THE USE AND MISUSE OF POWER AND POLITICS IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE

Maina Mackson Abga[1]

Matthew Funsho Bello, PhD[2]

ABSTRACT

Power may be defined as the ability or the right to be able to control people or things; the art of influencing and/or having control over other people in an organization and the flow of the available energy and resources towards certain goals as opposed to other goals. When people get together in groups, power must be applied therefore when employees in organizations convert their power into action, they are described as being engaged in politics. The effect of power in modern organizations depends on whether an employee uses the positive or negative type of power to control other employees. The aim of this paper is to examine the use and misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service. The specific objective is to understand how power and politics are being used and misused in organizations, identify the causes for the use and misuse of power and politics and to determine the impact of the use and misuse of power and politics on employees and the organization. The method of data collection was secondary sources using existing literature on the topic of discourse; content analysis techniques were used to analyze and present data. Findings from this study suggest that organizations can easily be turned into avenue for political games or power struggles since individuals who work in the Nigerian public service have ambitions to achieve goals for their personal benefits rather than that of the organization.

Keywords: Use, Misuse, Political games, Power, Politics, Nigerian Public Service

[1] Federal University Dutse, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Department of Political Science, Jigawa State, NIGERIA. abgamainamackson@gmail.com
[2] Gombe State University, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Department of Public Administration, Gombe State, NIGERIA. matthewfbello@gmail.com

THE USE AND MISUSE OF POWER AND POLITICS IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE

1. INTRODUCTION

Although there might have been so much theoretical and empirical researches on organizational power, there has not been concrete discussion on the use and misuse of power in the Nigerian public service. The use and misuse of power is an important organizational issue. In certain perspective, power could be used to get a task accomplished, on the other hand, it could also be used for the wrong reasons and politic is the influence gained from power. The effect of power in the Nigerian public service depends on whether an employee uses the positive or negative type of power to control other employees. In recent times, there tends to be more emphasis on developing and using power in an organization because political behaviour most often permeates organizational life, and it frequently gives power to people who do not have it from their organizational position. There ought to be a balance in the use of power and politics in achieving organizational goals and objectives since power play and politics in the Nigerian public service are all about being noticed and liked by the right people – 'the powers that be' e.g., in order to get the right promotions and influence at the right time.

Power may be defined as the ability or right to be able to control people or things. It can also be defined as the political control of a country or a specific area, an organization or a person that has a lot of influence and/or control over other people in an organization. It is also the ability to influence the flow of the available energy and resources towards certain goals as opposed to other goals (Somoye, 2016). Nowadays, no organizational study is complete without a study of how power is exercised, its uses and misuse in organizations be it public or private. Power could be described as the element that holds nations and organizations together and gave them the ability to control since without the exercise of power, it would be difficult to ensure orderliness; as such, unless power is exercised by those in position of authority, there would be no standards to follow and order to be enforced.

This does not preclude the importance and relevance of power in present day Nigerian public service setup. On the contrary, the use and misuse of power is a serious issue that often leads to disagreements and setting up of social movements. The use of power or abuse of authority is the form of wrong doing or misconduct by public officials. It is an unlawful act done by an official which affect the performance of official duties (Lee-Chai, et al, 2001). This is to say that power has to be exercised with great responsibility and accountability and except there is judicious application of power, there would be no worthwhile functioning of any public service sector. Hence, the implication of this condition is that power must be accompanied by

accountability and a chance for the people to decide and accept whom they feel responsible and wise enough to lead them and those whom they feel are misusing their power (Prachi, 2001).

The famous quote that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely is one of the best statements ever made. Misuse of power is when a leader uses his power in such a way that is inappropriate due to bad motives. Some leaders, despite all the institutions of government established to check their activities, assume extraordinary positions by ignoring the rules and abandoning the laws in their actions. Some power drunken leaders who care less about their citizens, loot the treasury and enrich themselves at the peril of the masses. They dictate the rule and elongate their tenure of office without adherence to the rule of law. Power thus tends to transmute some of the good people into tyrants when people ascend to power especially public officers.

In several African countries, we have seen how power converted normal men into tyrants and evil geniuses. Typical examples to illustrate this fact were the Uganda's' Idi Amin, former Zaire's Joseph Kasabovou - Mobutu Seseseku, Malawi's Kamuzu Banda, Ibrahim Babangida, Abacha from Nigeria, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe to mention few but only black leaders. These men were examples of what people can become when they acquire enormous power. Power does indeed corrupt and the more unaccountable it is, the more it can be used and misused to serve self-instinct and evils (Eke, 2012).

The use of power to enrich self and relatives or to give them undue advantage over others is perhaps the commonest way power is misused in Nigeria (Eke, 2012). Nigeria has considerable internal pressure over power through competing regional, religious, and ethnic camps that have plagued the society with protracted cacophony of mistrust and suspicion to the point of breaking (Bouchat, 2013). When power is used to amass wealth in a corrupt and dishonest manner, it becomes an abuse of the opportunities to do well. When we understand the true meaning and essence of power, we will see the evil of the ways and manners it is abused, misused and misapplied in Nigeria. Anyone who uses power to alter the economic equation in favour of his close relatives and friends has undermined the purpose and use of power.

Many people who misuse power were persuaded that what they were doing was right enough to justify their actions. However, what they failed to understand is that personal conviction about a problem does not give anybody the right to impose his will on others. No matter how convinced one is about its suitability or relevance to the cause; no man has the proclivity to impose a solution on others without their consent; no law gives anyone the right to impose his

will on others without their consent. But in many public institutions in contemporary Nigeria, power and politics are often misused or misapplied to achieve certain unethical objectives. It is against this background that this paper examines the use and misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In all social-economic and political entities, politics are peculiar to organizations though within the concept of individuals' personality diversity in organizations, individual differences in political behaviours highly depend on the perception of power and politics of the employees in organizations; The Nigerian public service basically operates by allocating authority and roles by creating the avenue for the exercise of power where employees are usually eager to secure and use power in order to achieve their personal goals. It is obvious that politics are at the core of public life and so in organizations. Since power is a basic force of human interaction and individuals come to work with various goals, it is obvious that these goals often lead to conflicts and competition among employees because of the expenditure or distribution of scarce resources in the organizations, the existence of various types of politics and power are endemic in the Nigerian public service system.

Moreover, it can be inferred that distribution of power is often ostensible in organizations which are political structures that provide power base for individuals. Organizations exist to create a surplus of income over costs by meeting the needs of the society. Organizations are also structures which provide opportunities for people to develop careers and therefore provide platforms for the expression of individual's interests and motives. The development of careers depends on accumulation of power as the vehicle for transforming individual' interests into activities which influence other people (Zaleznik, 1970). In the process of trying to influence others, people often end up misusing the power conferred on them. Misuse of power is when a leader uses his power in such a way that is inappropriate due to bad motives. Some leaders, despite all the institutions of government established to check their activities assume extraordinary positions by ignoring the rules and abandoning the laws in their actions and un-doings. Some power drunken leaders care less about their citizens, loot the treasury and enrich themselves at the peril of the masses. They dictate the rule and elongate their tenure of office without observance to the rule of law (Fleming & Spicer, 2014).

The major effects of misuse of power are anarchy, rebellion, coup, under-development, crises, political turmoil, war or even breakup of the state, assassination which tends to create ill-

feelings in the polity. This situation brings under-development, exploitation, corruption, indiscipline and all forms of ills in the society. The consequences of misuse of power and politics are enormous and that is the reason many leaders are advised against arbitrary use of power in any organization. Walyben (2002) opined that power could be described as the possibility that an individual within a social or organizational structure tries to pursue his/her goal or personal interest despite any resistance and that politics is the tactics and strategies individuals use to express this power or attempt to resist it; especially when goals and interests in the organization are conflicted. Hence organizational politics is often considered as dirty "backstabbing" types of behavior involving clandestine deals through improper and irrational influence over other people in the organizations (Can Bicer, 2020).

It is based on the above that this research attempts to examine the use and misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service. Hence the following research questions are imperative for this study:

a.   How are power and politics used and misused in the Nigerian public service?

b.   What are the causes of the misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service?

c.   How can we determine the impact of the use and misuse of power and politics on employees and the organizational performance?

d.   What are the possible ways to avoid misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service?

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this paper is to examine the use and misuse of power and politics in organizations. The specific objectives of the study are:

a.   To understand how power and politics are used and misused in the Nigerian public service.

b.   To identify the causes of misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service.

c.   To determine the impact of the use and misuse of power and politics on employees and the organizational performance.

d.   To proffer solutions on how to avoid misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service.

25

4. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF POWER AND POLITICS IN AN ORGANIZATION

4.1. Power

Power has been described as the last dirty word; it is easier to talk about money than it is to talk about power. People who have it deny it, people who want it try not to appear to be seeking it, and those who are good at getting it are secretive about how they got it. Researchers have learned a lot in recent years about how people gain and use power in organizations. Power is a natural process in any group or organization as such there is need to know how it is acquired and exercised for one to fully understand organizational behaviour. It is a reality of organizational life and it is not going to go away. Moreover, by learning how power works in organizations, you will be better able to use your knowledge to help you be a more effective manager. Power may exist but not be used. It is, therefore, a capacity or potential. One can have power but not impose it. From the above brief discourse, power could mean different things to different people. Power is seen as corrupt for some people, while for others, the more or greater the power they have, the more successful they always feel. Yet for others, they have no interest in power at all. Power is an important concept, a dynamic variable in the behavioural pattern of organizations. It is the ability to make someone to do things you want done or make something happen in the way you want. The concept of power is distinct from influence and authority. Power is the ability to change the actions of other people or their principles for satisfaction in order to improve their performance and productivity. Influence is the outcome of exercising power; it is expressed by others' behavioural response to your exercise of power. While authority is the right of directing others and asking them to do things that they would not naturally want to do, but it is legitimate and can be only exercised during the working hours of organizations (Somoye, 2016).

Pfeffer (1992) defined politics as the processes, actions, and the behaviours through which potential power is utilized and realized. Organizations are highly political and power is the name of the game. Power and politics must be recognized as an important dynamic in an organization where workers have the ambitions in the organization to reach the zenith of their career. This desire or ambition is not always borne out of financial reasons alone but majorly to get power. Work place politics most times have a negative undercurrent due to the negative dominant behaviours which employees exhibit to achieve their goal of getting to the top. Although, one can make a choice of separating oneself from destructive office politics by separating oneself from people who gossip about other employees and/or others who tend to take credit of work not done by them. Organizational politics can be disruptive when employees

go as far as undermining the reputation of other employees as they compete for one promotion or the other (Somoye, 2016).

In theory at least, power is a neutral concept because it can be used for good or ill. The word however tends to be associated with aggressive misuse such as overpowering or standing over those lower down the hierarchy, taking up more space, physical or verbal, than fair sharing would dictate, seeking or accepting favours, to which there is no legitimate entitlement; ignoring rules but expecting others to follow them (Harris, 2022). Power is an inescapable feature of human social life and structure; thus it is central to human affairs or a key concept in the social sciences. Roberts (2003) argues that it is the basis of society. 'The ability of one person to make a hundred others do his bidding is the basic building-block upon which all collective human endeavors is based' (Roberts, 2003)). Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson (2003), state that it is a basic force in social relationships. It appears to be a universal and indispensable feature of social organization at work in all political, organizational and institutional life and in every social relationship. Every group, organization or society must solve the problems of power to achieve its goals or risk failure, dysfunction or even extinction.

4.2. Politics

When people get together in groups, power will be exerted. People want to carve out a niche from which to exert influence, to earn awards or to advance their careers. When employees in organizations convert their power into action, they are described as being engaged in politics. Those with good political skills have the ability to use their bases of power effectively; but there has been no shortage of definitions for organizational politics. Essentially, however, they have focused on the use of power to affect decision making in the organization or on behaviours by members that are self-serving and organizationally non-sanctioned. For our purpose, we shall define political behaviour in organizations as those activities that are not required as part of one's formal role in the organization, but that influence or attempt to influence the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization. This definition encompasses key elements from what most people mean when they talk about organizational politic. Political behaviour is outside one's specified job requirements. The behaviour requires some attempts to use one's power bases. Our definition encompasses efforts to influence the goals, criteria, or processes used for decision making when we state that politics is concerned with the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization. Our definition is broad enough to include such varied political behaviours as withholding key information from decision makers, whistle-blowing, spreading rumours, leaking confidential information about organizational

activities to the media, exchanging favours with others in the organization for mutual benefit, and lobbying on behalf of or against a particular individual or decision alternative.

4.3. Misuse of Power

Misuse of power is common since time immemorial but it became typical today, due to advanced technology and social changes. Misuse of power could be defined as using a powerful position to take unfair advantage of others in a given organization, public office, or government. Power refers to the ability to influence the actions and behaviour of others with or without resistance with the intent to achieve a particular objective. It is the ability to exert authority over an individual to get things done. Misuse of power may be referred to bullying that involves misusing superior's authority in the workplace. Higher ranking officials who abuse authority mainly tend to harass the juniors thereby negatively affecting performance or success. It most often involve blackballing, public criticism, and ridicule. Misuse of power is primarily based on deceit and is quite common in places with inadequate supervision of superiors. The most common areas of misuse of power include schools, universities, colleges, private organizations, churches, hospitals, and public offices. Other forms of misuse of power may include misconduct, mismanagement, power harassment, corruption, incompetence, malpractice, negligence, ill-treatment, misconduct, exploitation, bad government, etc. Often a powerful ruler, executive, politician, or other leaders of some sort use their influence, connections, fame, money, or other forms of power to put other individuals at a significant disadvantage by forcing them to do (or not do) something against their will (Eke, 2012).

4.4. The Reality of Politics

Politics is a fact of life in organizations. People who ignore this fact of life do so at their own peril; but the question is must politics exist? Is it no possible for an organization to be politics free? It is possible, but most unlikely because organizations are made up of individuals and groups with different values, goals, and interests. This sets up the potential for conflict over resources. Departmental budgets, space allocations, project responsibilities, and salary adjustments are just a few examples of the resources about whose allocation organizational members will disagree. Resources in organizations are also limited, which often turn potential conflict into real conflict. If resources were abundant, then all the various departments and divisions within the organization could satisfy their goals but because they are limited, not everyone's interests can be provided for.

Furthermore, whether true or not, gains by one individual or group are often perceived as being at the expense of others within the organization; as such these forces create a competition among members for the organization's limited resources. Maybe the most important factor leading to politics within organizations is the realization that most of the "facts" that are used to allocate the limited resources are open to interpretation. What, for instance, is good performance? What is an adequate improvement? One person's view that an act is a "selfless effort to benefit the organization" is seen by another as a "blatant attempt to further one's interest."

More managerial decisions resemble this large and ambiguous middle ground of organizational life - where the facts do not speak for themselves - that politics flourish because most decisions have to be made in a climate of ambiguity where facts are rarely fully objective, and thus are open to interpretation. People within organizations will use whatever influence they can to taint the facts to support their goals and interests and this creates the activity called politicking. So, to answer the earlier question of whether or not it is possible for an organization to be politics free, we can say: "Yes," if all members of that organization hold the same goals and interests, if organizational resources are not scarce, and if performance optimum.

4.5. Power in Organizations

Individuals use various means to exercise power upon others and manipulate the political interactions within organizations. Workplace is such a political avenue where employees are often faced with how they should choose or react to others that use power in the ways they do not want or support. Power can simply be defined as how to get someone to do something the way you want done or the ability to influence the behaviour of other people to get what you want. Power is also associated with someone's ability to allocate resources, and command over others and commanding others mainly depends upon the ability to make others do something they never think of doing. It is apparent that every organization has its own working environment and way of getting things done. In this sense, power is the games that were formed long before anyone starts a new position at a workplace because power games have already been at play and the new comer's success will be based on how well he/she can interpret the power games especially dealing with positional power, resources and rewards to select best options to respond to them appropriately (Can Bicer, 2020).

Power is also seen as the potential ability to influence behaviour and to change the sequence or course of actions, to deal with resistance and to get individuals to do things that they would otherwise never do. Politics and influence are the processes, the intentions, actions or the

behaviours through which the potential power seeker used to achieve in the organization. Besides, it has been argued that power is utilized more when encountering moderate interdependence and there is often no need to exercise power or influence upon others especially with little or no interdependence. On the other hand, when the interdependence is at higher levels individuals give incentives to work together, pursue joint goals and develop cooperation and begin to coordinate their activities in the organization and when they ignore the incentives they might fail organizationally or individually in the end. Meanwhile, since interdependence is the main outcome of many things, the most critical matter is the scarcity of resources in organizations while lack of resources reduces interdependence, scarcity increases it in organizations (Pfeffer, 1994).

According to Hinck & Conrad (2018), you have power display when individuals or group of people employ their communicative abilities and strategies to influence others to fulfill their perceived interests, in an attempt to insist on their wishes on less powerful individuals in the organization. From a traditional point of view, power is an instrument that endures independence of actors' perceptions and is more readily available to some people than others. Power refers to a capacity that A has to influence the behaviour of B, so that B acts in accordance with A's wishes. This definition implies a potential that needs not be actualized to be effective and a dependency relationship. Probably the most important aspect of power is that it is a function of dependency. The greater B's dependence on A, the greater is A's power in the relationship. Dependence, in turn, is based on alternatives that B perceives and the importance that B places on the alternative(s) that A controls. Thus power is the capacity which A has to influence the perception and behaviour of B so that B behaves or acts the way A wishes especially when A possesses something that B requires or if B thinks that he/she is dependent on A so A has power on B. This suggests that a person can have power over you only if he or she controls something you desire.

Geppert, et al. (2016) accentuated Weber's point of view about power to get others to do what you want them to do and if necessary, against their will. In their study, they also applied the Marxist expression that the rulers are in power and will stay in power provided that they are able to manipulate the 'real interests' of the ruled. They also stated that there are four main 'faces' of organizational power: coercion, manipulation, domination and subjection. They concluded that coercion is one-dimensional idea of power and undertaken through immediate 'mobilization of power' by the individuals. Manipulation is associated with the two-dimensional idea of power which refers to the attempt to ensure actions and discussions occur

within accepted boundaries. Domination refers to the attempt to make relations of power seem inevitable and natural while subjection connotes sense of self, experience and emotions that existed at the 'deeper or 'systemic power level. Fairholm (2009) remarked that power is both an enigma and a central theme in organization theory since it is a significant feature of formal and informal relationships at workplaces and it has both social and psychological dimensions. This suggests that organization is a social grouping that consists of at least two people involved in some common initiatives with well-known goals, structure and methods where allocation of power and the system of power planning have a significant effect on the kind of fine-tuning individuals make to achieve their goals for power or fame. So, since the organizational construct is in every respect one of power it cannot be said organization is different or distinct from the idea of power.

Omisore & Nweke (2014) indicated in their study that power is the ability to apply force and mobilize resources, energy, capacity and information on behalf of preferred goals. They further stated that there are various reasons for using information in organizations and six major bases of power have been listed as coercion, expertise, rewards, legitimacy, referent power and information. In the same vein Shafritz, et al. (2014) emphasized the effectiveness that power brings are obtained from two main sources: the first one is access to resources and information and the second is the capacity or skill to cooperate in carrying out what is necessary especially through the managerial process. For example, during the decision making process in a meeting or in a committee, the person who is in charge of the department or organization that directs the meeting or record and keeps the minutes of the meeting can have significant power to control decision making process at that time. Furthermore, there are certain symbols of a manager's organizational power to influence both upward and outward the extent a manager can influence. Hence, Gencer, et al. (2018) concur that since power is a source or a kind of force reserved to engage in tactics and used by anyone effectively to influence or change the attitude and behaviour of others, then the concept of power is the core of the interest of individuals, the management and the organization.

Wilson (1995) stated that power is an essential function of the structure in organizations and the power inherent in one's position in the organization gives access to individuals, information, cooperation and financial resources (budgets) as well. So, those in power stay in power by fortifying the existing structure of the organization to achieve their selfish ambition. Shafritz, et al. (2014) stressed that when managers think they are in powerful positions then they assume that it will be easier for them to accomplish more because they tend to be highly motivated and

can easily motivate their subordinates too. Their actions and activities in the organization would be on target and so they can easily influence or shape policies to meet certain goals or emergent situations which would certainly enable them gain the respect and the cooperation needed which the attributed power brought. This means subordinates' skills and talents are authentic resources rather than threats or negative effects. Besides, the powerless live in a different world and usually have a negative perception of issues because lack of resources and information might turn to be the last weapon of oppressive power to hold other people through threats.

According to Weber (1947), power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance. The acquisition and maintenance of power is one of the most socially motivating processes that occur in modern organizations. Three categories of people are always involved in the power-game of an organization: the owner(s) of the businesses can influence the decision-making process in their favour and also influence promotions of workers, the top-level management are also involved in the power-play as they oversee daily activities and have high influence on the decision making of the organization and the third category is the 'top performers.' The company can actually not do without them due to the high productive input they bring into the organization, and that enable them to wield some decision-making powers in the organization. According to French & Raven (1959), there are five (5) different types of power in businesses; they are as listed and explained below:

32

a. **Coercive Power:** It is the most primordial type of power in a workplace or in an organization. Coercive power takes place when someone in higher authority threatens a subordinate with different punishments if certain tasks or duties are not performed or completed in time and correctly. This power is conveyed through fear of being demoted, losing one's job, or receiving a poor review of performance. It is gotten through threatening others. It is of great importance to know that coercive power is most effectively used in cases where the business is in a serious crisis. It can also be used when there is going to be a cut in personnel due to shift in management and transitions. For example, a Vice President of sales who threatens sales officers to either meets their goals or gets replaced.

b. **Legitimate Power**: This power comes from having a position of power in an organization. Example is being a boss in the organization or a key member of a leadership team. It exists when subordinates of someone in authority obeys orders given to them because they have the belief that the person is in a position of power to be able

to give them such orders. For example, it is the CEO who decides on the overall direction of the company and also determines the resource needs of the organization.

c.   **Reward Power**: Subordinates are rewarded and given incentives for carrying out tasks and orders given by a superior. Example of reward power includes promotion, bonuses, increase in salaries, extra-time off from work, public praise, and so on. The main aim of reward power is spurring up subordinates for effectiveness and productivity.

d.   **Referent Power:** This power comes from being respected and trusted. Leaders in the business industry have gained referent power by entrusting their employees with so much tasks and responsibilities in performing their jobs. This type of power is best achieved in the organization when the turnover of the employees is low and also in a work environment where a personal relationship exists.

e.   **Expert Power**: This is a type of power that comes from one's skills, knowledge and experience. People naturally respect and follow those who are experts in a certain field. Subordinates who know that their superior has an expert power feel so relaxed because they believe that he will guide them correctly due to his many experiences.

Kanter (1979) argues that power is the last dirty word. She stated that it is easy to talk about money and also about sex, than to talk about power. According to her, the effectiveness that power brings evolves from the two types of capacities which are: access to resources and information and support necessary to carry out a task; and ability to get cooperation in doing what is necessary. She assessed the effect that power has on different levels of organization; and according to her, power is derived from three (3) lines which are: lines of supply; lines of information; and lines of support.

Mintzberg theory (1983) was based on the fact that the behaviour in an organization is a power game in which there are many players called influencers, who seek to control the actions and decisions of an organization. According to him, there are two groups of influencers which are: the internal influencers which consist of techno-structure, support staff, and the ideology of the organization; the second groups are the external influencers which consist of associates, employee association, owners and publics. Baldridge (1971) noted that there are many conflicting goals in an organization; and as the balance of power changes among different coalitions, different sets of goals become a priority.

4.6. Politics in Organizations

Organizational politics can be referred to as the structure and process of use of authority and power to effect definitions of goals, directions and other parameters of the organization. It can be defined as the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means. Politics is an important function that results from differences in the self-interests of individuals. It is the art of creative compromise or bargain amongst competing interests. It is the use of power to develop socially acceptable ends and means that balance individual and collective interests. Political behaviour is the getting, developing and using of power to reach a desired result. It often appears in situations of uncertainty or conflict over choices. It often happens outside accepted channels of authority. It is an unofficial, unsanctioned behaviour to reach a goal.

The use of political behaviour is to affect decisions, get scarce resources and earn cooperation of people outside direct authority. The characteristics of political behaviour are power and influence. Traditionally, organizations are considered as rational systems which could be described as social machines that are designed and operated as instruments for reaching the predetermined goals. The employees are the operators and the machines expected to carry out their jobs and duties efficiently based on the formal rules, procedures, principles and job descriptions (Ferris, et al 2019). Organizations are social systems but they differ from families and communities because they produce certain products or special services for the surrounding environment. Since organizations are social systems created and run by individuals, organizations might turn into battlefield for political struggles simply because individuals work alone or as groups to obtain the best benefit that can be gained from the organization in which they work especially when the resources are scarce (Vigoda, 2000). Moreover, every individual has some goals of his/her own that differ or contradict those of others within the organization. Therefore, there is an ongoing squabble over the organizational spoils between its competing individuals. As such, politics is a complex case for the organization because on one hand organization has official rules and demands for obtaining the organizational goals and on the other hand from the unofficial side that is utilitarian attitudes and behaviours of the individuals that exploit every chance to get the best for oneself (Samuel, 2018:1-3).

Political behaviours in organizations imply the intentional actions that include influence tactics, self-presentation, impression management, and helping behaviour to control or manage (create, maintain, modify or abandon) the shared instruments of organizational events in order to achieve desired ambitions and goals which may not be feasible. It would not be out of place to

34

say that political behaviours are both self-serving and benevolent motives in employees'/managers' efforts to attain personal and/or organizational goals and such purposive behaviours, which may range from active to passive engagements form a concept within which employees and managers act to reach their goals (Halvorsen, et al. 2019). Business management scholars posited that politics is pervasive and can be destructive to most employees, work teams, and organizations. Through this assumption, it can be said that politics is a zero-sum game where personal interests are ran after at the expense other people's interest, resulting in secret trade-offs, insinuations, backstabbing and discouragement of coworkers in the organization. Ignoring the side effects of politics in organization could be very detrimental though it will not be easy to dismiss the fact that there are also positive effects about politics such as higher productivity, career advancement, higher innovation, and decision making consensus in the organizations (Kapoutsis & Thanos, 2016).

Organizational politics have been defined as informal, unofficial, and sometimes behind-the-scenes efforts to sell ideas, influence an organization, increase power, or achieve other targeted objectives. Since organizations often have limited resources that must be allocated in some way, employees and groups in the organizations usually tend not to agree with how the scarce resources should be distributed or shared. So they sometimes try to get these resources for themselves or for their interest groups. This eventually increases the intensity of the political games in organizations which often compels employees to hobnob themselves with other individuals who have common interest in an effort to acquire the scarce resources by engaging in bargaining, negotiating, alliance building, and resolving conflicting interests (Can Biçer, 2020). Organizational politics is an indispensable fact of organizational life as organizations come together with various aims and interests which must to be achieved. About 93% of managers surveyed stated that organizational politics exist in their organization, and 70% thought to be successful because an individual has to engage in politics (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012).

Landells & Albrecht (2019) stated that organizational politics is a "self-serving behaviour inconsistent with the organizational objectives deliberately exhibited to cause individuals, groups or entities harm with the negative outcomes of them being impairing, destructive whose negative effects cause stress, burnout, turnover intentions, lower levels of job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Though fewer researchers found that there are some advantages like the impact of organizational politics on employee engagement, a construct highly regarded as essential to organizational achievement and competitive advantage. Mintzberg (1985)

especially argued that political activities in organizations are often evaluated within the concept of "games" and political games are described as not only intricate and subtle and overlapping but also, they are guided by rules while some of them are explicit, clear and stable, others are implicit, fuzzy or ever-changing.

Guo, et al. (2019) emphasized that organizational politics has to do with non-sanctioned behaviors and activities strategically planned to preserve and enhance self-interests commonly in conflict with organizational objectives. Often seen as a disruptive organizational characteristic that, when perceived by employees, is probably to have a destructive effect of employees' behaviors. So, most people perceive organizational politics as self-serving and manipulative which eventually jeopardizes the wellbeing of both employees and the organization as a whole. It was observe also that workplaces with higher levels of politics tend to exhibit high level of distrust, suspicion, injustice, unfair decision making processes and disparity in the organization. Moreover, it was upheld that when organizational politics are perceived to be at higher levels, some employees indulge in protecting their interests rather than the best interest of the organization. For example, employees are often likely to engage in influencing behaviours such as self-promotion and ingratiation to get higher performance ratings from their supervisors. Contrariwise, when the level of organizational politics is perceived to be low, highly engaged employees are more likely to be recognized by their supervisors, because supervisor's evaluation is less likely biased toward employees heavily engaged in organizational politics yet some employees will intently show political behaviours to affect supervisor's evaluations when organizational politics are perceived to be high by them.

However, employees who are opposed to organizational politics and more engaged in their duties will probably receive less favorable performance evaluation from their managers. Kacmar & Baron (1999) observed that behaviour can only be considered as political if others make use of resources in competitive manner. That is to say, the essence of the political behaviour is inherently self-centered. For example, relying on others people's political behaviour in organizations to reach goals that are not sanctioned by the organization or to reach organizationally sanctioned outcomes via non-sanctioned means. Ferris, et al. (2019) were of the view that political beliefs influence individuals' political actions and interpretation of political effects on organizations and political actions work to manage shared meaning in a manner which affects political outcomes and that political outcomes also influence the ways in which individuals behave politically which affects decisions and whether and how to engage in subsequent self-interested behaviour.

Vigoda (2000) argued that organizational politics are often seen contradictory to the interests of the entire organization or work team. These behaviours are manipulation, defamation, disruptiveness, and illegitimate ways of overusing power to attain one's objectives. Politics in organizations should be understood within the concept of what individuals think of it rather than what it actually represents. This is because the higher the perceptions of politics are in the eyes of an organization member, the lower in that person's eyes is the level of justice, equity, and fairness and when employees perceive more politics in the organization, they are also likely to see the organization as less supportive of innovation. Salem (2014) averred that organizational politics are subjective perception and perceptions of politics may become more determinant to some extent that when employees think that their working environment is highly political. Promoting the interests of others became unfair and unjust from an individual point of view so employees would not be satisfied particularly when they think that the organizations decisions making regarding rewards and promotion are unfair especially when the resources are scarce. This may lead to increased negative feeling towards others, loss of faith in credibility and strategic power, lower levels of job performance, higher levels of dissatisfaction and work stress and finally less organizational commitment.

Labrague, et al. (2017) in their study observed that organizational politics are sequence of intentional actions which are carried out by an individual in order to pursue only his/her own interests by downplaying other people's rights and welfare and these deliberate acts are usually hidden beyond the organizational rules and regulations in order to directly or indirectly influence the organization's functions and processes. Organizational politics can be observed in varying degrees since they are used to achieve personal goals and interests, protect or enhance one's own professional career and gain resources or advantages from the organization often with negative effects on employees such as decrease in work performance level, decreased job satisfaction, decreased organizational commitment, lowered attendance, low morale, negative attitudes and negligent behaviours such as the intention to leave and disregard for duty and as a result of negative emotional states such as job stress and job burnout.

Nawaz, et al. (2019) were of the opinion that organizational politics may result in a rather rational basis for competitive advantage, especially when individuals in organizations are politically skilled and a foresighted management may successfully direct those highly political environments that are under stress. Such political skill may include the ability to employ actions that support feelings of trust, confidence and sincerity among employees. Managers can also maintain their political behaviours to enhance justice and equality in organizations when they

perceive highly political environment at a workplace. But when used to amass wealth in a corrupt and dishonest manner, power is wasted; it is misuse of one of the opportunities to do well. When we understand the true meaning and essence of power we will see the evil of the ways and manners it is abused, misused and misapplied in Nigeria. For example, when a president or governor or anybody in position of authority uses power to alter the economic fortunes in favours of a people for the reason that they share the same ancestral origin he undermined the unity and cohesiveness of the country and sow the seed of mistrust and unrest. It is dishonorable, unjust and unfair manner which undermines integrity and ultimately leads to loses respect and trust amongst from the populace. With the loss of respect comes contempt and loss of civility and that is how corruption damages the society. Many people who misuse power believe that it is their right to impose their will on others without their consent.

4.7. Acquiring and Using Power and Politics

A considerable portion of any manager's time is directed toward power-oriented behaviour which is an action directed at developing or using relationships in which other people are willing to accede wholly or partially to one's wishes. There are three dimensions of managerial power and influence which are: downward, upward and lateral. Effective managers build and maintain position power and personal power to exercise these downward, upward and lateral influences.

5. FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR IN ORGANIZATIONS

According to Morgan (1986), it is important to know that in its real meaning, the idea of politics arise from the fact that, there are different interests and the society should provide a means to allow individuals to agree with their differences by the way of consulting and negotiating. Aristotle put politics as a means of bringing the need for unity in the city-state with the reality that the polis was a summation of many members. For him, politics provides a means of creating order out of differences while avoiding forms of autocratic rule. Political science and diverse government systems have built on this foundational idea, in advocating of politics, and recognizing and interchange of striving regard that implies politics as a means to create a non-forceful form of social order.

Tom Burns who is a Scottish sociologist pointed out that most modern organizations are promoting various kinds of political behaviour because they are shown as systems of continuous competition and therefore collaboration. There must be collaboration among people in pursuing a common task, but they are yet often made to go against each other in competing for scarce

resources and career goal and advancement. Due to the fact that there are more jobs at the bottom when compared to at the top, it means that competing for the top position is likely to be paramount. In addition to the fact that various individuals and groups are commanded to use influence and authority over their subordinates, the pecking order will more or less ensure the kind of competitive grapple on which organizational politics flourishes. There are different organizational and individual factors that contribute to political behaviour in an organization according to (Dubrin, 2001):

D1. Pyramid-shaped Organizational Structure

A pyramid centralizes power at the top. So much power therefore is obtainable to give out to many people who like more of it. Each consecutive layer on the chart of the organization has less power than the layer which is above. Thus, workers have virtually no power at the very bottom of the organization.

D2. Subjective Standards of Performance

Because people do not believe that the organization has an impartial way of deciding their performance and whether they are suitable for promotion or not, they resort to organizational politics. Likewise, when managers have no unbiased way of recognizing people who are effective from the less effective, they often utilize the option of favoritism.

D3. Environmental Uncertainty and Turbulence

People tend to behave politically when they operate in an unstable and unpredictable environment. They depend on organizational politics to make an impression that is favorable because uncertainty makes it so hard to decide what they should accomplish. The insecurity and uncertainty and turbulence that are created by corporate acquisitions or mergers and/or downsizing is a major factor that is contributing to office politics.

D4. Emotional Insecurity

Some people take to political tricks or gimmicks to seek favours from superiors because they have little or no confidence in their expertise and competence and therefore get indulge in office politics to get emotional sympathy.

D5. Political Implications of Power

The theory of classical organization presents organization as a rational structure in which authority follows chains of command by which there are legitimized powers conferred on them; whereas non-formal roles of managers and organization show more practical perspective of the

organizations. In this pragmatic view of organizations, the significance of political aspects of power comes to the fore. In today's organizations, political power game is very real. Like other aspects of the dynamics of an organization, politics is not an easy process; it can differ from one organization to another and also from one sub unit to another sub unit. Some realities of political power have been pointed out by Walter Nord. He suggests four (4) hypotheses of power in organizations which focuses on the realities of politics.

1.   Organizations are made up of coalitions which rival with one another for resources, influence and energy.

2.   Different groups that form coalitions will strive to protect their interests and influential positions by knowing the pressures and effects of their environment.

3.   There is a dehumanizing effect in the unequal distribution of power.

4.   The use of power within various organizations is one very important aspect of exercising power within the larger social system.

Organizational politics has recognized various areas specifically relevant to the degree to which organizations are rather political than rational. These areas are: goals, change, resources, external environment and technology. Today, many organizations are more political because they possess very limited resources. They make ambivalent decisions, and they have very uncertain but yet complex goals. They have very high complex technology; and are undergoing extreme changes. These types of organizations face more politics and game of power becomes rapidly more important. Conditions that threaten the reputation of the powerful or support efforts of those willing to expand their base of power will encourage strengthening of politics in the organization and raise the rate of behaviour in decision making that are as political as against being rational.

5.1. Negative Outcomes of Politics in Modern Organizations and its Effects on Productivity

1.   **Differences:** Often times, political discussions in the work place develop into different views between two or more groups which can result in splitting a workplace into opposing factions. If these differences are allowed to linger, they may result into low productivity in the work place thereby affecting the growth of the company. A proactive manager must put a stop to it before getting out of hand.

2.   **Discordance:** Different political views or ambitions amongst workers can lead to sharp disagreement in the office which can bring about disharmony in the workplace. And because of different political views, workers may not be able to work together as it affects their effective organizational behaviours. This will in turn bring in low productivity in the organization.

3.   **Punitive Measures:** A worker who causes division at the work place due to political discussions or ambitions may be given suspension or salary reduction by the management of the organization. This can lead to accusations on the part of the worker who may lay claim to an infringement on his right to 'free speech in a free world' whilst the management may accuse him/her of low performance leading to low productivity. An organization is solely set up for profit making and any distractions due to political views must be adequately nipped in the bud for effective performance and higher productivity.

5.2. Ways in which Political Strategies can be used to Attain Power in Modern Organizations

a.   Ability to make strategic replacements

b.   Ability to exhibit confidence

c.   Controlling access to persons and information

d.   Formation of a winning coalition

e.   Ability to develop expertise and build personal stature

f.   Restriction of communication about actual intentions

g.   The use of a research data to buttress one's point of view

5.3. How to Limit the Effects of Political Behaviour in Modern Organizations

a.   Provision of sufficient resources

b.   Introducing clear rules

c.   Measuring performance and not personalities

d.   Hiring of low-politics employees

e.   Increasing opportunities for dialogue

f.   Allow free flow information and open communication (CIA, 1995).

6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Though there are many theories extrapolated by theorists to explain the concept of power, this paper examines the standard theory of power to explain the topic under consideration. The standard theory is that power is the capacity for influence and that influence is based on the control of resources valued or desired by others. The standard theory is not one specific formal theory but rather a set of general assumptions about the relationship between power and influence which is shared by all the classic theories of social influence (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Festinger, 1950, French & Raven, 1959; Kelman, 1958). The basic ideas are that power is the capacity to influence other people. That, it is conferred by the control of resources (positive and negative outcomes, rewards and costs, information, etc.) that are desired, valued or needed by others and which make them dependent upon the influencing agent for the satisfaction of their needs or reaching their goals, and that different types of resources confer different types of power leading to different kinds of influence.

A further importance and relevance of the standard theory to the meaning of power is that some kinds of influence reflect the needs to reduce uncertainty, and lead to private acceptance (private attitude change in line with the influence attempt). Other kinds are more social or goal-oriented in character, embodying group pressure or compulsion, and lead only to public compliance. The standard theory has been extremely successful that it has been applied to a huge range of phenomena and it is the only theory of power that ever get mentioned in social psychology (Keltner, et al., 2003). Nevertheless, there have always been problems with the standard theory though additional theories later emerged. The most important problems noticed are briefly discussed below.

First, the field has never agreed on one view about how the dependence-influence relationship works and the differences between the classic theories are inconsequential. They disagree about the role of group cohesion in compliance. For Festinger (1950, 1953, and 1954), attraction being attracted to the group leads to private acceptance of its influence by members and public compliance reflects dislike for the influencing group. For Deutsch & Gerard (1955) attraction to the group leads to 'normative' not 'informational' influence (i.e. compliance). French & Raven (1959) and Kelman (1958) explain compliance in terms of rewards and costs which are distinguished from both informational processes and attraction to others ('referent power' or 'identification').

Second, the basic idea that influence reflects dependence is highly problematic (Moscovici, 1976, and Turner, 1991,). If one considers the popular dual-process theory of Deutsch & Gerard (1955), for example, which contrasts an informational process with normative influence in which one conforms to the expectations of others to gain their approval, neither process provides an adequate description of the phenomena they are meant to explain. Private conformity is not a function of people who lack information shifting to people who have it. In fact, even people confronting an unambiguous stimulus (as in the Asch paradigm) become uncertain when similar others disagree with them and what reduces uncertainty is subjectively valid information, not information in the abstract. The perceived validity of information is always a function of social and relational factors such as the perceived source of a message, the degree to which it has consensual support and the degree to which the target defines the source as a positive reference group, that is, the degree to which it is in line with in-group norms. One does not accept influence from experts because of the information they provide (if one is not an expert, how can one judge its quality?), but accepts the information as valid because one defines them as an expert (Moscovici, 1976).

Similarly, the idea that normative influence in the Asch paradigm is non-informational group pressure is inconsistent with classic findings such as the importance of unanimity rather than group size in producing conformity and the fact that conformity is still strong even when group surveillance is removed. Basic findings and indeed basic phenomena (conformity in the classic paradigms, group polarization, and minority influence) do not fit and remain unexplained by the dual-process theory (Turner, 1991). These and other considerations imply that neither cognitive nor group aspects of influence can be reduced to dependence for information or social approval. Moscovici (1976) argues that social conflict, not informational dependence, is the crucial process in persuasion. Turner (1991) argues that it is reality testing in the context of a shared social identity.

A third issue is that the standard theory does not sit easily with the facts of historical and social change. It seems to rule out social change, innovation and minority influence (Moscovici, 1976). It implies that influence flows only in one direction, from the top down, from the 'haves' to the 'have nots', from those with power to those without it. There are countless historical examples of social movements, from the scientific (Freud) to the political (Hitler) to the religious (Christianity) in which power and control of resources did not precede but followed from processes of influence.

43

Finally, power and influence are not properly distinguished in the standard theory. They are confounded in the general view that all influence reflects a process of submission to the power of resources (at the same time as, confusingly, some kinds of dependence are supposed to be more specifically to do with submission to power than others because they produce compliance). Nowhere in the standard theory is there a place for the sharp antagonism between influence and power commonly found in everyday discourse, as persuasion versus naked force or domination. The attempt to deal with this issue through the idea of compliance based on reward and coercive power (French & Raven, 1959; Kelman, 1958) fails theoretically since all influence is based on rewards and costs in the dependence formulation.

From the foregoing, in the standard theory all forms of influence, from the private to the public, reflect power based on control of resources and social interdependence for positive outcomes is seen as the basis of the psychological group. But, in fact, there is no unanimity about how different types of resources produce different types of influence and the general analysis is problematic. The standard view also paints a picture of compliance which fails to distinguish between going along with people one likes and being coerced against one's will. All influence is conceptualized as if it were a kind of submission, moving in the direction dictated by those with resources, because one has no choice, because one is dependent, at the same time as real coercion (force, domination, and compulsion) is lost sight of. The standard theory fails to deal adequately with the role of psychological group membership and the facts of social and historical change as well as with the nature of persuasion and coercion.

New movements can gain adherents despite often lacking resources, expertise and prestige. The latter are often the badges of success rather than pre-conditions. The new theorist argues that if the standard theory is true, then how is it that social change from below ever takes place? How is it that subordinate groups for example, do come, under certain conditions, to reject the legitimacy of the social order and oppose it? To go beyond the standard theory we need to begin by considering what a theory of power is meant to explain. The new theory emphasizes group identity, social organization and ideology rather than dependence as the basis of power. It proposes that power is based on persuasion, authority and coercion. A key point is that the theory changes the way these processes have been understood by reversing the causal sequence of the standard theory. The latter argues that control of resources produces power, power is the basis of influence and that mutual influence leads to the formation of a psychological group. The three-process theory argues that psychological group formation produces influence and that influence is the basis of power and that power leads to the control of resources. The three-

44

process theory turns the standard theory on its head and solves its problems. It is compatible with the facts of and provides many new insights into social change. It unifies the informational and group aspects of the influence process in an analysis supported by much research. It properly acknowledges and specifies the causal role of the psychological group in influence and power. It rejects the confusion inherent in the traditional impression of compliance, sharply distinguishing coercive force from the workings of authority whilst showing how they are theoretically linked as divergent reactions to social identity and influence. The idea that resource control is the basis of power tends to imply that differences in power between individuals and groups are relatively static and enduring so long as one controls sufficient resources. It seems, one has power and those without resources have little option but to submit. Though it is difficult to see how power ever changes hands in this view because in practice there are many examples from real life of relatively rapid gains and losses in power where individuals and groups without initial resources become more powerful and those with overwhelming resources suddenly lose power (Turner, 2005).

The three-process theory makes perfect sense in this context since it assumes that power reflects group identity and that all self-categorizing is relational and dynamic, varying with social comparisons within and between groups, the specific social context, and the collective goals, values and beliefs of group members. Thus for example, as intergroup relations change, so that cooperation between groups is replaced by conflict, then group identity is likely to split to emphasize differences from the conflicting out-group and more extreme, conflicting members will tend to become more ideal of each group than will more moderate members. As a result, the more extreme members will gain in influence and authority over moderates. This paper therefore adopts the three factor theory for the explanation of the topic under review.

SUMMARY

Since the Nigerian public is most often made up of non-profit organizations, effective utilization of the positive types of power and politics cannot be overemphasized because it tells how employees interact positively with each other and controls how decisions are made. After critically examining the realities of power and politics in the Nigerian public service, it is believed that professionalism and appropriate use of politics in an organization is very vital in acquiring and retaining power in order to accomplish the organizational goals. This is in line with the view of Aristotle who said organizational power and politics can be used to reconcile differences through negotiation and consultation whilst still avoiding abuses. Despite the fact that power and political behaviour may be destructive and highly unethical, it can also be

constructively used to achieve certain goals and objectives in the Nigerian public service and also create a balance in a diverse set of interests that exist within the organizations that made up the public service. For an organization to be highly productive, there should be a balance in the use of power and politics in achieving organizational goals and objectives which include giving independence to employees to make decisions, compensating employees who put in effective performance in their works and making those who put in effective performance to oversee other employees whilst also developing a political system straightforward for employees to comprehend.

Therefore, if you want to get things done in a group or organization, it helps to have power. As a manager who wants to maximize power, you will want to increase others' dependence on you. You can for instance, increase your power in relation to your boss by developing knowledge or a skill that he needs and for which he perceives no ready substitute. But power is a two-way street; you must not be alone in attempting to build your power bases, particularly subordinates will be seeking to make you dependent on them. The result is a continual battle while you seek to maximize others' dependence on you, you will be seeking to minimize your dependence on others and, others you work with will be trying to do the same.

Since people are more likely to enthusiastically accept and commit to an individual whom they admire or whose knowledge they respect rather than someone who relies on his or her position to reward or coerce them, the effective use of expert and referent power should lead to higher employee performance, commitment, and satisfaction. The effective manager accepts the political nature of organizations. By assessing behaviour in a political framework, you can better predict the actions of others and use this information to formulate political strategies that will gain advantages for you and your work unit because organizational politics is positively related to actual performance. However, there seems to be ample evidence that good political skills are positively related to high performance evaluations and, hence, to salary increases and promotions enhances good relationship between politics and employee satisfaction.

The more political those employees perceive an organization to be, the lower their satisfaction because most often lower-ranking employees who lack the power base and the means of influence needed to benefit from the political game perceive organizational politics as a source of frustration and indicate lower satisfaction. But higher-ranking employees, who are in a better position to handle political behaviour and benefit from it, do not tend to exhibit this negative attitude.

Regardless of level or position an employee occupies in the public service, some people are just significantly more "politically astute" than are others. While there is little evidence to support or negate these assumptions yet the politically naive or inept are likely to exhibit lower job satisfaction than their politically astute counterparts. The politically naive and inept tend to feel unable to influence those decisions that most affect them when they look at actions around them and are perplexed at why they are being manipulated by colleagues, bosses or the system. Bye and large, findings from this study suggest that organizations can easily be turned into avenue for political games or power struggles since individuals who work in the Nigerian public service have ambitions to achieve goals for their personal benefits rather than that of the organization in which they work.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, power and politics have been examined and a detailed conceptual use and misuse of power and politics in the Nigerian public service have been discussed. Broadly speaking, the human factor and its outcomes on the behaviour of organizations in general and the individuals in particular are obvious and organizations are created and run by human beings. Findings from the study have shown that organizations can easily be turned into avenue for political games or power struggles since individuals in the organization have ambitions and their own plans in order to reach their goals for personal benefits rather than that of the organization. It is also found that organizations also are political structures that provide opportunities for employees to develop careers and served as platforms for the pursuit of personal interests and motives. It is found that accumulation of power is the instrument for transforming individual interests into activities which influence other people and a key to the development of careers for the employees as well. Power struggles come into play especially when the resources are scarce and to control the knowledge and information and decision-making processes in the organizations, therefore power and politics exist in the Nigerian public service where employees tend to engage in self-serving behaviours and organizational politics in order to increase the probability of obtaining positive outcomes in organizations and personal interests without regard to their impact on the organization they serve. It must be noted that when both individuals and groups engage in organizational politics, that may be destructive as individuals focus on personal interests and goals at the expense of the organization, such self-serving political efforts might negatively influence the social groupings, information sharing, and many other organizational functions that may lead to huge hidden costs for the entire public service. To this end, this paper wishes to make the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a.   The constitution of any country or state establishes checks and balances for abuse of power. The 1999 Nigerian Constitution as amended is unambiguous on the powers of the public officials; therefore the dictates of the constitution should be strictly adhered to.

b.   There is the need for effective implementation of policies and actions to remedy the misuse of power. Government should match words with action in checkmating the abuse of power in the Nigerian public service.

c.   Over ambitiousness should be guarded against to avoid individuals taking undue advantage of organizational politics to actualize their selfish interest to the detriment of the Nigerian public service sector.

d.   Subordinates should be rewarded and given encouragement for carrying out tasks and orders given by superiors. Example of reward power includes promotion, bonuses, increase in salaries, extra-time off from work, public praise just to mention few. This is to spur up subordinates for effectiveness and productivity.

e.   The use of power within the Nigerian public service is one very important aspect of exercising power within the larger social system. There is a dehumanizing effect when there is unequal distribution of power. Therefore power should be equally distributed within the larger structure of the Nigerian polity to avoid unhealthy competitions for power.

REFERENCES

Abraham Z. (1970). *Organizational Culture: Power and Politics in Organizational Life.* Harvard Business School in Boston.

Baldridge, J. V. (1971). *Power and Conflict in the University*. New York: Wiley.

Barnard, C. I. (1938, 1968). *The Function of the Executive.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bauer, T., & Erdogan, B. (2012). *An Introduction to Organizational Behavior. Creative Commons.* https://2012books.lardbucket.org/pdfs/anintroduction- to-organizational-behavior-v1.1.pdf

Can Bicer (2020). *The Power and Politics in Organizations* Karabuk University; at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347342951

CIA (1995). Power and Politics Based on "Women of the CIA Come Forward," ABC News Nightline; aired

Clarence, J. B. (2013). The Causes of Instability in Nigeria and Implication for the United States; US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/

Dubrin, A. J. (2001). *Leadership*. (3rd Ed) New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. B. (1955). A Study of Normative and Informational Social influences Upon Individual Judgment. *Journal of Abnormal & Social Psychology*, 51, 629–636.

Eke, E. O. (2012). *The Use, Abuse and Misuse of Power*. Nigeriaweb | Odili.Net | Naijanet.Com eoeke@aol.com

Fairholm, G. W. (2009). *Organizational Power Politics: Tactics in Organizational Leadership.* Greenwood Publishing Group, ABC-CLIO, California, U.S.A.

Ferris, G. R., Ellen III, B. P., McAllister, C. P., & Maher, L. P. (2019). Reorganizing Organizational Politics Research: A Review of the Literature and Identification of Future Research Directions. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behaviour*, 6, pp. 299-323.

Fleming, P., & Spicer, A. (2014). Power in Management and Organization Science. *Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), pp. 237-298.

French, J. R. P., Jr., & B. Raven (1959). The Bases of Social Power. In D. P. Cartwright, ed., *Studies in Social Power* (pp. 150-167). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research.

Gencer, M., Tok, T. N., & Ordu, A. (2018). The Effect of Power Base Games on Organizational Silence and Organizational Socialization.

Geppert, M., Becker-Ritterspach, F., & Mudambi, R. (2016). Politics and Power in Multinational Companies: Integrating the International Business and Organization Studies Perspectives. *Organization Studies*, 37(9), pp. 1209

Guo, Y., Kang, H., Shao, B., & Halvorsen, B. (2019). Organizational Politics as a Blindfold. *Personnel Review*.

Hinck, R., & Conrad, C. (2018). Organizational Politics. The International Encyclopedia of Strategic Communication, pp. 1-12.

John C. Turner (2005) Explaining the nature of power: A three-process theory; Agenda 2005 *European Journal of Social Psychology* Eur. J. Soc. Psychol. 35, 1–22. Published online in Wiley InterScience www.interscience.wiley.com DOI: 10.1002/ejsp.244

Kacmar, K. M., & Baron, R. A. (1999). Organizational Politics. *Research in Human Resources Management*, 1, 1-39.

Kanter, R. M. (1979). Power Failure in Management Circuits. *Harvard Business Review*. 57, 65-75.

Kapoutsis, I., & Thanos, I. (2016). Politics in Organizations: Positive and Negative Aspects of Political Behaviour. *European Management Journal*, 34(3), pp. 310-312.

Kairen Harris (2002). The Use, Abuse and Under-use of Power in the Workplace. *Workplace Culture Organizational Values Workplace Reviews*; Suite 401/110 Pacific Highway, North Sydney NSW 2060;@worklogic.com.au

Kelman, H. C. (1958). Compliance, identification, and internalization: Three processes of attitude change. *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 2, 51–60.

Keltner, D., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Anderson, C. (2003). Power, Approach, and Inhibition. *Psychological Review, 110, 265–284.*

Labrague, L. J., McEnroe-Petitte, D. M., Gloe, D., Tsaras, K., Arteche, D. L. Maldia, F. (2017). Organizational Politics, Nurses' Stress, Burnout Levels, Turnover Intention and Job Satisfaction. *International Nursing Review*, 64(1), pp. 109-116.

Landells, E. M., & Albrecht, S. L. (2019). Perceived Organizational Politics, Engagement and Stress: The Mediating Influence of Meaningful Work. *Frontiers in Psychology*, pp. 10, 1612.

 Lee Chai, Annete Y.; & Barge, J., Eds (2001). *The Use and Abuse of Power*. Philadelphia; Psychology Press.

Mintzberg, H. (1983). *Power in and Around Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Mintzberg, H. (1985). The Organization as Political Arena. *Journal of Management Studies*, 22(2), pp. 133-154.

Moscovici, S. (1976). Social influence and social change. London: Academic Press.

Morgan, G. (1996). *Images of Organization*. (2nd ed.). Newbury Park: Sage

Nawaz, M., Syed, A., & Dharejo, N. (2019). Two Facets pf Organizational Politics, The Constructive and Destructive Role of Organizational Politics on Employee Work Related Attitudes: A Theoretical Study. *Annals of Contemporary Developments on Management & HR (*ACDMHR), Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 15-22.

Omisore, B. O., & Nweke, A. N. (2014). The Influence of Power and Politics in Organizations (Part 1). *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 4(7), pp. 2222-6990.

Pfeffer, J. (1992). *Managing With Power: Politics and Influence in Organizations*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Pfeffer, J. (1994). *Managing With Power: Politics and Influence in Organizations*. Harvard Business Press.

Prachi, J. (2001). Power: Its Uses and Abuses in the Practice of Political Science. Management Science Guide Content Team.

Saleem, H. (2015). The Impact of Leadership Styles on Job Satisfaction and Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Politics. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 172(27), pp 563-569.

Samuel, Y. (2018). *The Political Agenda of Organizations*. Routledge, New York, U.S.A.

Shafritz, J. M., Ott, J. S., & Jang, Y. S. (2014). *Classics of Organization Theory*. Cengage Learning, Eighth Edition, Printed in The U.S.A.

Somoye, K. G. (2016). The Effects of Power and Politics in Modern Organizations and its Impact on Workers' Productivity. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. Vol. 6, No. 11 ISSN: 2222-6990

Turner, J. C. (1991). *Social influence*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.

Vigoda, E. (2000). Organizational Politics, Job Attitudes, and Work Outcomes: Exploration and Implications for the Public Sector. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 57(3), 326-347.

Walyben (2021). *Abuse of Power: Effects & Remedies of Abuse of Power*. Political Science Copyright © Walyben Media. All Right Reserved

Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York: Free Press

Wilson, P. A. (1995). The Effects of Politics and Power on The Organizational Commitment of Federal Executives. *Journal of Management*, 21(1), 101-118.