

## Significance of Power and Politics: Its Influence on Organizational Behavior Towards Efficacy

Aftab Ahmed Mangi  
Yasmin Yousif Pardesi  
Hakim Ali Kanasro

### **Abstract**

*Organizational behavior is immediately concerned with the theoretical and human side of management. Manager can influence the behavior in pursuing to reach organizational effectiveness and it is true that the Power and politics are human aspects of behavior and necessary drives of results in organizations. Politics is always concerned with power and power is defined as the ability to influence the existing energy or resources for definite goals and objectives. Organizational politics is known as exploration of person agenda; in an organization without observe result on the organizations. It must be understood that the modern organizations are mostly political systems; some very specific strategies can be identified to help members of organization to maintain their power base. Previous literature on the topic of organizational behavior has highlighted the significance of group, interactive behavior, informal organizations, communication, conflict, and leadership. Power and politics have not obtained sufficient response to be known as a significant vibrant in the organizational behavior. Max Weber defined Power influence behavior as the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite confrontation". Fred Luthans, (1983) said that the essential issue of today's management is with the use of skill and people to accomplish the organizational goals effectively. Barett and Bass (1976) said that the industrial and organizational psychology is equipped within exclusive cultural perspective. Etzioni (1968) stated three bases of Power. This observation also decreases the variables to clarify organizational behavior. The major issue is the decreasing output in the organization and the good management is needed to handle it, if the organization is effective in producing goods and services is considered as*

*successful. This research paper is an effort to study the significance of power and politics in organizational behavior as backing elements in organizational competence and success.*

**Key words:** organization, behavior, power, politics, management, proficiency, influence

### **Introduction**

The study of human behavior in organizations is known as organizational behavior in its simple meaning. Bobbit H Randolph et al (1978) stated that it is too simple and can reason of misperception between organizational behavior and various behavioral and human relations approaches to management. Stephen P, et al, (2009) presented the opinion that Organizational Behavior is an area of study, meaning that it is different area of proficiency with a common form of information, it studies three factors of Behavior in Organizations; individuals, groups, and structure. Organizational behavior is mostly related with human behavior as the main variable in perceiving organizational practices. It is true that management has these major dimensions which are technical and human; i) the technical dimension comprises of the manager's expertise as accounting, computers, technical marketing; ii) the human dimension is showing behavior that is perception and feelings of a person which can be observed through the actions. In short today's managers are technically competent but they are beset with more complex problems. In the academic terms politics denotes the process to use authority and power to effect goals, directions, and other major parameters of the organization. The power has been defined as the capability to influence overflows of the available strength or resources towards definite objectives as different to other objectives. Alfred Adler (1970) observed that the power is certainly in every psychical event that endeavoring for superiority; in our all determinations follow its ways, right or wrong they attempt for incursion, and increase the thinkers and psychologists hope of self-protection, pleasure, principle and equivalent. Modern psychologists do not normally accept the view that power effort is in born and so dominant, in recent years it has provoked transformed interest. The politician is possibly the best example, and political scandals make a

charming study of the striving for, and use of power in the government and politics. In the field Political Science there is properly comprehensive agreement as stated Dahl (1968) that power is the capability, through whatever resources, one person make another to do his or her will, even and mostly situations in which doing accordingly is not easy that other person desires.

### **Organizational Behavior**

Stephen P, et al, (2009) gave the opinion that Organizational Behavior is a field of study, meaning that it is different area of information with a common body of knowledge, it studies three determinants of Behavior in Organizations; individuals, groups, and structure. In its true meaning OB is defined as “human behavior in organizations is known as organizational behavior”. Fred Luthans (2002) stated in his study that the academic field of organizational behavior has been around for at least the past thirty years; problems facing managers of human organizations have been around since the creation of civilizations. Study of organizational behavior is correlated with human behavior as the leading variable in identifying the organizational practices. Chester Irving Barnard (1886-1961) stated that “every person behaves different in their organizations and the studies of these variances describe the behavior of persons and groups in the organizations”.

### **Power influence behavior**

Social and behavioral sciences have various concepts which are hardly having common definitions. Max Weber a prominent sociologist has well-defined power as “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite confrontation”. Walter R. Nord (1978) has defined power as “the ability to influence floods of the available energy or resources towards definite objectives as opposed to other goals. Power is expected to be used only when these goals are at least somewhat in clash with each other”.

Etzioni (1968) stated three bases of Power:

- i) Coercive Power – involves forcing someone to comply with one's wishes.

- ii) Utilitarian Power – is based on a system of rewards or punishments.
- iii) Normative Power – beliefs of members that the organization has a right to govern their behavior.

Power in socio-political perspective is well-defined as the capability to affect the behavior of people without any conflict. Stephen P Robbins (1983) has given a more reasonable definition he said “Power refers to the capacity that X has to influence the behavior of Y, so that Y does something somebody would not otherwise do.

The above definition of Stephen means:

- (1) A potential that need not be actualized to be effective;
- (2) A dependence relationship;
- (3) That B has some discretion above his or her own behavior.

A.J. Grimes (1978) defines power in terms of “informal authority”, and modern organizational sociologists define authority as “legitimate power”. Alfred Adler was the leading promoter of the power motive, and points out a person’s overwhelming drive for superiority. Steven Lukes, stated that the power has Three Faces:

- 1- (Decision Making) in this Face the member contributes equally in the decision making process and the opinion of all members considered for the decision making.
- 2- (Non-Decision Making) in this face members who have power won't allow the less powerful group to participate in the decision making process.
- 3- (Ability to shape preferences and perception) in this face of power the individuals try to make limits of freedom for others and treat them badly because of differences in their point view, ideologies and goals and there is no freedom to discuss your point of view.

Alfred Adler, (1930) explained that “the power needs to influence others; every child develops sense of weakness when these feelings of weakness are joined that he sensed as an intrinsic need for superiority and these two behaviors draw power”.

### **Organizational politics**

Organizational politics is known as the exploration of person agenda and self interest in an organization without observe to their result on

the organization's effort to achieve its goals and objectives. "Word politics have been derived from Greek language "Politikos" which means the art of influencing people on a civic or affairs of the city" from ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics)). Organizational politics recently has become a topic of study in organizational behavior. The definition of politics focuses the role of uncertainty as the important variable because politics is the response to uncertainty. Politics is a method for arriving at an agreement when rules and past experiences are not available. In academic terms politics refers to the structure and process of the use of authority and power to effect definitions of goals, directions, and other main parameters of the organization. Bronson T. Mayes and Robert W Allen (1977) stated more formally, politics has been defined as "the management of influence to achieve conclusions not authorized by the organization or to obtain approved conclusions through uncertified influence means". In the more specialist oriented literature, the argument of politics states to accurate ways to get forward in organizations. Robbins exposes to organizational politics as any behavior by an organizational fellow that is self-serving.

### **Power and Politics in Organizations**

First of all it must be understood and acknowledged that the modern organizations are mostly political systems, some very specific strategies can be identified to help members of organization to maintain their power base. There are four areas in which politics plays a substantial role:

- (1) Structural change.
- (2) Interdepartmental coordination.
- (3) Personnel changes.
- (4) Resource allocation.

There is a series of power and politics relationship between work groups that help to determine the actual structure and functioning of the group, power and political relationships must be recognized and acknowledged as facts of organizational life and dealt with by managers intended to facilitating organizational effectiveness. Structural reorganizations strike at the heart of power and authority. Structural change relocates legitimate authority by changing

responsibilities and tasks, which effect underlying power base from strategic contingencies.

The managers have to maintain their power bases the implications of reorganization, and actively bargain and negotiate to maintain the responsibilities they have. The formation of coalitions is critical to the attainment and maintenance of power within an organization. The guiding principle in take over firms should be to either welcome or sack the senior man. If the senior man is sacked he is rendered powerless or if he is simply downgraded he becomes resentful and determined to get his own back. Organizational coordination involves joint issues when managers of different departments meet and work out solutions on ad hoc basis. These coordination activities are often political in nature. Personnel changes involve promotion, transfers, hiring new executives and career development. These changes have great political significance at the organization levels when uncertainty is high, and trust and cooperation among executives is important. Hiring and promotions can be used to strengthen internal alliances and coalition by putting one's own people in prominent position.

The obligation would often hold the subordinate to support critical decisions of their benefactor. Resource allocation decisions encompass the range of resources required for organization performance, including salaries, operating budgets, number of employees, office facilities, and equipment. Resources are so vital that disagreement exists, and political processes help resolve the dilemmas.

### **Conclusion**

Power game in the politics is not a myth but truth in today's organizations and in its practices. Organizational behavior is interrelated with human behavior so that there is the Significance of Power and Politics and it influence the Organizational behavior towards effectiveness. As the leading part in classifying the organizational practices; in 16th century Italian philosopher Machiavelli laid the base for this modern work on organizational power and politics his writings provided the significance to this topic and other social scientists have also very much focused on this topic. Politics is not a simple phenomenon in

organizations; but like other aspects of organizational perspectives, it can vary from organization to organization and even from its one section to another. Political process supports to define the respective of authority (power) and task margins. The political policies can offer sensible guidance that how to get onward in an organization. The perspective which is taken here is related to Schoomaker's view: Politics does not mean avoiding effort, passing bulk, or joining the clubs; nor is it a real reason for not getting forward for work. These things can be a part of politics, but politics is a much more widespread phenomenon that comprises on the sharing of power and planning for achieving and holding it. The use of authority and power is to effect definitions of goals, directions, and other main parameters of the organization. Politics in organizations is always concerned with holding power. Power and politics are human aspects of behavior and providing vital purposes of endings in organizations for its developments.

## References

- A. M. Henderson, and Talcott Parsons (trans. And ed.) (1947) Max Weber: *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, New York: Free Press, p. 152.
- A. J. Grimes, (1978) "Authority, Power, Influence and Social Control: A Theoretical Synthesis," *Academy of management Review* p- 725.
- Alfred Adler, (1930) "Individual Psychology, "translated by Susane Langer, in Carl Murchison (ed.), Worcester, Mass: Clark University Press, 1970, p. 398-399.
- Bobbit H. Randolph. et al,(1978) *Organizational Behavior*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentic-Hall Inc., p. 6-7.
- Bronston T. Mayes, and Robert W. Allen (1977) *definition of Organizational Politics* *Academy of management Review*, p. 675.
- Chester Irving Barnard (1886-1961) "*The Functions of the Executive*" Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press
- Don Hellriegel, John W. Slocum, jr. (2007) "*organizations behavior*" Thomson South-Western, U.S.A

- Debra L. Nelson, James Campbell Quick, (2006) “*Organizational Behavior; Foundations, Realities and challenges*”, Thomson south-western, USA,
- Fred Luthans, (1983) *Organizational Behavior*, New York, Mc Graw-Hill Book Co., p. 3. *Omaha World-Herald*, October 1981, p. 11.
- G. Wamsley, and M. Zaid, (1973) *The Political Economy of Public Organizations (Lexington Mass: Heath, p. 18.*
- John W. Newstrom, Keith Davis (1993) “*Organizational Behavior, Human behavior at work*” -9<sup>th</sup> ed. published by McGraw- hill-Inc. USA
- Kuper, A. & Kuper, J. (1985) *Social Science Encyclopedia*, Published by Routledge & Kegan Paul London, Boston & Hamely.
- Luthans, F. (2002) “Organizational Behavior” McGraw-Hill Company, Inc. UK.
- Lau, J. B., & Shani, A.B. (1988). *Behavior in organizations: An experiential Approach* (4<sup>th</sup> edi.). Homewood, IL: Irwin.
- Max Weber (1973) *Watergate as a study in Management, Fortune*
- Richard L. Daft, (1983) *Organization Theory and Design, St. Paul: West Publishing Co.,*
- Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., Sanghi, S. (2009) “Organizational Behavior” Published by Pearson Education, Inc, Dorling Kindersly (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- Stephen P. Robbins, (1983) *Organizational Behavior*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, p. 314-315.
- S. K. Srivastava. (2005) “Organizational Behavior and Management”. Sarup & Sons, Ansari Road Darya Ganj, New Delhi-2.
- Walter R. Nord (1978), *Dreams of Humanization and the Realities of Power*, “*Academy of management Review*”, p. 675.