ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS AND CAREER PROGRESSION OF EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN EDO STATE

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ABSTRACT: *The non-availability of adequate resources, limited number of positions and tussle for power in the various tertiary institutions in Edo State has made organizational politics inevitable in these institutions. The main objective of this study is to determine the type of relationship that exists between organizational politics and career progression of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State while the specific objective is to ascertain the type of relationship that exists between impression management and job enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State. Survey research design was adopted for the study, a total population of 305 was used for the study, the Taro Yemmane sampling technique was used for the study,the data collection tool employed by the researcher was the questionnaire,while the analysis of the data was done using the pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis. The findings revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between impression management and job enlargement in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that the portraying of certain preferred behaviors by employees in an organization can aid the enlargement of their job. It was against this backdrop that the researcher recommended that employees of tertiary institutions in Edo State should learn to exhibit certain images that are preferred by the influential members of these institutions.Employees who see organizational politics as destructive should have a rethink as the competitive working environment and limited resources available to the employees of these institutions have made organizational politics important in these institutions*

KEYWORDS*: Organizational Politics, Career Progression, Impression Management and Job Enlargement*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Organizational politics is part of organizational life and nearly all organizations experience some kind of politics in their work environment (Davis & Gardner, 2004; Vigoda, 2003). The reality of scarce resources, struggle for power, jealousy and conflict of interest among employees in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions has made organizational politics inevitable in these institutions.

Some researchers regard organizational politics as being positive and necessary for managers of business organizations (Butcher & Clarke 2002;Hartley&Branicki, 2006;Vigoda &Kapun, 2005). In the light of the above, organizational politics can be seen as indeed necessary for the career progression of employees in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions.

As an ubiquitous concept, defining organizational politics is not straight forward; this is obvious from the inability of several researchers to provide a generally acceptable definition of the concept. One reason for this, according to Doldor, (2007) is the increase in terminologies, such as political climate, behaviours, tactics, skills, and influences associated with the workplace and used interchangeably. One definition as given by Onyeizugbe and Orogbu, (2015) state that "Organizational politics are informal, unofficial and sometimes behind the scene efforts to sell ideas, influence an organization, increase power or achieve other target objectives". It represents attempts to influence others using discretionary behaviours to promote personal objectives. According to Appelbaum and Hughes (1998) in a bid to accomplish these personal objectives, some organizational political tactics employed by employees are forming coalitions, impression management, information management, promote the opposition, pursue line responsibility, ingratiation and devious political tactics. According to Turnley and Gilstrap, (2008) impression management is a common organizational political tactic used by employees as it aids the rapid actualization of an employee's personal objective in an organization. These personal objectives comprises of rapid promotion, job enlargement and getting various forms of favourable appointments which are salient indicators of career progression.

Most Managements of the Tertiary Institutions in Edo State are regarded as being politically mindedand the employees of these institutions are convincingly members of one clique or another in a bid to ensure a progression in their career.

Career progression is the positive advancement of an individual's working life along a career-related pathway and is often associated with an increase in income or benefits. This advancement can also relate to other accomplishments that make it more likely for employees to be able to increase their earnings in the future (Anderson, Holzer& Lane, 2005). Some indicators of career progression include, but are not limited to, gains in hourly wages or salary, gains in number of hours worked per week or month, changes in job status, job enlargement, promotion along an identified career path and opportunities for advanced training programmes (Miller, Deitch, & Hill, 2011).

Therefore, any individual who has a job with some level of security and opportunity for career progression may want to do anything to keep the job including undue loyalty (to enhance impression management) to his superior. This gives credence to the inevitability of organizational politics in these institutions and its effect on career progression.

Statement of the Problem

The non-availability of adequate resources, limited number of positions and tussle for power in the various tertiary institutions in Edo State has made organizational politics inevitable in these institutions. However, most employees in these institutions lack adequate impression management skills which is a common organizational political tactic and this limits the opportunity of enlarging their job through an increase in the responsibilities and tasks performed by these employees. These employees fail to manage their outward appearance and style. As a result of this, they are being viewed as not been recommendable for higher responsibilities by their superiors and this limits the opportunity of enlarging their job. Employees in these institutions clamour for the enlargement of their job because of the added benefits like bonuses, prestige and increased experience that is ensured by it; but their inability to portray an image that is preferred by their superior inhibits the opportunity of enlarging their job.

Based on the above, this study seeks to examine the type of relationship that exists between organizational politics and career progression of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State.

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this study is:

To determine the type of relationship that exists between organizational politics and career progression of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State.

The specific objective of this study is:

(i) To ascertain the type of relationship that exists between impression management and job enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State.

Research Question

(i) What type of relationship exists between impression management and job enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State?

Research Hypothesis

H_A: There is a positive relationship between Impression Management and Job Enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Considerable research has been undertaken in the area of organizational politics in the last thirty or forty years. Interest has resulted in some authors claiming that organizational politics is important enough to be considered a discipline within organizational studies (Butcher & Clarke, 1999). Whilst organizational politics is generally stigmatised as an undesirable and negative aspect of organizational life within the functional and procedural approaches, those taking a social constructionist to sense-making approach have argued that open and legitimate politics can create the conditions necessary for organizational learning (Coopey& Burgoyne, 2000). Furthermore, an open form of politics can offset difficulties of unlearning existing knowledge and practices within organizations (Coopey& Burgoyne, 2000). Clearly this has implications for the innovation process within organizations because it suggests that if negative politics wereminimised and positive politics maximised, the innovation process in organizations would be improved.

Zanzi and O'Neill (2001) assert that there are two primary views of organizational politics.

The first is a view that politics is a broad and general set of social behaviours that can either be functional or dysfunctional. The second view focuses on behaviours that are self-serving and not sanctioned by the organisation. Zanzi and O'Neill (2001) contends that awareness and an understanding of the role of sanctioned and non-sanctioned political tactics will benefit managers and professionals.The competitive nature of organizations has led to the existence of organizational politics in various organizations (Zanzi& O'Neill, 2001). This is consistent with

the views of Pfeffer, (1992) who opines that interdependence, heterogeneous goals and beliefs, scarcity and distribution of power increase the use of politics in an organization.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Exchange Theory which evolved from Thorndike's (1932, 1935) work on the development of Reinforcement Theory and Mill's (1923) Marginal Utility Theory.

The model comprise of five central elements:

Behavior is predicated upon the notion of rationality: That is, the more a behavior results in a reward, the more individuals will behave that way.

Relationship is based on reciprocation: That is, each individual in the relationship will provide benefits to the other so long as the exchange is equitable and the units of exchange are important to the respective parties. An exchange between two individuals must be seen as fair by both parties for the relationship to continue.

 Social exchange is based on a justice principle: In each exchange, there should be a norm of fairness governing behavior. The exchange must be viewed as fair when compared in the context of a wider network   to third and fourth parties. This notion of distributive justice goes beyond the equity between the two principals' contribution. It involves each person comparing his or her reward to that of others who have dealt with this individual (the employee's superior) and what they received for the same or a similar contribution.

Individuals will seek to maximize their gains and minimize their costs in the exchange relation: It is important to understand that the notion of costs does not relate exclusively to financial issues; rather, costs can be incurred through the time and energy invested in a relationship.

Individuals participate in a relationship out of a sense of mutual benefit rather than coercion.

Thus, coercion should be minimized as employees tend to view the work sphere as fair and just in cases where social ties can support their interests and ambitions.

This theory is relevant to this study because the five central elements of the theory reflect the political behaviors exhibited by employees in the organization.

Empirical Review

Abubakar, Chauhan and Kura, (2014)   examined the relationship between perceived organizational politics, organizational trust, perceived human resource management practices and employee turnover among registered nurses in Nigerian public hospitals using multiple regression analysis technique. One hundred and seventy five registered nurses participated in the study. The result indicated that perceived organizational politics was significantly and positively related to turnover intentions. The result also showed that both organizational trust and perceived human resource practices were significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions.

Fanimehin and Popoola, (2013) examined the effect of career progression, work motivation and leadership styles on job satisfaction of library personnels in the Federal Civil Service of Nigeria. Total enumeration technique together with questionnaire was used to collect data from

450 library personnel in the Federal Civil Service in Nigeria, out of which 426 responded. The copies of the questionnaire were found usable for analysis given a response rate of 94.67%.The data was analysed using correlation coefficient analysis and regression analysis. The study found that there were significant relationships between career progression, work motivation, leadership styles and job satisfaction of the respondents.

Wangui and Muathe, (2014) examined the relationship between perception of organizational politics, job satisfaction, employee turnover intentions and organizational conflict in Kenyan business organizations. The descriptive survey research design was used by the researchers. They concluded thatorganizational politics is not inherently bad although often portrayed negative. Instead, it's important to be aware of the potentially destructive aspects of organizational politics in order to minimize their negative effect.

Ugwu, Ndugba, Okoroji and Kalu, (2014) examined the impact of organizational politics on employees' performance in the private sectors. Qualitative study was chosen using Zenith Bank Plc and Alcon Plc, Nigeria. The choice of methodology reflects the explorative purpose of this research. The data were mainly primary, collected during face to- face interviews with managers and subordinates of the two firms. Study adopts data categorization approach for the analysis of empirical findings to see the connection between theory and practice. Research found that bad political behavior affects negatively employees' performance and lowers organizational productivity; while good political behavior affects positively employees' performance and increases organizational productivity.

Akbar and Riaz, (2012) investigated the effect of participation in decision-making, role stressors (role ambiguity and role conflict) and Machiavellianism on organizational politics perception in Federal Government owned organizations in Pakistan. 112 copies of the questionnaire were used for the study. Ordinary least square regression analysis was used to analyse the collected data. The result showedthat role ambiguity and Machiavellianism are key predictors of organizational politics.

Adebusuyi, Olasupo and Idehen, (2013) examined the nature of perception of organizational politics by workers in a Nigerian university. Three hundred and seventy two (academic and non-academic) staff of ObafemiAwolowo University, Ile-Ife filled Perception of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS). Data was analysed using the chi-square statistical tool to show the most commonly perceived organisational politics variables and the relationships among these dimensions of perceived organisational politics. The results identified six dimensions of perception of organizational politics which were: General Political Behaviour (GPB), Go Along to get Ahead (GAA), Pay and Promotion Policies(PPP), General Political Behaviour and Go Along to get Ahead (GPB and GAA) General Political Behaviour and Pay and Promotion Policies (GPB and PPP) and (GPB, GAA and PPP). The results revealed that Go Along to Get Ahead (35.5%) was perceived most by workers of ObafemiAwolowo University. Furthermore, the study showed that nonacademic staff significantly perceived organizational politics more than the academic staff.

RESEARCH   METHODS

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is the survey research design. It was used because of the nature of the study. Survey research design enables the researcher to observe what happens to the sample subjects without manipulating them.

Table 1: List of Tertiary Institutions in Edo State.

S/N	INSTITUTION	STATUS	SOURCE
1	School of Health Technology, Benin-City, Edo State.	College of health technology	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_011.html
2	Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State.	Federal polytechnic	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_01.html
3	University of Benin	Federal university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/federal-univeristies
4	Lighthouse Polytechnic, Evbuobanosa, Edo State	Private polytechnic	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_03.html
5	Shaka Polytechnic Benin City PMB 1240, Edo State	Private polytechnic	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_03.html
6	Kings Polytechnic, Ubiaja, Edo State	Private polytechnic	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_03.html
7	Wellspring University, Evbuobanosa - Edo State	Private university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/private-univeristies
8	Benson IdahosaUniversity,Benin City	Private university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/private-univeristies
9	Igbinedion University Okada	Private university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/private-univeristies
10	Samuel AdegboyegaUniversity,Ogwa.	Private university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/private-univeristies
11	College of Education, Ekiadolor-Benin	State college of education	www.ncceonline.edu.ng/colleges.php
12	Edo State College of Education, Igueben	State college of education	www.ncceonline.edu.ng/colleges.php
13	Edo State College of Agriculture, Iguoriakhi.	State college of education	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_015.html
14	Edo State Institute of Techology& Management, Usen, Benin City, Edo State	State polytechnic	www.nbte.gov.ng/inst_02.html
15	Edo University Iyamo	State university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/state-univerisity
16	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma,	State university	nuc.edu.ng/nigerian-univerisities/state-univerisity

The table above is a list of all the Tertiary Institutions in Edo State. The researcher judgmentally selected 3 out of these institutions. 1 University (Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma) 1 Polytechnic (Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi) and 1 College of Education (College of Education, Igueben).

Population of Study

Table 2: Population of the Selected Institutions.

S/N	INSTITUTION	POPULATION
1	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.	545
2	Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi	615
3	College of Education, Igueben	120
	Total:	1,280

Source: Field Survey 2016.

The table above shows the number of academic staff in the selected tertiary institutions as only academic staff were used for the study.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The Taro Yammane, (1973) sampling technique was used to determine the sample size. It is denoted by the formula below:

$n = N/1 + Ne^2$

Where n = Sample Size

   N= Population Size=1,280

   e = Sampling Error= 0.05

$n = 1,280/1 + 1,280(0.05)^2$

$n = 1,280/1 + 1,280(0.0025)$

$n = 1,280/4.2 = 304.8 \sim 305.$

Based on the above, 305 copies of the questionnaire was distributed randomly to the respondents in the Institutions of study.

Method of Data Collection

The data collection tool employed by the researcher was the questionnaire. It was divided into two sections. Section A and Section B. Section A contained respondent's personal data while section B contained questions relating to the research hypothesis. It was designed on a five point Likert Scale. Strongly Agreed (SD), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D) and Undecided (U). It was used because it enables the collection of data from a primary source.

The Bowley's (1926) allocation formula was used to determine the copies of questionnaire to be distributed to each Institution. The formular is denoted below:

Nh= n(nh)/N

Where Nh= Number of units to be distributed to each group.

nh = Number of respondents in each group.

n= Total Sample Size.

N= Total Population Size.

Ambrose Alli University:

Nh = 305(545)/1,280 = 166,225/1,280

= 129.86 ~ 130.

Base on the above, 130 copies of the questionnaire will be randomly distributed to the Academic Staff of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Auchi Polytechnic:

Nh = 305(615)/1,280 = 187,575/1,280

= 146.44 ~ 146.

Based on the above, 146 copies of the questionnaire will be randomly distributed to the Academic Staff of Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi.

College of Education, Igueben:

Nh = 305(120)/1,280 = 36,600/1,280

= 28.59 ~ 29.

Base on the above, 29 copies of the questionnaire will be randomly distributed to the Academic Staff of College of Education, Igueben.

Validity of the instrument

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure. The content and construct validity test was used by the researcher.

Reliability of the Instrument

This measures the reliability of a particular instrument employed by a researcher. The cronbach's alpha reliability test was used by the researcher.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Basedon Standardized Items	N of Items
.993	.993	10

Source: SPSS Ver. 22

The Reliability Statics table which is a summary of the result shows a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0. 993. Since 0.993>0.70, it shows that the instrument is reliable.

Method of data Analysis

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the data in other to ascertain the type of relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variable. The level of significance was 5% while 95% confidence interval reliability was adopted.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Research Hypothesis

H_A: There is a positive relationship between impression management and job enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State.

Correlations

		Impression Management	Job Enlargement
Impression Management	Pearson Correlation	1	.969[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	278	278
Job Enlargement	Pearson Correlation	.969[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	278	278

 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: SPSS Ver. 22

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary of Findings

The table above shows that p-value (0.000) < 0.01 (at a 2-tailed test). This means that the result is statistically significant at 5% confidence level. The r value 0.969(97%) shows that there is a strong positive relationship between impression management and job enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State. This corroborates the work of Judge and Bretz, (1994) who asserts that impresssion management enhances the job enlargement of employees in an organization. The findings of this study also corroborates the submissions of Wayne and Liden, (1995) who assert that there exists a positive relationship between impression management and the performance rating of employees in business organizations and this positive performance rating of employees can lead to the job enlargement of employees as they are perceived as competent individuals by their superiors. Carlson and Bratton, (2004) opines that there is a positive relationship between impression management and the performance appraisal of employees. When the result of a performance appraisal yields a positive result, it could lead to the job enlargement of employees .Cheng, Chiu and Tzeng,

(2013) assert that there is a positive relationship between impression management and the job performance of employees. An employee who wants to please his superior at all cost will always carry out his job effectively and this could lead to the job enlargement of such an employee.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that there exists a strong positive relationship between impression management and job enlargement of employees in selected tertiary institutions in Edo State. This implies that the portraying of certain preferred behaviors by employees in an organization can aid the enlargement of their jobs.

RECOMMENDATION

The researcher makes the following recommendations based on the findings of the study:

1. Employees of tertiary institutions in Edo State should learn to exhibit certain images that are preferred by the influential members of these institutions.

2. Employees who see organizational politics as destructive should have a rethink as the competitive working environment and limited resources available to the employees of these institutions have made organizational politics important in these institutions.

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