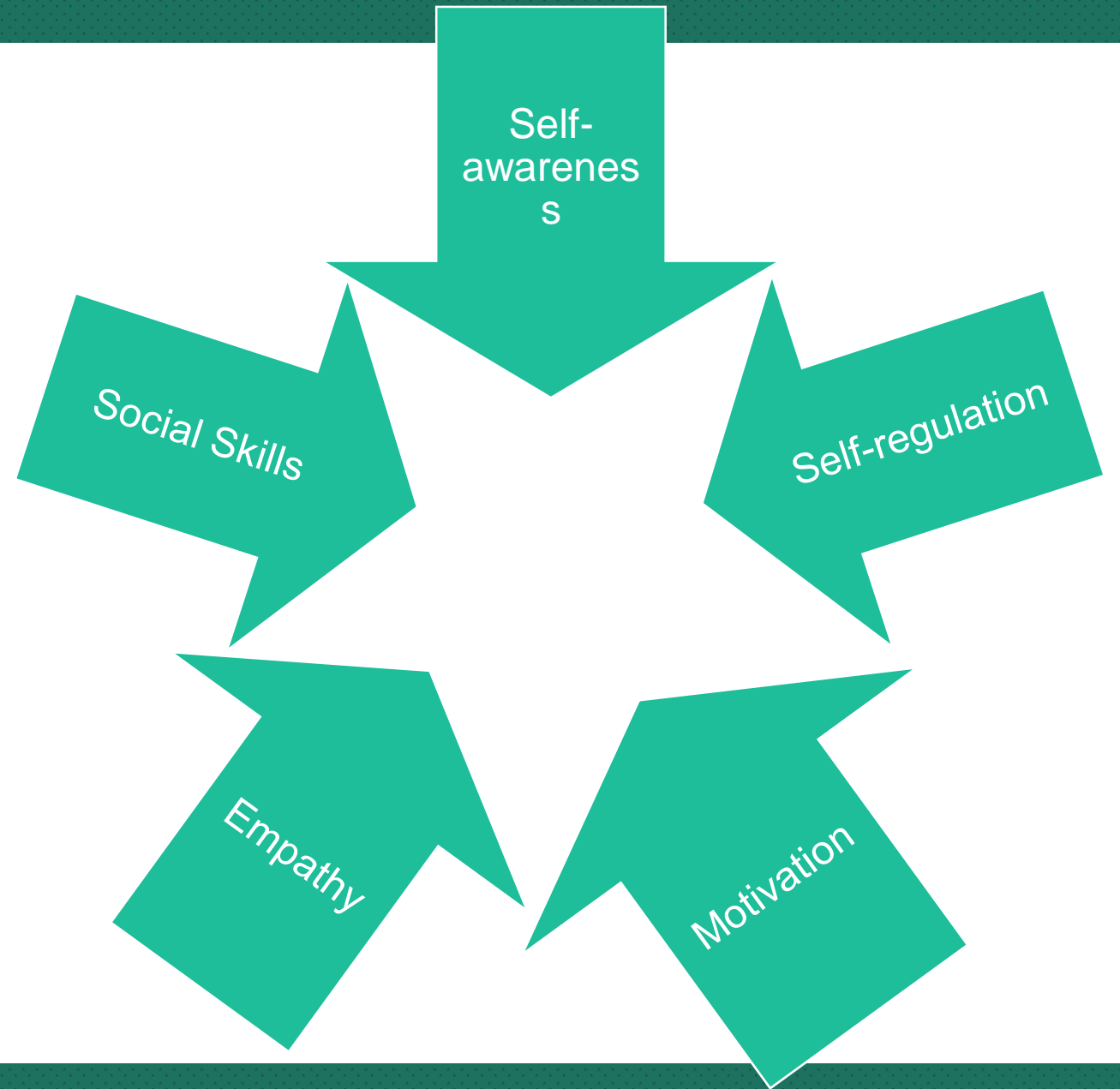
Emotional Intelligence (EI), also known as emotional quotient (EQ), refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage our own emotions and the emotions of others. It is a crucial skill in:

- effective communication,
- conflict resolution,
- leadership, and
- relationship-building.

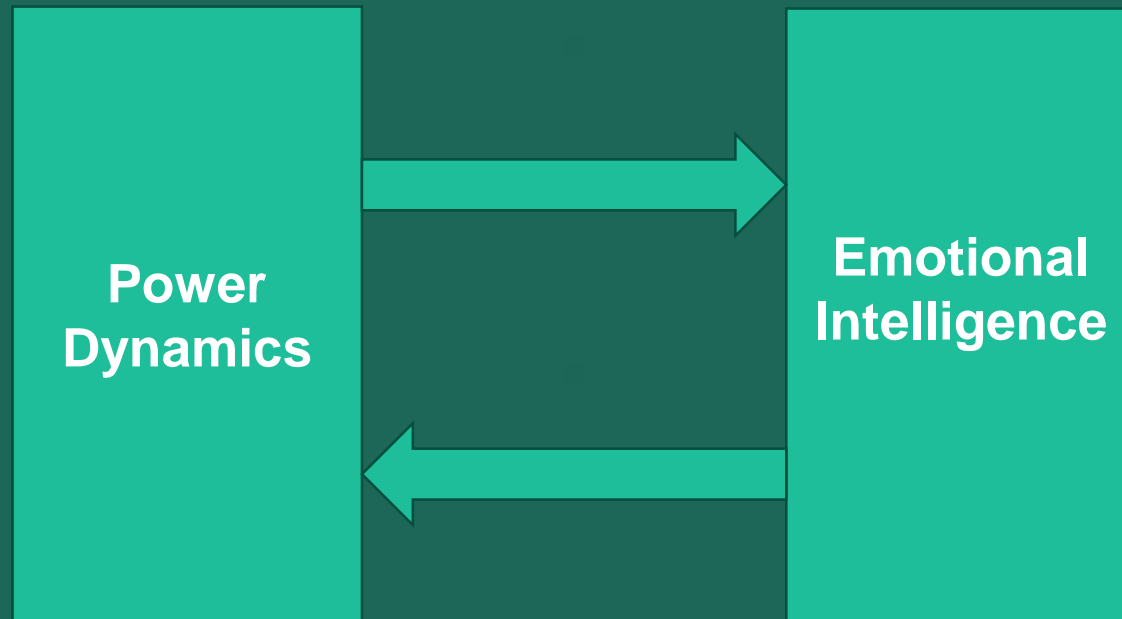
In the context of governance, particularly in settings such as local panchayats where decisions directly affect community livelihood and well-being, **emotional intelligence can significantly enhance the effectiveness of governance.**



# The Emotional Competencies Model – Daniel Goleman



# Handling Power and Politics



$$PP=f(d)$$

where,  $d$  = Importance

Scarcity

Non-substitutability



# Summary and Implications

- Focus on Developing Expert and Referent Power. May be becoming subject-matter experts in areas like agriculture, infrastructure, or local law etc.
- Minimize Powerlessness Among Others. Instead of sidelining the people involve them in discussions.
- Recognize and Leverage Political Behavior.
- Foster Emotional Intelligence in Handling Power and Politics, emotional reactions influence decision-making in political situations, and how self-awareness can lead to better handling of power struggles

# Thank you!



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