

ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS AND LEADERSHIP DECISION MAKING IN PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: As every organization struggles with achieving goals and objectives through effective decision-making, organizational politics have been fingered as an influencing factor. Nigeria's professional membership institutes (PMIs) are not left out of this conundrum. To that effect, this study examined, using the Political Systems Theory as a basis, the connection between organizational politics and leadership decision-making in PMIs in Nigeria. Three research questions were posed for this investigation. Correlational research was used as the study's research design. The collected data was evaluated using descriptive statistics such as mean, percentages, and frequency distribution. Members of the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered), one of the most well-known PMIs in the country, staff union members, and members of the council made up the study's population. For this study, 110 respondents were chosen using the purposive sample technique, of whom 100 properly filled out and returned their questionnaires for analysis. The instrument used to collect the data was an organized questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach statistics, and the results showed an alpha coefficient of 0.78. The results of the study showed that organizational politics indicators and leadership decision-making had a strong positive correlation. The study also showed that pressure from influential people and interest groups had a significant impact on leadership decision-making among the other subset of variables. The study's conclusions led to several recommendations, one of which was for PMI management to make decisions that will satisfy the interest of their institutes and not those that will satisfy certain influential individuals and groups.

Keywords: Institutes, Leadership decision-making, Organizational Politics, Political behaviour, Professional membership

1. Introduction

Politics is about the dynamics of gaining and exercising power and influence in a country, organization, or group, to assert rival interests. The phrase "organizational politics," sometimes referred to as "workplace politics" or "office politics," describes the goals of all parties involved in a business and the actions they take to obtain, hold, and exercise influence to achieve a particular result. The decision-making, resource allocation, and conflict-resolution procedures within an organization are frequently linked to organizational politics. One gains a quick understanding of the overall "political climate" of an organisation by studying its methods of resource allocation, conflict resolution, and overall decision-making. Rationality in decision-making can be undermined when interests are fundamentally incongruent, leading to emergence of political behaviour.

As Philip and Thomas (2013) noted, "We can often identify best or optimal decisions and decision-making processes, but observed responses may deviate markedly from these to a large extent because the environment in which decisions must be made is constantly changing. Moreover, decision-making can be highly constrained by institutions, natural and social context, and capabilities." Decision-making is a dominant aspect of leadership and is closely tied to seeking the best path toward achieving organizational goals.

It is expected of leaders to be able to do data analysis, option evaluation, and decision-making that is in the organization's best interests. While it is important for decision-making to be impartial and objective, it can also entail weighing conflicting interests and goals and making politically motivated compromises.

Professions are "forms of social organization that claim jurisdiction of specific occupational territories, based on their professional expertise and knowledge," according to Tellmann et al. (2020). A strong sense of professional autonomy and resistance to outside attempts to intervene in professional educational programs are produced by professional identity, which is viewed as a byproduct of professional socialization and training.

Professional bodies or institutes are organizations that maintain an oversight of the knowledge, skill, and ethical conduct of members of the respective professions. Professional membership institutes monitor and foster skills development as well as enforce code of conduct of members of that occupation.

The Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered), NIM is the first, foremost, and largest multidisciplinary professional institute in Nigeria, was established in 1961 and attained charter status through Act 14 of June 19, 2003, which empowers it to control and regulate the practice of the management profession in all its ramifications in Nigeria. With a membership of over 200,000 individuals and 400 corporate organizations, NIM can be said to be the largest professional body in Africa. The NIM Council is the policy-making body of the Institute while the management team headed by a Registrar/Chief Executive is the implementation arm. The past Presidents serve as the moral compass of the Institute by monitoring activities at the Institute to ensure that the vision, values, and professional ethics and standards for which the Institute is known for over the years are maintained in all its dealings.

Statement of the Problem

Most decision-making frameworks assume that leaders and other decision-makers have autonomy and work with information. Goodman (1993) averred that 'Managerial decision making is often based on incomplete or inaccurate information.' Autonomous decision-making means objectively considering alternative actions and making a choice without the influence or pressure of politically savvy individuals or groups. It is the free will of a leader to think and act on his or her own terms. Decision-making autonomy is vital for effective leadership. It allows leaders to make quick decisions, adapt to changes, and drive the organization toward achieving its goals. "Deviations from rational decision-making have been observed in nearly every facet of economic activity," claims Rode (1997). If these less than ideal choices had no effect on the value of enterprises and hence the economy, this would be just a funny theoretical subject. Therefore, there are two options left: either managers are unaware that they make poor decisions, or managers genuinely don't care that they make subpar decisions. It makes sense to think that the second scenario is indeed the one that exists.

This study is focused on solving the problem of the knowledge gap about how organizational politics affects leadership decision-making, with special reference to the effects on professional membership institutes. The researchers will ascertain the magnitude of the influence of indicators of organizational politics in the decision-making process, and proffer solutions to ensure that leadership autonomy in decision-making is upheld.

While organizational politics and leadership decision-making have been extensively studied globally, there may be a lack of research focusing specifically on professional membership institutes in Nigeria. The unique cultural, economic, and political context of Nigeria might influence how organizational politics impacts leadership decisions, and this context-specific insight could be underexplored.

In addition, professional membership institutes often operate differently from other organizations due to their unique roles in professional development, certification, and regulation. Agarwal N. & Islam M. (2016) state that there is still a disconnect between the expectations of members and the association's offerings. Frequently, individuals who are either current or prospective members are merely unaware of the plethora of events and

advantages offered by the organization. The dynamics of organizational politics and decision-making in these specific types of institutions may differ from those in other sectors. Research focusing specifically on these dynamics within Nigerian institutes could provide new insights.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Does the perception of organizational politics (POP) influence leaders in professional membership institutes in Nigeria to make decisions that are not ideal?
2. Does pressure from powerful individuals and interest groups cause the prioritization of unimportant goals in professional membership institutes in Nigeria?
3. Does lack of leadership autonomy negatively affect leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes in Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

This study ascertains the relationship between organizational politics and leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate whether the perception of organizational politics (POP) influences leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes in Nigeria.
2. Determine whether pressure from powerful individuals and interest groups influences leadership decision-making.
3. Ascertain if lack of leadership autonomy negatively affects leadership decision-making.

Scope of the Study

The study ascertained the relationship between organizational politics and leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes in Nigeria. The study specifically covered how the indicators of organizational politics (perceptions of organizational politics, pressure from influential individuals and groups, and lack of leadership autonomy) relate to leadership decision-making in PMIs. The geographical scope is Nigeria consisting of four locations of the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered) NIM namely Lagos, Abuja, Kano, and Port Harcourt. The respondents of the study comprised Council members representing all the professional members of the institute, management, and employees including members of staff Union. These are people who are political influencers, decision-makers, employees, and members who are at the receiving end of leadership decision-making and as such are better placed to ascertain how organizational politics impacts leadership decision-making at NIM.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Review

Meaning of Politics

Politics, according to Pfeffer (1992), is the application and realization of potential power through various procedures, acts, and behaviors. People must cooperate and work together because they are social creatures and members of society, claims Modebadze Valeri (2010). Making decisions about the distribution of group resources is necessary when individuals collaborate. Politics is the study of decision-making processes like these.

Organizational Politics

Organizational politics are unofficial strategies for acquiring power through methods other than hard work or good fortune, according to Dubrin (2001). One could argue that the main purpose of politics is to acquire power, either directly or indirectly, through opportunities like promotions, bigger budgets or other resources, or attractive assignments.

Chisanga (2024) defines organizational politics as the use of authority and influence within a group or organization to achieve individual or group goals, frequently at the expense of the organization's objectives. This can involve taking part in power battles, building coalitions, making alliances, and using information carefully.

Organizational politics can occasionally be morally right or wrong. Ahmed (2022) argues that unethical political behaviour usually entails influencing people for one's benefit or undermining the organization's aims, whereas ethical political behaviour is in accordance with the mission and goals of the organization. This explains why organizational politics, according to Ekpeyong and Ojeaga (2022), is the pursuit of personal interests without taking into account how doing so will ultimately affect the attainment of organizational objectives. They went on to say that informal attempts to advance ideas, gain authority, and accomplish other specific goals within an organization make up organizational politics.

Objectives of organizational politics

Gaining authority, increasing output, getting recognition, settling conflicts, advancing individual goals, defending self-interest, making money and revenue, and cultivating strong relationships are some of the purposes of organizational politics.

Factors Impacting Organizational Politics

The phenomenon of organizational politics is the result of several interconnected factors. People and organizations are compelled to scheme and make plans in order to acquire the resources they desire because of a scarcity of resources, usually at the expense of others (Ekpenyong and Ojeaga, 2022). For example, employees may criticize a colleague or push for higher project costs as part of a political strategy to advance, which might undermine the project and split the team.

Mehmood, Khan, and Ali (2023) assert that one of the main causes of organizational politics is ambiguity and uncertainty regarding the goals, responsibilities, and processes of the organization. When these variables are ambiguous, employees may employ political manoeuvres to resolve the uncertainty. This can entail forming alliances with powerful coworkers or superiors, promoting specific decisions or resource allocation, or leveraging networking to build social capital.

Mehmood, Khan, and Ali (2023) claim that this may result in decisions that are made that are in opposition to the goals of the organization, unfair treatment, or favouritism. Moreover, power relationships and hierarchies inside the firm can aggravate organizational politics (Khan, Ali, and Khan, 2021). When hierarchical systems are coupled with authoritarian or manipulative leadership styles, power imbalances can result, in encouraging political behaviour as people or groups try to move up or down the hierarchy. For instance, a manager who instills fear or intimidation in staff members may incite them to undertake political strategies to win favour or defend themselves.

The incidence of organizational politics is also significantly shaped by organizational culture (Khan, Ali, and Khan, 2021). Political behaviour can be fostered by cultures that value individual success above group accomplishments, or rivalry over cooperation. Reward structures that prioritize personal success or immediate benefits over the organization's long-term objectives can also encourage political conduct. For example, if an organization's incentive programme just honours individual performance measures, staff members can use devious means to surpass their peers.

The dynamics inside an organization are greatly impacted by external factors, such as legal frameworks or market competition, resulting in the rise of organizational politics (Gregg, et al. 2022). Organizations have to constantly negotiate shifting market conditions and challenges from competitors in today's fast-paced business environment. Internal rivalry among teams or employees can result from the pressure to keep up with the competition and hold onto market share. This can then encourage political scheming. Employees could feel under pressure to prioritize their ideas or initiatives over others, for instance, if a company is in a competitive market (Gregg, et al., 2022). This may cause one to place more emphasis on individual or group goals than on the overall goals of the company. Workers may use political strategies to their advantage, such as lobbying for resources or creating alliances with powerful co-workers, which can polarize the workplace.

Moreover, the frequency of organizational politics can be greatly influenced by the leadership styles employed (Chisanga, 2024). Political dynamics that are already present in the organization might be exacerbated by leaders who prioritize their agendas, nepotism, or favouritism. For instance, managers who favour some staff members over others by giving them greater opportunities or treatment can stoke conflict and lower morale in a hostile work environment. Since workers may feel under pressure to act similarly to preserve their own interests,

political maneuvering may become more common as a result. However, leaders who value justice, cooperation, and honesty highly may be able to mitigate the negative effects of organizational politics. A leader who encourages open communication, for instance, creates a work environment where members of staff feel appreciated and valued.

Effects of Politics in Organizations

Organizational politics can have far-reaching effects on people, groups, and even the efficacy of the organization as a whole. Employee perceptions of favoritism, injustice, or manipulation are frequently the result of organizational politics, and this can have a negative effect on engagement and morale. Workers may get discouraged and demotivated if they believe that their efforts and contributions are disregarded in favour of politically connected people or organizations (Okeke, and Mbah, 2019).

The sense of injustice or manipulation can weaken management-employee trust, which can result in a breakdown in coordination and communication (Khan, and Hussain, 2022). If workers believe their contributions will go unappreciated or unacknowledged, they can be less willing to collaborate or share ideas. This may impede collaboration and teamwork, which in turn may have an impact on the organization's general efficacy and production. Reduced morale and involvement might also show up in higher absenteeism and turnover rates, according to Khan and Hussain (2022).

Teams' trust is eroded by organizational politics, which frequently thrive on deception, secrecy, and favoritism (Jasinth, 2023). This suggests that judgments made based on personal agendas rather than merit might give rise to feelings of unfairness among staff members and erode their confidence in the leadership. Employee reluctance to give ideas or information for fear of being disregarded or undercut might result from this lack of trust and reduce collaboration. Political maneuvering can also result in information silos when particular people or organizations withhold information to obtain an advantage, which makes cooperation and openness even more difficult. In the end, if teams find it difficult to collaborate, this breakdown of confidence and trust can endanger projects and initiatives.

Jasinth (2023) averred that organizational politics can also impede innovation and creativity due to uncertainty, personal agendas, and fear of reprisals. If workers believe that sharing new ideas or taking chances may hurt their political standing, they may become reluctant to do so. This fear of the consequences might prevent people from trying new things and from challenging the status quo, which can impede the organization's ability to grow and develop. Employees who prioritize furthering their interests over the objectives of the company may also foster a mediocre culture that devalues originality and creativity.

Ahmed (2022) claims that organizational politics frequently gives subjective standards a lower priority than personal agendas when making decisions. This may result in the wasteful use of resources since political allegiances or personal ties may have more of an impact on decisions than needs or merit. A manager might, for instance, decide to distribute project funds or resources according to personal tastes rather than considering the project's potential significance or strategic value. This may result in a misalignment of goals and resources, which would ultimately affect the organization's capacity to meet its strategic objectives.

Employees may experience emotional and mental exhaustion when managing the complicated political terrain within firms, according to Ellen, et al. (2022).

Leadership Decision-Making

Making decisions is a key component of leadership and is intimately related to strategic thinking. Competent leaders need to be able to evaluate options, assess data, and make well-informed decisions that serve the organization's interests. The process of weighing the advantages and disadvantages of different possibilities and selecting the one that best satisfies organizational goals and objectives is known as leadership decision-making. Leadership must make judgments that are at times straightforward and at other times difficult and overwhelming. Professionals must be prepared to adopt effective leadership styles that assist them in solving the problems of employees and their stakeholders as crucial entities towards sustainability. Professionals' needs

and resources have changed due to technological advancements, and they now require more autonomy and involvement in decision-making (Fahad et al., 2020).

Levels of Decision-making

According to Avendano et al. (2020), there are three levels of decision-making explained as follows:

- i. **Strategic decisions:** Senior managers are responsible for making strategic decisions. They establish the overarching objectives that impact the entire organization and concurrently delineate the enduring strategies to accomplish those goals. Errors in these choices could jeopardize the organization, therefore a high standard of responsibility is necessary.
- ii. **Tactical decisions:** Middle-level managers make the tactical choices. They have to do with allocating resources effectively so as to accomplish the goals established at the strategic level. They have the potential to be repeating, and when they are, the repetition is enough to rely on history. Their effects are usually reversible and spread over a short period of time.
- iii. **Operational decisions:** These have to do with the day-to-day operations of the company and are made by lower-level management. They are repetitive.

The Decision-making Process

- a. Establishing Objectives: Specifying goals that must be fulfilled within a given amount of time.
- b. Determine the Decision: Determine the issue that has to be resolved.
- c. Compile Useful Information - Interviews, focus groups, direct observation, and secondary data sources including publications and reports are some of the information gathering techniques.
- d. Recognize the Alternatives: Without knowledge of the possibilities, it might be challenging to make an informed selection. Alternatives can be found through research, conversation, and brainstorming.
- e. Weigh the Evidence: Before deciding on a course of action, the decision-maker weighs the advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- f. Select from the Options - A selection is done based on a predetermined criterion. Other elements like political concerns and the influence could affect the decision.

2.2. Theoretical Review

Political Systems Theory is the foundation of this research. Systems theory decision-making models for human groups and organizations place a strong emphasis on how these entities interact with "outside" actors and organizations. These models also focus on identifying the specific components of the group or organization's environment that have a significant impact on the decisions made by the group or organization. Stated differently, making decisions is a reaction to external opportunities or threats.

David Easton, a Canadian-American political scientist, first popularized the Political Systems Theory in his 1953 book "The Political System: An Inquiry into the State of Political Science." Later, in 1965, he expanded on it in two more books, "A Framework for Political Analysis" and "A Systems Analysis of Political Life."

According to the Political Systems Theory, the people of any society have many expectations, interests, motivations, opinions, and preferences regarding the allocation of value within the society. They end up taking political action to satisfy their wants because political action places authoritative obligations on all members of society which are accepted as binding by most persons.

This theory is appropriate for the current study given that it views organizations as complex systems of political interactions and power relations. It helps to analyze how different stakeholders within professional membership institutes (e.g., Council members, management team, employees, Union, and professional members) use power and influence to shape decision-making processes and satisfy their wants.

2.3. Empirical Review

Oboh et al. (2020) studied the impact of ethical philosophy, work sector, and professional membership categories on ethical decision-making among Nigerian professional accountants. This study set out to investigate

how professional membership categories, the job sector, and ethical ideological orientation—namely, moral idealism and moral relativism—affect professional accountants' ethical decision-making (EDM) processes in Nigeria. Using four scenarios of ethical problems in the form of a structured questionnaire, the study collected primary data from 329 professional accountants. Multiple regression, independent sample t-test, Pearson correlation analysis, and descriptive statistical analysis were used to evaluate the data. The findings showed that the accountants examined had both idealistic and relativistic moral orientations, with a higher mean score (>4.0) noted for moral idealism. It was discovered that moral idealism had a favorable impact on the three phases of EDM that were studied (ethical recognition, ethical assessment, and ethical intention), whereas moral relativism had a negative impact. Professional accountants who tended toward relativistic orientation were less likely than those who tended toward idealistic orientation to make moral decisions when faced with moral conundrums. The findings also showed that professional membership categories and the kind of work sector (public or private) are important predictors of the EDM process used by Nigerian professional accountants. The researchers suggested that in order to improve professional accountants' moral ideological orientation and, consequently, their EDM processes, educational and legislative initiatives should be made. Additionally, the researchers suggested that ethics education and training could benefit from the findings.

Schneider R. (2016) studied *Organizational Politics: An Understanding and Managing Approach*. This paper's goal was to give a foundation for understanding organizational politics and offer a range of strategies for reducing its prevalence and generally detrimental consequences on the organization. The approach used was a survey of the body of knowledge regarding the topic. The writers listed below were referenced: Organizational politics frequently involve self-interest, which is embodied in individuals' desires to further and protect their careers (Randall, Cropanzano, Borman, & Birjulin, 1999; Vigoda, 2000). Organizational politics can have detrimental impacts that ultimately compromise the organization's objectives. These implications include favoritism (Malik, Danish, & Ghafoor, 2009); bad organizational citizenship (Chang, et al., 2009); a decline in job satisfaction and an increase in job stress (Miller, Rutherford, & Kolodinsky, 2008); an indifferent employee attitude and poor job performance (Witt, Andrews, & Kacmar, 2000); a disruption of return on employee investment (Hochwarter, Kacmar, Perrewe, & Johnson, 2003); and lower morale (Chang et al., 2009) are some of the negative effects of organizational politics that can ultimately undermine the overall goals of the organization.

According to the study, hiring politically inexperienced staff members, encouraging teamwork, developing trust and social support, involving employees in decision-making, and basing program and personnel decisions on objective standards are some of the tactics for minimizing organizational politics. It was suggested that internal politics in organizations must be constantly addressed if organizational outcomes are to be achieved and maximized.

Spitzeck and Hansen's (2010) study, *Stakeholder Governance: How Stakeholders Influence company Decision Making*, examined the voluntary processes by which stakeholders are given influence over company decisions. Using publicly available sources, a multiple comparative case analysis was conducted to examine the stakeholder governance processes of 46 different organizations. According to the research, stakeholders have a say in matters pertaining to operations, management, and strategy. Stakeholders have varying degrees of power, ranging from non-participation to co-decision making. After observing a variety of stakeholder governance methods, the study advises managers to consider their own approach to stakeholders and observe how other businesses employ stakeholder involvement for scenario planning and innovation.

In 2016, Khan MA and Hussaini N. carried out a study on 'Perceptions of Organizational Politics Among Public Sector University Faculty' analyzing how university professors perceived organizational politics. The aim of this study is to investigate, via empirical means, how university faculty members in Pakistan perceive organizational politics. The purpose of the study was to gather information regarding how Karachi university faculty members saw organizational politics. 110 professors from different higher education institutions made up the sample size. The 15-item Perception of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS), created by Kacmar and Carlson (1997), served as the study's instrument. The 0.05 threshold of significance was applied while testing the hypotheses using Pearson Correlation Chi square. According to the research, there is a correlation between the survival of staff in higher education institutions and influential political groupings. The researchers suggested that in order to

increase their level of pleasure and decrease the frequency of frustration, faculty members should attempt to comprehend and proactively counteract the general political conduct in their institutions.

Okeke and Mbah (2019) studied organizational politics and worker performance in a few Nigerian tertiary institutions in the state of Anambra. The specific objective of the study was to determine the effects of power struggles, religious diversity, remuneration and promotion, and cultural antagonism on employee performance. The study's cornerstone was the Just World Theory. A study design based on surveys was used. The population of the study consisted of 5403. Using the statistical methods provided by Nwana (1992) and Fawett (1997), 540 was the sample size. The Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) method was used to test the hypotheses. The study discovered a favorable correlation between organizational politics and employee performance in postsecondary institutions, particularly in Anambra State. According to the report, companies need to be aware of how employee cultures differ and how those differences affect how people behave and react. Equal promotion chances, a suitable compensation structure that takes performance into account and offers bonuses, and other measures that lessen the harmful impacts of political behavior should all be guaranteed.

'Organizational politics as a factor impacting librarians' work performance at public university libraries in North-West Nigeria' was studied by Unobe and Ikonne (2021). The study assessed how organizational politics affected librarians' ability to do their jobs in public university libraries in Nigeria's northwest. In this study, a survey research design was adopted. The 12 public universities in North-West Nigeria that are part of the Federal and State systems of higher education comprise the population of 736 respondents for this study. The results showed that the most common organizational politics used by librarians in public university libraries in North-West Nigeria were organizational influence, personal influence, and work context influence. According to the study's findings, organizational politics play a critical role in helping librarians in North-West Nigeria do their jobs more effectively. The study concluded that organizational politics is crucial factor for increasing job performance of librarians in North-West Nigeria. However, the study recommended that the level of librarians' job performance in public university libraries in North-West, Nigeria was high, appraising the staff performance will ensure that the factors that makes for job satisfaction are still in place before making a decision on whether a librarian is performing well or bad and take responsibility for management induced inefficiency.

Ekpenyong and Ojeaga (2022) examined the ways in which organizational politics impacted the allocation of resources in institutions in Nigeria. Three research questions were answered and two null hypotheses were looked at throughout the investigation. In the inquiry, a descriptive survey design was used. In order to randomly select 229 participants from the population, stratified random sampling was employed in this investigation. An instrument with standardized use was used to collect data for the research. After analyzing the gathered data, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient yielded a reliability grade of 0.82. The z-test and Wilcoxon rank test were used to assess the hypotheses, while mean and standard deviation (SD) were used to answer the study questions. Findings indicated, among other things, that many categories of university system personnel, from time to time, approached chairmen and members of committees in charge of resource allocation to request preferential treatment. Based on the results, it was suggested that Nigerian university founders work to enhance the distribution of resources within their institutions and establish accountability and transparency in this regard by appropriately implementing established policies and procedures.

3. Methodology

Descriptive statistics is the research design of the study. The purposive sample strategy was employed in data collecting in consideration of the goals and objectives of the research. Purposive sampling involves deliberate unit selection based on the qualities you require in your sample. The researcher's familiarity with the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered) enabled the selection of specific groups of individuals on purpose. These groups of individuals are made up of members of the Council who are representatives of the professional members, management team, and employees including members of the staff union. A population size of 120 was captured, and given a desired level of precision, desired confidence level, and the estimated proportion of the attribute present in the population, a sample size of 110 respondents was selected using the purposive sampling technique.

Data was collected with the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire had a clear format with predetermined questions. The questionnaire was designed with the utmost care to prevent providing responders with unnecessary hints. The surveys provided the researcher the chance to gather information from a sample where response manipulation is unlikely. There were two sections on the questionnaire: A and B. In Section A, respondents provided their demographic information, while in Section B, respondents were asked about the connection between organizational politics and leadership decision-making. Questions in this section included those on perceptions of organizational politics (POP) using 12 items from Kacmar and Carlson's (1997) scale. The Cronbach alpha statistics was employed to assess the questionnaire's reliability and internal consistency. The instrument was deemed dependable and the obtained coefficient of 0.78 was deemed sufficient. Response options were presented on a 5-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Undecided, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly Agree).

Questionnaires were sent to 110 respondents electronically for ease of collection and collation. The researchers received 100 duly completed questionnaires that were in good condition and usable, thus achieving a 91% response rate.

4. Result

The responses gathered from respondents on key variables that affect leadership decision-making at the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered) are presented in the tables below.

TABLE 1: Demographic Information on Respondents

Age	24-34	35-45	46-56	57-67	68 and above	Total
%	10	25	40	20	5	100

Gender	Male	Female	Other			Total
%	65	35	0			100

Status	Council members	Management	Employees/ Union			Total
%	40	10	50			100

The demographic information in Table 1 shows that a large portion of respondents fall between the ages of 46 and 56, representing 40% of the sample size, followed by those between ages 57 and 67 at 20% of the sample size. This informs the researchers that the majority of respondents were mature and experienced people who have been with the institute long enough to know how decisions are made. Furthermore, 65% of respondents were males while 35% were females. No respondent claimed other gender classification. This shows that the institute is dominated by male stakeholders. However, this ratio is acceptable since it did not bring about any distortion of the research outcome. The respondents cut across various statuses namely; Council members (representing all professional members) 40%, Management 10%, and Employees/Union 50% (union members are also part of employees). This shows an adequate representation of stakeholders in the institute.

TABLE 2: Response on Key Variables that Affect Leadership Decision-making

Variable		SA (%)	A (%)	UN (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean
V1	Pressure from influential individuals	60 (60%)	22 (22%)	15 (15%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	4.38
V2	Lack of autonomy of decision-maker	65 (65%)	20 (20%)	1 (1%)	10 (10%)	4 (4%)	4.32
V3	Lack of prioritization	65	15	1	10	9	4.17

		(65%)	(15%)	(1%)	(10%)	(9%)	
V4	Perception of organizational politics	60 (60%)	25 (25%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	4.30
V5	Organizational culture	50 (50%)	25 (25%)	2 (2%)	18 (18%)	5 (5%)	3.97
V6	Lack of adequate information	5 (5%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	25 (25%)	55 (55%)	1.85
V7	Risk and uncertainty	10 (10%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	25 (25%)	45 (45%)	2.00
V8	Poor skillset of leadership	5 (5%)	15 (15%)	8 (8%)	40 (40%)	32 (32%)	2.21
V9	Unavailability of Finance	10 (10%)	10 (10%)	1 (1%)	50 (50%)	29 (29%)	2.22
V10	Unrealistic assumptions	5 (5%)	10 (10%)	3 (3%)	25 (25%)	57 (57%)	1.81

Note: N=100, SA=5, A=4, UN=3, D=2, SD=1. Grand mean = 3.12 computed as sum of the means divided by 10 which is the number of variables. Decision criterion: There is high perception of a variable if it's mean is higher than the grand mean of 3.12 and vice versa.

The data analysis in Table 2 shows that all the indicators of organizational politics represented as V1, V2, V3, V4 and V5 had high percentages of 'Strongly Agree, and Agree' (SA, A). Under variable V1, 82% of respondents (SA 60%, A 22%) felt that pressure from influential individuals was a key consideration in leadership decision-making. Also, majority of respondents (85%) in V2 are of the view that lack of autonomy of decision-makers has impact on decision-making. In their response to V3, 80% of respondents believed that lack of prioritization is a key feature of decision-making at NIM. Furthermore, V4 which is about the effect of perception of organizational politics raked in a total of 85% on the Strongly Agree and Agree scale. Organizational culture garnered a total of 75% of respondents under the Strongly Agree and Agree scale.

Overall, the predictor variables of organizational politics accounted for a significant percentage of the factors that affect leadership decision-making at NIM.

In contrast, V6, V7, V8, V9, and V10 which are generally perceived variables in determining effective leadership decision-making were scored lower percentages by respondents at NIM, meaning that they had low perception of the significance of these variables in decision-making. Note that these variables are not key predictors of organizational politics.

Furthermore, the mean value of the variables shown in the chart below indicates that predictors of organizational politics V1 to V5 had individual mean scores, above the grand mean of 3.12 while the other variables from V6 to V10 had mean scores lower than the grand mean.



This buttresses the fact that respondents considered leadership decision-making, more as a function of the indicators of organizational politics at NIM.

5. Discussion

The study found that leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes in Nigeria, particularly NIM, was highly correlated with organizational politics. This proves that pressure from influential individuals as an indicator of organizational politics has a high relevance in leadership decision-making. The study's conclusions corroborate the claims made by Unobe and Ikonne (2021), who claimed that the three main organizational politics practices used by librarians in public libraries and universities in North-West Nigeria were personal influence, organizational influence, and job context influence.

The study also showed that leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes was highly correlated with organizational culture. This suggests that leadership decision-making in professional membership institutes is substantially influenced by the work environment as an indicator of organizational politics. The study's findings are consistent with those of Ekpenyong and Ojeaga (2022), who evaluated university working conditions and found that different staff groups occasionally asked resource allocation committee chairs and members for preferential treatment.

According to the report, stakeholders have a big say in how leaders make decisions. This is consistent with a study by Spitzack H. and Hansen E.G. (2010) titled Stakeholder Governance: How Stakeholders Influence Corporate Decision Making, which reveals that stakeholders are given a voice in matters pertaining to operations, management, and strategy.

6. Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of organizational politics on leadership decision-making in professional membership organizations in Nigeria, specifically, the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered). The study reveals that indicators of organizational politics such as pressure from influential individuals, lack of autonomy of decision-makers, prioritization of unimportant activities, and organizational culture strongly impact decision-making.

This is contrary to the common perception that the skillset of leaders, lack of finance, unrealistic assumptions, and other factors significantly affect decision-making in professional management institutes in Nigeria. The study's findings suggest that this is not the case for professional membership institutes in Nigeria, where organizational politics play a significant role in decision-making for leaders.

5.1. Recommendations

In light of the study's conclusions, the following suggestions were put forth:

- a. Professional membership organizations' management needs to make sure that decisions they make serve the interests of their institutions rather than those of a select group of powerful people, even though politics will always exist in organizations.
- b. Members of the leadership team should ensure that they have the requisite autonomy to make decisions. The institute's Council should respect the principle of corporate governance which provides for separation of responsibilities between the Council and management of professional membership institutes. This will ensure that the institute's Vision, mission, and goals are actualized.
- c. Those saddled with decision-making should be coached and mentored on how to navigate organizational politics through on-the-job training, seminars, and workshops. This goes a long way in ensuring that they shun the negative effects of organizational politics.

5.2. Suggestions for Further Studies

This kind of research can be conducted in the public sector with a government agency or parastatal. It can be conducted in the private sector with a corporate organization to see if the outcome will be different. Similar research should be conducted with more than one organization to compare the effects of organizational politics on leadership decision-making in various industries across the country.

The researchers also suggest that similar research be conducted with the use of other statistical research tools and sampling methods different from the purposive sampling method and descriptive analysis. It is also

important to conduct follow-up research on why organizational politics impacts strongly leadership decision-making and how the negative impact can be minimized.

Further studies on the effect of organizational politics on member participation in professional membership institutes may be undertaken. Understanding how political behavior influences members' willingness to engage with and contribute to their institutes could provide insights into improving member satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

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