

## ORGANISATIONAL POLITICS AND EMPLOYEE WITHDRAWAL BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY OF PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*What managers and their subordinates need is a friendly and fair working environment free from negative politics that may result in poor productivity and dissatisfaction. This study is on factors that give employees organizational politics perception. The study also determines how politics in place of work influences psychological withdrawal. The study collected data through the administration of structured questionnaires to a sample of 135 employees of Federal Inland Revenue Services in Northeast Nigerian; SPSS version 25 and SEM AMOS were used to test the study's hypotheses. The results from the study indicated that organizational politics increase psychological withdrawal among employees. The study recommended that managers and captains in the organization identify and manage political tactics to avoid withdrawal behavior.*

**Keywords:** Workforce diversity, Centralisation, Relationship conflict, Need for power, Organisational Politics Perception and Withdrawal Behaviour.

### Introduction

Withdrawal behaviors among employees is one of the most typical occurrences that has a significant negative impact on enterprises throughout the world (Yan et al., 2021). Withdrawal behaviors in employees might be physical or psychological (Okache, 2020). Lateness to work, absenteeism, and employee turnover are all linked to physical withdrawal behavior. Psychological withdrawal behaviors, on the other hand, is a situation in which an employee is physically present in the office but is not doing their formal tasks (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Even-Zohar, 2011). Job anxiety, a lack of employee commitment, and a desire to leave are all factors that contribute to psychological withdrawal behaviors (Gaji et al., 2021; Mishra et al., 2020).

However, politics inside organizations is one factor that causes employees to retreat, and it is important to recognize that politicking in organizations is an unavoidable phenomena that has ramifications for institutions in both the public and private sectors (Meisler et al., 2020). Organizational politics is commonly defined as activities performed by managers and

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employees to advance personal agendas at the expense of the organization's broader interests and aims (Eldor, 2017). Similarly, for institutions to achieve favorable organizational outcomes, proper understanding and management of politics in the workplace is required; similarly, for an entity to obtain the required target, employees must possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and experiences in order to achieve efficiency, effectiveness, innovation, and the ability of organizations to maintain a distinctive individual pool (Hill, 2017).

Organizational politics do not just happen for no reason. They are frequently influenced by factors in the workplace; forces such as manpower diversity, organizational structure, centralization, interpersonal conflict, role ambiguity, span of control, political struggle, and scarce resources were thought to be among them (Ferris, Gerald R and Kacmar, 1992; Kacmar & Carlos, 1997). As a genealogy of organizational politics perception, this study article focused on workforce diversity, centralization, relational friction, and individual demand for power. At the same time, organizational politics has a number of negative repercussions, including job anxiety, job discontent, intention to leave, lack of employee engagement, and withdrawal behavior (physical and psychological) (Haq, 2011; Imran & Haque, 2018). This research focused on psychological retreat as a result of organizational and political perceptions.

Organizations that have a diverse workforce often have room for politics. People frequently develop interest groups based on age, ethnicity, and professional background similarities or differences (Gaji et al., 2021). These organizations frequently advocate their own interests over the organization's mission. Within the organization, relationship problems frequently lead to a lack of cohesion among employees/managers, resulting in a hostile work environment (Darr & Johns, 2004). Employees' desire for power leads to them influencing others' activities, making other coworkers feel politicked (Wangu, 2014). At the top, centralization focuses on decision-making, planning, and resource allocation. Employees in a centralized set up play a high level of organizational politics. In a centralized corporation, employees generally play politics to influence decision-makers (Taghizadeh et al., 2012). Centralization ensures that the entire organization is under the authority of the top management. It guarantees that every work is completed in a consistent way and in compliance with the same standards and concepts (Marume and Jubenkanda, 2016).

Politics has infiltrated the core of employee engagement in Nigeria, institutions have already seen their fair share of the effects of organizational politics, particularly in the areas of recruitment, selection, promotion, salary, and other fringe benefits (Idriss, 2018; Ullah et al., 2019). Furthermore, workplace politics has raised employees' job anxiety, discontent, organizational commitment, intention to resign, and turnover (Chan & Mark, 2020; Huang et al., 2020). Similarly, a group of young people opposed the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) in 2018 due to partiality in employee advancement, selection, and placement (Idriss, 2018). Furthermore, many institutions in Nigeria have seen a detrimental influence of politics on their performance, upon both an individual and collective level (Nwaeke, 2012; Obuebite,

2019; Opoku & Arthur, 2018). The choice of the FIRS was made as result of frequent complains made by different groups and individuals as reported by (Idriss, 2018). Looking at diversified workforce in FIRS, politics in such institution is inevitable and it paramount to understand and manage politics in the organisation.

The research was carried out on FIRS personnel in north east Nigeria states like as Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe, and is the first of its sort for FIRS. Despite decades of research on organizational politics and their impact on performance, most of the studies were conducted in a western environment, and factors such as psychological retreat among employees were not extensively explored, particularly in public organizations like the FIRS. Chan & James (2020) conducted a study on the role of politics (at both the individual and group levels) on emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction and consequently on intention to turnover. The study found that negative impacts of organisational politics lead to emotional exhaustion, job dissatisfaction and intention to turnover among employees. The study suggested the variables not examined and pinpointed the possible effects of OP on workplace actions such as deviant behaviour, performance, and citizenship behaviour similarly Girei et al. (2020) piloted a study on the possible mediating effects of psychological ownership in the relationship between organisational politics and employees' commitment. The results from the study found that there is no positive relationship between organisational politics and employees' commitment. Consequently, organisational politics positively affects employees' psychological ownership and psychological ownership was found to mediate between organisational politics and employees' commitment. The study recommended that future studies should consider both private and public institutions for comparison and wider scope to enable better generalization. This study responds to a need for more research on other variables not addressed in previous studies; counterproductive work behavior was suggested, necessitating the investigation of psychological withdrawal behavior.

This study was aimed at examining the relationship between the following variables:

1. Workforce diversity and organizational politics perception by employees of FIRS
2. Centralization of decision making and organizational politics perception by employees of FIRS
3. Relationship conflict and organizational politics perception by employees of FIRS
4. Struggle for power by employees and organizational politics perception in FIRS
5. Perception of organizational politics and psychological withdrawal behavior among employees of FIRS.

To achieve the object of the study, data were collected through face-to-face administration of questionnaires, and the collection period for data was three weeks.

## Literature Review

Organizational politics is prevalent in both the public and private sectors, although it is typically seen to be more so in public organizations (Shaq, 2015). Organizational politics alter rules, practices, norms, and values in order to push personal interests over a collective aim (Ferris, G.R., Ellen, B.P., III, McAllister, C.P. and Maher, 2019). Politics in the workplace has been demonstrated to cause ambiguity, uncertainty, anxiety, intention to leave, job unhappiness, and a decrease in employee engagement, according to empirical research (Hochwarter et al., 2020; Iqbal & Ahmad, 2020; Ufuk, 2020). Furthermore, empirical data from earlier investigations indicated that, workplace politics has a negative association with organizational commitment, a positive link with job unhappiness, and a negligible relationship with desire to leave (Abbas et al., 2015).

In addition, Agarwal (2016) also performed correlation research between the mediated moderated work engagement and locus of control and the perception of organizational politics on job results. In order to conduct the research, data was collected from full-time managers in India. According to the findings, unequal decisions, nepotism, and preferential treatment are hurdles to commitment, innovative work behavior, and manager retention. Consequently investigation among employees in China has revealed that employees' perceptions of politics in the workplace have a far stronger detrimental impact on emotional than normative commitment (Riaz et al., 2021).

While (Haq, 2011) investigated how the interpersonal conflict between workers influences experience of organizational politics and its consequences, the study collected data from 264 employees of six institutions in Pakistan; the analysis of the data collected found that conflict within the organization, if not well managed, can result in high politicking in the working climate in the same vein politics in the workplace can lead to negative commitment, job stress and intention to change job.

Imran and Haque (2018) looked at the link between performance evaluation politics and workers performance. The purposive sampling strategy was utilised to obtain data from 445 valid respondents (115 from each nation) out of 750 sample sizes using semi-structured questionnaires. The data analysis in this work is done using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that performance assessment politics had a detrimental impact on employee performance. Furthermore, politics in performance management leads to increased anxiety and sadness, resulting in lower operational level employee productivity.

A research was undertaken by (Asad et al., 2020) to uncover the origins of organizational politics. This research looked into a number of aspects that contribute to organizational politics. Organizational politics is a serious concern for some firms, according to the study, and it leads to demoralization or even departure of talented personnel. Individual incompetence, thirst for money, fame, and power, extroverts' conduct, nepotism, management financial interests, the nature of the company, and change in management are

all factors that contribute to organizational politics. Future scholars are encouraged to undertake similar searches at colleges and institutions in the public sector. In addition, a qualitative investigation of the uncovered elements is recommended.

Furthermore, in Rivers State, Nigeria, a research by (Nwizia Tordumbari Julius & Alagah, 2017) looked into the link between organizational politics and workers satisfaction on job in the health industry. A cross-sectional research approach was used in this study. The findings of the study indicated that there is a substantial link between organizational politics and employee job happiness, and that organizational politics has an impact on employee job satisfaction in Rivers State's health sector.

In Oman's Oil and Gas Industry, (Al Busaidi, 2020) did mixed methods study to investigate the interrelationship between leadership styles, organizational politics, and employee productivity. According to the findings, transformative leadership has negative association with employees' perceptions of organizational politics. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, was found to have a favorable association with the perception of organizational politics. Furthermore, the data revealed a negative link between organizational politics views and organizational citizenship conduct.

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

The Just World Theory, as articulated by Learner, led this research (1980). The just-world theory's arguments are founded on the notion that humans live in a just society in which they get what they deserve and every human action has preset consequences. Every political technique, according to the principle, has a consequence. As a result, when workers see politics in companies, they experience job strain, discontent, a desire to leave, and psychological/physical retreat. This is the mindset that people have while creating plans and objectives, as well as when achieving ambitious goals. According to the hypothesis, humans desire to believe that they live on a planet where wonderful things happen to good people and bad people are denied nice things. As a result, everyone reaps what they distinguish themselves from others. It is assumed that powerful people who believe the world is a fair place for everyone are more willing to exploit and victimise others because this belief facilitates the perception that other people are blameworthy or unsympathetic, allowing only such people to be victims of antisocial behavior in the first place. As a result, people are less likely to feel terrible about prospective wrongdoings. According to these beliefs, those who were conscious of their unfairness experienced a drop in self-esteem because their unfair behavior violated the bargain they had made with the world to behave well and be treated fairly in return.

### **The Research Framework**

The objectives and the presumptions of this study were developed based on research framework as shown in Figure 1. The research framework is an upshot of recommendations

from the model of POP developed by Mishra et al. (2016) and Chan and Mark (2020). The framework of the article indicated a relationship between workforce diversity, Centralisation, relationship conflict, and individual need for power as predictors of organisational politics perception as well as how organisational politics perception influence Psychological withdrawal. Organisational politics perception was simultaneously tested as an endogenous variable in relationship with the antecedents while it was examined as predictor variable in relationships with psychological withdrawal which was measured using the two dimension as presented in the framework.

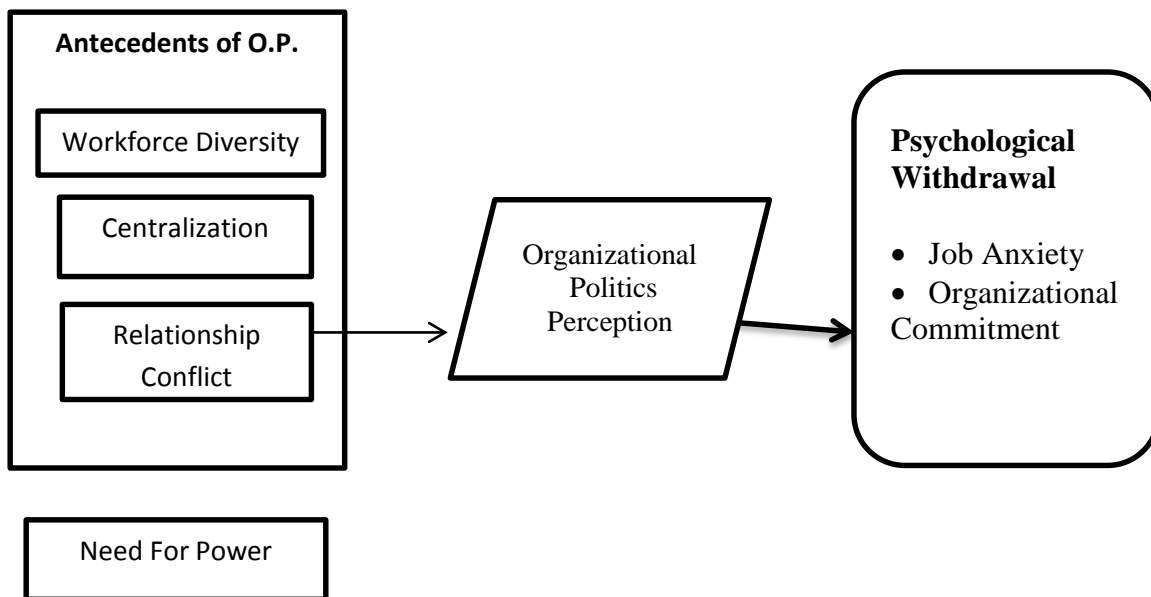


Figure 1.1: Research Framework

By examining centralization as an organizational level antecedents of organizational politics perception and psychological retreat as a result, the framework above has enhanced Mishra et al. (2016) Model. This methodology was put to the test in the Nigerian public sector, with a particular focus on personnel of Federal Revenue Inland Service offices in the North East region of the country. The variable on the research framework are explained below:

### **Workforce diversity**

The term workforce diversity means any characteristics among employees which make them differentiate themselves from others (Eugene et al., 2011). Diversity in workforce entails employees working together who are from different background such differences includes cultural difference, gender, age, professional affiliation, and race (Mishra et al., 2016). It is often natural for individuals from similar religion or ethnic background to form cliques or ingroup within organisation such groups usually promote their personal agenda against the common goal of organisation (Henry & Evans, 2007). Even though diversity in Workforce

promotes heterogeneity, which is believed to be good for an organization's well-being at the same time it has detrimental effects too (Aidoo & Odoi, 2018). A heterogeneous workforce consists of two types of individuals. Those who are homogeneous with decision-makers are known as an "ingroup," while those who are heterogeneous to them are called an "outgroup". Since decision-makers try to maximize the interest of their "ingroup" (homosocial reproduction), those who belong to an "outgroup" do not receive their share of the distribution of organizational resources (Allison, 1999). To make a claim on organizational resources, those in an "outgroup" have to act politically (Kreitz, 2008). As political skills are never taught to "outgroups" and minorities, they tend to lack these skills. Because of their deficiency of political skills, they tend to lose political battles. Being either a victim of acts of favoritism, or by losing their political battles, an "outgroup" will perceive its organization to be more political than it might necessarily be in fact (Mishra et al., 2016). Workforce diversity in context this study refers to personnel in FIRS working together who are from different background such differences includes cultural difference, gender, age, professional affiliation, and race.

### **Centralisation**

Centralization therefore means concentration of authority at the top level of the administrative system where the features of a centralized system of administration, entails the lower levels (called field offices) cannot act out of their own initiative (Lambert, Eric G, Poaline III, E.A & Hogan, 2006). Employees working in a centralised organisational structure have to refer most of their problems to the higher level (called headquarters) for decision making. They act only as implementing agencies (Marume & Jubenkanda, 2016). In FIRS the organisation structure is centralised because all decisions are made at the top, resources allocation are done from the head office to other offices. Such concentrating power and control at the centre, increases the likelihood that individuals with little legitimate power will use other influence strategies and also perceive other decisions to be motivated by self-interests. Additionally, if an organization is highly centralized, then employees at lower levels may have less control over decision outcomes and might, therefore, perceive more decisions to be politically motivated (Taghizadeh et al., 2012).

### **Relationship conflict**

Thus, conflict is believed to be a pre-condition for the existence of political perception or political behavior, irrespective of parties' awareness of it (Haq, 2011). Scholars have revealed that there is a positive association between OP and relationship conflict among employees nonetheless a significant link exist between the two (Friedman et al., 2000). Similarly, Relationship conflict was also found to have a positive influence on POP (Arefin, 2020). Considering the fact that relationship conflict is one of causes of POP and that both result in destructive organizational outcomes, authors have also assess the mediation effect of POP on the relationship between interpersonal conflict and job-related outcomes (Mishra et al., 2020). They have reported that conflict gives rise to OP, which eventually results in

dysfunctional organizational outcomes (intentions to quit and job stress). This study have indicated that relationship conflict among personnel of FIRS often results in organisational politics perception.conflict between units, decision makers and individuals working in different departments or units results in POP.

### **Need for power.**

The motive of any power struggle is all about control over resources (Sule et al., 2015). Individual need power to enable them have access to resources and control over such resource (Mishra et al., 2020). Organisational power is related to organizational resources (Anderson et al., 2012). Employees working in any organization are co-operators and contenders at the same time. They contend to get best out scarce organizational resources (Farrell & Rusbult, 2017). Individuals who are close to top level managers receive a higher share of available resources, while persons who are not close to decision makers in their organisation do not receive the same access (Kaya et al., 2016). Thus, to increase their share in organizational resources, those who could not get high share in allocation resources will start acting politically (Sule et al., 2015). When employees comprehend a political environment well, they identify how to deal with it. Thus, an understanding of an organization's political environment only results in a reduction of the detrimental effects of POP on job-related outcomes, and not in a reduction of POP itself (Salah et al., 2021). In context of personnel of FIRS need for power was reveal to have negative relationship with POP.

### **Employee Withdrawal Behaviour**

Public sector employees, much more than private sector employees, view their work environment as political in nature, and thus unfair and unjust (Vigoda-Gadot, Eran and Talmud, 2010).Organisational politics may cause an individual to detach either physically or mentally from the workplace (Taris et al., 2001). Therefore, whilst people may be present at the place of work, their mind could be elsewhere and may lack concentration. Studies that focus on the notion that organisational politics refers to the strategic behaviour that promotes self-interest, offer a negative image of workplace politics, and thus individuals continue to enforce their negative perspective of organisational politics (Gadot et al., 2006).Psychological withdrawal is the condition where an employee is physically present at the workplace but mentally absent (disengagement) (Gaji et al., 2021). POP is positively related to employees' intentions to turnover (Ahmed, 2018). Its relationship with psychological withdrawal is stronger at public sector organizations (Drory & Vigoda-gadot, 2010). In the public sector, the cost of leaving an organization is very high and employees are not ready to bear this cost. Thus, on perceiving their organization to be political, public sector employees opt to withdraw psychologically, rather than actually leave the organization (Vigoda, 2002). This study looked at psychological withdrawal in terms of job anxiety and organisational commitment. Anxiety in the workplace may appear in different qualities: workplace-related posttraumatic stress or adjustment disorder, workplace-related situational fears, workplace related panic reactions, workplace-related specific and unspecific social



phobia and workplace-related generalized anxiety (Selcuk, 2018). Employee's psychological and physical attachment towards their organisation forms what is called commitment and this is the inner force that guides a course of action towards one or more targets (Gaji et al., 2021). This study has indicated that when employees perceive OP in their work environment they psychologically withdraw.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

Hypotheses in this study were developed based on theoretical and literature evidence from previous studies and the research framework. The hypotheses are as follows:

- H<sub>1</sub>:** Workforce diversity has a substantial connection with organizational politics perception.
- H<sub>2</sub>:** Centralization has significant relationship with organizational politics perception.
- H<sub>3</sub>:** Relationship conflict has a positive relationship with organizational politics perception.
- H<sub>4</sub>:** A strong relationship is existing between the need for power and organizational politics perception.
- H<sub>5</sub>:** There is a sound link between organizational politics perception and Psychological withdrawal.

### **3.1 Research Methodology**

This study is a quantitative research and a cross-sectional research design. The population consist of all personnel of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) working in 18 offices in North East Nigeria. The total population of the personnel is 320 (nominal Roll of FIRS, December, 2021). There are six states in North East region, each state has 3 offices; Micro and Small Tax Office (MSTO), Government Business Tax Office (GBTO) and Stamp Duties (SD). For the purpose of this study, a probability sampling technique was adopted. Probability sampling ensures that every item in the population has an equal chance of being included in sample (Taherdoost, 2016). Simple random sampling technique was adopted to carry out this study. This involves the selection of sample at random. This technique has ease of use and accuracy of representation. The sample size of the study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size from a given population see appendix I. The sample size for this study is 175. The research gathered information from 175 personnel of the Federal Inland Revenue Service in North-East Nigeria. The information was gathered by face-to-face questionnaire distribution, however only 135 of the 175 given questionnaires were returned, accounting for 77 percent of the population sample. Based on (Sekaran, 2003) argument that a response rate of 30% is appropriate for survey research, the response rate is satisfactory. Using the variable and data view platforms, the data was coded and put into IBM SPSS software version 25. Multiple regression tests were performed on the

Hypotheses presented and the study has also use structural equation modeling using IBM SEM-AMOS.

### 3.2 Measurement Instrument

The measuring items for this study's constructs were derived from earlier research as depicted in Table 1. A 5 likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5 strongly disagree

**Table 1: Measurement Instruments, Items and Source**

CONSTRUCT	NO. OF ITEMS	SOURCE
Workforce Diversity	7	(Podsiadlowski et al., 2013)
Centralisation	7	Lambert, Poaline and Hogan, (2006)
Relationship conflict	7	Friedman et al.(2000)
Need for power	7	Anderson et al., (2012)
Perception of organisation politics	8	Ferris,Gerald R and Kacmar (1992)
Organisational commitment	8	Lambert, poaline and Hogan (2006)
Job Anxiety	7	Muschalla and Linden, (2014)

### 3.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used in this study to identify and classify underlying dimensions with their observable items that accounted for a greater explanation of a variable's variation.(Arbuckle, 2008).The six variables (Workforce Diversity, Centralisation, Relationship Conflict, Need for Power, Perception of Organizational Politics, and Perception of Organizational Politics) were assessed using factor analysis. The following procedures were used to conduct the analysis using IBM SPSS 25 software: Maximum likelihood recovery and Promax with Kaiser normalisation technique, values suppressed by less than 0.5 (Awang, 2014), KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, Eigenvalues more than 1, Eigenvalues greater than 1 The EFA of the five latent constructs was calculated as a whole. Diversity in the workplace, Centralisation, Relationship conflict, Need it for Power, and Organizational Politics Perception are the factors. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling

Adequacy = 0.841, Bartlett's Test of Homoscedasticity Approx. Chi-Square = 2172.267, df = 595, and Sig = 0.000 are the variables' values. The results showed that the sample group was sufficient for future investigation. The variables accounted for 68.9% of the total variance.

**Table 3: Factor Loading: Rotated Components Matrix of all the Constructs**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Items/Constructs</b>	<b>Loading</b>
<b>Workforce Diversity</b>		
WFD1	In this organisation, male and female employees do not fit in very well.	.743
WFD2	In this organisation, differences in cultural background create different opinion groups.	.805
WFD3	In this organisation, people fit in when they have similar background with the existing workforce.	.896
WFD5	At work, I experience poor relationship with people of different age group.	.694
WFD6	Opportunities for growth and advancement do not exist for employees with no godfather in this organisation.	.736
<b>Relationship Conflict</b>		
RSC2	Backbiting is a frequent occurrence in this organisation	.774
RSC3	One party frequently undermines another in this organisation	.788
RSC4	Much plotting takes place behind the scenes in this organisation	.791
RSC6	I often have conflict with my co-workers on issues related to work assignment	.612
<b>Need for Power</b>		
NFP1	I cannot get people in my organisation to listen to what I say	.717
NFP2	My wishes do not always carry much weight in this organisation	.816

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NFP3	In my organisation, I cannot get people to do what I want	.785
NFP4	I think I have no great deal of power in this organization	.793
NFP5	My opinions are hardly accepted in this organization	.751
<b>Centralisation</b>		
CTL3	Major policies and strategic decisions are determined by the top management.	.844
CTL4	Other Staff are not asked for their input on adoption of new policies.	.806
CTL5	I have to ask my supervisor before I can do almost anything in this organisation.	.691
CTL6	Daily operational activities cannot be done without a supervisor's permission.	.860
CTL7	Even small matters have to be referred to someone higher up for a final answer.	.778
<b>Perception of Organisational Politics</b>		
POP2	My organisation disagrees with good ideas if it contradicts the interest of the top management	.655
POP4	In this organisation I am not encouraged to speak out frankly even on critical issues.	.848
POP5	There are cliques in this organisation which hinder the effectiveness	.746
POP8	I have seen changes made in policies that only serve the purposes of a few individuals, not the organization	.683
POP6	One can usually get what you want in this organisation if you know the right person to ask	.876
POP7	There has always been an influential staff in this organisation	.866

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**Psychological Withdrawal**

JBA3	After work I hurry up more than others just to get away from that place.	.622
JBA4	I feel uncomfortable when I am at work.	.773
JBA5	At work, I often get the symptoms like trembling, blushing, sweating, heart beating	.743
JBA6	After work whenever possible, I avoid coming near to the site of my workplace	.827
JBA7	It cost a lot of effort for me to enter public place where I could meet my supervisor or colleagues	.792
OGC1	I tell my friends this is not a good organisation to work for.	.772
OGC2	I am not loyal to this organisation	.822
OGC3	I only accept job assignment if refusal will threaten my job security	.748
OGC5	I don't understand how my job contributes to the organisation's goals and objectives	.752
OGC6	I don't have good understanding of where the organisation is going.	.769

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**Source:** Researcher's survey, 2021.

### 3.4 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the measuring devices' dependability. IBM SPSS version 25 was used to assess the accuracy of the research measuring tools. In terms of data collecting methods, the study article focuses on internal consistency reliability, which employs Cronbach's Alpha to assess the consistency of responses across items within a single component. The Cronbach's Alpha statistic is the most accurate way to assess the scales' consistency. The lowest limit of alpha values is commonly accepted to be 0.7, however 0.6 is also acceptable (Hair Jr et al., 2013; Nunnally, 1978) The analyses' dependability demonstrates that all alpha values for the study's measurements were over the lower limit. See table 2 below for the result of the reliability.

**Table 3: Results of Construct Reliability**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Workforce Diversity	5	0.669
Relationship Conflict	4	0.800
Need for Power	5	0.828
Centralization	5	0.691
Influence Tactics of POP	2	0.789
Subjective Perception of POP	4	0.781
Job Anxiety of Psychological Withdrawal	5	0.849
Organizational Commitment of Psychological Withdrawal	5	0.871

**Source:** Researcher's survey, 2021.

### 3.5 Construct, Convergent and Discriminant Validities

The researcher has examined related scholarly journals and books to meet the requirement. The constructs were operationalised from previous literature. A pilot study was also made by the researcher on the measurement instruments and recommendations and comments were used to amend enrich the instrument. The correlation result as depicted in Table 4 has indicated that no variable correlated above 0.85 and therefore multicollinearity was not a problem. The convergent validity was evaluated based on recommendations by (Hair Jr et al., 2013). First, item loading should be more than 0.70 and significant. Second, the composite reliability of the construct must be greater than 0.80. Third, all constructs' Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must be greater than 0.50. (Table 4). In addition (Bagozzi, 1993) another technique used in assessing construct was examining the fitness indices. The confirmation of the structural research model displays that fitness indices that are satisfactory. : RMR = .079, CFI = .853, TLI = .835, RMSEA = .073, ChiSq/df. = 1.695, P-Value = .000 (Figure 1).

Discriminant validity was assessed based on the criterion recommended by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The criterion states that "the square root of AVE for each construct must be larger than its correlations with all other constructs. In other words, "AVE should exceed the squared correlation with any other construct" (Hair et al., 2013; Hair et al., 2018). The bold values denoted on diagonal in Table 3 show that the square root of AVE for each construct is greater than its correlations alongside all other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics, Correlations, Convergent and Discriminant Validity**

Variables	Mean	S.D.	PSW	WFD	RSC	NFP	CTL	POP	CR	AVE
PSW	1.876	.594	<b>0.750</b>	0.279	0.286	0.169	0.282	0.214	0.920	0.562
WFD	2.124	.635	<b>0.528**</b>	<b>0.707</b>	0.231	0.243	0.297	0.419	0.932	0.500
RSC	2.277	.617	<b>0.535**</b>	<b>0.645**</b>	<b>0.707</b>	0.416	0.378	0.278	0.932	0.500
NFP	2.523	.688	<b>0.481**</b>	<b>0.531**</b>	<b>0.548**</b>	<b>0.707</b>	0.300	0.235	0.932	0.500
CTL	2.967	.642	<b>0.411**</b>	<b>0.545**</b>	<b>0.463**</b>	<b>0.527**</b>	<b>0.707</b>	0.267	0.932	0.500
POP	2.614	.775	<b>0.493**</b>	<b>0.615**</b>	<b>0.647**</b>	<b>0.485**</b>	<b>0.517**</b>	<b>0.737</b>	0.875	0.543

**Note:** PSW = Psychological Withdrawal, WFD = Workforce Diversity, RSC = Relationship Conflict, NFP = Need for Power, CTL = Centralisation and POP = Perception of Organizational Politics

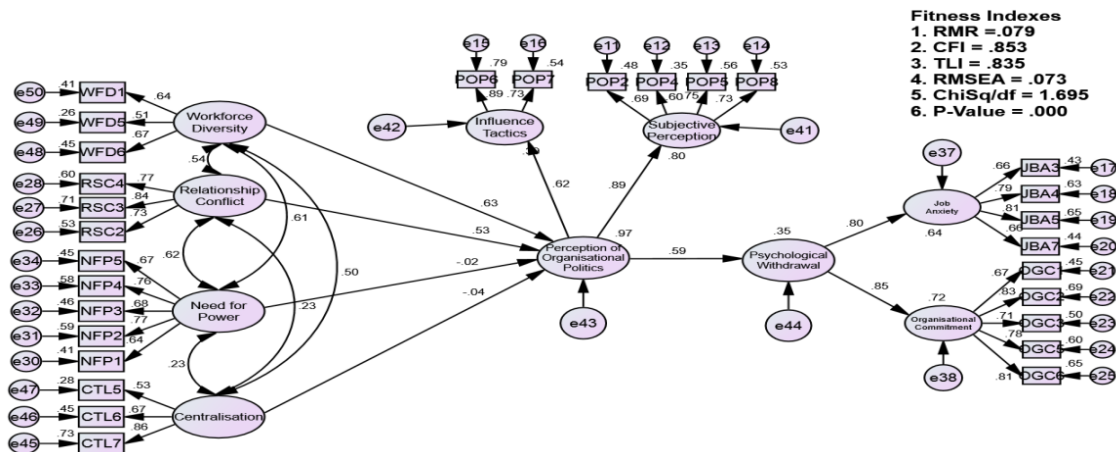
\*\* . Correlation coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Bold diagonal values are the squared root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

. Values above the diagonal are the squared correlation of variables.

**3.6 Authenticating the Structural Model**

The structural model is confirmed with all variables (workforce diversity, relationship conflict, need for power and centralization), organizational politics perception, and psychological withdrawal. The overall structural model of the study based on the research framework after performing the multiple regression analysis is presented in the Figure below



**Figure 1: Structural Model for Antecedents of Organizational Politics perception and Psychological Withdrawal**

#### 4.1 Hypotheses results

The regression weights implied a positive connection between workforce diversity and organizational politics perception ( $\beta = 0.63$ ,  $P < 0.005$ ). The outcome from table 5 shows that when workforce diversity increase by one standard deviation, organizational politics increases by 0.63 standard deviations with a standard error of approximately 0.223. While the probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 3.045 is 0.002. Hence, **H<sub>1</sub>**: Workforce diversity has a substantial connection with organizational politics perception is accepted. This result is in consistent with the work of (Mishra et al., 2016) which found that workforce diversity increase organisational politics perception by employees.

Table 2. Shows that centralization has an insignificant impact on organizational politics perception ( $\beta = -0.04$  and  $P > 0.005$ ). This is an indication that when centralization increases with one standard deviation, organizational politics perception decreases by -0.04 standard deviations, with a standard error of about 0.081. Thus, hypotheses (**H<sub>2</sub>** is rejected) which stated that there is strong connection between centralization and organisational politics perception study by (Gaji et al., 2021) the study demonstrated that concentration of power at the top level management has no relationship with POP. Consequently, regression weights suggested a strong affiliation between relationship conflict and organizational politics perception ( $\beta = 0.531$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Table 5 indicated that when relationship conflict increases with one standard deviation so also perception of organizational politics increases with 0.531 standard deviations then with a standard error of about 0.114. Whereas the likelihood of attaining a critical quotient as large as 3.873 is 0.000. The result of the beta and the P values has supported the proposition of **H<sub>3</sub>**: which states that relationship conflict a strong influence on organizational politics perception. The study reveal that the higher the relationship conflict the higher the perception of organisational politics by employees, the outcome of this study was supported by the work of (Friedman et al., 2000; Mishra et al., 2016; Obuebite, 2019).

Regression analysis also revealed ( $\beta = -0.02$ ,  $P > 0.005$ ) which indicates the need for power by individual employees has negative connection with organizational politics perception. Based on the statistical results it is clear that if need for power raises with one standard deviation, organizational politics perception reduces by -0.02 standard deviations, while a standard error of nearly 0.216. The chance of reaching a critical ratio of -0.153 was 0.878. Based ( $\beta = -0.02$ ,  $P > 0.005$ ) the study is of believe that, there is no link between the need for power and organizational politics. The research hereby reject the presumption of **H<sub>4</sub>** which stated that: A strong relationship is existing between the need for power and organizational politics perception. The regression result from this study contradicted finding from previous studies (Mishra et al., 2016; Nwaeke, 2012; Omisore et al., 2014) these authors found power struggle for position of influence among employees triggers politicking.

Similarly, another finding from result of regression weight as shown in Table 5 has demonstrated a sound link between organizational politics perception and workers mental withdrawal (psychological withdrawal) from activities in their organisation the regression



output indicates ( $\beta = 0.590$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) in line with the finding (Abbad et al., 2020; Gaji et al., 2021; Riaz et al., 2021). Employee perception of organisational politics leads to job anxiety and low employee commitment.

**Table 5 Result of Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Estimate**

Constructs	Std. Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
WFD → POP	0.627	0.223	3.045	0.002	Significant
RSC → POP	0.531	0.114	3.873	***	Significant
NFP → POP	-0.021	0.216	-0.153	0.878	Not Significant
CTL → POP	-0.042	0.081	-0.372	0.710	Not Significant
POP → PSW	0.590	0.081	4.260	***	Significant

\*\*\*means significant at  $< 0.001$

Source: Extracted from IBM AMOS vs 22 Output, 2021.

## 4.2 Summary of Findings

The study's findings represent a significant advancement in organizational behaviors and human resource management. Employee perceptions of company politics can be influenced by workforce diversity and interpersonal friction, according to the study. When an organization has a diverse workforce consisting of people of various genders, ethnicities, religions, races, professional backgrounds, and tribes, people from similar backgrounds tend to form groups within the organization, and these groups within the work cycle tend to promote their agenda at the expense of the organization's overall goal. The findings of this study substantiate those of Mishra et al. (2016), who showed that workforce diversity had a substantial and favorable influence on POP in their study. Furthermore, because the regression analysis revealed a positive and substantial association between organizational politics perception and relationship conflict, the study concluded that relationship conflict cannot be avoided in human effort. These studies show that the more friction there is in the workplace, the more politics there is. This outcome is consistent with the findings of (Mintzberg, 1985; Darr & Johns 2004; Haq, 2011; & Mishra et al., 2016).

Many academics argue that centralization of power and control enhances the likelihood of individuals influencing tactics and policies in their advantage by sycophantically approaching persons in positions of power with the goal of promoting self-interest (Buenger, Forte, Boozer, & Maddox, 2007). Centralization was examined as one of the study's predictive factors. The study's findings revealed that the variable had a detrimental impact on POP. The findings of the study were backed up by research done by Mohammad (2007), who piloted a study on the antecedents of organizational politics perceptions at three levels: organizational, work setting, and personal, and discovered that centralization harmed perceived organizational politics. The desire for power by man is an endless struggle, but this survey showed that power struggles among employees do not create a political climate. According to (Pfeffer, 1981; Mishra et al.2016), in order to influence the office and induce outcomes to one's own benefit, one needs power, and in order to have power, one must behave politically. The two researchers discovered a link between the lust for power and the impression of organizational politics in their study.

However, the results of this study demonstrated a negative association between the desire for power and the view of organizational politics. The findings of this study contrast those of other study since the bulk of the respondents are in lower-level management positions with a focus on their own well-being, such as bonuses, salary raises, and other benefits, rather than a power struggle. Another cause might be cultural differences; respondents in previous research are largely from the western world. This research is being conducted in Nigeria, where the working environment is different.

Psychological withdrawal is a research dependent variable, and the regression results demonstrate that the greater the perception of organizational politics, the higher the psychological disengagement. Employees who are unable to find another employment frequently retreat mentally when they detect politics in their workplace. The outcome contradicts the findings of the research (Felix & Arthur, 2018; Vigoda-Gado, 2002; Faye & Ye, 2014). These researchers also discovered a link between POP and intentions to quit that was both favorable and substantial.

### **4.3 Recommendations**

This study recommends that organizational leaders should fight political behavior when it is dysfunctional and clearly present in organizations. Leaders should act like role models to induce followers to learn from them. Looking at the finding from this study workforce diversity has strong influence on OP. Therefore, efforts must be made to manage diversity, since people from various backgrounds bring strength to the organisation.in the same vein this study has shown that relationship conflict among personnel could lead to political games in organisation which means managers must manage conflict by ensuring a conducive working climate.

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## Appendix I

Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note - N is population size, S is sample size.