

## POWER AND HEALTH OF STATE-OWNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN RIVERS STATE

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### ABSTRACT

This study, focused on investigating the relationship between power and the health of State-owned government agencies in Rivers State. The study was designed as a correlational design, and draws on the systems as its underlying theoretical base. The theory is adopted based on its suitability in explaining group behaviour and the nature of political behaviour in the workplace. The population for the study was seven State-owned agencies in Rivers State, from which 62 participants were drawn for the study based on their roles as key and principal officers within the context of the target organisations. The study also adopted the quantitative methodology, and utilised primary data (based on a cross-sectional time horizon), generated using the structured questionnaire. The measure of goodness fit was assessed using both validity and reliability tests with all instruments registering reliability scores above the adopted benchmark of 0.70. The validity test was carried out using the content and face validity. The test for the hypotheses was carried out using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the results revealing significant correlations in all instances; hence, all previously stated null hypotheses were therefore rejected. It was therefore concluded that the balancing of power in the workplace is vital for promoting and advancing the health of the State-owned agencies in Rivers State. Furthermore, it was recommended that the management and administration of State-owned agencies in Rivers State, build on ensuring power balance through the fair treatment of staff, non-bias in policies and the equitable distribution of resources.

**Keywords:** Power, politics, organisational health, cohesion, solvency

### INTRODUCTION

Organisational health refers to the extent to which internal factors, groups and sub-systems of the organisation are integrated, harmonised and effectively coordinated (Capone, Joshanloo & Park, 2019). Organisational health is imperative to the success of the organisation as it provides the necessary structuring of relationships that are utilised in ensuring the organisations achievement of objectives and goals (Brega et al, 2019). Studies (Yuceler et al, 2013; Fu et al, 2023; Aaby et al, 2020) appear to agree on the focus of health, which primarily in internal in its manifestation. This is a major detail that distinguishes it from organisational performance.

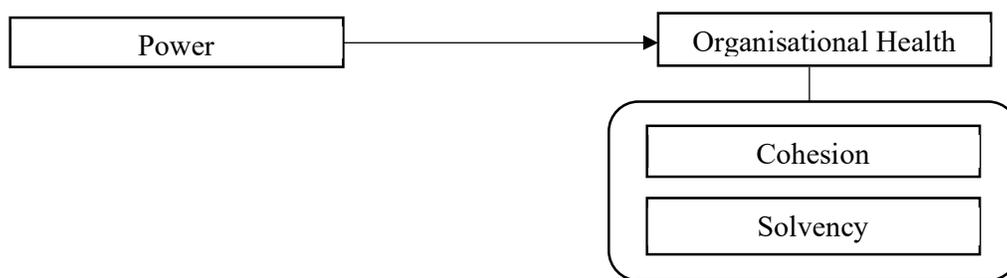
This is because while organisational performance offers a broad conceptualisation of the organisation’s functionality and wellbeing within its environment, organisational health is narrowed to offer a position on the internal workings and interdependence between units, functions and groups in the organisation (Brega et al, 2019).

Much research has centred on leveraging factors such as workplace collaborations, employee relations and organisational structures in bridging workplace relationship gaps in the organisation. Ahmad, Hashmi and Akhtar (2016) noted that apart from concerns of diversity, ideological and social differences, the disparity that exist between groups can also range from a number of other factors. One of which is the extent of power expressed by various groups within the organisation. Kaur and Kang (2023) described politics as the pursuit of interest and the overly or subtle manipulation of social mechanisms, to advance and secure favourable outcomes. Politics as Riaz (2020) noted can create disparities among individuals and groups, and that way, influence the extent of harmony and synchrony between the various organisational elements and facets.

Related studies on the relationship between power and organisational health is however scant. This study, thus investigated the relationship between the variables, as a departure from previous studies, and as a way of enriching research on the dynamic nature and interaction between power and the health of the organisation. The study thus builds on examining the extent to which particular expressions of power within the workplace, impact or influence outcomes of organisational health of state-owned agencies within Rivers State. Through this focus, this research intended to identify the peculiar nature and direction of the relationship between the variables, as it applies within the Rivers State public sector. The purpose for this study was therefore to examine the relationship between power and the health of State-owned agencies in Rivers State. The related objectives of the study were to:

- i. Examine the relationship between power and cohesion of State-owned agencies in Rivers State
- ii. Ascertain the relationship between power and solvency of State-owned agencies in Rivers State

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework for power and organisational health

**Source:** Desk Research (2025), with the measures of organisational health was adopted from Doganay and Dagli (2020).

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this study are as follows:

- i. Examine the relationship between power and cohesion of State-owned agencies in Rivers State

- ii. Ascertain the relationship between power and solvency of State-owned agencies in Rivers State

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are to be tested in this study.

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between power and cohesion of State-owned agencies in Rivers State

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between power and solvency of State-owned agencies in Rivers State

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Systems theory**

The first baseline theory for this study was the systems theory. The systems theory was propounded by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1920 (Checklard, 2005; Mele et al, 2010). Ludwig von Bertalanffy advanced referred to it as Allgemeine Systemlehre (theory of systems or, more popularity, general system theory (GST). Scholars (Nykamp, 2016; Burke, 2009) began to view the administration and management of organization and educational institutions as a system. The basic idea behind the system theory is that, to understand a phenomenon, we must recognize that the whole is greater than the sum of all its parts.

The theory is useful and also adopted in this paper as it espouses the position and imperatives of coordinating group interests in a manner that aligns with that of the organisation. The theory offers a wholistic position on the organisation as a system and the need for its various parts and sub-systems to be harmonised and integrated. The focus is on the interactions and on the relationships between parts in order to understand an entity's organization, functioning and outcomes (Burke, 2009). This perspective implies a dialogue between holism and reductionism and is applied in understanding the implications of power for the organisation's overall wellbeing and health.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Power**

Power, refers to the control or manipulation of events, people, situations and relationships for advantage and for personal benefit or for the interest of one's group (Aalberg et al, 2012). The evidence of power is in this sense not only manifested in the influence one yields over others or events, but also to the extent that such control or influence can be channelled or narrowed to advance specific outcomes that are of benefit or advantage to the individual. For example, an individual may be considered as connected or as "knowing" people within his or her work circles, or even share affiliations with these groups in terms of religion or alumni; however, his or her ability to leverage and channel such relationships or acquaintances to their own advantage is what is crucial and imperative (Riaz, 2020; Kaur & Kang, 2023). The politics for power can also be subtle, unseen but yet permeating across levels and social circles in the organisation and serving to secure strategic positions and placements within the organisation or workplace.

### **Organisational Health**

Various authors have defined OH over a period of time based on the indices one might use to measure health in organization. For example, an organization might be financially healthy, structurally healthy, strategically healthy, culturally healthy and/or behaviourally healthy (McHugh *et al.*, 2003). Miles (1965) defined OH strategically as a set of fairly durable second-order system properties which tend to transcend short run of effectiveness. A healthy organization not only survives its environment but also continues to cope adequately over long haul and continuously develops and extends its surviving and coping abilities. Authors have defined OH in strategic terms using factors, such as readiness to change (Raya & Panneerselvam, 2013), reflection of effectiveness (McHugh *et al.*, 2003), adaptability (Keller *et al.*, 2005), integration and coherence (Raya & Sivapragasam, 2011), work efficiency and performance (Wilson *et al.*, 2004), ability to develop (Hoy & Miskel, 2005) and integration and reinforcement (Raya & Panneerselvam, 2013).

### **Cohesion**

Cohesion refers to the extent of agreement or unity, expressed in a group. It is an important aspect and feature of the health of the organisation as it demonstrates the nature and quality of relationship expressed in the organisation (Sadat et al, 2023). Cohesion is considered vital to the overall disposition of the organisation as it also determines the extent of coherence and understanding between the members of the organisation. Aaby et al (2020) opined that the development or reinforcement of cohesion, is necessary in promoting understanding and collaboration between organisational members. It is important that to work as a group, or as members of the same organisation, members, correspond consistently, and share in the values and beliefs of the organisation. This level of collaboration and cooperation is integral to the success and effectiveness of the organisation. Moreso, organisations or workplaces that manifest cohesion, demonstrate strong knitted interactions that create a wholesome position for the organisation and can be useful during moments of organisational change or disruption (Fu et al, 2023).

### **Solvency**

Solvency indicates the ability to meet long term financial obligation (Dahiyat, 2016). Solvency is traditionally viewed as arising from financing activities: firms borrow to raise cash for operations (Dahiyat, 2016). Solvency ratios used in solvency management by each organization in the form of a debt ratio and debt to equity ratio. Debt ratio will be calculated as a measure of solvency through measuring debt level of a business as a percentage of its total assets. It is calculated by dividing total debt of a business by its total assets. If the percentage is too high, it might indicate that it difficult for the business to pay off its debts and continue operations (Walsh, 2008). Meanwhile, debt to equity ratio is intended to bring out relative importance of debt financing in the firm and the risks in such financing (Khidmat and Rehman, 2014). In addition, return on asset and return on equity are need calculated to measure the profitability. Return on asset indicates the net income produced by total assets during a period by dividing net income to the average total assets (Gibson, 2009). Return on equity is measured as the ratio of profit generated to the total investment capital provided by the owner of the firm (Khidmat and Rehman, 2014).

### **Empirical Review**

Empirical review assessed the position and facts generated by previous studies, particularly the extent to which power influences or impacts on the wellbeing of the organisation. The review of empirical literature thus serves as a base for understanding the position of previous research and the extent of their focus. Ahmed (2018) studied organizational politics and turnover intention in private colleges of Pakistan. This study tends to find out if there is a relationship

between organizational politics and its three antecedents' (favouritism, pay and promotion and scarcity of resources) on employee turnover intention in private colleges. Data was collected from the respondents using the Multan city. A quantitative method was adopted and regression analysis was used in testing the hypotheses formulated. It was found out from the study that once an organization are involved in favouritism, delayed pay and promotion and struggle for scarcity of resources this will adversely affect the rate of employee turnover.

Nwizia, Ojiabo and Alagah (2017) investigated if there is a relationship between organizational politics and employee's job satisfaction in health sector of Rivers State. The study utilized cross sectional research design. A sample size of 274 was employed using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. Questionnaire was the primary source of data used in collecting information from the respondents. 274 copies of questionnaire were distributed while 245 copies were returned. Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient statistic with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used in analysing the data and testing the hypotheses. From the findings, it was discovered that there is a positive relationship between organizational politics and employee's job satisfaction and it was concluded that organizational politics affects employee's job satisfaction in the health sector of Rivers State. The study therefore recommended that, Management in health sector of Rivers State should emphasize and put more effort in focus positive political behaviour that will drive workers' satisfaction in their job and management must place a good and suitable pay structure and also include how pay, bonuses and performance will be assessed.

Kaya, Aydin and Ayhan (2016) studied how organizational politics held by different members of the organizations and how these affect the how the members of the organization view organizational justice and how it relates to it employee turnover decisions. In the study, a total of 259 surveys were completed and obtained from different public and private sector personnel. Confirmatory factor analysis and correlation and regression analyses was implemented to determine the relationship between the variables used in the study. Its findings were that that organizational politics had a positive effect on perceived organizational justice and intention to leave.

Abbas and Awan (2017) investigated the effect of organizational politics on employee performance in the public organisations in Pakistan. A thorough extensive literature review was carried out to show an empirical perception about the proposed relationships. A total of 15 public sector employees in the organizations in Pakistan were selected. The data was statistically analyzed using regression analysis. After the conclusion of the study, the results showed that organizational politics have a positive effect on employee performance. The study therefore recommended that management needs to understand how employees view the perception of organizational and develop suitable tactics that would curtail the perception of organizational politics and enhance employee performance in the organisation.

Advani and Shaista (2014) examined the causes and identification of employees' politics and its impact on performance of Banking Industry in Pakistan. Language and caste, experience and position, cultural animosity, religious lobbies, gender discrimination and referral employment were the major variables used in the study. Quantitative and survey research was adopted in the study. Descriptive statistics was used in analysing the data. Simple random sampling method was used in selecting 160 employees out of target population. From the study, it was found that there should be a Standardize Human Resource Management i.e. the right person should be posted to the job, bracing courses, conducting orientation on emerging banking and problem solving and meetings with employees should be conducted to resolve

problems that may ensue between employees and management and there must be transparency and merit system observed in all matters

**The Relationship between power and organisational health**

Power and the politics for such, characterises most organisations today. Dahl (2017) affirmed that groups utilise the politics for power, in advancing their interests and protecting their position in the workplace. However, the expression and use of power in politics can be oppressive, forceful and that way, have negative repercussions for the level of cohesion and adaptation of the organisation. Riaz (2020) argued that the use of power can be stemmed through the strengthening or reinforcement of regulatory frameworks in the workplace. According to Riaz (2020), uncontrolled power, only feeds mediocrity and can stagnate the organisations growth as it favours the short-term interests of particular groups.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research design adopted in this study is the correlational design. The accessible population for this study is therefore seven State-owned government agencies within the context of Rivers State. While there exist an estimated 33 State-owned agencies, as listed by the Rivers State Civil Service Ministry, most of these agencies are not operational and have barely been active for years. Furthermore, for the purpose of feasibility, this research delimited itself to the registered and operational agencies in Rivers State, hence, a total of 15 agencies in Rivers State. This research adopts a census approach; thus, investigating the identified agencies selected as constituting the population frame for the study. From the seven identified agencies, representatives, comprising directors, unit or departmental heads, and supervisors are to be selected as representatives for the study. A total of 70 participants from the 15 agencies were included in the study as representatives of the various agencies in Rivers State. Data for this research anchored on the primary data which was sourced using the structured questionnaire instrument. The study in establishing the consistency and replicability of the instrument for this research relied on the Cronbach alpha technique to assess the reliability. The Numally (1980) alpha threshold of 0.7 was adopted for affirming reliability. The test for the hypotheses was carried out using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation

**DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

**Bi-variate Analysis**

Table 1: Correlation for power and measures of organisational health

|                |          |                         | Power  | Cohesion | Solvency |
|----------------|----------|-------------------------|--------|----------|----------|
| Spearman's rho | Power    | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000  | .536**   | .500**   |
|                |          | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .      | .000     | .000     |
|                |          | N                       | 62     | 62       | 62       |
|                | Cohesion | Correlation Coefficient | .536** | 1.000    | .898**   |
|                |          | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000   | .        | .000     |
|                |          | N                       | 62     | 62       | 62       |
|                | Solvency | Correlation Coefficient | .500** | .898**   | 1.000    |
|                |          | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000   | .000     | .        |
|                |          | N                       | 62     | 62       | 62       |

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

Source: Survey Data (2025)

The test for the correlation between power and the measures of organisational health is revealed to be significant. This follows the observed impact on cohesion ( $Rho = 0.536$  and  $P = 0.000$ ) and solvency ( $Rho = 0.500$  and  $P = 0.000$ ). The analysis, demonstrates the extent to which power drives the behaviour and disposition of the organisation. The results show that power characteristic of the State-owned agencies in Rivers State, has a positive effect on the extent to which they are able to enhance outcomes such as cohesion and solvency. Based on the findings, the null hypothetical statements of no significant relationships between the variables are therefore rejected as the findings show that:

- i. Power significantly and positively contributes toward cohesion of State-owned agencies in Rivers State
- ii. Power significantly and positively contributes toward solvency of State-owned agencies in Rivers State

### **Discussion of Findings**

The relationship between power and organisational health is identified as significant and also positive. The findings indicate that power and the expression of influence, bias and distortions in the sharing or distribution of resources in the organisation is minimal and as such low. Related practices within the organisation are such that are designed to balance disparities between groups and emphasize equality and shared access to resources and opportunities. The findings of the study, corroborate the views of previous scholars (Jha, 2010; Fu *et al.*, 2023) on the significance of respect and transparency in the management and coordination of people and groups in the organisation. Raiz (2020) posited that the balancing of power within the workplace is crucial in establishing trust and collaboration, and also in ensuring that no particular group or individuals are subjugated or marginalised in the organisation. According to Riaz (2020), the adequate balancing of power, assures of the consistent aligning of group interests with those of the organisation.

This research, through the evidence generated, reinforces related theories such as the symbolism interactionism theory and the systems theory, demonstrating their usefulness and appropriateness, to understanding and predicting the relationship between power and organisational health, and clarifying on the role of effective power balancing in creating conducive, harmonic and supportive systems that are crucial to cohesion and solvency of organisations (Vigoda & Drory, 2006). The findings of this study are therefore such that demonstrate the imperatives of control for power, especially such that is expressed in the management of people opportunities (promotion, transfers, compensation), resource distribution, and also sanctions and others. The study therefore enriches scholarship as it identifies low power manifestations and expressions as correlating with cohesion and solvency, thus establishing power balance as essential for a healthier and more integrated workplace.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The relationship between power and organisational health of government agencies in Rivers State is established in this research to be significant. The findings of this research are such that identify politics as significantly contributing toward the organisation's capacity for improved outcomes of cohesion and solvency. Through the effective balancing of power, within the workplace leadership can substantially drive the health of the government agencies in Rivers State. Following this position, it is concluded that the balancing of power concerns within the organisation and between groups, is key in building more cohesive and solvent organisation. The management and leadership of the government agencies in Rivers State should focus on addressing power bias and controlling for practices that reflect favouritism, nepotism and the

various forms of power abuse and excesses that may negatively impact the balance in power and the fair distribution of resources. This is necessary for ensuring trust and as such, improved levels of cohesion and solvency for the government agencies.

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