Employee's Perception of Organizational Politics and its Relationship with Turnover Intention

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated employee perception of organizational politics and its relationship with turnover intention in Public/Private Organization in Nigeria. Various literature in organizational politics revealed that turnover intention is an inevitable outcome. Employees will intend to leave when there is unjust appraisal system, pay and promotion policies emanating from manipulation through politics. Performance appraisal processes in organization is often political in nature especially when it involves promotion. The data for this research was collected from Primary source. Survey research method was utilized to collect Primary data. Sample size of 90 employees from Public/Private organizations in Enugu State, Nigeria was collected. Simple regression and Pearson correlation was used to test hypothesis. The simple regression result indicated that perception of organizational politics had positive and significant relationship with turnover intention at 5% level of significance. Pearson correlation result for perception of organizational politics and turnover intention ($r = 0.371 < 0.05$) indicated that positive association exists between perception of organization politics and turnover intention. The positive coefficient means that the increase in perception of organizational politics might lead to increase in turnover intention. The study recommended that management of organizations should discourage politically manipulative behavior and ensure Justice in performance evaluation.

Highlights of this paper
- The objective of this study is to investigate employee perception of organizational politics and its relationship with turnover intention in Public/Private Organization in Nigeria.
- The simple regression result indicated that perception of organizational politics had positive and significant relationship with turnover intention at 5% level of significance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational politics is found in all kind of originations and affects employee performance (Vigoda, 2002b). It is difficult to find a political free environment. This is because employees always scramble for valued resources, position and power in organization for self interest. Perception of organizational politics has negative effects on employee through stress which is an antecedent of turnover intention.

Organizational politics can also be manipulated by power players in organization to make water muddy to a targeted person. It can make the person to lose confidence in himself and make costly mistakes that can lead to termination of his appointment. Power play can make an employee do a thing for which he will be blamed or punished (Madison *et al.*, 1980; Ferris and Kaemar, 1992).

A person out of political maneuver in organization can be witch hunt to make him scapegoat. Both, however constitutes a game plan for those who play it. They can come in many forms visible or hidden. The hidden ones become noticeable with time. Nobody will want to stay and work in a situation like this (Egwuonwu, 1988).

Employees can withdraw emotionally from the organization when policies are manipulated through politics. And this can also arouse sentiment and anxiety of workers. The effect of this withdrawal can result in inability to achieve organizational culture that can enhance high performance and organizational commitment (Madison *et al.*, 1980; Schein, 2005). This is why organizational politics is said to be detrimental to employee and organizational performance (Byrne, 2005).

Some certain group of researchers sees organizational politics as a functional means of getting work done by managers (Pfeffer, 1981). But managers must tread with caution in the way and manner they apply politics in organization in order not to lose their workers in the process. But strictly speaking, organizational politics is a dysfunctional tool because employees do things that interest them to gain control of resources at the detriment of organizational interest (Cropanzano *et al.*, 1997). Dysfunctional politics is associated with stress, which is an antecedent of turnover intention. Stress reduces performance level at work (Ali, 2008; Rajib and Mahua, 2010).

Vigoda (2002b) argued that employees may experience stress and show numerous behavior at work as a result of perceived politics. This according to him can lead to leaving behavior and no employee will like to work in stressful environment. Usually those workers who feel that they cannot cope with politically charged atmosphere often quit their job, Selye (1975). Others who do not have where to go, chose to stay and fight the organization or adjust by their norm (Selye, 1975). Those who stay are often exposed to stressful condition due to politically charged atmosphere (Selye, 1975).

According to Poon (2003) organizational politics requires to be investigated more expansively. He emphasized that research is needed to unearth the effect of organizational politics on employee intention to stay or leave. And this is the reason why this research is worthwhile.

1.1. Objective of Research

The objective of research is to investigate employee perception of organizational politics and its relationship with turnover intention.

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1.2. Hypothesis of the Research

Alternate hypothesis was formulated to guide this study:

H$_{A.}$: Employee perception of organizational politics and turnover intention have positive relationship.

1.3. Significance of the Research

i. The research will help management to avoid politically charged atmosphere in the organization, which has adverse impact on both employee and organization.

ii. The research will help management to discourage accumulation of scarce resources by some individuals/group in organization, so that they will be distributed to all sections of the organization without complaint.

iii. The research will help management to discourage politically manipulative behavior associated with performance evaluation, pay and promotion policies and ensure justice in performance evaluation system.

1.4. Scope of the Research

The research will investigate the relationship between employees perception of organizational politics and turnover intention among different organizations in Enugu, Nsukka and Oji River in Enugu, State, Nigeria.

1.5. Limitations of the Research

A Non-probability convenience sampling was used in this research due to various limitations and this limits the external validity of result, and findings cannot be generalized to other organizations. There was no proper record of the population of the various public/private organizations for one to be able to determine the sample size.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is the intention of workers to quit their work, job role and organization. Turnover intention is the predictor of turnover and increases as intention to turnover increases. Turnover Intention indicates the leaving behavior of employees and is the determinant of turnover(Brigham *et al.*, 2007; Adeboye and Adegoroye, 2012).

Turnover intention correlates with turnover and therefore when employees intend to leave and it is ignored, it leads to loss of employees (Griffeth *et al.*, 2000). Powell and York (1992) argued that loss of employees can result to psychological imbalance, reduced output, quality service and recruitment cost.

Hom and Griffeth (1991) argued that turnover intention is the individual intention to withdraw from the organization as a result of reasons best known to him and that this takes place within a specific interval. Price (2001) stated that turnover intention is used as a veritable tool in measuring actual turnover. He posited that it is more practical to ask employees of their intention to leave in cross sectional study than actually tracking them down through longitudinal study to see if they left.

2.2. Perception of Organizational Politics

Organizational politics is defined as a process through which people organize and interpret their sensory impression in order to give meaning to what is happening around them (Robbins *et al.*, 2008). Organizational politics involves observation of others self interest behavior which includes manipulation of organizational policies (Ferris and Kaemar, 1992) Perception is largely different from objective reality. This in essence implies that people

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behave on the basis of their perception about reality, not reality itself. Perception of organizational politics is a subjective perception and not necessary an objective reality. (Ferris *et al.,* 1989a). Perception of Organizational politics affects work negatively and is detrimental for employees and organizations.

Organizational politics is not a formal method of approach in executing organizational policies and programmes, rather it is informal, divisive and illegitimate and is not recognized by formal authority (Mintzberg, 1983) Some group of researchers considered politics as a functional means to get work done by managers but others see it as dysfunctional tool because employees use it to achieve self interest (Cropanzano *et al.,* 1997).

Kacmar and Carlson (1997) posited that organizational politics is very common in organization where rules and regulations does not exist, and that when decision are made, it may be found to be influenced by organizational politics. Kacmar and Carlson (1997) also argued that high political environment is prevalent in organizations where there is limited valuable resources and that scarce resources can cause rivalry among individuals and groups.

Organizational politics includes the way organizations and employees behave when implementing policies and decisions related to pay and promotion (Ferris *et al.,* 1989a). Pay and promotions has always been based on performance evaluations, which has been known to be political in nature (Dyke, 1990).

2.3. Perception of Organizational Politics and Turnover Intention

Most of the negative outcomes that affects leaving behavior, job performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitments are associated with perception of organizational politics (Cropanzano *et al.,* 1997). Kacmar *et al.* (1999) stated that the knowledge of antecedents of these unwanted negative outcomes remains incomplete, and are yet to be completely ascertained, hence the basis for this research. The research aimed at investigating critically the outcomes of organizational politics in organization and to show that this is an antecedent of turnover intention.

Organizational politics is a source of dysfunctional outcomes and stress in organization. It is a potential source of job stress. And job stress is an antecedent of turnover intentions. Job stress is a structural or organizational factor. Stress is a potential source of turnover intention (Gilmore *et al.,* 1996).

Power play arising from organizational politics can make water muddy for a targeted person with the aim of making him loose confidence in himself. Power play can make one make costly mistakes that would pave way for his termination of appointment (Ferris and Kaemar, 1992).

Power play can corner an employee to do something for which he will be blamed or punished. No employee will want to stay and work in a situation like this (Egwuonwu, 1988).

Dysfunctional aspects of politics causes stress on employees, which reduces their performance level at workplace and lead to turnover intention(Ali, 2008; Rajib and Mahua, 2010). Uzma *et al.* (2013) in their research in organizational politics pointed out that future research should investigate the effect of organizational politics on other variables such as job commitment, job satisfaction, job performance, turnover intention.

In a research carried out by Abubakara *et al.* (2014) to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational politics, organizational trust, human resource practices and turnover intention among nurses in Nigeria, they found out that organizational politics have positive relationship with turnover intention.

Ahmad *et al.* (2010) conducted a research on performance appraisal politics and employee turnover intention. The objective of the research was to find out the relationship between appraisal politics and turnover intention. The findings of the research showed that performance appraisal politics had positive relationship with turnover intention. They found that performance appraisal that are biased and allows sanctions could increase employees turnover intention. The research recommended that performance appraisal should be evaluated objectively based on

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the actual achievement to prevent dissatisfaction and turnover intention. Another research carried out by Guchait and Cho (2010) corroborated the findings that performance appraisal politics has positive relationship with employee turnover intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

The data for the research was collected from Primary Source. The source of the data was through questionnaire distributed to employees drawn from different public and private organizations in Enugu, Nsukka, and Oji River in Enugu State, Nigeria.

A non probability convenience sampling technique was used in this research due to the fact that there was no proper record of the population of the various public/private organizations for one to be able to determine the sample size.

The questionnaire consisted of demography data such as age, gender, level of education, marital status etc. The questionnaire also consisted of questions raised on 12 variables that described political behavior and 8 variables that described turnover behavior. The questionnaire was developed using five point likert type scale ranging from I (strongly disagree with the statement to 5 (strongly agree for each of the statement. 90 questionnaires were shared to employees of the public and private organizations and all of them were well filled and returned.

The model of study has two variables for empirical testing. And the variables were turnover intention which was the dependent variable and perception of organizational politics which was the independent variable. The sample was analyzed with statistical package for social science (SPSS) 15.0 computer package. Simple regression analysis was utilized as a statistical tool since it was a measure of association. Pearson correlation test was also carried out to find out the relationship between the stated variables. The demographic data were analyzed using frequency table.

3.1. Model Specification

The following model was specified for empirical testing

$T_1 = \beta o + \beta_1 pop + \mu$

Where

T_1 = Turnover Intention

β_1 pop = Perception of organizational politics

βo = βeta zero

β_1 = (i=1) is the estimate of the coefficient

μ = An error term measuring variation in turnover intention unaccounted for by the independent variable.

3.2. Validity/Reliability of Instrument

Questionnnaire was sent to 20 respondents to test the relevance and clarity of the statements and pass their comments. The idea was to ensure that the questions in the questionnaire were simple and understandable. The 20 respondents passed a favorable comment which showed that the questionnaire was understandable.

A reliability test was also carried out on perception of organizational politics and turnover intention scales. The analysis result showed that the reliability test of the data were overall 0.792. This value is generally considered acceptable in social science. The analytical scale or data of 0.792 is reliable enough for analysis. According to Walonick (1993) the value 0.7 is acceptable and the value above 0.8 are preferable and good.

4. PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The demography of the respondents to show the characteristic of the respondents who participated in the survey is shown below

Table-1. Demographic Feature of Respondents.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Age:		
Less than 30years	19	21.1
30-39 Years	32	35.6
40-49 Years	23	25.5
Above 50years	16	17.8
Total	**90**	**100.0**
Sex: **Male**	69	74.5
Female	23	25.5
Total	**90**	**100.0**
Educational Level:		
Post Secondary	17	18.9
University	51	56.7
Post graduate	22	24.4
Total	**90**	**100**
Marital Status:		
Single	28	68.9
Married	62	31.9
Total	**90**	**100.0**
Years of Service:		
Below 5 years	10	11.1
5 − 10 years	35	38.9
10 − 15 years	19	21.1
16 and above	26	28.9
Total	**90**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The age distribution of respondents in Table 1showed that 19 (21.1%) were less than 30years, 32 (35.6%) were 30 − 39 years, 23 (25.5%) were 50 − 59 years and 16 (17.8%) were above 50 years. Majority of the respondents were 30 − 39years.

The sex of the respondents showed that 69 (74.4%) were male while 23 (25.5%) were females. Majority of the respondents were female. The educational level of respondents showed that 17 (18.9%) attended post secondary school, 51 (56.7%) attended University while 22 (24.4%) attended post graduate school. Majority of the respondents attended University.

The marital status of respondents showed that 28 (68.9%) were single, 62 (31.9%) were named. Majority of the respondents were married. The year of service of respondents showed that 10 (11.1%) worked for less than 5 years, 35 (38.9%) worked for 10 − 5years and 26 (28.9%) worked for above 16years. Majority of the respondents worked for 5years.

4.1. Data Collected and Used for Regression Analysis

Table-2. Responses to questions ask on independent variable.

Independent Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
POP	35 (38.9)	26(28.9)	8 (8.9)	10 (11.1)	11 (12.2)

Source: Field Survey, 2019.
The non bracketed numbers indicate number of responses.
The bracketed number indicate the percentage of response

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In Table 2, 35 respondents which comprised 38.9% of the 90 respondents that participated in the survey strongly agreed that perception of organizational politics and turnover intention have positive relation while 26 (28.9%) agreed. 8 (8.9%) of the respondents were undecided on the issue. 10 (11.1%) disagreed while 11 (12.2%) strongly disagreed. This in essence showed that majority of the respondents comprising 67.8% agreed that perception of organizational politics and turnover intention has positive relation with turnover intention, while 23.3.% disagreed and 8.9% were undecided on the issue.

Table-3. Responses to questions asked on dependent variable.

Dependent Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
T.I.	20 (22.2)	30 (33.4)	21 (23.4)	13 (14.4)	6 (6.6)

Source: Field Survey, 2019.
The non bracketed numbers indicate number of responses.
The bracketed number indicate the percentage of response.

Table 3, showed that 20 respondents which comprised (22.2%) of the 90 respondents who participated in the survey strongly agreed that they can leave when perception of politics is present in organization. 20 (33.4%) agreed that they can leave when perception of politics is present in organization. 21 (23.4%) were undecided on the issue. 13 (14.4%) disagreed while 6 (6.6%) strongly disagreed. This in essence showed that majority of the respondents comprising 55.6% agreed that they can leave when perception of politics is present in the organization while 21% disagreed and 23.4% were undecided on the issue.

4.2.Regression Technique

Simple regression technique was used to test the hypothesis of the research

Table-4. Simple Regression Results.

Variable	Coefficient	std error	t-statics	Probability
Constant	0.312	0.389	0.803	0.408
POP	0.371	0.111	3.344	0.001

R- squared 0.141
Adjusted R- squared 0.128
F- statistics 10.560 {.001
Standard error of regression 0.11
(SPSS) Version 15.0.

In Table 4, the beta value or coefficient showed that 1 unit increase in the value of perception of organizational politics would result in .371 unit (37.1%) increase in turnover intention, other variables being held constant. The beta value or coefficient of 0.371 showed that perception of organizational politics (pop) has positive relationship with turnover intention The t-statistics value of 3.344 showed that perception of organizational (pop) has a statistically significant t.ratio. The statistics of perception of organization politics (pop) showed that it accounted for significant positive variation in dependent variable turnover intention (P=3.344, P<.05). Probability or significant value of 0.001 shows that pop is significant at less than 5% level.

The F value of 10.560 showed that the model has overall significance at 1% level. R^2 14.1. suggested that the model is of good fit. This indicates that 14.10% of the variation in turnover intention is accounted for by variation in pop.

Table-5. Correlation Result.

		POP
Turnover Intention (TI)	Pearson Correlation	0.371
	Significance(1-tailed)	0.001

The spear correlation result is significant at 5% level.

4.3. Interpretation of Results

H$_A$: Employee perception of organizational politics and turnover intention have positive relationship.

In testing the hypothesis, it would be revealed from the simple regression results above that perception of organizational politics (POP) had a positive and significant relationship with employee turnover intention at 5% level of significance. This means that we were 95% confidence level that perception of organization politics would significantly lead to increase in employee turnover intention. The positive coefficient value of perception of organizational politics (0.371) accounted for 37.1% employee turnover intention. This means that perception of organizational politics would lead to employee turnover intention and is statistically significant. This significant influence of Perception of organization politics (pop) is because it passed test of significance. The t-statistics of perception of organizational politics (pop) also accounted for significance positive variation in dependence variable, turnover intention (p=3.344, p <0.05). And as a result, null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. Perception of organizational politics has positive relationship with turnover intention.

4.4. Pearson Correlation Test

Table 5 shows the result of correlation between perception of organizational politics and turnover intention i.e (r = 0.371) p <0.05).

The correlation measured the result of degree of linear association between the given variables for the research. The result of the correlation revealed that a positive association exists between perception of organization politics and turnover intention (T1 = 0.371). The positive coefficient means that increase in perception of organizational politics might lead to increase in employee turnover intention.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Perception of organizational politics had a positive and significance influence on employee turnover intention at 5% level of significance. The finding was in line with the findings of Madison *et al.* (1980); Cropanzano *et al.* (1997); Rajib and Mahua (2010) and Uzma *et al.* (2013) that perception of organizational politics have positive relationship with turnover intention. This research therefore suggested that we should accept the alternate hypothesis that employee perception of organizational politics is positively related to turnover intention.

It would be observed in Table 5 that the coefficient of determination (adj. R^2) value of 0.128, that is 12.8% of the systematic variation in employee turnover intention was explained by perception of organizational politics. The remaining 87.2% was captured by the error term. Therefore the low value of Adjusted R-Squared was due to the exclusion of other possible variables that might explained turnover intention. This means that the model overall was good for statistical predictions. The value F = 10.560 with (p <0.05) showed that the model is significant, thus it can be assumed that there is a linear relationship between the variable in the model.

Table 5 showed the result of correlation between perceptions of organizational politics and turnover intention (r = 0.371, p <0.05). It showed that a positive relationship exists between perception of organizational politics and turnover intention.

6. CONCLUSION

The study addressed to what extent perception of organizational politics influences turnover intention. And the results above also showedthat the empirical support of the hypothesis is obvious. The empirical result from the regression showed that perception of organizational politics and turnover intention had significant positive

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relationship at 5% level of significance. This implies that when there is manipulation of policies in organization as a result of politics, employees will intend to leave.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the empirical findings from the multiple results, the recommendations are made accordingly.

i.   The study therefore recommended that management should avoid allocation of scarce resources to some people in organizations to deter political behavior and also ensure equitable sharing of resources

ii.   The study also recommended that management should deter political and manipulative behavior of some group of people in the organization in other to prevent the negatives effect of politics.

iii.   The study recommended that management should discourage politically charged atmosphere in the organizations since it could lead to stress which is injurious to the health of workers.

iv.   The study recommended that Management should discourage manipulation of organizational policies through power play.

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