

ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS AND EMPLOYEE SUPPORT: EVIDENCE FROM ENUGU STATE MINISTRY OF LANDS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study, organizational politics and employee support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, Enugu was aimed at ascertaining the relationship between organizational politics and employee support. 123 employees of the ministry participated in the study. 112 responses were used to generate data for the analysis. Pearson's product moment correlation with the aid of SPSS version 23.0 was used to ascertain the relationship which was used to test the stated hypotheses. The result indicated a significant negative relationship between Line vs Staff game and employee support. Rival camp game has a significant negative relationship with employee support; Expertise game equally indicated a significant negative relationship with employee support. We therefore concluded that organizational politics has a significant negative relationship with employee support. The implication of these findings is that political behaviour in an organization is inevitable. Moreover, its practice in the context of organization with diverse workforce as it pertains to experts/professionals manifests in various games which could divert employees attention towards self-interest to the detriment of the entire organization. We recommended that proper check should be put in place to ensure that political games do not get too personal within the ministry as it gradually wanes support amongst employees.

1.1 Background of the Study

In every organization, employees seek to operate in an environment that would help them discharge their duties to their organization and as well achieve their personal goal(s). It has been observed that employees perform at their best only in an environment that is relatively stable (Cacciattolo, 2014). Such an environment could as well be said to be apt for employees' job satisfaction which could translate in their putting adequate effort for the organization to realize its essence of existence.

However, several factors permeate the relative stability of an organizations' environment especially at workplace level; one of such factors is the method of influencing formal authority to achieve personal or group interest outside organizations' normal procedures. It could be said that employees can only achieve personal interest outside organizational formal procedure through politicking. This, perhaps, could be hinged on the credence that politics, as may be perceived at organizational level, interferes with normal organizational processes like promotion, rewards and decision making (Vigoda-Gadot, 2000); and every employee is inevitably affected depending on politics inherent in their organization.

Organizational politics is the perception of employees on how individuals or groups within an organization gain advantage over others which most often is incongruent with the organizational procedures (Kodisinghe, 2010). Most often, it manifests as 'games' used by employees to influence formal authority or wield powers and attach importance to their positions at the expense of their colleagues, groups and even to the needs of the organization at large (Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot, 2014). This glaringly justify Mintzberg (1985) earlier work that describes organization as a political arena; and referred to organizational politics as various obsessive political games like: Line vs Staff game, Rival Camp groups game, Expertise game, Whistle Blowing game, Empire Building game, Sponsorship game, Alliance game, etc. engaged in by employees in an organization. Such games are employed as system of influences to resist authority per se, counter such resistance, build power base, defeat a rival or change the organization (Mintzberg, 1985). It is elusive in nature and could take different dimensions depending on the nature, structure and culture of the organization in question. The import is that such games are capable of triggering off competition amongst individuals or groups in an organization which could affect support inherent in an organization.

For employees to perform at peak conducive workplace environment is inevitable; and such can only be achieved in a supportive organization. Perception of organizational politics perhaps may affect the extent to which employees are disposed to support each other at workplace. Such perception could be informed by their relationships with their co-workers, supervisor, discretionary rewards dispensed by the organization and procedural justice (Cropanzano, HowesGrandey and Toth, 2015). These could, to a large, extent influence employee's disposition towards support which could manifest in citizenship behaviours, commitment and loyalty (Akanbi and Ofoegbu, 2013).

The organization under study, Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development was established in 1991 after the creation of the State from Anambra State on 27th August 1991 and is saddled with the responsibility of providing a good habitable environment and framework for optimum utilization of land resources in Enugu State. Hence it embarks on acquisition of Lands for various development purposes; promotion of easy access to Land by both private and public users; management of Land resources in the state in line with the provision of Land Tenure Laws; registration of land ownership/ Deeds and issuance of certificate of occupancy (C-of-O); control development of buildings and Land use activities through enforcement of schemes/building codes and bye-laws; to advise/provide useful information to government on all physical planning matters with the state; and to oversee any issue that relates to Land/buildings.

The critical nature of this ministry has made its workforce so diverse that they cut across different profession/expertise like Surveyors; Architects/Engineers; Lawyers; Estate managers; Accountants; Planning Research and Statistics experts; Information management experts etc. Given the Tall/vertical organizational structure inherent in the Ministry; units/departments, professionals/experts, and even individual employees could try to influence management or outwit colleagues through politicking in order to gain advantage which most often are undue. Organizational politics could as such manifest in Line managers vs support staff game which most often is used to enhance personal power and to put managerial decision makers in line with formal authority against technical staff; Rival camp game employed by creating power blocks to outwit rivals; Professionals/experts could as well try to use their knowledge and skills to build power base through expertise game to create and attach some kind of unnecessary relevance to their job. These to a large extent could create unnecessary competition amongst individual employees, teams or groups which affect employees' disposition to support each other to discharge their duties and advance the interest of the ministry.

This study has become necessary in order to determine the degree of relationship between organizational politics (line vs staff games, rivalry camp games and expertise games) and employees'

support in the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, Enugu. Understanding this relationship will go a long way in minimizing current and potential delays experienced in assessing the services of the Ministry by clients.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Organizational membership, self-identity and affective attachment to an organization have been averred by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa (1986) to be the results of favorable perceptions of employees' towards employees' support. Amongst other things, employees' support represents the extent to which employees perceive that the organization value them, and could result in greater productivity, satisfaction, commitment and job performance. There is however some exceptions to this, particularly as has been observed in The Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development where organizational membership, self-identity and affective attachment appears to be non-existent among employees. Many pointers to these anti-organizational behaviours are directed towards their perceptions of poor employees' support ranging from inconsistent promotion, inadequate training and development, inadequate remunerations, and etc. that could have been caused by organizational politics.

Organizational politics issues like *line Vs staff game*, presents the impression that "power is the route to success, therefore employees' efforts are best devoted to alliance building with their superiors" (Cropanzano; Howes; Grandey and Toth, 2015). This sought of game are often played not just to enhance personal power but to defeat a rival; pits managerial decision-makers in line with formal authority against technical advisers in the staff with specialized expertise. Each side tends to exploit legitimate power in illegitimate ways. The implication of this to the employees within the ministry is that meritocracy sometimes gets sacrificed over mediocrity, whereby the resultant effects are lesser employees' affective attachments, poor job satisfaction, less commitment and poor performance.

In the same vain, issues like *rival camp games*; a situation whereby employees form different cliques that antagonize one another in a bid to gain an advantage that suit different individuals could also be devastating for the levels of attachment and commitment that employees have for the firm (Cropanzano *et al*, 2015). For the Ministry of lands and Urban Development, the implication of rival camps games is that employees could engage in anti-organizational citizenship activities that could give the impression that the organization does not lend support to the employees, and this could lead to poor performance.

Similarly, issues of *expertise game*; situations where by support to employees by the organizationis on the bases of their specialties could be another source of ill emotional attachment, job dissatisfaction and poor job performance (Eisenberger; Huntington; Hutchinson and Sowa, 1986). In the case of the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, employees with different specialties like architects, builders and surveyors often times form alliances from which they are able to garner supports like training and developments from the organization than employees that do not have such specialties. This could portend serious commitment and emotional attachment issues for the employees therein, and could result in poor job performance.

With these issues in mind, this study therefore hopes to discover the nature of the relationships that exist between organizational politics and employees' support as they exist in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to determine the nature of the relationship that exists between organizational politics and employees' support as they exist in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, Enugu.

The specific objectives are to:

- To determine the nature of the relationship that exists between line Vs staff games and employees' support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.
- To determine the nature of the relationship that exists between rival camp games and employees' support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.

- To determine the nature of the relationship that exists between expertise game and employees' support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.

1.4 Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between line Vs staff games and employees' support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between rival camp games and employees' support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between expertise games and employees' support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development.

1.5 Implications of the Study

The study's findings are quite timely and novel in the sense that there are no studies within this clime to the best of the researcher's knowledge that have queried the organizational politics-employees' support relationship using the variables adapted in this study. The findings would be beneficial to many quarters including the government, the management and the employees of the Ministry. The study's finding could be employed as best strategies by administrators and managers alike in tackling issues of unmotivated/less committed employees within the Ministry and other organizations as well. Students and researchers alike could tap from the findings of this study both as references and as areas for further enquiries.

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Framework: Organizational Politics

Organizational politics involves the entire polity that exists within an organizational setting. The concept of Organizational Politics (OP) has been viewed from different perspectives by different authors, managers and individuals as well. While it generally connotes or sparks negativity to a majority, others have looked at it as veritable tool for enhancing organizational goals. Nik, Syned and Ramraini (2013) defines OP to be those intentional acts that are geared towards influencing, enhancing or protecting the self-interest of individuals or groups. Sarminah (2011) defines OP as the use of power in influencing decision making processes within the organization. Akanbi, and Ofoegbu (2013) aver that OP consists of those political behaviours in organization that are mostly covert and subject to differences in perception. They believe that people's attitude and behaviours are determined mostly by their perceptions of reality and not reality per se. The import of this view is that OP is not a totally healthy phenomenon for organizational growth (Atinc, Darrat, Fuller and Parker, 2010; Eric, 2013; Cacciattolo, 2014). Kacmar and Baron (2011) view OP as an informal approach through which powers are gained through other means other than merit or luck. Wildavsky (2008) defines politics as conflict over whose preferences are to prevail in the determination of policy, this tends to suggest that the budgeting process is a political method of allocating financial resources (Akanbi and Ofoegbu, 2013). Mintzberg (1985) describes OP as a system reflecting power that is technically illegitimate in its means. What this implies is that political behaviours are not formally authorized, widely accepted, nor officially certified. As a result, political behaviour is typically divisive and conflictive, often pitting individuals or groups against formal authority, accepted ideology, and/or certified expertise, or else against each other. Politics can, of course, arise when other systems of influence are absent or at least weak. But it can also be evoked by them, as when departmentalization, created through formal authority, encourages group processes that benefit parochial interests at the expense of the needs of the organization at large.

Political activity in organizations is sometimes described in terms of 'games' (Allison as cited in Mintzberg, 1985). Political games are intricate and subtle, simultaneous, over-lapping, some are explicit, others implicit. Some are quite clear, others fuzzy. Some are very stable; others are ever changing. But the collection of all these in effect, define the game. These games are a concrete mechanism with which men are able to structure their power relations and regulate them. Thirteen of such political games have been identified and described by Mintzberg (1985); they are : Insurgency game, Counter-insurgency game,

Sponsorship game, Alliance building game, Empire building game, Budgeting game, Expertise game, Lording game, Line vs. Staff, Rival camp game, Strategic candidate game, Whistle blowing game, Young Turks games. However three of these games suit the context of this study, and have been adapted.

Expertise game: expertise game comprises the use of expertise to achieve individual interest over organizational goals. Mintzberg opines that true experts play by exploiting technical skills and knowledge, emphasizing its uniqueness, criticality, and irreplaceability and also by seeking to keep it from being rationalized, notably by keeping knowledge to selves.

Line vs. staff game: a game of sibling-type rivalry, played not just to enhance personal power but to defeat a rival; pits managerial decision-makers in line with formal authority against technical advisers in the staff with specialized expertise. Each side tends to exploit legitimate power in illegitimate ways.

Rival camps game: this type of game typically occurs when alliance or empire building game result in different major power blocks, giving rise to two-person, zero sum game in place of n-person one; can be most divisive game of all; conflict can be between units (*e.g.* between marketing and production in manufacturing firm), between rival personalities between two competing missions.

Employees' support

Employees' support comprises the general beliefs that employees develop concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, et al. 1986). Such perceived employees' support would depend on the same attributional processes that people use generally to infer the commitment by others to social relationships. That is perceived employees' support would be influenced by the frequency, extremity and judged sincerity of statements of praise and approval (Blau, 2014). Other rewards such as pay, rank, job enrichment, and influence over organizational policies would affect perceived support to the extent that they signified the organization's positive evaluations of employee.

Employees' support would be influenced by various aspects of an employee's treatment by the organization and would in turn, influence the employee's interpretation of organizational motives underlying the treatment. This implies that there will be agreement in the degree of support that the employee would expect of the organization in a wide variety of situations. Employees' support in the context of this study is however viewed from the aspect of the levels of support that employees are willing to exert in the form of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) to other members within the organization.

2.2 Theoretical Framework:

To examine the inherent relationship between organizational politics and organizational support, it becomes pertinent to anchor on equity theory as propounded by behavioural psychologist Adams J.S. (1965). The theory hinged on the basis that employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs that they bring to a job and the outcomes that they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others. Employees could bring in their ingenuity, expertise and professionalism to bear in their organization; and most often try to wield influence and recognition amongst contemporaries. However, such influence may threaten the very fact that every employee values fair treatment which causes them to be motivated to keep the fairness maintained within the relationship of their co-workers and the organization. When fairness could not be achieved, employees could engage in games that could give them leverage over others. Notwithstanding, the structure of equity theory in the workplace is based on the ratio of inputs to outcomes. Equity theory focuses on determining whether the distribution of resources is fair to both relational partners. Equity theory is measured by comparing the ratio of contributions or (cost) and benefits or (rewards) for each person. It proposes that individuals who perceived themselves as either under or over rewarded will express distress that leads effort to restore equity within the relationship.

Assumptions of equity theory:

- i. Employees expect a fair return for what they contribute to their jobs, a concept referred to as the "equity norm".

- ii. Employees determine what their equitable return should be after comparing their inputs and outcomes with those of their coworkers. This concept is referred to as “social comparison”.
- iii. Employees who perceive themselves as being in an inequitable situation will seek to reduce the inequity either by distorting inputs or outcomes in their own minds (cognitive distortion) by directly altering inputs and or outputs or by leaving the organization (Carrel and Ditttrich 1978).

In any public organization like Enugu State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, employees would prefer a situation where their contributions and work outcomes are being rewarded with adequate pay and recognition. If an employee feels underpaid or not recognized as and when due then the employee will perhaps be inclined to indulge in cognitive dissonance by using politicking to galvanize needed influence. This often than not leads to various issues like line vs staff game, rival camps and expertise game which could precipitate into showing negative attitude towards their co-workers and the organization. The implication may trickle down to not rendering necessary support to fellow employee and hindering performance of the entire Ministry. It is the subtle variables that also play an important role in the feeling of equity.

2.3 Empirical Review

In a meta-analysis on the perceptions of OP on different work outcomes in both public and private organizations conducted by Miller, Rutherford and Kolodinsky(2008), it was averred that the last past few decades have witness increased focus on the role of subjective work issues, as well as how they impact on important worker-related outcomes. They also highlighted that POP which happens to be one of the most prominently studied factors, has received much recent conceptual and empirical attention. They also stated that the majority of the studies on it have shown negative results between POP and various work outcomes in the work environments. In a bid to achieve their objective, which was to examine the relationship that exists between POP and key workplace outcomes like support, they conducted a meta-analysis on 79 independent samples from 59 published and unpublished studies involving 25,059 individual participants in Central Europe. From the meta-analysis, they discovered that the relationship that exists between POP and job satisfaction was a strong negative one; the same result was found in the relationship between POP and organizational commitment which could manifest inform of organizational support (from the employees side). Overall, a non-significant relationship between POP and in-role job performance was discovered. Their results also showed that other moderating variables like workplace as well as diversity has various degrees of effects on certain POP relationships. They recommended that further studies should be conducted on how the moderating factor affects other POP and other work outcomes.

Andrews and Kacmar (2010) conducted a similar study, they examined the relationships that exist between OP and job satisfaction. They posit that when employees go along to get ahead, or when there is a general tensed political setting within the organization, employees were bound to get dissatisfied with their jobs. To this effect, they conducted a survey whereby they distributed structured questionnaire to a sample of 355 employees in manufacturing firms in the United States of America. The data from the survey were analyzed with regression analysis, and the results indicated that sensitivity of political affairs (game)were directly associated with job dissatisfaction. When this happens it could heist the supposed support which employees should render to their colleagues as well as to their organization.

In a similar study conducted by Kodisinghe (2010), the purpose was to examine the influence of supposed organizational political affairs on work support of employees. In the study, it was averred that perceived chances of politics that manifests in seeking to gain influence over others due to one’s position, expertise, and knowledge/skill by organizational members often caused displeasure amongst members, and could lead to unfavourable workplace outcomes like lack of support, lack of commitment and higher employee turnover especially when one finds it difficult to cope. To confirm this assertion, a survey on

a sample of 300 employees was conducted. Data were generated using structured questionnaires and analyzed with both regression and correlation analysis. The findings of the study were that there were negative and significant relationships existing between political affairs and work support of employees. In other words the higher the perceptions of employees of purported political games, the lower the levels of employees' support, and the higher other of their job behaviours like non-attendance and job nervousness will be. The study therefore suggested that the management should strive to keep political affairs at barest minimal as it will help them increase the work pleasure of their employees, which will ultimately translate into higher employee support, lesser intentions of turnover and higher employees' commitment.

The study is quite robust but not without a few limitations; the class of employees examined in the study was not described, this therefore created a doubt as to if there were actually incidences of perceived OP in the organization of study. In an attempt to improve on the previous empirical works on OP by introducing a possible moderating factor, Saraminah's (2011) examined the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in moderating the relationship between OP and Job performance, opined that amongst every other thing, the extent of politicking within an organization would rub off on the job performances of the employees therein. To verify this postulation, structured instruments on EI, OP and job performance were designed and distributed to a total of 349 civil servants that were gathered through a multistage random sampling conducted in public organizations in Malaysia. The data gathered from the study were further analyzed, and the results therefrom revealed that the various components of OP were negatively related to job Performance. The results also showed that two components of OP mainly going along to get ahead (GATGA) and pay and Promotion Policies (PPP) had significant influence on job Performance. It was therefore concluded that managers of organizations have to pay adequate attention to diversity of their workforce, in other to understand the way the behaviour of the employees in these organizations were affecting the job performance. It was also concluded that the perceptions of the employees, in this case their emotional intelligence also interplayed with the perception of OP and job outcomes

The study was quite elaborate, but was not without some limitations. For instance, the methodology adopted for this study does not seem to be adequate as a Chi-square test would not have produced the relationships which the study sort to establish initially. A correlation analysis would have been more appropriate. Also the study was centered on only civil servants from Malaysian public organizations and cannot be generalized.

Nik, Syed and Ramirani (2012)'s study focused on investigating the factors that are affecting the dispositions of managers towards OP in Malaysia. In their study, they opined that amongst other things, professionalism/expertise values and attitudes of employees determine to a great extent the levels of politicking within an organizational work environment. To confirm this, they conducted a survey on a total of 178 respondents that were sampled from various backgrounds in both the public and private sectors. The data gathered from the survey showed that three variables of the study; power motive, ability to accept/support other employees and need for achievement were significant determinants of managers disposition towards OP. The implication of this finding was that organizations that were run by managers who had high power motives, as well as high needs for achievement tend to display a higher level of OP than those that were run by managers that had lower power motives and as well as low needs for achievement. The study also indicated that managers who were more receptive to other individuals were less likely to indulge in OP behaviours than those who were not receptive to other individuals.

The study's findings however cannot be generalized because of its relatively small sample size given that both private and public organizations were studied. Similarly, the study's methodology may not have been appropriate for a study of this nature, given the fact that the study claimed to have collated two sets of data, from employees of different sectors (private and public) which from all indications were rated under different scales. Also the levels of OP in these settings differed because administrative

orientations were different. Against these backdrops it is believed that this study suffered some limitations, and therefore its conclusions, recommendations and suggestions could not be generalized.

In a study conducted by Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot (2014), on “Perceived organizational politics, emotional intelligence and work outcomes, empirical exploration of direct and indirect effects”, it was maintained that the perceptions of organizational politics, coupled with emotional intelligence of employees had both direct and indirect effects on the outcomes of works. They therefore aimed at examining the various relationships that existed between POP and emotional intelligence, as well as their interplay in the work attitude/behaviours context. In other to achieve this purpose, they conducted a survey on a sample of 368 employees, and the data gathered therefrom were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). This was used to test for the mediating effects of POP on the relationship between EI on the one hand, and job satisfaction, turnover intentions and employee support. Findings from the analysis of the data showed that POP had a mediating relationship between emotional intelligence and all three outcomes. It equally revealed that a higher perception of OP have a negative impact on employee support. The implications of their findings is that EI could be used as a powerful tool that organizations and human resource managers can employ to reduce POP and enhance work attitudes and performance.

The study was quite contributory in both literature and methodology; given that the study showed that it was possible to combine both primary and secondary sources of data. However notwithstanding the contributions and strengths of the study, there were several observable flaws in the study. Firstly, the study evaluated employees’ EI levels with a self-report scale only, this did not harmonize with the fact that the study archived secondary data on other work outcomes, and presented possible errors in the findings of the study.

In a similar study conducted by Hira and Salman (2013), the intentions of which was to evaluate the various effects that OP exerts on employee’s performance in both public and private organizations in Punjab India. They averred that the levels of politicking that existd in an organization whether public or private were bound to affect the performance of such an organization either positively and negatively, depending on the extent of perceptions held by the employees. In a bid to achieve the aim of this study, they designed and distributed a structured questionnaire amongst the public and private organizations in India. The data that were gathered in the course of the survey were statistically analyzed using the Pearson’s product moment correlation. The findings from the analysis indicated that there was a strong negative relationship between OP and employee performance. It equally revealed that perception of organizational politics had a significant relationship with employee support. The implication of a strong negative relationship is that high levels of politicking amongst employees within the organization reflected in the downturn of their performance levels. It was therefore recommended that effective implementation of working environments that are free of politics should be encouraged, as it will support employee’s performance and deter employees from seeking personal or group interest at the detriment of the organization..

The study was quite elaborate and concise, but was however not without flaws. Notable amongst the flaws was the fact that the study combined organizations from both public and private institutions. This could have posed serious discrepancies in the findings of this study because both private and public organizations do not operate under the same working environment; therefore levels of politicking may be different. Furthermore, employees performances are not evaluated on the same scales in these sectors, therefore harmonizing these would have not been easy. The imports of these are that their findings cannot be generalized in other working environments elsewhere in the world.

Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey and Toth, (2015) study on “the relationship of OP and support to work behaviours, attitudes, and stress” posit that OP had an effect on the work behaviours of employees, as well as their attitude and their stress levels. They therefore aimed at ascertaining the consequences of OP and supports of organizations on two separate samples of employees numbering 283. Using Pearson

Moment correlation, data generated were analysed. Findings from their study showed that politics had strong relationships with employees' negative behaviours like withdrawals, turnover intentions, and lack of organizational commitment. They however found out that support within the organization produce positive outcomes. Similarly, they found out that politics did not support employees' job involvements and reduced organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), but with support from the organization, employees recorded high levels of involvement on the job and OCB. Based on their findings, they recommended that the best way organizations can sustain healthy workplace behaviours was for employees to enjoy organizational supports and minimize rift emanating from organizational politics amongst employees. This they aver will go a long way in predicting their attitudes like involvement, and as well as moderate employees stress levels.

Gap in the Literature

The study of organizational politics has attracted several empirical studies from researchers using several dimensions. However, since the Mintzberg's (1985) study of organization as political arena and various games which characterized politics in an organization, no empirical study has been done to test these constructs in an ideal Nigerian work environment. It is pertinent to note that as organization assemble different professionals/expertise as employees, such employees could seek to build power base with real of feigned knowledge and skill against their organization. Hence, to determine the relationship between organizational politics and employee support, this study sought to fill this gap in literature using an organization that has diverse workforce in terms of profession/expertise.

3.0 Methodology

A survey method design of research involving the employees of Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, Enugu State was adopted in this study. The reason for this decision was based on the fact that this study is exploratory in nature, such that it aimed at exploring the nature of relationships that exists between organizational politics and employees' support within the Ministry.

The population of this study consists of the entire staff of the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, Enugu State Government 2015 Draft Estimate of the Ministry revealed that there are 123 employees in the Ministry, all of which are spread into different departments like Lands, Finance and Accounts, Deeds Registry, Engineering Services, Architectural services, Town Planning, Research and Statistics, Quantity Surveying and Administration. This population is moderate enough; therefore the entire population was adopted for this study without sampling. Of a total of 123 copies of questionnaire distributed, 11 (11.2%) of them were not returned, whereas 112 (88.8%) copies of the questionnaire were returned and analyzed.

Operational Measures of Variables

The measurements of the variables of the study were all belted on a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire included 14 items that included the independent and dependent constructs. Organizational politics constructs; Line vs Staff game, Rival Camp game and Expertise game while employees' support was assessed by one indicator.

Descriptive and Empirical Result

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

From the data gathered from the survey, 63.4% of the employees of the Ministry were male, while the remaining 36.6% of the employees of the Ministry were female. 85.23% of the employees indicated that they were 45 years and above, whereas the remainder; 14.77% were between the ages of 30-44 years of age. 47.63% of the employees indicated that they had their Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's or higher degrees, while the remaining 52.37% indicated that they had only their National Diploma, O'Levels or their FSLC.

Data Analysis

The hypotheses for this study were tested using the SPSS V23 statistical programs with Unstandardized, Standard Errors and Standardized estimates. The data gathered from the survey met all the preliminary tests criteria; multicollinearity was not an issue, and there was no violation for either the convergent or discriminant validities. Cronbach's alpha for all the variables were also above 0.7. The Pearson's product moment correlation was used to test for the relationships between the variables.

Results

Table 1 Correlation between Gender, Organizational Politics and Employees' Support

	Mean	SD	Gender	Line vs Staff game	Rival camp game	Expertise game	Employees support
Gender	1.37	.484	1				
Line vs Staff game	9.21	3.94	.244*	1			
Rival camp game	9.87	3.90	.041	.100	1		
Expertise game	10.19	3.93	-.008	.344**	.265**	1	
Employees Support	16.76	5.69	-.265**	-.512**	-.385**	-.407**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS v23 output; 2018

Table 1 above shows the various mean and the standard deviations and correlations that existed between the variables of the study. There is a significant correlation between line vs staff game and employee support ($r = -.512$, $p < .01$), though a negative relationship. In other words, the greater the level to which line and staff of the Ministry pitch themselves in power tussle, the lesser the level of employee support abound. The relationship between Rival camp game and employee support is also negative and significant ($r = -.385$, $p < .01$) which is an indication that when rival gets higher, employee support in Enugu State Ministry of Lands, Survey and Housing, Enugu gets lower. Finally, there is a negative and significant relationship between Expertise game and employee support ($r = -.407$, $p < .01$), meaning that the more professionals/experts of the ministry try to wield power and control using their expertise, the less employee support obtainable therein.

Discussions

The result showed that organizational politics and employee support had negative but significant relationship. The test of hypothesis one specifically indicated that line vs staff game had a negative significant relationship with employee support leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This to a large extent was apt with the findings of Hira and Salman (2013); Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey and Toth (2015) which posit that organizational politics heist the willingness of employees to render support to their fellow employee and as well disposed them to help the organization to achieve its core competence. The second null hypothesis was also rejected; rival camp game was significantly related to employee support though negatively. This glaringly revealed that as employees engaged in rival camp games building, it results in creating rivalry amongst employee in the Ministry, their level of support to each other and to the organization wanes. Each rival camp would be obsessed with the quest to gain undue advantage over others and would care less in the assisting each other to achieve organizational goals. This is equally related to the findings of (Miller, *et al*, 2008; Andrews and Kacmar 2010; Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot, 2014) which maintained that higher perception of organizational politics largely distort support in an organization. The third null hypothesis was equally rejected as there is significant relationship between expertise game and employee support. From the result, obtained it was glaring that when professionals/experts in the Ministry

like: surveyors, Architects, Engineers, Estate managers, Accountants, Lawyers and other professionals and experts, as may be obtained in the Ministry, are obsessed with their profession to the extent of leveraging on it to amass power, recognition and influence; these could pitch them against others. Such would reduce their inclination to support each other at workplace. The findings is related to the findings of (Kodisinghe, 2010; Hira and Salman, 2013,) which are of the opinion that employees could use their requisite skill and knowledge (expertise) to build power base which minimize their willingness to support others to the advantage of the organization.

• **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The relationship between Organizational politics and employees' support is anegatively significant one. Simple explanation for this results is that the various types of political games played by employees within the Ministry, has the tendency of eroding every ounce of OCB that employees has to show to other organization member. The implications are less attached employees to the organization, less committed employees, dissatisfied employees and generally a poor performing Ministry. Recommendations however are that: proper checks should be put in place to ensure that such political games do not get too personal within the ministry, as this is whence it is no longer healthy for employees support. Also policy makers should ensure that issues of expertise are not overplayed as it is bound to create acrimony amongst employees which would lead to anti-OCB within the Ministry.

Limitations and Suggestions for further studies

Limitations of this study were in the areas of population size; the population of this study was not large enough to make a generalization that OP affects employees support in Nigeria negatively. Therefore there is need for further studies with a larger population to be done in this area. Further studies are also suggested with different other political games in other Ministries, as there is every tendency that these very political games explored in the ministry of landsand Urban Development may be peculiar to them, and may present contrary results elsewhere.

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