Influence of Perception of Organizational Politics on Job Satisfaction among University Workers in Oyo Town, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of perception of organizational politics on job satisfaction among university workers in Oyo Town, Nigeria. The objectives of this study were to ascertain the relationship between pay and promotion policy and job satisfaction and also to determine the main and interaction effect of going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction. Furthermore, the study sought to examine the significant difference between general political behaviour and job satisfaction. A survey design was employed to collect data from two hundred subjects who were employees of a private university in Oyo. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant relationship between pay and promotion policy and job satisfaction. The result also indicated that there was main and interaction effect of going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction. In addition, there was a significant difference between general political behaviour and job satisfaction. Based on the results obtained from the study, it was recommended among others that employees should endeavour to understand and respond strategically to the general political behaviour in their organizations to maximize their job satisfaction and minimize incidence of job frustration.

Keywords: Organizational politics, general political behaviour, pay and promotion policy, job satisfaction.

Introduction

Politics in organizations is simply a fact of life (cf. Medison, Allen, Renwick, & Mayes, 1980; Gandz& Murray, 1980). Personal experiences, hunches, and anecdotal evidence for years have supported general belief that behaviour in organizations is often political in nature (Ferris &Kacmar, 1992).Mintzderg (1983) and Pfeffer (1992) defined organizational politics as a general term that indicates power relations and influence tactics in workplace. Due to this political nature, the concept of Organizational Politics has received an increasing attention in management literature. The direction of researches in this area has primarily focused on the role of organizational politics in setting organizational outcomes and the nature and characteristics of attendant relationship.

Besides its practical implications, one of the reasons that consider politics and political behaviour in organizations as a promising field for theoretical inquiry is the general belief that views this phenomenon as one of the existing obstacles to the optimum performance of organizations (Vigod , 2000; Kacmar& Baron,1999). In line with the aforementioned accounts, is the belief by researchers that organizational politics, and political perceptions, have a negative influence on both workers and the work environment (e.g., Ferris, Russ, &Fandt, 1989; Ferris, Adams, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, & Ammeter, 2002; Kacmar& Baron, 1999; Mayes & Allen, 1977; Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1981). Previous studies suggest that a negative relationship exists between Perception of Organizational Politics and job performance (Witt, 1998; Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, & Anthony, 1999).

The need for factor that predicts employees' effectiveness has become more critical to organizational success especially in academia. One of the factors that could lead to overall organizational performance and productivity in the dynamic and competition in technology world today is employees' efficiency on their job and satisfaction. Employees' satisfaction on their job has emerged as a promising area of research within the study of industrial and labour relations in the recent time (Gbadamosi&Nwosu, 2010; Allen & Meyer,1990), 1997), Ogunyemi, 2007; Salami, 2008).

A variety of studies have pointed to organizational politics as an important antecedent of employees' performance, both formal and informal (Adams et al., 2002; Ferris &Kacmar, 1992; Gandz& Murray, 1980; Kacmar& Baron, 1999; O'Connor & Morrison, 2001; Valle &Perrewe, 2000). Most of these studies, and others, have relied on the definition of organizational politics as behavior strategically designed to maximize self-interests (Ferris et al., 1989 in Vigodata-Gadot, 2006) and therefore in conflict with the collective organizational goals or the interests of other individuals. This perspective reflects a generally negative image of workplace politics in the eyes of most organization members. Although treated as separate constructs, several studies have also related organizational politics to the theory of fairness, equity, and justice in the workplace (Ferris &Kacmar, 1992, Vigoda-Gadot, 2003).

Other studies describe organizational politics as a power game and influence tactics designed to achieve the best outcomes for the user (Kipnis et al., 1980; Pfeffer, 1992).

The objective of this paper therefore is to critically examine the influence of perception of organizational politics on job satisfaction among teaching and non-teaching staff of a private university in Nigeria, namely:

1.) to analyse the association between pay and promotion policy and job satisfaction.
2.) to assesss the main and interactive effect of going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction.
3.) to ascertain the significant difference between general political behaviour and job satisfaction.

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were tested in this study.

4.) There is a significant relationship between pay and promotion policy and job satisfaction.
5.) There is main and interactive effect of going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction.
6.) There is a significant difference between general political behaviour and job satisfaction.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The construct of organizational politics has captured the interest of organizational scientists for quite some time. Many definitions of this concept have been proposed in the literature (Drory & Romm, 1990). One of the earliest descriptions of organizational politics in the literature is from Mintzberg (1983). He defined organisation politics as "individual or group behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial, typically divisive, and above all in a technical sense, illegitimate—sanctioned neither by formal authority, accepted ideology, nor certified expertise (although it may exploit any one of these)."

Examples of political behavior include bypassing the chain of command to gain approval, going through improper channels to obtain special equipment, and lobbying high level managers just prior to promotion decisions (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001).

A variety of perspectives were presented to understand politics in organizations (Burns, 1961; Gandz & Murray, 1980; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). There is a common belief that political behavior can be defined by the nature of the act or by people's perceptions of what is political (Vredenburgh & Maurer, 1984). This is consistent with Lewin's (1936) notion that people's attitudes and behaviors are determined mostly by their perceptions of reality and not reality per se. In this area of research, we agree with Gandz and Murray (1980) who suggested that rather than exclusively an objective state, it is appropriate to construe organizational politics as a subjective experience and, thus, as a state of mind.

As a result, during the 1990s, perception of politics was suggested by Ferris and Kacmar (1992) as a good measure of the general political atmosphere in organization. A measure of perceived politics has greater scientific value than other measures of actual politics for three main reasons:

1. Perceptions of politics are more easily measured than actual political behaviour.
2. They represent the reality as it is in the eyes of the beholder and thus are more expressive of player's views and behavioural intentions.
3. They are assumed to have a greater impact on the attitudes and behaviours of employees than actual politics (Vigoda, Vinarski, & Ben, 2003).

Consonant with the above, we suggest a definition by Ferris, Harrell-Cook, and Dulebohn (2000,) to be more applicable to the current study: the perception of organizational politics "involves an individual's attribution to behaviours of self-serving intent, and is defined as an individual's subjective evaluation about the extent to which the work environment is characterized by co-workers and supervisors who demonstrate such self-serving behavior."

The latest attempt to conceptualize the perceptions of organizational politics identified three factors which are labelled *general political behaviour (GPB),* that includes the behaviours of individuals who act in a self-serving manner to obtain valued outcomes; *go along to get ahead (GAGA),* which consists of a lack of action by individuals (e.g., remain silent) in order to secure valued outcomes; and *pay and promotion policies (PPP),* which involves the organization behaving politically through the policies it enacts (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997).

Researches in this area have shown that perception of organisation politics have a negative influence on a number of organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Valle & Perrewe, 2000), intent to turnover (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Kacmar et al., 1999; Maslyn & Fedor, 1998), and

employee performance (Kacmar et al., 1999; Witt, 1998). Two previous studies have offered empirical support for the relationship between politics and performance (Kacmar et al., 1999; Witt, 1998). As mentioned earlier, employee performance is divided into two components: task performance and contextual performance (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior).

Scholars define perception of organizational politics in many ways in literature and explained it as behavior which is informal and self-serving (Drory & Romm, 1990; Vigoda, 1999, 2000, 2002; Ferris,Russ & Fandt, 1989; Kacmar & Ferris, 1993; Byrne, 2005). One school of thought considered politics as a functional tool for organization enabling managers to get the work done through creating political environment and competition (Pfeffer, 1981). Yet, others distinguish politics more narrowly and view politics as dysfunctional because employees involved in politics when they do something focused on achieving their self-interest (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Ferris and Judge, 1991;Gandz and Murray, 1980).

According to Ferris et al., (1989), the perception of organizational politics is having three dimensions. Kacmar & Ferris (1991) illustrate these three dimensions as, "General political behaviour","Go along to get ahead" and "Pay and promotion policies". General political behaviour is focused mainly on serving their own cause of achieving their individual goals (Fandt & Ferris, 1990; Ferris et al., 1989; Kacmar & Ferris, 1993; Kacmar & Carlson,1997). Second dimension is 'go along to get ahead' where individual proceed acquiescently, showing lack of interest in actions and remaining silent in order to mold the situations in one's best interest(Byrne, 2005). The 'Pay and promotion policies' is the third dimension where employee is politically involved in promotional policies and decisions (Ferris et al, 1989).

Methodology

Research Design

The design for this study is a survey design with perceptions of organizational politics as independent variable which was measured by three sub variables (general political behaviour, going along to get ahead, pay and promotion policy) and the dependent variable is job satisfaction.

Subjects

The respondents of this study were two hundred employees of a private university in Oyo who were selected using stratified random sampling technique.

Instruments

The study employed a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A measured the demographics of the respondents, while section B measured perceptions of organizational politics in terms of general political behaviour, going along to get ahead, and pay and promotion policy. We measured perceptions of organizational politics with the research instrument that was developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997) Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS). This scale identifies three dimensions, including: *General Political Behavior* (2 items)*, Go Along To Get Ahead* (7 items)*, Pay and Promotion Policies* (6 items)*. The Cronbach alpha for general political behavior subscale is _ = 0.77; go along to get ahead is _ = 0.78; and pay and promotion policies is _ =0 .73. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Section C measured job satisfaction. Job satisfaction scale is a twenty five item questionnaire. Job satisfaction was measured in terms of reward system, job related stress, job meaningfulness, training and supervisory role. The scale for job satisfaction was adapted from a scale developed by Getahun et. al (2006) with a Likert scale scoring format ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The alpha reliability coefficients were 0.84 for reward system, job related stress was 0.76, job meaningfulness was 0.80, training was 0.59 and supervisory role was 0.71.

The instruments were revalidated, and the cronobach alpha reliability coefficients gave the following results: General political behaviour -.71, going along to get ahead -.68, Pay and Promotion policies-.83 and job satisfaction-.63

Data Analysis

The demographic information was analysed using frequency counts and simple percentage. Hypothesis 1 was tested using Pearson's Correlation, hypothesis 2 was analysed using analysis of variance while hypothesis 3 was analysed using t-test.

Results and Discussion

Demographical Variables
Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	95	47.5
Male	105	52.5
Total	200	100.0

Field Survey, 2012
Table 1 shows that there are 105(52.5%) male respondents while their female counterparts are 60(47.5%).

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents by Cadre

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Academic Staff	80	40.0
Non Academic Staff	120	60.0
Total	200	100.0

Field Survey,2012
Table 2 shows that there are 80(40.0%) academic staff and 120(60%) non- academic staff who were respondents.

Hypotheses Testing

H1: There is a significant relationship between pay and promotion policy and job satisfaction.

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Correlation showing the relationship between pay and promotion policy and Job Satisfaction

Variable	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	SD	N	R	P
Pay and Promotion Policy	14.9900	8.00	28.00	4.6300	200	-.115	.01
Job Satisfaction	101.0825	52.00	113.00	8.61637			

The result from table 3 shows that the mean value of 14.9900 for Pay and Promotion Policy and 101.0825 for Job Satisfaction falls within the minimum and maximum values of 8.00 and 28.00 and 52.00 and 113.00 respectively. The result also shows standard deviation of 4.6300 and 8.61637. However, based on the result from the correlation table, it indicates that correlation is significant at 0.01 level with a 2 tailed test. This result indicates $P<0.05$ since P=0.01. Hence, it is significant at 5%. Based on the outcome therefore, we conclude that there is a significant relationship between Pay and Promotion Policy and Job Satisfaction.
H2: There is main and interactive effect of going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction.

Table 4: A table showing analysis of variance between going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction

Variables	F- ratio	Significance of P	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	B	t	Probability
Going along to get ahead	5.035	.007	.224	.050	.040	-.381	-2.646	.009
Pay and promotion policy						.508	2.727	.007

Table 4 shows that Going Along to Get ahead and Pay and Promotion Policy have main and interaction effect on Job Satisfaction. This result was significant with F (2, 194) = 5.035 with P<0.01. The result indicates that it is significant at 1%. The R value of 0.224, R^2 = .050 and Adj R^2 of .040 indicates that the independent variables jointly account for a variation of about 5% of the dependent variable i.e both Going Along To Get ahead and Pay and Promotion Policy accounts for about 5% in the variation of Job satisfaction. Based on the coefficient result from the values of β, the result indicates that a 1% increase in pay and promotion policy will lead to about 38% fall in Job satisfaction while a 1% rise in Going Along to Get ahead will lead to about 51% increase in Job Satisfaction. The result from the t values of -2.646 and 2.727 with P<0.1 indicates that both Going Along to Get ahead and Pay and Promotion Policy are significant factors that determines Job Satisfaction. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted.

H3: There is a significant difference between going ahead to get along and job satisfaction.

Table 5: A table showing Significant Difference between Going ahead to get along and Job Satisfaction

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cal –t	DF	P
Going ahead to get along	200	22.8557	3.62201	-122.087	198	.000
Job satisfaction		101.0825	8.61637			

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference between going along to get ahead and Job Satisfaction. (Cal – t = -122.087, df =198, P<.01 level of significant). The result is significant at 1 per cent. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted.

Concluding Remarks

Previous research has suggested that organizational politics and job satisfaction could have differential effects on individuals in the workplace. Research work of Murphy and Cleveland (1995); Vigoda 2003; (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001; Cropan-zano & Kacmar, 1995; Dipboye & Foster, 2002; Fedor et al., (1998); Ferris & Kacmar, (1992); Vigoda-Gadot(2003) found that workplace politics was perceived as self-serving behavior by employees to achieve self-interests, advantages, and benefits at the expense of others and some-times contrary to the interests of the entire organization or work unit. There was a strong association between pay and promotion policy and job satisfaction. Study has shown that there is positive association between perception of organizational politics and workplace friendship(Ofoegbu, Akanbi and Alhanolu ,2012).

It can also be concluded from the test conducted that there was main and interaction effect of going along to get ahead and Pay and Promotion Policy on job satisfaction was significant. This means that going along to get ahead and Pay and Promotion Policy had significant effect on employees' job satisfaction. The result also showed that the main and interaction effect of going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policy on job satisfaction was significant. The implication of this significance is that employees tend to be more satisfied with their jobs when they are able to play along successfully with the prevailing organizational politics in the organization and also when the pay promotion policies of the firm are in their favour. The result finally indicated a significant difference between going along to get ahead and Job Satisfaction. Based on the results obtained from the study, it is recommended

among others that employees should endeavour to understand and respond strategically to the general political behaviour in their organizations to maximize their job satisfaction and minimize incidence of job frustration.

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