

# Strategic Management in the Context Organizational Politics: Conceptual Review

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**Abstract—** The role of organizational politics in the strategic process is receiving a great deal of attention from managers and scholars today Organizational politics, as argued by various researchers, can be either positive or negative (Othman, 2008: 44) and this paper delves into both sides of the organizational politics by offering examples from literature and research carried out throughout the years. it provides some examples of political strategies that managers use, arguing that political action is not all bad and that managers have much more choice in strategic change strategies than they are willing to acknowledge. Organizational politics is generally viewed as having negative outcomes in the strategic management process or as an indication of problems in the process. We argue that organizational politics can have both positive and negative outcomes

**Index Terms—** Strategic Management, Organizational Politics

## I. INTRODUCTION

Broadly, organizational politics is often defined as the behavior that is aimed at safeguarding the self-interest of an individual at the cost of another (Allen et al, 1979: 77; Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010: 195; Ferris et al, 1989: 145; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010: 498; Latif et al, 2011; Vigoda-Gadot & Kapun, 2005: 252), and this behavior usually conflicts with the organizational goals (Ladebo, 2006: 259; Sussman et al, 2002: 314; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007: 665). Consequently, according to Beugré & Liverpool (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006), organizational politics is an ‘antisocial’ behavior (2006: 124). Organizational politics can also be viewed as a group phenomenon where people do not necessarily engage in politics just as individuals. according to James (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) that group politics probably motivated or weakened by the organizational cultural values, which may also template the route that the group politics will take. mentioned ( Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) organizational politics defined as significant since these supply an understanding of the unofficial processes of struggle and co-operations in organizations, and their impact on the employees’ performance. Othman (2008) references two sides of organizational politics in his paper on the role of justice, trust and job ambiguity, namely the negative side, which involves convenient and illegal behavior, and the positive side which is a social function that is important for organizations to survive. Negative organizational politics are refused because of the ethical problems encrusted with them and the workplace struggle that is created, whilst positive organizational politics results from the amalgamation of

engaged goals and stimulating collaboration (Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010: 196; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010: 509). Managers can mitigate the detrimental effects of politics by not only executing specific measures that address organizational politics but also by investigating sound overall management approaches as indirect deterrents to prevent its negative influence on the organization.commissioners of an organization, supervisors, and subordinates, who behave in a manner that places self-interest ahead of the organizational goals are engaging in organizational politics, which can compromise productivity. This paper suggests that one of the key influences upon strategic management process effectiveness, which has not been adequately or accurately addressed to date is organizational politics. Zahra (1987: 579) noted that despite increasing awareness of the ramifications of organizational politics in organizational success ‘there is a paucity of empirical studies that articulate the link between organizational politics and the strategic process.’ Nearly We contend in this paper, that efforts to improve the effectiveness of strategic management will benefit from further research that considers the role that organizational politics plays in strategic management. We seek to contribute to this, through a review of the relevant literature and identification of propositions to inform future research.

## II. STUDY OBJECTIVES

several issues are emphasized in this paper. The first is the relationship between organizational politic and strategic management. The second is the influence of organizational politic on company performance, third explain the concepts of strategic management and organization politics

## III. DEFINITION OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

Most research has tended towards defining politic as negative. Overall, organizational politics affects employees unfavorably because they feel like they have no dominance within the organization, in addition to a lack of trust of those in power positions (Malik, Danish, & Ghafoor, 2009). when persons were asked to characterize workplace politics they typically listed self-serving and manipulative activities that are not perceived positively. Driven heavily by self-interest, organizational politics can result in abundant negative organizational results that can lead to the ultimate demise of the organization by lowering productivity and profits (Miller, Rutherford, & Kolodinsky, 2008; Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010). Organizational politics is an extremely complex construct and widely divergent views exist as to what it is, and how to measure it. ‘While certain likeness may be said to exist among the definitions proposed thus far, at present there is no widely shared definition of organizational politics’ (Kacmar et al 1999: 384). Zanzi and O’Neill (2001) identify negative political tactics as those behaviors that are not

sanctioned by the organization, including manipulation, blaming or attacking others, and the use of innuendoes, also positive political tactics such as the use of superordinate goals and networking. According to (Drory, 1993; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992) found that organizational politics was perceived as self-serving behavior by workers to achieve self-interests, advantages, and benefits at the expense of others and sometimes opposite to the interests of the entire organization or work unit. This behavior was a lot associated with defamation, subversiveness, and illegitimate ways of overusing power to attain one's objectives. Ferris et al. (1989) apprehension and lower employee trust are byproducts of organizational politics that support a disruptive organization, making goal achievement difficult (Cropanzano et al., 1997). Organizations are social existence that includes a fight for resources, personal conflicts, and a variety of influence tactics executed by individuals and groups to obtain benefits and goals in different ways (Molm, 1997). For instance, Darr and Johns (2004: 171) suggest that organizational politics is 'generally understood as involving behavior that is directed toward furthering self or group interest at the expense of others' well being'. However, increasingly many researchers support the view that organizational political behavior is not inherently negative; that it can be used for positive and negative outcomes. For example, Pfeffer (1992) argues that the use of influence and power should not be viewed negatively as it can be used for evil purposes and to accomplish great things. Involved as negative influences of organizational politics are the playing of favorites (Malik, et al., 2009); poor organizational citizenship behaviors such as backstabbing among employees (Chang, et al., 2009); the low in job satisfaction and increases of job stress (Miller, et al., 2008); an indifferent employee attitude shown in decreases in commitment to the organization and its goals. usually, organizational politics is known as behavior strategically designed to maximize self-interests (Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989) and therefore contradicts the collective organizational goals or the interests of other individuals. This perspective reflects a generally negative image of organizational politics in the eyes of most organizational members.

#### IV. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT DEFINED

Strategic management is the process carried out by managers in which they analyze the internal and external factors affecting the firm to determine strategies to allocate resources that lead to developing a competitive advantage over other firms in their industry and achieving the goals of the firm (Cox et al., 2012). Omari et al. (2011) defined strategic management as "the process and approach of specifying an organization's objectives, developing policies and plans to achieve and attain these objectives and allocating resources to implement the policies and plans" (p. 233). Now, strategic management is one of the most prominent and relevant areas in the management field. strategic management specifies a group of management actions that enable company managers to keep it aligned with its environment and on the correct path of development, that way bringing about the fulfillment of its objectives and its mission (DESS, 2007), (JONES, 1981), (MORRIS, 1992), (STEINTHORSSON, 2002), (BOYD, 2005). Porth said (PORTH, 2002), strategic management emerged as part of strategic planning, which is now regarded as one of its main instruments. It was merged into strategic

management, which united planning and management in the same process. Also, Stead and Stead (STEAD, 2008) stated that strategic management is derived from the concept of enterprise policy. This notion explains the organization as a system in which economic resources are applied effectively with the company's functional activities coordinated around generating profit. Once founded, strategic management expanded quickly and produced both theoretical and practical models (CHU, 1992). A broad series of models emerged out of market analysis in the 1960s, including the BCG Matrix, SWOT Model, the Experience Curve, and Portfolio Analysis, as well as important concepts such as the economic analysis of structure, behavior, and performance, distinctive competences, skills, and the so-called strategic planning systems (FAIRHOLM, 2009), (MINTZBERG, 2002), (STEENM, 2010). Porth (PORTH, 2002) thinks that strategic management is definable as a cross-process of formulation, and evaluation of the decisions that enable organizations to clarify and achieve their mission and ultimately to create value.

#### V. POWER

We discuss that another dimension that needs to be considered is how power relations affect the outcome. Top-down approaches to strategic decision-making put more power in the hands of those at the top. The aim of the process is to implement decisions of the key decision-maker or decision-making group. Hence, political behavior by those lower down will not only be viewed negatively but have negative effects on the process. The same behaviors by those at the top may have different effects. The opposite may be true of bottom-up decision-making processes where political behavior by those lower in the organizational hierarchy is viewed more positively which may enable its legitimate use and improve strategic management effectiveness. On the other hand, political behavior by those at the top may be viewed as attempts to manipulate the decision-making process.

#### VI. THE POSITIVE SIDE OF ORGANISATIONAL POLITICS

It has been indicated that politically clever management successfully achieves those organizational environments that are under stress – a political skill that includes an aptitude to employ actions that support feelings of trust and sincerity (Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010: 195; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010: 504). Also, the Positive Side of Organisational Politics Positive organisational politics may provide the basis for competitive advantage, especially when people are appropriately politically skilled. Also, this means that positive politics are mainly visible when individuals know how to use positive influence behaviours and strategies, and evade negative behaviour. Drory & Vigoda-Gadot (2010) argue that when one develops a set of positive political skillfulness, an effective political environment is created that does not suffer from injustice, unfairness and inequity (2010: 197). expansion to this line of argument, Butcher and Clarke (2006: 297) argue that managers who are keenly aware of the political environment in their workplace are more probable to be capable to manage those political behaviours in order to promote equality. So, according to Kurchner- Hawkins & Miller (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006), organisational politics is a key leadership concern taking into account the

perspective influence of political behaviour on the environment and competence of an organisation (2006: 331). Also (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006), the connections and alliances that are shaped on confidence and conformity, and are as well in line with the organisation's goals and objectives, may be considered as "politically positive" (2006: 341).

#### VII. THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF ORGANISATIONAL POLITICS

Though organizational politics are widely accepted to have positive potential, studies show that individuals still predominantly perceive these as negative (Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010: 195; Othman, 2008: 44; Poon, 2003: 138). Also, the interesting statement presented by Block (1988) states that "If I told you, you were a very political person you would either take it as an insult or at best as a mixed blessing" (1988: 5). Also, usually political work environments are perceived negatively by individuals and may induce a sense of unfairness, deprivation and inequity (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010: 499; Harris et al, 2009: 2669; Ladebo, 2006: 256; Vigoda-Gadot & Kapun, 2005: 258). Also, those employees who perceive their organization as being politicized will tend to withhold useful information (Beugré & Liverpool in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006: 125). Political behavior is included in the cultural factors that may also inhibit learning. Bishop et al (2006) declare that cultures that give importance to the attainment and hoarding of technical skills that are used independently by individuals are less likely to support knowledge-sharing networks (2006: 20). Likewise, cultures that are distinguished by a lack of trust will probably not encourage the transfer of knowledge from the individual to the group or the organization (Bishop et al, 2006: 20). Albrecht (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) mentions that when employees feel that they cannot trust other employees and the procedures of an organization, they tend to reduce their dedication, put in less effort, and engage in withdrawal behavior (2006: 109).

#### VIII. REASONS FOR ORGANISATIONAL POLITICS

Vredenburg & Shea-VanFossen (2010), some research has specific organizational conditions that cause employees to share in workplace political behaviors. (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) if workers realize that they are being played or their interests are ignored, then they will end up engaging in self-serving behavior (2006: 130). according, Nicholson (1997) argues that humans have an innate tendency towards power striving, which can cause workplace political behaviors where it comes into stress with the division of labor and status segregation. James also indicates the example of Tilly (in Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) wherein it is identified that severe and explicit negative politics are mostly present in low-resource countries (2006: 62). Last but not least, according to Buchanan (2008), politics may also be caused by structural relationships within an organization (2008: 54); one group of employees may have particular performance indicators and tasks to fulfill that are very different from those of another group. Also, politics is not just something that appears out of personal differences; it is often produced by tensions that exist between one function or category of employees and another; tensions can often create irritation and frustration (Jehn, 1997). According to (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) state that persons manage in political behavior oftentimes treat others with disfavor and try

to thwart formal procedures, especially when these procedures are not clear (2006: 129). research has identified sundry areas in which employees engage in political behavior, namely pressures for the economy, management and subordinates relationships, structural power struggles between configured groups such as unions and workers, struggle between the workforce and management for explaining agreements, uncertainty about standards and strategies of promotion, difficulty in linking reward with productivity, and policies and procedures (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010: 499; Latif et al, 2011: 203). Indeed, individuals are more likely to engage in political behavior when there is uncertainty involved in decision-making procedures and performance measures, and when the competition is present among individuals and sets for limited resources (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010: 499; Othman, 2008: 43; Poon, 2003: 142).

#### CONCLUSION

Astute and strong management is necessary if organizational politics is to be stifled, in the interest of maximizing productivity. Insecure and weak managers will succumb to the political persuasions of the more powerful employees. Therefore it is necessary that leadership of the organization is proficient in establishing and implementing a system of management that is transparent and based on performance-based criteria. We side with researchers who assert that organizational politics can be both positive and negative and that it can have both a positive and negative effect on the effectiveness of the strategic management process. Furthermore, we suggest that the type of strategic management process and the power relationships encouraged by that process moderate the degree of positive and negative politics and the effects of organizational politics in strategic decision-making and implementation. Further research could examine which types of strategic management processes are most effective in controlling the negative impacts of organizational politics.'

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