

**GENERAL POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR AND PERFORMANCE  
APPRAISAL DECISION IN DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN RIVERS  
STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The focus of this paper was on the relationship between general political behaviour and performance appraisal decision. The paper centred on the issue of group and self-interest as expressed in the concept of general political behaviour; and the impact of such on-performance appraisal decision. By adopting organizational justice as the theoretical framework, the discussion followed through a position on the significance of related practices and activities geared toward securing and advancing personal interests, for the organization – particularly with regard to appraisal decisions covering employee promotion, discipline and transfer. The investigation was designed as a cross sectional survey and utilized the structured questionnaire in its collection of data from 112 workers from 19 deposit money banks in Rivers State. Three null hypotheses were tested in the study with results indicating that general political behaviour, significantly contributes and enhances outcomes of employee promotion, discipline and transfer. Thus, all null hypothetical statements were rejected. It was concluded that related actions of general political behaviour, drive decision outcomes and performance in the organization. It was thereafter recommended that the management of the deposit money banks allow for increased involvement and stakeholders for enriched decision outcomes in the deposit money banks in Rivers State.

**Keywords:** General political behaviour, performance appraisal decision, organizational justice, employee relations

## **INTRODUCTION**

Challenges of poor performance appraisal decisions are such that impact on the effectiveness of workers as well as the organization itself (Pink, 2009). Abubakar, Saidin and Ahmi (2016) stated that when performance appraisal decisions fail to adequately address the functional deficiencies of the organization, it could further complicate things for the organization and lead to outcomes such as poor productivity, inefficiency and resource waste. The challenge associated with poor performance appraisal decisions is such that stems from unethical practices, corruption and the lack of consistency when it comes to corrective actions.

Employee performance is critical to the success of the organization. Performance appraisals provide the basis for assessing and evaluating the workforce of the organization. This is because performance appraisals serve as the basis for determining the quality and competence of workers, thus leading to decisions such as employee promotion, discipline and transfer (Ibeogu & Ozturen, 2015; Jawahar, 2010). Performance appraisal decision describes the various outcomes of the functional assessments carried out in line with ensuring workforce characteristics match or are aligned with established organizational parameters. Such assessments focus on diagnosing the operational gaps in the organization and restructuring related features or attributes so as to be able to build and advance the capabilities required for the organization's effectiveness (Jawahar, 2010).

Spense and Keeping (2013) argued that performance appraisal decisions emerge in line with addressing the functional and operational gaps in the organization. Spense and Keeping (2013) also stated that related appraisal decisions, are context-based and focus on equipping workers in the organization by drawing on related challenges and weaknesses in the organization. Jawahar (2010) emphasized on the linkage between appraisals and decisions, noting that without such connection or link, organizations tend to waste resources and apply policies or actions that are not only unethical, but also highly manipulative of the system.

Studies on performance appraisal decisions distinguish such from the process of appraisal itself (Spense & Keeping, 2013; Omusebe, Gabriel & Douglas, 2013). Nawaz *et al* (2014) described appraisal decisions as the outcome of appraisal processes. According to Noe (2008) appraisal decisions are based on the findings of appraisal activities and serve to demonstrate the necessary actions for improving or reinforcing particular organizational aspects as a way of enabling the organization function better. Dewakar (2009) argued that while it is often treated as an individual level concern, performance appraisal practices are also significant to the organization, especially since they build on developing and structuring the organization's human resource in a more efficient and effective manner.

General political behaviour refers to the various activities channelled toward reinforcing one's own interest (Hope, 2010; Ferris & Treadway, 2012); these include actions geared toward manipulating and controlling various organizational processes and decisions so that it benefits them or furthers their interest in the organization. General political behaviour is considered as advancing both good (networking and socializing activities) and negative (inequity and manipulation) impacts on the organization (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010). This is because organizational politicking can also be used to drive the interest and actual values of the organization against those of a smaller group or unit in the organization.

Despite the noted influence of various organizational parties and groups on the appraisal process and its related decisions, not much as addressed the direct relationship between general political behaviour and performance appraisal decisions. Thus, posing a knowledge gap in performance appraisal decision research, especially with regard to the nature of influence general political behaviour could have on the choices and decision outcomes of the organization. This study, in line with bridging the observed gap, investigated the relationship between general political behaviour and performance appraisal decisions in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### Conceptual Framework

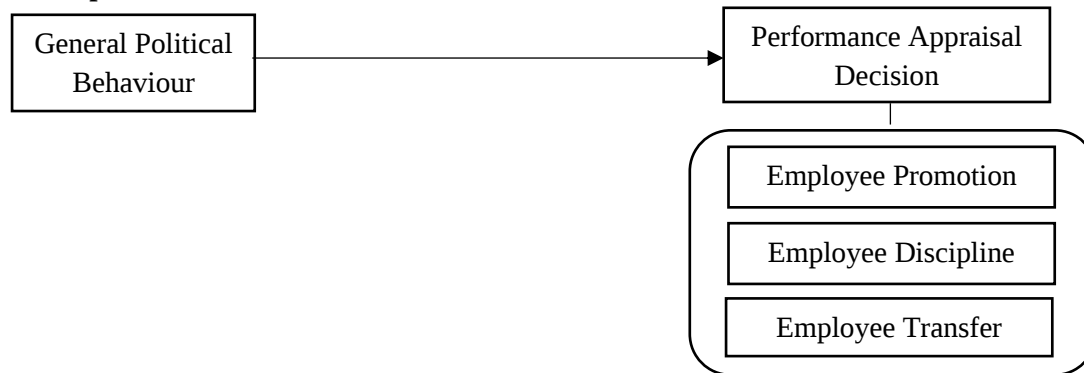


Figure 1. General Political Behaviour and Performance Appraisal Decision

Source: Desk Researcher (2023); Measures for performance appraisal decision sourced from Jawahar (2010)

### The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between general political behaviour and employee promotion in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between general political behaviour and employee discipline in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between general political behaviour and employee transfer in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria?

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Theoretical Review

#### Organizational procedural justice theory

Organizational justice theory, developed from applied research in organizational settings, focuses on how individuals socially construct incidents of justice and injustice. A leadership act is just in the eyes of employees when they perceive it as just and respond accordingly. Organizational justice, in this sense is

subjective – what might be perceived as just by one person may be perceived as unjust by another. However, justice is also socially constructed; therefore, coherent, long-standing groups (such as employee groups) often develop shared conceptions of what constitutes justice.

## **Conceptual Review**

### **General political behaviour**

This dimension describes the various activities which demonstrate or express the leveraging for one or a particular groups interest, within a particular context (Jawahar, 2010). General political behaviour is considered prevalent within a variety of social and institutional frameworks and given its premise on influencing the choice or decision or significant others, it is generally considered a social action (Erdogan, 2002). Ferris and Hochwarter (2011) affirmed that while most individuals shy away from concepts such as “power” or “influence”, their actions on the other hand express subtle means of controlling or manipulating outcomes in their interest. As such, political behaviour does not have to be intentional or deliberate, as long as it engages or adopts approaches that seek out the individual or groups own interest.

### **Performance Appraisal Decision**

Performance appraisal is a widely discussed concept in the field of performance management. It is used interchangeably as performance evaluation, job performance, performance assessment, performance evaluation as the case may be according to Amah and Gabriel (2017). Performance appraisal sounds simple but researchers say that it is commonly used in performance feedback and identifies individual employee’s strengths and weaknesses (Ruddin, 2005). For achieving high performance goal of organization performance appraisal is a very important component of human resource management. The information gathered and performance appraisal provide basis for recruitment and selection, training and development of existing staff, and motivating and maintaining a quality human resource through correct and proper rewarding of performance (Lillian, Mathooko, & Sitati ,2011).

**Employee promotion:** This describes the growth opportunities offered the worker as a way of rewarding and motivating the employees in the organization. Promotion is considered important as it not only demonstrates the employees value to the organization, but also indicates substantial levels of growth and the emergence of roles or additional responsibilities within the workplace (Jawahar, 2010). Employee promotion as a dimension of performance appraisal decision draws on management's position on the effectiveness and reward for employee efforts toward the organization. It also an outcome of the varied views and assessment and evaluation of the employees' qualities, competencies and capabilities in line with new responsibilities (Amah & Gabriel, 2017).

**Employee discipline:** This measure of performance appraisal decision, describes the related actions or corrective measures taken in line with addressing related defects or issues associated with the behaviour or functionality of the worker (Weiss, 2001; Erdogan, 2002). Employee discipline is a crucial aspect of work relationships as it modulates workers' behaviour, ensuring they fully align with the values and parameters put forward by the organization. To this end, organizations are constantly advancing functional and operational frameworks structured to address related issues of deviance in the workplace. Discipline as a measure of performance appraisal outcome, ensures cohesion between workers and groups in the organization, bridging differences and harmonizing organizational members' attributes (Weiss, 2001).

**Employee transfer:** This is the third measure of performance appraisal decision in this research, and it addresses the movement of workers across departments, units or branches of the organization. Employee transfer is a key factor in the development of workers, but it is also a way of addressing workers' characteristics in line with functional gaps in the organization (Jawahar, 2010; Weiss, 2001). Employee transfer is thus based on considerations of worker effectiveness, suitability and competence for such movements, following appraisal processes. Employee transfer is also crucial for the well-being of the employee – enabling variety and enrichment, and that way enhancing the workers level of commitment and engagement in the organization (Jawahar, 2010).

## **Empiriccal Review**

### **General political behaviour and performance appraisal decision**

The nature of politicking within the organization is considered as influencing the outcome of organizational choices and actions of the organization. This follows the shifting and repositioning of intra-group allies and views when it comes to processes such as leader succession, power distribution, resource control and allocation (Hope, 2010). Cannella and Ocasio (2014) argued that political behaviour is one which is aimed at self or group interest, and hence, there is often an emphasis on advancing policies, structures and arrangements that favour the disposition of particular groups. Numerous studies (Ferris & Hochwarter, 2011; Drory & Vogoda-Gadot, 2010) have examined the role of general political behaviour on a variety organizational outcome as earlier stated, however, scant research has addressed the link between organizational politics and performance appraisal decision; thus, occasioning a gap in research. In line with the review, the following hypotheses are stated:

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between general political behaviour and employee promotion in deposit money banks in Rivers State

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between general political behaviour and employee discipline in deposit money banks in Rivers State

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between general political behaviour and employee transfer in deposit money banks in Rivers State

## **METHODOLOGY**

Thus study, being non-experimental by characteristic adopts the cross-sectional survey method in its investigation of the relationship between general political behaviour and performance appraisal decision, with data instruments structured to allow for construct measurement and quantification of observations, which is in line with the quantitative methodology (Sarantakos, 2005; Kothari, 2004). While there exists a total of 24 deposit money banks in Nigeria, some of these banks only have regional licenses and as such

are not authorized to practice or operate outside their States or authorized localities. Only 19 of these banks are authorized and licensed to operate in all States of the federation and as such, have operational branches in Rivers State. Therefore, the accessible population for this study is 172 managerial and supervisory staff of 19 deposit money banks in Rivers State, sourced from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN, 2023), list and website. The total sample size for this study is determined using the Taro Yamen 1970 (Sekaran, 2003) sampling formula. Therefore, based on the calculations, the actual and total sample units for measurement for this study is 117 managerial and supervisory staff of the selected deposit money banks in River's state, Nigeria. This study being descriptive in nature is premised on the quantitative methodology. Data for the study is sourced from *primary sources* – the participants of the study with data generated through the administration of structured questionnaire copies.

Table 1: The Cronbach alpha reliability

| Variables                   | Dimensions/Measures | No. of Indicators | Alpha coif. |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| General Political Behaviour |                     | 3                 | 0.782       |
| Performance Appraisal       | Employee Promotion  | 3                 | 0.881       |
| Decision                    | Employee Discipline | 3                 | 0.896       |
|                             | Employee Transfer   | 3                 | 0.716       |

Source: Research data, 2023

As revealed (table 1), the result on the Cronbach alpha reliability for the instruments on the variables demonstrates all instruments as having good reliability scores. This is demonstrated by the Cronbach alpha coefficients which are all revealed to surpass the 0.70 threshold for adequate reliability results. The evidence from the reliability test suggests that all instruments are clear and precise in addressing the features and manifest properties of the variables of the study, hence modifications or omissions were not considered as necessary due to the instruments level of reliability.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### Field Report

The distribution for the survey activities of the study reveal that all target deposit money banks were successfully contacted and their distributed copies retrieved at a 95% rate. Furthermore, all retrieved copies were collated and coded in the Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26; after which the data was assessed for errors and outliers using histogram charts and boxplots. Evidence showed a 0% error rate in the retrieved copies and also established a 0% level of bias or outliers.

### Univariate Data Analysis

The results for the distribution on the variables – general political behaviour and the measures of performance appraisal decision are presented in this section of the study. Each variable is assessed using distribution assessments that identify key features such as their central tendencies and their levels of dispersion. Distributions address the manifestations of the variables as they are expressed or experienced within the context of the study.

Table 2 Distribution for the variables

|                                                           |             | <b>N</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Employee Promotion<br>(x = 3.2239; SD = 0.88075)          | Promotion1  | 112      | 3.2388      | 1.06015               |
|                                                           | Promotion2  | 112      | 3.0746      | 1.14566               |
|                                                           | Promotion3  | 112      | 3.3582      | 1.21483               |
| Employee Discipline<br>(x = 3.2786; SD = 0.88115)         | Discipline1 | 112      | 2.9851      | 1.23696               |
|                                                           | Discipline2 | 112      | 3.4179      | 1.08919               |
|                                                           | Discipline3 | 112      | 3.4328      | 1.22132               |
| Employee Transfer<br>(x = 3.5075; SD = 0.90334)           | Transfer1   | 112      | 3.5522      | 1.04857               |
|                                                           | Transfer2   | 112      | 3.7910      | 1.09458               |
|                                                           | Transfer3   | 112      | 3.1791      | 1.23000               |
| General Political Behaviour<br>(x = 3.4428; SD = 0.95943) | General1    | 112      | 3.3731      | 1.36887               |
|                                                           | General2    | 112      | 3.4030      | .95441                |
|                                                           | General3    | 112      | 3.5522      | 1.10486               |

Source: Research data, 2023

The result on the distribution for the variables demonstrates the high evidence and manifestations for the properties of general political behaviour and performance appraisal decision (Employee promotion, employee discipline, employee transfer). Results suggest that respondents consider these features as evident and well manifested within the context of the deposit money banks in Rivers State. This is as the outcome of the distribution reveals mean coefficients for the main measures as surpassing the adopted benchmark of  $x = 2.5$  implying the variables can be considered as characterizing the industry.

**Bivariate Results**

Table 3 General political behaviour and performance appraisal decision

|                   |            |                         | General | Promotion | Discipline | Transfer |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------------|---------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Spearman's<br>rho | General    | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000   | .633**    | .656**     | .647**   |
|                   |            | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .       | .000      | .000       | .000     |
|                   |            | N                       | 112     | 112       | 112        | 112      |
|                   | Promotion  | Correlation Coefficient | .633**  | 1.000     | .656**     | .503**   |
|                   |            | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000    | .         | .000       | .000     |
|                   |            | N                       | 112     | 112       | 112        | 112      |
|                   | Discipline | Correlation Coefficient | .656**  | .656**    | 1.000      | .712**   |
|                   |            | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000    | .000      | .          | .000     |
|                   |            | N                       |         |           |            |          |
|                   | Transfer   | Correlation Coefficient | .647**  | .503**    | .712**     | 1.000    |
|                   |            | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000    | .000      | .000       | .        |
|                   |            | N                       | 112     | 112       | 112        | 112      |

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

The result for the test on the null hypotheses addressing the relationship between general political behaviour and the dimensions of performance appraisal decision is revealed to be significant. The results show that general political behaviour significantly influences outcomes of performance appraisal decision. This is premised on the evidence of outcomes such as employee promotion ( $\rho = 0.633$  and  $P = 0.000$ ), employee discipline ( $\rho = 0.656$  and  $P = 0.000$ ) and employee transfer ( $\rho = 0.647$  and  $P = 0.000$ ). In line with this result, all previous null hypothetical statements are rejected as the results show that general political behaviour significantly correlates with performance appraisal decisions.

**DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

The findings of this research affirm to the significance of general political behaviour in advancing outcome of performance appraisal decision in the deposit money banks in Rivers State. Ultimately, the willingness or inclination of employees to make use of political skills is yet another aspect that may influence HR decisions and HRM. Existing researches have indicated that the eagerness to make use of politics in organizations results from personal, social and situational constructs. Individuals with definite personality types are more likely to use politics in the work environment (Mwangi & Njuguna, 2019).

For instance, people with Machiavellian orientation, especially those hungry for power, or people who are extremely competitive or achievement oriented are more likely to engage in organizational politics. Amid the situational variables, it was identified that hierarchical level, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and participation in decision making are associated with organizational politics. Moreover, social factors also influence the eagerness of individuals to get involved in workplace politics. Pink (2009) assert that such factors comprise the extent of social support and mutual trust in the organization and the recognition of politics as a legitimate way to get things done.

According to Dhar (2011), most of the problems linked with the conventional functions of human resource (HR) systems are associated with ambiguity in the process of matching a potential employee to the work context. Human resource managers are mainly responsible to carry out this alignment during HR planning, i.e., recruitment, job analysis, job design, training and development, performance management, and job promotion. Chua (2000) explain that when the human resource processes are effective with clear standards, the possibility of the build-up of ambiguity is low and organizational politics is likely to be less dominant and less destructively influential in the process of HR decisions.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The findings of this study are premised on empirical evidence which establishes general political behaviour as a core aspect and behaviour of the organization, and as such contributing significantly toward related outcomes such as employee promotion, discipline and transfer. The evidence demonstrates the significance of general political behaviour as shaping and defining the behaviour and choices of the organization; thus, reflecting that which necessitates and controls the actions and behaviour of participants within the deposit money banks in Rivers State. In view of this outcome, this study concludes that the evidence and manifestations of general political behaviour, impacts on the choice of who to promote, discipline and transfer in the workplace; that is the extent to which the deposit money banks in South-South Nigeria addresses its internal issues and concerns.

The management of the deposit money banks in Rivers State should focus on effectively managing the general political behaviour of its workers or organization; ensuring that the choices and actions of the organization are premised on clear and transparent functions which allow for the participation and contributions of all key stakeholders, groups (majority and minority), as well as various levels in the organization.

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