

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS ON EFFECTIVE
LEADERSHIP DELIVERY**

A CASE OF TAMALE POLYTECHNIC, GHANA

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Abstract

This research had the objective of assessing the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership delivery. Survey responses from questionnaires administered to both teaching staff and administrators in Tamale Polytechnic- Ghana were quantitatively analyzed. The results of the research indicated that organizational politics (OP) in Tamale Polytechnic takes an ethnic dimension as was seen in both teachers and administrators as players' in the polytechnic. OP influences decision making and appointments of staff negatively and that ultimately affects effective leadership, employee attitude and performance. Assigning loyal people to key position enhances effective leadership delivery. This measure may contradict organizational values; however this comes down to the leaders' preference. The research did not examine other facets of political phenomenon in organizations, as many suggest. So the specific characteristics of the examined organization may limit the external validity of the findings.

Keywords: Organizational politics, Effective leadership, Leadership decision making, Strategies, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Organizational politics are an unavoidable factor governing the workplace. In this era of technological advances and globalization, politics allows for greater opportunities for both collaboration and competition. This enhances the quality of the product of business but may hinder the organizational policies and corporate goals. Whereas, no human institution exists and operates meaningfully without clusters of relational of people who are employed to work. Members of these clusters usually have their agendas that may or may not be in cognizance

with corporate goals and policies. The relation of individuals or groups interest with that of corporate goals influences leadership delivery. This however gets worrying when organizational politics generates interests among members that are not in line with corporate goals. Whereas organizations cannot exist without any form of politics, it must be stated that the failure of management to run organizations objectively and equitable is largely responsible for the increasing dangerous, destructive and desperate political tendencies prevalent in most organizations today (Muo, 2005).

In the African terrain (Ghana), this situation gets complex where background of employees are diverse and that has a role in relationship and leadership delivery. Leadership gets very challenging and achieving leadership goals becomes equally challenging whose members of groups have keen interest in relation to the collective corporate goals. This situation has caused the failure of many organizations. Tamale polytechnic is an organization that has formal or informal groups. How these groups through organizational politics drive their interest and how that in turn influences the delivery of leadership is of interest to this study.

John et al (2002), posit that the goals of the organization and the acceptable means are established by organizationally powerful individuals in negotiation with others. Thus, leadership success through organizational politics is the use of power to develop socially acceptable ends and means that balance individual and collective interests, of which Tamale Polytechnic is no exception. This study is hence conducted to assess the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership delivery. In a bid to realize the general objective, the study focused the following specific objectives:

- i. To determine the nature of organizational politics in Tamale Polytechnic.
- ii. To assess the influence of organizational politics on leadership decision process.
- iii. To explore strategies of using organizational politics to enhance leadership.

Scope of the study

The spectrum of the research work includes an assessment of the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership delivery; a case study of Tamale Polytechnic. Certainly, Tamale polytechnic is the prime focus because; it has off late been engulfed in different dimensions of organizational politics. It interest one to study its effects on leadership delivery in the polytechnic. Formal unionization forms a key element of the staff composition in the polytechnic, and exposes both teaching and non-teaching staff to organizational politics. The proximity to respondents in relation to data gathering would be overwhelmed, hence, the scope. Tamale Polytechnic is one of the ten public polytechnics in Ghana established to provide middle level manpower needs to the teaming industries in the country and beyond. Situated in the regional capital of the Northern region, the polytechnic and its staff are characterized by people with diverse ethnic, religious and geographical background, and for that matter; workers speak

various languages with the main or native language being Dagbani. This research is conducted during the period of 2012 & 2013.

Delimitations

- i. Staff who was not regular or proceeded for study leave in the polytechnic was not included in the study on the grounds that they may not be able to give objective responses in administering the questionnaire.
- ii. Also, staff on probationary appointments was exempted for reason that they may not have insight of the nature of organizational politics in the polytechnic.

Limitations of the study

- (a) The study focused on an assessment of the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership delivery as reported by the employees and not on actual political behaviors. The research did not examine other facets of the political phenomenon in organizations, as other studies suggest (Vigoda-Gadot, 2003).
- (b) The specific characteristics of the examined organization may limit the external validity of the findings. The organization is very formal, employs relatively young individuals in to field of academia and administration with job experience, and demands excellent performance from its employees. The study utilized data from Tamale Polytechnic employees and thus cannot be generalized to other industries.
- (c) Due to the small sample size used for this study, results may not be generalized beyond the specific population from which the sample was drawn.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The website www.businessdictionary.com, defined organization as a social unit of people that is structured and managed to meet a need or to pursue collective goals. All organizations have a management structure that determines relationships between the different activities and the members, and subdivides and assigns roles, responsibilities, and authority to carry out different tasks. Organizations are open systems: they affect and are affected by their environment.

Daft (2007) supports this view when he describes organizations as social entities that are goal – directed, designed and structured deliberately with coordinated activity systems which are linked to the external environment. Robbins and Coulter (2009) asserted that an organization is a deliberate arrangement of people to accomplish some specific purpose. According to their definition, all organizations have three common characteristics. First, an organization has distinct purpose (this purpose is typically expressed through goals that organization hopes to accomplish). Second, each organization is composed of people who

perform the work that is necessary for the organization to achieve its goals. Third, all organizations develop some deliberate structure within which members do their work. It is important to remember that the goals of the organization and the acceptable means are established by organizationally powerful individuals in negotiation with others (John et al, 2002). Thus, leadership success through organizational politics is the use of power to develop socially acceptable ends and means that balance individual and collective interests

Politics is neutral and is not necessary harmful to the organization (Daft, 2007). Mayes et al (1980) asserted that, Organizational Politics (OP) is the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through no sanctioned means and the art of creative compromise among competing interests. Organizational politics involves activities to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain the preferred outcome when there is uncertainty or disagreement about choices. Organizational politics 'involves those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation where there is uncertainty or disagreement' (McAfee & Champagne 1987, cited in Oghojafor & Muo, 2012). It is the business of employing a constellation of forces by an individual or a group to gain advantage over others. It is a business because those involved look forward to bountiful gains as rewards for engaging in it (Fajana, 2002). It is also defined as 'those activities that are not required as part of one's formal role in organization, but that influence or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization (Farrell and Peterson 1982, cited in Oghojafor & Muo, 2012).

Organizational politics is defined again as behavior strategically designed to maximize self-interests and therefore in conflict with the collective organizational goals or the interests of other individuals. Studies that have focused on organizational politics have taken different approaches. An extensive bank of knowledge has been accumulated in recent years about organizational politics and their relationship with organizational performance (Ferris et al, 1989).

Research scholars have asserted that, there are two quite different traditions in the analysis of organizational politics. One tradition builds on Machiavelli's philosophy and defines politics in terms of self-interest and the use of non-sanctioned means. In this tradition, organizational politics may be formally defined as the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non sanctioned influence or means (Mayes & Allen, 1977). Managers are often considered political when they seek their own goals or use means that are not currently authorized by the organization or that push legal limits. Where there is uncertainty or ambiguity, it is often extremely difficult to tell whether a manager is being political in this self-serving sense. Pfeffer (1984), for instance, was John Meriwether a great innovator when he established Long Term Capital Management (LTCM) as a hedge fund to bet on interest rate spreads (Sconcolfi et al, 1998). At one time, the

firm included 2 Nobel laureates and some 25 Ph.D.s. Or was he the consummate insider when he got the U.S. Federal Reserve to orchestrate a bailout when it looked like he would either go broke or lose control to a rich investor? Or as often happens in the world of corporate politics, could both of these statements be partially true?

The second tradition treats politics as a necessary function resulting from differences in the self-interests of individuals. Here, organizational politics is viewed as the art of creative compromise among competing interests. In the case of John Meriwether and LTCM, when it went bankrupt the country's financial leaders were concerned that it could cause panic in the markets and so hurt everyone. So the Federal Reserve stepped in. That Meriwether did not lose everything was merely a byproduct of saving the whole financial system (Ashforth et al, 1990).

Effective leadership action requires managers to harness power that is intrinsically political. According to Robbins & Coulter (2009), leadership is what leaders do. It is a process of leading a group and influencing that group to achieve its goals. Lussier & Achua (2007) support this definition, and posit that leadership is the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve organizational objectives through change. Their definition of leadership centers on five key elements (leaders-followers, influence, organizational objectives, people and change). Curtis & Manning (2009) assert that, Leadership is social influence. It means leaving a mark. It is initiating and guiding, and the result is change. The product is a new character or direction that otherwise would never be. By their ideas and deeds, leaders show the way and influence the behavior of others (Manning & Curtis, 2009). Lewis et al (2001) support the work of (Curtis & Manning, 2009; Robbins & Coulter, 2009; Lussier & Achua, 2007), and posit further that, leadership isn't a position, title or privilege; it's a responsibility and a process – an observable, understandable, learnable set of skills and practices available to everyone, any – where in the organization. Leadership is the indirect ability to lead people by setting an inspiring example – not just any sort of example, but one that inspires people to pursue goals that benefit the organization. It is indirect because, true leaders don't have to try to influence intentionally.

Leadership involves creating a vision of the future, devising a strategy for achieving that vision, and communicating the vision so that everyone understands and believes in it. Leadership also entails providing an environment that will inspire and motivate people to overcome obstacles. In this way leadership brings about change (Lewis et al, 2001). Effective leaders do not use a single style; they adjust their style to the situation. Although not mentioned explicitly, national culture is certainly an important situational variable in determining which leadership style will be most effective (Robbins & Coulter, 2001).

In a research study Swierczek (1991) concluded that what works in China isn't likely to be effective in France or Canada. For instance, one study of Asian leadership styles revealed that Asian managers preferred leaders who were competent decision makers, effective

communicators, and supportive of employees. Effective leadership is considered a factor that has a major influence on the performance of organizations, managers and employees (Wang et al., 2005). Early theories tried to define effective leadership styles (democratic or autocratic, socially oriented or target oriented etc.) and to relate them with various aspects of organizational outcomes (Lewin et al., 1939). More recently, researchers have focused mainly on the subordinates' perspective and proposed two main facets of leadership: transactional and transformational (Bass, 1985). This theory suggests that transformational leadership, more than transactional leadership, has a stronger positive effect on employees' attitudes towards their job, their job environment, and ultimately affects their work performance.

It has been said that there is nothing as practical as a goad theory (Miner, 2003). Leadership theory also called research approaches, classification include trait, behavioral, contingency and integration. A leadership paradigm is a shared mindset that represents a fundamental way of thinking about, perceiving, studying, researching, and understanding leadership. This has changed in the 60 years from paradigm in management to leadership (Lussier & Achua, 2007). Early leadership studies were based on the assumption that leaders are born, not made. Researches wanted to identify a set of characteristics or traits that distinguished leaders from followers or effective from ineffective leaders. Leadership trait theories attempt to explain distinctive characteristics accounting for leadership effectiveness. Researchers analyzed physical and psychological traits, or qualities, such as high energy level, appearance, aggressiveness, self-reliance, persuasiveness, and dominance in an effort to identify a set of traits that all successful leaders possessed. Studies conducted during the 1930s and 1990s to discover a list of qualities shows that, no one has traits that will guarantee leadership success (Lussier & Achua, 2009). Researchers attempted further to identify differences in the behavior of effective leaders versus ineffective leaders. Behavioral research focuses on finding ways to classify behavior that will facilitate our understanding of leadership. However, there was no agreement on one best leadership style for all management situations. On the positive side, Mintzberg's leadership theory is widely used to train leaders. And other researchers did identify two generic dimensions of leader behavior: task – and people – oriented leadership, which have importance in accounting for leadership effectiveness (House & Aditya, 1997).

Good decision making is important at all levels in the organization. It begins with recognition or awareness of problems and opportunities and concludes with an assessment of the results of actions taken to solve those problems (Lewis et al, 2001). Daft (2007) support and formally defined organizational decision making as the process of identifying and solving problems. The process has two major stages. In the problem identification stage, information about environment and organizational conditions is mentioned to determine if performance is

satisfactory and diagnose the cause of shortcomings. The problem solution stage is when alternative course of action are considered and one alternative is selected and implemented.

An effective decision-making process generally includes the seven steps, processing in a logical, sequential order, managerial decision making often unfolds in a quite disorderly and complex manner. Keep in mind that managers are influenced at each step in the decision-making process by their individual personalities, attitudes, and behaviors, ethics and values, and culture (Lewis et al, 2001).

Identifying Opportunities and Diagnosing Problems: Decision makers must know where action is required. Consequently, the step in the decision-making process is the clear identification of opportunities or the diagnosis of problems that require a decision. Managers regularly review data related to their areas of responsibility, including outside information and reports and information from within the organization.

An assessment of opportunities and problems will be on as accurate as the information on which it is based. Therefore, managers put a premium on obtaining accurate, reliable information. Poor-quality or inaccurate information can waste time and lead a manager to overlook the underlying causes of a situation (O' Reilly, 1982).

Objectives reflect the results the organization wants to attain. Both the quantity and quality of the desired result should be specified, for those aspects of the objectives will ultimately guide the decision maker in selecting the appropriate course of action. Regardless of the time frame, the objectives guide the ensuring decision-making process (Lewis et al, 2001). In generating alternatives, the manager must keep in mind the goal and objectives that he or she is trying to achieve. The alternatives can be standard and obvious as well as innovative and unique. Innovative approaches may be developed through such strategies as brainstorming, nominal group technique, and the Delphi technique. Evaluating Alternatives - Fundamental to this step is the ability to assess the value or relative advantages and disadvantages of each alternative under consideration. Predetermined decision criteria such as the quality desired, anticipated costs, benefits, uncertainties, and risks of each alternatives may be used in the evaluation process (Lewis et al, 2001).

Reaching decision involves carefully examining all the facts, determining whether sufficient information is available, and finally selecting the best alternative (Eisenhardt, 1989). Choosing implementation strategies: To bridge between reaching a decision and evaluating the results is the implementation phase of the decision-making process. According to recent research, senior executives frequently complain that middle and operating managers fail to take actions necessary to implement decisions (Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992). Monitoring and Evaluating - Managers must observe the impact of the decision as objectively as possible and

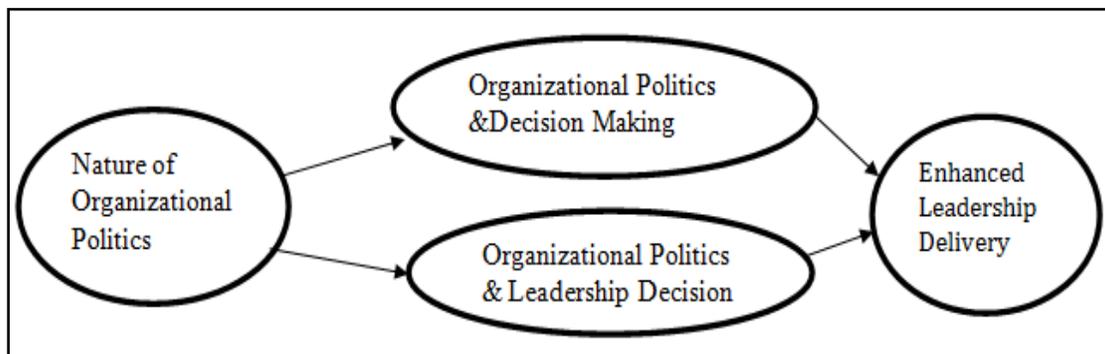
make further corrective action if it becomes necessary. Quantifiable objectives can be established even before the solution to the problem is put into effect (Lewis et al, 2001).

Most research shows that the nature of organizational politics takes the forms; reciprocity, networking and coalition (Robbins & Cenzo, 2004; Flynn; Stewart, 2003). The use of power in organizations however requires both skill and willingness. Many decisions are made through political processes because rational decision processes do not fit. Uncertainty or disagreement is too high. Political tactics for using power to influence decision outcomes include; Build coalitions and expand networks, Assign loyal people to key positions, Control decision premises, Enhance legitimacy and expertise, Make a direct appeal and Use of power however should be obvious (Daft, 2007).

The conceptual model

The research model depicted in Figure 1, suggests the nature of organizational politics, and its effect on decision making process and leadership decision, and how these enhanced leadership delivery. Transparency in decision-making process characterize that employees understand what is expected from the framework of their job. Employees should have a more positive outlook on the workplace and be willing to invest efforts in the work, even beyond that which is required by their formal job definition (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). Organizational politics may have effect on leadership decision which will also influence enhanced leadership delivery.

Figure 1: The nature of organizational politics on leadership delivery



Leadership decisions are expected to create a better understanding among employees that encourages the development of interest-based relationship between employees and managers characterized by negotiation skills that are suitable for a political environment, by the management of exchange relationships, and a reward system that will increase employees' motivation thereby enhancing leadership delivery. Leadership decision can be influenced by the nature of organizational politics. This in turn will influence leadership delivery in the polytechnic. Mintzberg (1985) held that the political arena in organizations had a functional role. He posits

further that, a system of politics in organizations is necessary to correct certain deficiencies and dysfunctions. Leadership could be enhanced by bringing the strongest members of the organization into positions of authority in a somewhat Darwinian manner which promotes a full debate of issues necessary for organizational change blocked by legitimate systems of influence that can facilitate decision making.

It is thus the leaders' responsibility to create an organizational atmosphere that is reciprocal, fair, and fulfills the expectations and needs of the individuals and the managerial cadre, as well as the organization as a whole. A balanced relationship between leaders and members is essential, and the fair treatment of the individual must be advanced as an organizational strategy. Enhancing fair social exchange relations may reduce the level of organization politics and positively enhanced leadership delivery.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach used is qualitative. A descriptive survey design method was adopted for the study. One set of questionnaire with structured questions was directed to teachers and administrators of Tamale polytechnic with the research objective in mind. The questions were mainly closed-ended seeking definite answers from respondents. An interview guide intended for researcher flexibility, clarification and also elicits information necessary for this research was also utilized. This was directed to principal officers (teachers and administrators') of the polytechnic. The data collected from the research instruments discussed above was analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS), summarized, and interpreted accordingly with the aid of descriptive statistical techniques, simple percentages presented in table, charts.

Population and sample size

Simple random sampling was used to draw the sample from the total population. This was intended to give each element an equal and independent chance of being selected. With a staff population of 475, characterized by both masculine and feminine gender, 387 represent the masculine gender, while the remaining 88 constitutes the feminine gender (Source: unpublished data from Planning Unit of Tamale Polytechnic, 2010). The population is however a reflection of Academic and Non- Academic staff of the institution. A total 130 questionnaires were applied out of which 110 successful retrieved. This consists of ninety (90) men and twenty (20) female.

Socio biographic profile of respondents

The demographic distribution of Respondents was studied in six (6) dimensions. These were

the: Sex; Educational attainment; Length of being with Tamale Polytechnic; Schedule of work; Extra responsibility allocation; and Nature of responsibility.

On the sex of respondents, majority of the respondents were males keeping a tally of 78% and 22% were females. The educational construct was measure on four indicators namely: 2nd degree; 1st degree; Diploma; and others. 1st degree holders dominated the study attaining 51% of the study respondents. 27% of the respondents were 2nd degree holders, with 12% and 10% representing Diploma and other certificates holders of the respondents.

The demographic feature of the length of time; respondents have worked at Tamale Polytechnic revealed 60% of respondents have worked at the Tamale Polytechnic for between 1 to 6 years. 20% of the respondents have worked at Tamale Polytechnic from between 7 to 8 years. 7% of the respondents have worked between 13 to 18 years. Also, 5% have worked for between 19 to 24 years, with 8% of the respondents worked for 25 years and above.

The structure of work of respondents' shows 36% of respondents indicated that they are in the teaching field, while 54% of the respondents have administrative duties, and the remaining 10% of the total number of respondents, have both duties.

Interestingly only 40% of respondents were allocated any extra responsibilities, with the majority of 60% respondents not allocated to any extra responsibility. On the nature of the extra responsibilities allocation, 22% of the respondents indicated that they had coordinative duties, 5% of the respondents were heads of departments, with 15% of the respondents indicated that they were deans in their institution, and 58% of the respondents were assign on other natures of responsibility (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio biographic profile of the Respondents

S/N	Demographics	Indicators	Frequency	%
1.	Sex	Male	86	78%
		Female	24	22%
2.	Educational Attainment	2 nd Degree	30	27%
		1 st Degree	56	51%
		Diploma	13	12%
		Others	11	10%
3.	Length of Being with Tamale Polytechnic	1 to 6 Years	66	60%
		7 to 12 Years	22	20%
		13 to 18 Years	8	7%
		19 to 24 Years	5	5%
		25 and above Years	9	8%
4.	Schedule of Work	Teaching	40	36%
		Administrative	59	54%
		Both	11	10%
5.	Extra responsibility allocation	Yes	44	40%
		No	66	60%
6.	Nature of Responsibility	Coordinator	24	22%
		Head of Department	6	5%
		Dean	16	15%
		Others	64	58%

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

Nature of organizational politics

The study shows that staff acknowledges the existence of Organizational Politics in Tamale Polytechnic. 87% of respondents supported the existence of Politics in Tamale Polytechnic, with 13% of the respondents opposing its existence. A further insight was sought to present the political actors in the Polytechnic in terms of their schedule of work. 10% of respondents were teachers, 17% for administrator, while the remaining 73% of respondents indicated both teachers and administrators. The natures of organizational politics were cross tabulated with the dimension of organizational politics in Tamale Politics. Networking nature of organizational politics in an ethnic dimension dominated over Reciprocity and Coalition natures' of organizational politics in the context of social dimension recorded the next highest total counts. Other nature of Organizational politics received the lowest total count on the nature of organizational politics. Party lines' dimension of organizational politics also recorded a higher total counts than Religious and other dimension of organizational' politics (Table 2).

Table 2. Cross tabulation of nature and dimension of organizational politics

		The dimension of organizational politics					Total	
		Ethnic	Religiou s	Party Lines	Social	Other		
Nature of Organizati onal Politics	Reciprocity	Count	18	2	4	7	0	31
		% within Nature of organizational politics	58.1%	6.5%	12.9%	22.6%	0%	100%
	Coalition	Count	21	4	0	6	0	31
		% within Nature of organizational politics	67.7%	12.9%	.0%	19.4%	0%	100%
	Networking	Count	23	0	5	15	3	46
		% within Nature of organizational politics	50.0%	.0%	10.9%	32.6%	6.5%	100.0%
	Others	Count	2	0	0	0	0	2
		% within Nature of organizational politics	100.0 %	.0%	.0%	.0%	0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	64	6	9	28	3	110
		% within Nature of organizational politics	58.2%	5.5%	8.2%	25.5%	2.7%	100.0%

Influence of organizational politics on leadership decision process

The study revealed that organizational politics influence leadership decision making process in Tamale Polytechnic immensely. 84% of respondents in the study accept organizational politics influence on leadership decision making process, with 16% of respondents opposing organizational politics on leadership decision making process.

In evaluating the influence of organizational politics on decision making elements, the appointment of positions recorded the highest count as the decision making element, followed by recruitment of staff. Staff promotion, staff upgrading, and other decision making element are chronologically listed using the total counts. The line of influence of organizational politics on leadership decision making were three folded as positively, negatively, and both positive and negative influences. Negatively line of influence recorded the highest total count and also on all decision making elements. Both positive and negative line of influence also recorded high total counts compared with the positive line influence (Table 3).

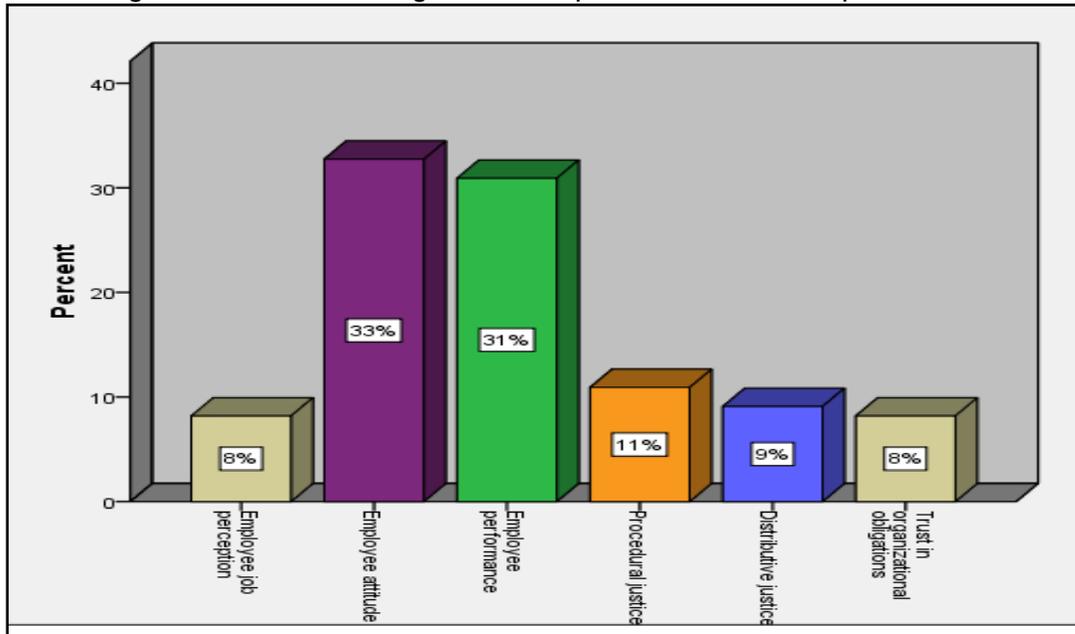
Table 3. Cross tabulation of line of organizational politics influence and decision making elements

		The line of organizational politics influence				
		Positive y	Negative y	Both	Totals	
Decision making Elements	Appointment of positions	Count	2	29	25	56
		% within How does OP influence leadership decision making in TP	3.6%	51.8%	44.6%	100%
	Recruitment of staff	Count	6	13	5	24
		% within How does OP influence leadership decision making in TP	25.0%	54.2%	20.8%	100%
	Staff promotion	Count	0	7	6	13
		% within How does OP influence leadership decision making in TP	.0%	53.8%	46.2%	100%
	Staff upgrading	Count	0	3	2	5
		% within How does OP influence leadership decision making in TP	.0%	60%	40.0%	100%
	Others	Count	2	7	3	12
		% within How does OP influence leadership decision making in TP	16.7%	58.3%	25.0%	100%
	Total	Count	10	59	41	110
		% within How does OP influence leadership decision making in TP	9.1%	53.6%	37.3%	100%

The study further established that organizational politics affects effective leadership in Tamale Polytechnic. Nearly 92% of respondents in the study acknowledge the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership, while 8% of respondents denying organizational politics on effective leadership delivery. A further insight was inquired from respondents on the area of organizational political influence. 33% associated the influences to employee attitudes, 31%

also attributed the influences to employee performance, 11% related the influence to procedural justice, 9% linked the influence to distributive justice, and 8% of respondents indicated that it influences employee job perception, and trust in organizational obligations correspondingly (Figure 1).

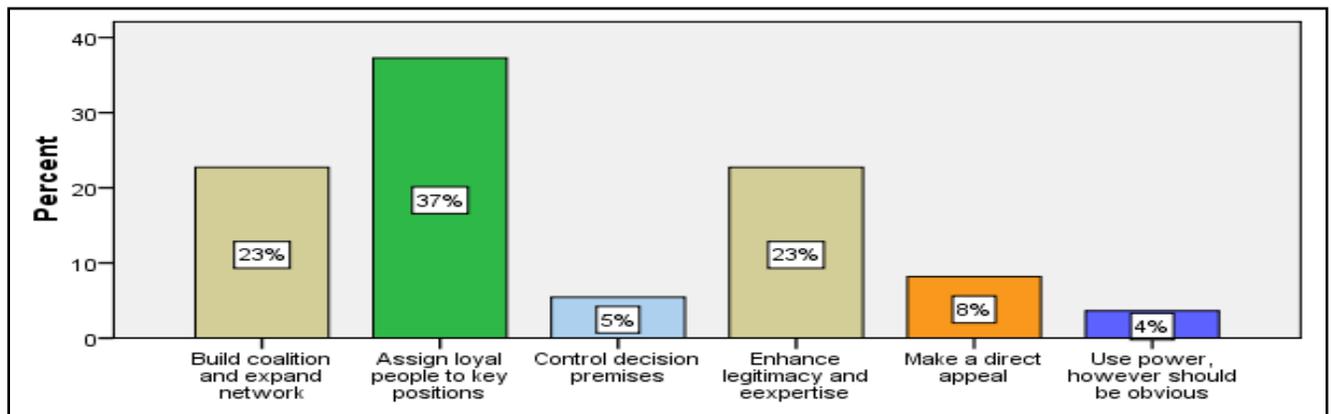
Figure 1. Influence of organizational politics on Leadership decisions



Strategies in organizational politics that enhance leadership

The existences of measures to enhance effective leadership delivery in Tamale Polytechnic were sort (Figure 2). 88% of respondents in the study support the existence of measures to enhance effective leadership delivery, but 12% of respondents oppose the existence of measures to enhance effective leadership delivery.

Figure 2. Strategies in organizational politics that enhance leadership



The study further establishes an ideal application of organizational politics in enhancing effective leadership delivery in Tamale Polytechnic. 37% of respondents indicated assigning loyal people to key positions, 23% of respondents point to the building of coalition and expand network, 23% of respondents embraces legitimacy and expertise, 8% of respondents indicated making a direct appeal, 5% of respondents support control decision premises, and 4% of respondents indicated that used power, however should be obvious.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study evaluated effects of organizational politics on effective leadership delivery; the case of Tamale Polytechnic, Northern Region – Ghana. The results of the research as per the objectives are summarized and concluded below.

Demographic profile of respondents

It has been established that Tamale Polytechnic is a male dominated institution. The male sex appears to be more on both teaching and none teaching staffs with just a little being the female sex. Also, Tamale Polytechnic has more Bachelors holders than any other level of academic attainment. Staff under this study had worked with the Polytechnic for between a year and six years, and above with less than half of the respondents had ever or currently engages in extra duties.

The nature of organizational politics in Tamale Polytechnic

Findings showed that staff acknowledges the existence of organizational politics in the institution and reveals further that both Teachers and Administrators staffs as players in organizational politics. Politics in the polytechnic is however networking nature, rooted in ethnic dimension dominated over reciprocity and coalition natures' of organizational politics in asocial, party lines,' religious and other dimension also receives attention in polytechnic.

The influence of organizational politics on leadership decision making process

The study revealed that organizational politics influence leadership decision making process in Tamale Polytechnic. Close to hundred percent of respondents asserted that organizational politics influence on the following decisions making elements of the Tamale Polytechnic, specifically in the appointment of positions; recruitment of staff; and in staff upgrading. Interestingly, this impedes leadership decisions negatively as expressed by most respondents. Finding again revealed that organizational politics affects effective leadership in Tamale Polytechnic. Almost all respondents in the study acknowledge the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership. Respondents associated the consequences to employee

attitudes; employee performance; procedural justice; distributive justice; employee job perception; and trust in organizational obligations.

Strategies in organizational politics that enhance leadership

The study further showed that Tamale Polytechnic has measures that make organizational politics enhance effective leadership. The assignment of loyal people to key positions; the building of coalition and expansion of network; enhancement of legitimacy and expertise, making a direct appeal; controlling decision premises; and the used of power been obvious are the various strategies within the organizational politics used to enhance leadership in Tamale Polytechnic.

Organizational politics has become a common scourge in modern organizations. Even when organizations are properly structured with appropriate policies and culture, there is still the natural tendency for leadership to act beyond the book in an effort to have an edge over others in a world characterized by scarcity and uncertainty.

It is conclusive from the summary of the above findings that organizational politics, “those actions not officially approved by an organization taken to influence others to meet one’s personal goals” (Greenberg and Baron, 1997), would appear to be inevitable in organizational life. Some individuals and groups will naturally take advantage of circumstances at work, which will benefit them personally. Most people in Tamale Polytechnic agree that workplace politics is a reality of organizational life. Hence there is some level of organizational politics in Tamale Polytechnic, but players are much informed on the effects of these politics and play it to their personal ends.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that, the Polytechnic Governing Council and National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEx) which have oversight responsibility on the Tamale polytechnic institute more objective intervention to check leadership actions that are purely political during staff appointments and placement in the polytechnic.

Tamale Polytechnic should create an organizational atmosphere that is reciprocal, fair, and fulfils the expectations and needs of employees and the managerial cadre, as well as the organization. Thus, systems in the polytechnic should enable employees predict his/her position in the next three (3) years.

There should be awareness creation about the dangers of organizational politics rooted through ethnic dimension. Since this have the consequences of retarding the growth of Tamale Polytechnic employees’ especially teaching and administration staff.

Implication for further research

The sample size used was not very large due to financial and time constraints. Further research could therefore be conducted into the phenomenon using a larger sample size. Preferably the study could be conducted across the 10 Polytechnics of Ghana for a general view of the effects of organizational politics on effective leadership delivery.

The research did not examine other facets of political phenomenon in organizations, as many suggest. So the specific characteristics of the examined organization may limit the external validity of the findings. Hence, utilized data cannot be generalized to other industries. Future studies can explore more rigorous statistical techniques and incorporate variables such as impact of interaction, position, workplace culture, involvement; work based self-esteem on working women perception.

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