

## **Menace of Office Politics on Organizational Effectiveness in Civil Service Commission of Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The study examined the relationship menace of office politics on organizational effectiveness in civil service commission of Nigeria. In order to carry out this study, one specified research objectives were drawn from which null hypotheses were formulated and used for the study. The research design for this study is an Expost Facto design. The population of the study consisted of 30,969 in south south and south west geo political. Simple random and stratified sampling technique was used to select 250 respondents out of the population. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument was validated by two experts in Test and Measurement. Crombach Alpha reliability technique was used for testing the reliability of the instrument and reliability index of .77 was realized, hence the instrument was regard as being

reliable. Data from 250 completed questionnaires was subjected to PPMC and regression analysis. The findings showed that concluded that there is significant relationship office politics and organizational effectiveness of ferderal civil service commission of nigeria. The study recommeded that management and staff should avoid distorting or manipulating the truth and facts; management should be fair in their dealings; management and staff should be flexible, appreciable and accessible to others and managers and office workers should ensure a timely and open communication system.

**Keywords: Office Politics; Organizational Effectiveness; Ferderal Civil Service Commission Of Nigeria**

## **Introduction**

The word “politics” means the activities involved in getting and using power in public life, and being able to influence decisions that affect the country or a society (Joshua Bjerke 2012). Politics is also defined as the matters that are concerned with getting or using power with a particular group or organization (Ohakwe 2011). Office politics could therefore refer to as an attempt to influence other peoples behaviour using discretionary actions to promote personal or group interest and objectives Ohakwe (2011). It is the use of power to get one’s own way, including the acquisition of more power often at the expense of others.

Politics in order words is a well calculated, premeditated behaviours or action likely to bring advantage to the other, (Chloe Young, 2013). Office politics is not only played but it is either used or misused in the workplace. This definition implies that office politics is not necessarily a bad practice in the office. It is simply how power gets to work out on a practical day to day basis. It is also the use of assigned power within an organization or obtaining advantage beyond one’s legitimate authority Ohakwe (2011). Those advantages may include access to tangible assets or intangible benefits such as status and fake authority that influence the behaviours of others.

Off politics differs from office gossip. In office politics people participating do so with the objective of gaining advantage. Whereas gossip can be a purely social activity, both activities are highly related to each other, (S.N.Ohakwe 2011). Office polities is the

way co-workers act among themselves. It can be demonstrated for either positive or negative motives.

In every working environment, we are faced with office politics. Politics arises because there is disagreement or selfish comfort to gain. Conflicts arise because one party perceives its interest by opposing negatively to affect any party. In other words, office politics exist when over some one believes or feels that another person or group is obstructing its efforts and rights. This might be a mild disagreement between two people regarding the best choice of a decision, (Ohakwe 2011).

Every organization has conflicts, but how the organization tackles it goes a long way in ensuring the success of the employees as well as the organization. Office politics is complex and can turn the organization into an ugly and nasty battle field. Often, power is the bone of contention. The powerful employee can take advantage of the situations and manipulate things (David Schwiammer, 2006).

Though desirable, office workers should know that office politics consumes time, wastes energy and disrupts work activities. Political tactics can reduce trust and motivation to work together, (Mike Myatt: 2011). When people operate in a tense, political environment, they have difficulty relating to other employees. This determines the condition for active knowledge sharing. Employees who experience more office politics show higher stress, express signs of psychological withdrawal and high labour turnover in the workplace. Office politics frequently becomes personal, rather than focusing on the issues, each worker starts seeing the other as a problem, (Ohakwe, 2011).

Alex Malley (2014) observed that office politics slow down organizational activities with office politics, differences may be mistakenly viewed as personal attacks rather than attempt to resolve issue. Office politics can also impede information processing because perceptual biases are introduced, (Nick Kossovan; 2014).

Office politics sways the mind of an employee away from management goals and objectives to personal issues. It creates enmity between workers which makes each

worker to start seeing another as a problem. It creates tension and reduces attention to work (Stephen Stouffer 2014). Office politics reduces zeal and motivation to work (Ohakwe, 2011).

### Concept of Office Politics

The concept of office politics started getting interested of academicians and practitioners in the last decade. The body of literature on office politics is expanding but still the research remains unchangeable with respect to theory and research methodologies adopted despite a lot of empirical data conceptual vagueness still exist. Office politics are proved to be the fact of life (vigada-Gadot, 2001). Regardless of the widespread acceptance of presence of organization politics proved by empirical research, this aspect of life at workplace remained polemic. Before 1970s office politics was considered as nerboten in the field of management.

Office politics started to have growing attention when the concept of office rationality was changed because of the emergence of concept of office rationality concepts like person-organisation misfit, in compatibility of personal and organizational goals. The concept of office rationality was based on the idea that individuals decide their goals and are expected to work for the achievement of their personal goals according to the rules and regulations of the organization. But a real picture of life a workplace showed the existence of conflicting goals within the organization. The existence of conflicting goals in organization gives birth to the office politics because it is considered as a means of resolve the conflicts of people in organization.

Office politics has proved to be an important part of both public and private sector organizations, therefore researchers argue for the need of further investigation of the issue (Drory and Roman, 1990) the literature of office politics was systematically reviewed to discover how academicians and practitioners have defined and examined office politics in existing literature.

## Office Politics and Organizational Effectiveness in Nigerian Civil Service

Depending on the situation and the type of influence the employee or manager uses, few possible results may occur. People may oppose the attitudes or behaviour desired by the person influencing (Rawes, 2008). Office politics within organization can result in cursing members to become frustrated if they feel there is no solution in sight, or if they feel that their opinion goes unrecognized by other group members. As a result, members become stressed, which adversely affects their professional and personal lives. Organization members may have problems sleeping, loss of appetite and overeating, headaches and become unapproachable. In some instances, organization members may avoid meeting to prevent themselves from experiencing stress and stress-related symptoms. Office politics also resulted in the following:

- (i) **Decrease in Productivity:** When an organization spends much of its time dealing with conflict, members take time away from focusing on the core goals they are tasked with achieving. Politics causes members to focus less on the project at hand and more on gossiping about politics or venting about frustrations. As a result, organization can lose money, donors and access to essential resources, (Hirschman, 1970; Ryan, 1989).
- (ii) **Members leave Organization:** Organization members who are increasingly frustrated with the level of conflict within an organization may decide to end their membership. This is especially detrimental when members are a part of the executive board or head of committees, and where several members leave or an executive board steps down, organizations risk dissolution (Miranda Brokins, 2014).
- (iii) **Violence:** When office politics escalates without mediation, intense situation may arise between organization members. Office politics may cause violence among members resulting in legal problems for members and possibly the organization.
- (iv) **Inspire creativity:** fortunately, some organization member's views conflict as an opportunity for finding creative solutions to solve problems. Conflicts can be

inspire members to brainstorm ideas, while examining problems from various perspective (Miranda Brokins,2014)

- (v) **Share and respect opinion:** as organization a member works together to solve conflict, they are more willing to share their opinion with the groups.
- (vi) **Improve future communication:** politics can bring group members together and help them learn more about each other. From learning each others opinion on topics relevant to the organizations growth to the understanding each members preferred communication style, and this can give members the tools necessary to easily solve conflict in the future.

Office politics can also result in identifying new members actively participate in each meeting, enjoy serving on multiple committees and have an opinion on each topic the group discourses (Ohakwe, 2011).

### Office Politics on Management –Staff Work Relationship

Relationship in the Area of promotion and training in an organization:

Disruptive politics in the workplace can involve employees differing opinions about issues of public policy as well as the politics of the workplace itself. While some employees may be distracting one another over the details of the latest gubernatorial domination others may be busy undermining each other office reputation as they compete for promotion (Tagg, 1983). Office politics between management and staff of an organization can result to a lack of harmony and cooperation in the workplace. The result can be employees who don't look well together simply because they hold incompatible political viewpoints. Here are some effect of office politics and management and staff relationship in an organization opined by some authors:

- (i) **Decrease in overall productivity:** politics lowers the output of an individual and eventually affects the productivity of the organization.
- (ii) **Affects concentration:** individuals find it difficult to concentrate on their work. Office politics does not allow the management and staff of the organization to concentrate on one goal.

- (iii) Spoils the Ambiance: Politics leads to a negative environment at the workplace.
- (iv) Changes the Attitude of Employees: politics changes the attitude of the employees. Even the serious employees lose interest in work and attend office just for the sake of it.
- (v) Increase Stress: Management find it difficult to confide in any of their fellow member of staff due to the fear of secrets getting leaked politics increases the stress level of the management and staff.
- (vi) Wrong Information: Management indulges in politics and manipulates information and it is never passed in its desired form superiors get a wrong picture of what is actually happening in the organization and this affect the management –staff relationship in an organization.
- (vii) Management fails to trust your staff. (Sanjeev Sharma, 2014, Bacharach, 2005).  
Though desirable, office workers should know that office politics consume time, wastes energy and disrupts work activities political tactics can reduce trust and motivation to work together. When people operate in a tense, political environment, they have difficulty relating to other employees (Ohakwe, 2011).

This determines the conditions for active knowledge sharing. Employees who experience more office politics show higher stress, express sign of psychological with drawal and high labour turnover in the workplace. Office politics frequently becomes personal, rather than focusing on the issues, each worker starts serving the other person as a problem. (Baker, 1983; Pfefer, 1978).

Office politics consumes time and disrupts work and slows down organizational activities. With office politics, differences may be mistakenly viewed as personal attacks rather than attempts to resolve issue. The tactics employed in office politics helps to reduce trust and the motivation to collaborate. Office politics can also impede information processing because perceptual biases are introduced. Office politics sways the mind of an employee away from management goals and objectives to personal issues. Office politics creates tension and reduces attention to work, (Mary, 2007).

## Theoretical Framework

### Goals Theory of Organizational Effectiveness by Hoy and Miskel (1982)

The goal theory of organizational effectiveness according to Ukeje, Okorie, and Nwagbara (1992) was based on the conceptualization of organizational effectiveness in terms of goal attainment. In this regard, organization was said to be effective if the observable outcomes of its activities met or even exceeded organizational goals. Hoy and Miskel (1982) identified three common types of organizational goals to include official goals, operative goals, and operational goals.

The official goals were formal statements of purpose by the governing Board of the organization, such as the Board of Directors. The official goals portrayed the mission of the organization. Operative goals, on the other hand, reflected the true intension of the organization. They mirrored the actual tasks or activities performed by the organization. They mirrored the actual tasks or activities performed by the organization. Official goals were general while operative goals were specific. The operative goals guided administration and were based on staff behaviour.

Operative goals carried with them approved criteria and evaluation procedures that indicated how the levels of accomplishment would be measured.

The goal theory of organizational effectiveness assumed that a rational group of decision-makers in the organization had rational goals to be pursued; and that the goals were few enough to be measured and were concretely defined to be understood by the participants. It heavily relied on certain administrative practices to enhance goal specifications and goal achievement. Such administrative practices included management by objectives (MBO), cost/benefit analysis, and behavioural objectives.



## Objective of the Study

The study is guided by this objective:

- ❖ To examine the relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigerian Civil Service

## Research Question

The study shall answer the following question:

- ❖ What is the relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigerian Civil Service?

## Hypothesis

The hypothesis shall be tested:

- ❖ There is no significant relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigerian Civil Service

## METHOD

### Research Design

Survey design was adopted in the study. This design was appropriate in the study because according to Osuala (2005), survey research focuses on people, the vital facts of the people and their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivation and behaviour.

### Area of the Study

The study area for this research consists of two geo-political zones in Nigeria namely: South-South and South West. South-South states are six in number and made up of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers state while the South-West, also six in number, are made up of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo state. In

all the six geo political zones in Nigeria, there appears to be more activities portraying office politics in the South-South and South West as a result of massive oil exploration in these zones and economic activities hence the zones were considered for this study.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study is composed of administrative office managers in the state civil service commissions in South-South and South West geo-political zones in Nigeria. They are estimated to be 30,969

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The respondents for the study will be randomly selected such that 3 office administrative managers will be chosen from each of the ministries in each of the 12 states of the South-South and South-West geo-political zones under review. This is obtained through stratified random sampling techniques to give a sample size of 1250

### **Instrumentation**

The research instrument was used for data collection. The instrument was a questionnaire. The research instrument was made up of two sections; A and B. Section A, focused on the personal data of the respondents. Section B measured the constructs of the independent variables.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

The questionnaire items were subjected to validation by 2 experts in the Department of Statistic, University of Calabar, Calabar.

### **Reliability of the Instrument:**

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instruments. Using the test-retest method, the instruments were administered twice to thirty (30) personnel that were not part of the study with two weeks' interval between each administration. The reliability coefficient for the questionnaire ranged from 0.71 to 0.98, which showed that the instruments were highly reliable.

### **Administration of Instrument**

The instruments were administered personally by the researcher to the respondents. This personal administration of questionnaire helped to minimise loss of questionnaire. The respondents were given enough time to complete the questionnaire before they were collected for analysis.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Two research questions was answered using (mean) descriptive statistics; while hypotheses was tested using the independent t-test analysis at 0.05.

## Results and Discussions

**Table 1: office administrative managers based on their age**

Age	Mean	Standard derivation
21-30	28.2500	1.70783
31-40	31.8000	2.29976
41-50	32.2778	2.39621
51+	35.1000	2.13177
Total	32.4524	2.88142

Table 1 present the means distribution of office administrative managers age in. From the Table, it was observed that an office administrative manager with the highest means (35.1) where those in age bracket (51+). This was seconded by office administrative managers in age bracket (41-50) with the mean (32.2778) while the 3<sup>rd</sup> was (31-40) aged bracket with mean (31.8) and the least means score was (21-30) aged bracket with mean (28.2500).

**Table2: office administrative manager's gender**

Gender	Mean	Standard derivation
Male	29.7857	1.84718
Female	33.7857	2.33106
Total	32.4524	2.88142

Table 2 present the means distribution of office administrative managers gender in the study area from the above Table. It was observed that female office administrative managers have the highest means score (33.7857) while the male followed with the least means score of (29.7857).

**Table 3: Office Administrative Manager's Marital Status**

Marital status	Mean	Standard derivation
Single	29.5000	1.82117
Married	33.1471	2.55998
Total	32.4524	2.88142

Table 3 present the means distribution of office administrative managers based on their marital status from the above Table. It was observed that married counsellors' have the highest means score with (33.1471) while the single with the least means score of (29.5000).

**Table 4: office Administrative Managers on Educational Qualification**

Edu. Quali.	Mean	Standard derivation
Low	29.8750	1.82117
Ave.	34.0667	2.08624
High	35.3636	1.56670
Total	32.4524	2.88142

Table 4 present the means distribution of office administrative managers based on their educational qualification. From the above Table, it was observed that, the office administrative managers with the high qualification have the highest means score (35.3636) seconded by the office administrative managers with average qualification with mean score (33.0667) while the office administrative managers with the low qualification have the least means score (29.8750).

**Table 5: Office Administrative Managers based on their years of experience**

Yrs. Of exp.	Mean	Standard derivation
Short	29.2500	1.42223
Medium	33.1340	2.09554
Long	35.7143	1.49603
Total	32.4524	2.88142

Table 5 presents the means distribution of office administrative managers based on their years of experience. From the above Table, it was observed that, the office administrative managers with the long years of experience have the highest means score (35.7143) seconded by the office administrative managers with medium years of experience with mean score (33.1340) while the office administrative managers with the short years of experience have the least means score (29.2500).

**Research Question One:** To examine the relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization. In order to

answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data collected (see table 6).

**Table 6**

**Descriptive analysis of the relationship between office politics and management – staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization**

Variable	N	Arithmetic mean	Expected mean	R	Remarks
Office Politics		13.09	12.50		
	1250			0.56	*strong to perfect Relationship
management – staff work relationship		12.49	5.00		

**Source: Field Survey, 2020**

Table 6 presents the result of the descriptive analysis of the relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization. The two variables were observed to have strong to perfect relationship at 0.56%. The arithmetic mean for office politics (13.09) was also observed to be higher than the expected mean score of 12.50. In addition to that the arithmetic mean for management –staff work relationship (12.49) was observed to be higher than the expected mean score of 5.00. The result therefore means that office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization. Regression analysis was then used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the two variables (see table 7)

**Table7: Model Summary of the relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization.**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics
					R Square Change
1	.856	.732	.732	.82449	.732

**P < 0.05; df=1248; N =1250; Critical R-value = 0.068**

The above calculated R-value 0.856 was greater than the table R-value of 0.068 at 0.05 alpha level with 1248 degree of freedom. The R-square value 0.85 predicts 85% of the relationship between office politics and management –staff work relationship in Nigeria’s Business Organization.

## Conclusion

Based on the data analysis of the study, it was concluded that there is significant relationship office politics and organizational effectiveness of federal civil service commission of nigeria



## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management and staff should avoid distorting or manipulating the truth and facts.
2. Management should be fair in their dealings
3. Management and staff should be flexible, appreciable and accessible to others.
4. Managers and office workers should ensure a timely and open communication system.
5. Managers and office workers should not compromise on morals and ethics and should not hesitate to apologize if they realize that they are wrong.
6. Managers should address the “politics” issue openly when appropriate.
7. Management should set incentives to foster teamwork.
8. Management and staff should live at peace with each other.
9. Management should also remember the little peoples like drivers, messengers, clerks and assistants etc. because they are vital to the running of any organization.
10. Management and staffs relationship should be cordial

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