Examining organizational politics as the cause of the crisis in energy generation in developing countries: the instance of Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

The majority of state-owned entities (SoEs) have experienced organizational cancer for nearly three decades without showing any signs of improvement. Academicians generally agree that organizational politics are to blame for the ongoing energy-generating dilemma that has plagued rising nations. Worldwide, economies rely heavily on electricity as an energy source, to the point where they would not function or even survive without it. To reduce unfavorable political behavior, this study examines organizational politics at the Zimbabwe Supply Authority, a SoE in charge of energy production. A sample of 1400 individuals were chosen at random from a population of 2210 staff who members participated in the study using a quantitative research approach to collect data. By the deadline, 358 completed questionnaires had been returned; however, 11 of them were rejected because they had been wrongly filled out. The data were analyzed using the statistical tool SPSS 21.0 for Windows. To ensure that the samples were adequate for factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's Test of sphericity were applied to the data before exploratory factor analysis could be conducted on them (Field, 2007:619). The results of the study showed that had political behavior and ineffective managerial leadership techniques had a detrimental impact on the power generation crisis. According to the report, managers should receive training on modern managerial leadership behavior, managerial methods for behavior modification, and improved communication.

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Introduction

The world is in a profound electricity generation crisis that dates back to the 19th century (Guan et al., 2023), with Africa facing the greatest challenges despite possessing the world's largest untapped energy resources. Africa's economies are likely to continue to expand as most nations struggle to increase their power generation, given that electricity drives economies worldwide. Electricity is a fundamental requirement for powering industries and service organizations, as well as domestic applications. Without electricity, some countries' current levels of development would not be possible. It is important to note that the vast majority, if not all, of electricity generation companies in Africa are state-owned, indicating that the government exerts some influence over the day-to-day management of such strategic companies. Unfortunately, the majority of companies have demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt that they are incapable of generating enough electricity to power their respective economies, with the Southern African DevelopmentCommunity (SADC) being particularly hard hit.

In a state-owned organization, the government exerts influence over the managerial leadership practices, system operations, and procedures that affect the efficient flow of work. Obviously, the matrix between the government as overseer and the management structure of the state-owned entity will become an integral element of the organizational politics prevalent in state-controlled organizations. This is the predicament in which state-run organizations find themselves. Organizational politics is not a novel topic in either managerial practice or academia. For more than four decades, empirical studies on managerial practices have focused primarily on organizational power and politics (Drory & Vigdor-Gadot, 2018). In support, Ullah, Jafri, and Dost (2011) state that...
organizational politics has received a great deal of attention in recent decades due to its image of pervasiveness, mystique, and potential benefits accruing to those who play the political game successfully. Despite the volume of current research in the field of organizational politics, there are few empirical studies on organizational politics within electricity corporations in Africa, despite the fact that organizational politics is pervasive throughout state-owned electricity entities within SADC. It is essential to establish from the outset that organizational politics in state-owned electricity entities in SADC cannot be viewed in isolation from government politics. This is due to the fact that state-owned electricity entities are state-owned institutions that are generally under the control of the respective government ministry, typically the ministry of energy resources.

Organizational politics is an unavoidable phenomenon that can either strengthen or ruin a company. In the context of mediocre performance, the prevalence of organizational politics in the preponderance of state-owned electricity entities prompted this study. Most, if not all, state-owned electricity entities in SADC are currently struggling to power their economies, with the insurgency of organizational politics cited as a major contributing factor as of late, posing a threat to the future ability of the SADC region to make significant contributions to Africa’s economy due to insufficient electrical power. South Africa, the region’s dominant player, experienced the worst electrical power crisis in 2008, resulting in load shedding in the majority of its cities. The SADC region is confronting a severe crisis. Moreover, at the time of the study, Mozambique supplied hydro and gas power to South Africa and Zimbabwe, and work is well advanced to connect Malawi and Tanzania to its national power infrastructure in an effort to alleviate the power generation crisis that has stifled economic growth in the SADC region. Taking a cue from the highly politicized environment that permeates state utilities, including state-owned electricity entities, across SADC, there is every reason to believe that organizational politics has a direct effect on SADC’s electricity crisis. Despite the pervasive organizational politics within the majority of SADC’s state-owned electricity entities, significant progress has been made in the development of energy power initiatives to alleviate the crisis. The convergence of organizational politics and electricity crises in the majority of SADC’s state-owned electricity firms is likely to have an impact on organizational management. As the subject of the study, it is essential to comprehend what organizational politics entails. Organizational politics refers to the existence of multiple interests and incompatible goals beyond the organization’s objectives as well as the influence used by organization members to defend these goals (Ullah et al., 2011). Organizational politics are synonymous with many terms, including political behavior, political talent, influence tactics, politicking, and political maneuvering. Ullah et al. (2011) characterize organizational politics as resembling the influence processes utilized to manage organizations’ multiple competing interests. Early on, Pfeffer (1992) defined organizational politics as the activities undertaken within an organization to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to achieve one’s desired outcomes in a situation marked by uncertainty or a lack of consensus on the best course of action. According to Kurchner-Hawkins and Miller (2020), organizational politics is the exercise of power and influence that occurs primarily outside formal organizational processes and procedures, with the ultimate goal of advancing one’s own interests. By their very essence, organizations are political arenas where battles are fought, won, and lost (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2011). Therefore, the prevalence of organizational politics is an inevitable trend. In the midst of political conflicts, the organization’s operations are compromised to a significant degree.

SADC, there is substantial evidence that organizational politics played a significant role in the electricity crisis. Despite the pervasive organizational politics within the majority of SADC’s state-owned electricity entities, significant progress has been made in the development of energy power initiatives to alleviate the crisis. The convergence of organizational politics and electricity crises in the majority of SADC’s state-owned electricity firms is likely to have an impact on organizational management. Consequently, it is crucial to perceive what organizational politics is, as it constitutes the study’s central concept. Organizational politics refers to the existence of multiple interests and incompatible goals outside of the organization’s objectives as well as the influence used by members of the organization to defend these goals (Ullah et al., 2011). Organizational politics is synonymous with, among other things, political conduct, political talent, influence strategies, “politicizing,” and political maneuvering. Ullah et al. (2011) characterize organizational politics as resembling the influence processes utilized to manage the multiple competing interests of organizations. Early on, Pfeffer (1992) defined organizational politics as the activities undertaken within organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to achieve one’s desired outcomes when there is ambiguity or disagreement regarding the available options. This definition is current and applicable to organizational developments, according to Kurchner-Hawkins and Miller (2020), who define organizational politics as the exercise of power and influence that primarily occurs outside of formal organizational processes and procedures with the ultimate goal of advancing one’s own interests. Organizations, by their very nature, are political arenas where battles are fought, won, and lost (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2011). Organizational politics are therefore an unavoidable phenomenon. Political conflicts have a substantial negative impact on the operations of the organization.

Veluri (2019) defines an organization as a collection of individuals who collaborate to achieve their objectives. In essence, an organization is viewed as a social marketplace in which individuals engage in transactions or activities in order to earn a profit. Jones and George (2019) define an organization as a group of individuals who collaborate and coordinate their actions in order to attain future goals. Taking elements from the preceding description of an organization, state-owned electricity entities throughout SADC display the aforementioned description. These are typical organizations that have objectives and employees with deferred goals by their very nature. The enigmatic actions of all organization members in pursuit of individual goals, however, indicate the emergence of organizational politics, which is the central focus of the study.
The focus of the study is the organizational dynamics of Zimbabwe’s government-owned electricity company. The study investigates the impact of management on organizational governance. Despite substantial studies on organizational politics such as Aino and Sini (2022), Muhammad (2017), and Ferris et al. (2002), few studies have been conducted on the electricity generation sector, and specifically on Zimbabwe’s state-owned electricity entity commonly known as the Zimbabwe electricity supply authority (ZESA).

After this introduction, the remainder of the paper consists of a literature review, research methodology, analysis, study findings, and discussions. The paper concludes with conclusions, recommendations, and limitations on future directions of research.

**Literature Review**

**Theoretical and Conceptual Background**

**The global perspective**

Africa is endowed with natural resources that includes huge fossil in the northern, southern, and western regions, geothermal in the Red Sea Valley, hydro power from its major rivers such as the Congo, Zambezi and the Nile, and wind power and solar due to its high altitude (Guan et al., 2023). Despite being endowed with all the resources, Africa continues to lag behind the rest of the continents in terms of providing the much-needed energy to its industries and its growing population. Africa’s state-owned electricity companies have had a fair share of challenges over the past four decades (Africa Progress Panel, 2015). The challenges range from power politics, the struggle for resources, favouritism, backstabbing, image tarnishing, blaming others to whistle blowing, lack of planning and under-capitalisation just to mention some. To compound the challenges, Africa’s challenges are increasingly becoming a huge burden with Zimbabwe experiencing the worst crisis since attaining political independence from Britain (Asuëline & Simara, 2013). For example, huge economies in Africa’s economic regions are experiencing severe electricity shortages which negatively impact on industry performance (Amajouyi, 2019). In West Africa, where Nigeria is the biggest economy, only 17 of its 79 power stations are operating at a capacity of 3,500 MW against a total demand of 7,600 (The Africa Progress Panel, 2015). In North Africa, Egypt, which is the powerhouse, is also struggling to power its economy with a capacity output of 27,000 MW, while in East Africa, Kenya is experiencing severe power outages (Amajouyi, 2019). The following table shows Africa’s comparative position in world electrification:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World rate electrification</th>
<th>Population (Millions)</th>
<th>Population with electricity (Millions)</th>
<th>Population without electricity (Millions)</th>
<th>Electrification rate (%)</th>
<th>Urban (%)</th>
<th>Rural (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Asia</td>
<td>3,418</td>
<td>2,488</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>856.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin Africa</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>4,943</td>
<td>3,374</td>
<td>1,569</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition economies and OECD</td>
<td>1,501</td>
<td>1,501</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>64,452</td>
<td>4,875</td>
<td>1,577</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 1 shows the situation on world electrification. Despite being endowed with natural energy resources, Africa has the lowest electrification rates in both urban and rural areas, indicating that developmental projections and economic growth of Africa are bound to be negatively affected since economies heavily rely on electricity (Africa Progress Report, 2015). Endowed with fossil and renewable energy resources vast enough to cover all its energy needs, a huge number of Africa’s population does not have direct access to electricity (Amajouyi, 2019). According to Amajouyi (2019), Africa’s power challenges are still imminent, as an international conference has been planned for 2014 to reconsider Africa’s position on the way forward.

**The SADC perspective**

According to Kakoma, Chilala, and Mwanza (2021), the SADC region is faced with a serious crisis, and South Africa, the region’s powerhouse, went through its worst power crisis in 2008 to date, leading to load-shedding in most of its towns and cities. The ongoing power outages in the SADC region will persist until 2015 despite new projects being undertaken (Amajouyi, 2019). On the other hand, Mozambique, Angola, Malawi, and Tanzania are all experiencing a power generation crisis. The Democratic Republic of Congo, despite being endowed with the Congo River in terms of hydroelectric power generation capacity, is reeling to power its
Zimbabwe’s electrical power imports as of 2013. countries have since cut off supply due to non-payment of bills by the state-owned electricity entity. The following table provides work in progress in response to the turbulences of the 2008 power outages that are still imminent up to this present day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Power project name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>MW Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Benga thermal power station</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>2000 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moatize thermal power station</td>
<td></td>
<td>400 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mphanda Nkuwa hydropower station</td>
<td></td>
<td>1500 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Itezhi Tezhi hydropower station</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>120 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kariba North Bank</td>
<td></td>
<td>350 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Hwange thermal power station</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>600 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kariba South hydropower plant</td>
<td></td>
<td>700 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gokwe North thermal station</td>
<td></td>
<td>300 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Medupi dry cooled coal fired power station</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>4800 MW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10770 MW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the Cremer media (2019)

The table explains a total of 10770 megawatts (MW) to be generated from the current work in progress in SADC with the bulk of power expected to be generated by the Medupi plant of South Africa, deemed to be the largest in the world when completed. The projects are expected to feed into SADC’s power grid which is currently experiencing severe shortages of 7709 MW, with an estimated power requirement of 20 000 MW in the next five years (Gunda, Chikuni, Tazvingina, and Mudare, 2021). Going forward, an effort is being made to improve the power generation situation in Africa.

While the steps taken to improve the power generation crisis are a good cause, organizational politics in State-owned electricity entities continue to ravage, with the latest reports of organizational infighting surfacing in Zimbabwe’s state-owned electricity entity due to moves taken by top management to unbundle the utility entity for the third time in sixteen years, raising doubts and fears about the state-owned electricity entity’s ability to focus on the core business of electrical power generation at a time the economy is in desperate need of electricity (Gunda et al., 2021).

The Zimbabwean perspective

Zimbabwe has two main sources of domestic electricity supply, namely: thermal and hydro sources. The state-owned electricity entity generates electricity from five plants which include four thermal power stations and one hydro-power station. (Kaseke, and Hosking, 2011). According to Kaseke & Hosking (2011), Zimbabwe relies mainly on coal-fired thermal power generation, which accounts for about 75% of domestic electricity supply, with the other 25% being generated from the hydropower of the Zambezi River. The following table shows the megawatt (MW) consumption the entire country requires and the generation capacity available from the installed capacity as of 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station name</th>
<th>Plant type</th>
<th>Generation (MW)</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Available Generation capacity (MW)</th>
<th>Consumption (MW)</th>
<th>Consumption deficit (MW)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hwange</td>
<td>Coal-fired</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kariba</td>
<td>Hydro-electric</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>Coal-fired</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulawayo</td>
<td>Coal-fired</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyati</td>
<td>Coal-fired</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: State-owned electricity entity (2013)

As reflected by the table 3 above, Zimbabwe currently generates about 1,300 MW of electricity against a daily consumption of 2200 MW, falling far too short by 900 MW. To cover this gap, the country imports power from neighboring countries, but most of these countries have since cut off supply due to non-payment of bills by the state-owned electricity entity. The following table presents Zimbabwe’s electrical power imports as of 2013.
As shown in Table 4 above, Zimbabwe needs to import a total of 900 MW of electricity to operate at full capacity, and despite the standing arrangements to import this much, the country can only import 100 MW from Mozambique as most of the neighbouring countries have since cut off supply citing non-payment of bills by the state-owned electricity entity. Unfortunately, as stated by (Kaseke, and Hosking, 2011), the state-owned electricity entity is owed US$ 550 million by customers, of which huge sums are owed by some high-profile government ministers making the debt recovery process more difficult as the ministers often use their influence to stop possible disconnections of electrical power, ultimately weakening the debt recovery process meant to improve electrical power supply. The electricity situation in Zimbabwe has reached alarming levels that are unimaginable, negatively affecting almost every part of the economy, with hospitals and heavy industries, as well as farming being hard hit. For example, load shedding that comes because of inadequate electricity is forcing the state-owned electricity entity to ration supplies to both domestic and commercial users, with most areas going for 10 hours per day without electricity, negatively affecting key industries and the delivery of services such as medical care and agriculture, to name a few (Kaseke, and Hosking, 2011). In hospitals, medical doctors find it impossible to conduct medical operations using diesel electrical generators to power their operating equipment, while the agricultural sector suffered the most due to power outages (Kaseke, and Hosking, 2011).

The image of any organization is purely a matter of perception of what goes around within an organization and its surroundings, and it heavily impacts or influences on the day-to-day activities within the organization. Of particular concern is the perception of organizational politics at a state-owned electricity entity in the SADC country which happens to be Zimbabwe. For a country such as Zimbabwe, it has become too obvious and common that the perceived view of organizational politics in most organizations be they private or public, would be largely influenced by the economic, political, and social challenges the country would be facing. This is because organizations are managed by people who are affected by the political, economic, and social forces of the country in which they reside. Such is the perceived view of Zimbabwean companies. Drawing from the negative political developments that have bedeviled the country, one would expect the political tempo at the state-owned electricity entity to be influenced by the developments in government since the state-owned electricity entity is state-owned and controlled. Therefore, the organizational politics at the state-owned electricity entity will have an element of government involvement.

Robbins and Judge (2019) define organizational politics as activities that are not required as one’s formal role in the organization but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization. Robbins and Judge (2019) analyse the definition as encompassing key elements of what most people mean when they talk about organizational politics. Thus, political behaviors is outside one’s specified job requirements. In recent decades, organizational politics (OP) has become a growing field of interest in management studies. To date, the major scholarly effort has been dedicated to the exploration of the external organizational environment by customers, clients, and as far as governmental agencies such as the state-owned electricity entity is concerned, by the public as well. However, one of the important aspects of this phenomenon which has received little attention over the years, is the extent to which the key internal clients in an organizational setting, such as managers and employees perceive organizational politics.

To better understand organizational politics, it is necessary to clearly explain what an organization is and how organizational politics creeps in the contemporary organization’s management circles and practices. According to Veluri (2019), an organization is a group of individuals, who come together to realise their goals. Veluri (2019) sees an organization as representing a social unit deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals.

It is important to note that human beings are born in organizations, educated by organizations and to acknowledge that they do spend most of their lives working in organizations. Even the families, in which they spent most of their time in, are also an organization. Hence an organization is a group of individuals who agree to share their effort in the realisation of common goals. The goals of an organization are therefore derived from individual goals. Individuals, to realise their goals, must join an organization of their choice. Aryee and Budhwar (2019) view an organization as a social marketplace where individuals engage in transactions to obtain favourable dealings. An organization is not merely a rational model of economic activities but is also a place where political activity and conflict takes place. The constraints of bounded rationality and imperfect information limit the ability of organizations to develop...
a complete set of rules and procedures to guide and govern employee and management actions and behaviors within an organization setting.

Moorhead and Griffin (2009) define organizational politics as activities carried out by people to acquire, enhance, and use power and other resources to obtain their desired outcomes. Robbins and Judge (2019) concur with the above sentiments when they say that whenever people get together in groups, power will be exerted. He emphasizes that people want to carve out a niche from which to exert influence, to earn rewards, and to advance their careers, and when employees in the organization convert their power into action, they are then described as being engaged in politics. Organizational politics, therefore, refers to those activities that are not required as one’s formal role in the organization, but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization.

From the above assertions, organizations are deliberately created and maintained by people who have different goals and ambitions. The inherent selfish nature of human beings makes them compete to realize their individual goals, thus overlooking or even undermining the goals of others. To overcome this, organizations develop common goals that reflect the individual interests of its members. Despite the development of such common goals, some members will always try to meet their selfish ends, thus, individuals often find themselves having to rely on informal and unsanctioned means in making decisions, marking the beginnings/ foundations of organizational politics. It is therefore clear that both informal and unsanctioned means of decision-making within the organization presents perpetrators of organizational politics with the opportunity to engage in political behavior.

The high-level political tempo in organizations is manifested by the differences in the positions held by the employees. Differences in positions between managers and employees obliquely compound the perceived view of organizational politics. Those placed in management positions always strive to take advantage of the power vested in them in making decisions in their favour, with employees on the receiving end. The concept of organizational politics is therefore closely related to power in an organizational setting; thus, political behaviors is the general means by which people attempt to obtain and use power. Put simply, the goal of such behaviors is to get one’s own way about things.

Moorhead and Griffin (2009) describe organizational politics as all the visible and the not so visible forces in the organization that support, undermine, advance, promote, individual or groups of individuals for the purpose of gain or self-gain. It is present in all organizations and manifests itself differently in different organizational settings. Organizational politics is therefore ubiquitous and have widespread effects on critical processes (e.g., performance evaluation; resource allocation; and managerial decision-making) that influence organizational effectiveness and efficiency (Kacmar and Baron, 2009). Employees may engage in some legitimate, organizationally sanctioned political activities that are beneficial to work groups and organizations (Fedor et al., 2008). For example, managers who are “good politicians” may develop large bases of social capital and strong networks that allow them to increase the resources that are available to their subordinates (Treadway et al., 2019).

Morehead and Griffin (2009) assert that organizational politics often is easier to recognize than to describe. The general term politics simply describes a competition for power, but organizational politics involves those who seek power at the expense of others, with an “I win, you lose” attitude. Organizational politics represents behaviors that maximize self-interest and conflict with the collective goals and interests of others.

These divisive behaviors take many forms. At its worst, organizational politics manifest as outright manipulation and sabotage for the sake of one’s own upward mobility, power, or success. These tactics function to win the regard of superiors or key decision-makers, both in and outside of the agency. Instead of honest, professionally built relationships, organization politicians build relationships through deceit and chicanery (Kacmar and Baron, 2009). More often though, workplace politics take the more subtle forms of malicious gossip; rumors; or criticism through which the office politician controls the flow of information. For example, office politicians may spread nuggets of bad information that discredit and ruin the reputation of a co-worker, or they might exploit the weaknesses of others to make them appear less competent. With these tactics, office politicians aim to undermine co-workers whom they perceive as threats to success (Kacmar & Baron, 2009).

According to Morehead and Griffin (2009), organizational politics represents all the activities people perform to acquire, enhance, and use power and other resources to obtain their preferred outcomes in a situation where uncertainty or disagreement exists. Study by Zanzi and O’Neil (2019) indicates that most managers do not advocate use of political behaviors but acknowledge that it is a necessity of organizational life. Because managers cannot eliminate political activity in the organization, they must learn to cope with it. Venugopal (2013) define organizational politics from different traditions. One tradition builds on Machiavellian philosophy and defines organizational politics in terms of the management of influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned means. It is also considered as an art of creative compromise. Venugopal (2013) asserts that managers are often considered political when they seek their own goals, or when they use means that are not currently authorized by the organization or that push legal limits.

Robbins and Judge (2019) view the use of power as a central component of organizational politics. He stresses that people want to carve out a niche from which to exert influence; to earn rewards; and to advance their careers and when employees in the organization convert their power into action, they are then described as being engaged in politics. Organizational politics therefore refers to those activities that are not required as one’s formal role in the organization, but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of
advantages and disadvantages within the organization (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Zanzi and O’Neil (2019) review of literature shows that definitions of organizational politics fall into two broad categories. The first view sees organizational politics as negative and involves self-serving and unsanctioned behaviors. Such behaviors are said to be divisive; illegitimate; and dysfunctional and can produce conflict (Gilmore et al., 2010). The second view sees politics in a more neutral light and accepts that it can sometimes be functional (Venugopal, 2013).

**Factors influencing organizational politics perceptions**

According to Ferris et al. (2002), organizational Politics Perception (OPP) is underpinned by three categories of “antecedent” influences, namely Job/Work influences; organizational influences; and Personal influences.

*Job/Work influences*

Muhammad (2017) identifies scarcity of resources and job ambiguity as determinants of organizational politics. According to Muhammad (2017), when organizational resources that employees value (for example, monetary incentives, promotions, or advancement promotions), are limited, they would need to compete for such resources. Muhammad (2017) suggests that one way to influence the outcome of organizational resource allocations is to rely on political tactics in a self-serving fashion.

*Organizational influences*

Ferris et al. (2002) identified centralization, formalization and hierarchical levels as variables for organizational influences. Centralisation refers to the degree to which power is differently distributed with an organization. On the other hand, formalization refers to the rules, regulations, and written policies. Highly formalized organizations are characterized by written policies; procedures; rules and so on. Thus, highly formalized organizations attempt to provide clear expectations about how people should behave in certain situations. If perceptions of organizational politics are associated with uncertainty and ambiguity, then we should expect that the more formalized an organization, the less likely that organizational members will report perceptions that the organization is politicised. This relationship is indeed what the research findings suggest.

*Personal influences*

Personal influences can be referred as individual influences because they vary from one individual to another. These factors include core self-evaluation, Machiavellianism, narcissism, employee training and several more influences depending on situations prevailing in the respective organization. According to Robbins, and Judge (2019), personality refers to the dynamic concept describing the growth and development of an individual’s whole psychological system. In a nutshell, personality can be viewed as the sum total of ways in which an individual reacts to and interacts with others in an organization.

Core self-evaluation refers to the perspective in which individuals see themselves as capable or incapable in controlling the environment in which they work (Robbins, and Judge 2019). In line with this thought, individuals with a negative core self-evaluation tend to dislike themselves as powerless in the organization, hence becoming less political. Locus of control is considered very central in influencing organizational politics as it explains the degree to which individuals believe that they are masters of their own fate ordesty. The personality characteristic of Machiavellianism is named after Niccolo Machiavelli who researched widely on how power can be gained and used. The Machiavellianism study, despite being conducted many years ago, is still relevant to contemporary organizational practices as cited in Robins and Judge (2012) when they describe the extent to which power can be amassed and used in a contemporary organization as a political weapon to control others. Robins and Judge (2019) define Machiavellianism as the degree to which an individual is pragmatic, maintains emotional distance and believes that ends can justify means. The Machiavellianism study focused on high and low personalisations to behavioural outcomes which are still relevant to contemporary practices.

Narcissism describes a person who has a sense of self-importance, who requires much admiration, sense of entitlement and very arrogant (Brown & Hall, 2014). Individuals, who are considered narcissists, consider themselves as better leaders than their colleagues. In current management practices, and at the state-owned electricity entity, cases where individual managers consider themselves as the best are innumerable. Some employees view themselves as indispensable and that if they are dismissed from work, the organization will not function properly. For example, the general manager of the biggest power station, Gwariro, viewed his position as the most influential, to the extent that he believed that the current power outages were partly caused by his suspension from the organization (Amajouyi, 2019).

The individual training offered to employees play a major role in enhancing the political life of the respective employees in the organization. The state-owned electricity entity provides some training to some of its employees. According to Halepota and Shah (2011) training is an important positive predictor of individual positive attitudes. By providing training to employees, the organization has a chance to reshape the organizational culture, which in a way has an impact on the prevailing political environment.

In a nutshell, it is clear from the discussions above that politics in an organization is influenced by both individual and organizational factors. While organizational factors relate to the organization as a function of the organization’s characteristics, individual factors relate to all the facets that reside in the individual employee such as Machiavellian and narcissism. By and large both are considered by Robins and Judge (2019) as major influencers of organizational politics and managers are warned to identify and measure such tendencies to successfully deal with them.
Pfeffer (2018) for instance, defines politics as a social function that can contribute to the basic functioning of organizations. Both definitions agree, however, that organizational politics involves unsanctioned and informal forms of behaviors. George and Konstantinos (2011) identify managerial perceptions as a key factor of organizational politics. According to George and Konstantinos (2011), the debate on managerial perceptions as a contributor to the success of the organization is still a robust one. Jennifer et al. (2012) argues that social support to the employee by a manager is of critical importance as it provides emotional or instrumental resources. It is therefore clear that unsupportive management destroys the potential for employees to trust their managers. In contemporary organizations such as the state-owned electricity entity, employees are increasingly losing trust in management and in most cases, they end up engaging in unexpected behaviors such as gossiping, undermining fellow employees as well as the organization. According to Juddy et al. (2017), trust is a form of employee behaviors that is variously associated with increased efficiency and effectiveness.

Ince and Gul (2021) argue that communication is at the centre of the organization’s political life, thus communication encompasses all aspects ranging from the objectives of the organization to the simple daily tasks that are performed by each employee. Ince, and Gul (2021 further note that organizational communication “is the exchange of knowledge and opinions in the organization”, while Argenti (2013) sees it as creating a positive atmosphere for all employees of the organization. For without effective communication, every move taken by the organization crumbles down. It is thus important to note that organizations are social units that congregate for production, formed by individuals who have different views and knowledge to reach a common goal. According to Ince and Gul (2021) organizational and administrative activities for adapting in and out of organizations and information exchange require an effective and functional communication system. Effective communication helps organizations to strengthen employees to reach organizational goals (Ince & Gul 2021). Communication at organizational degree helps to transfer organizational objectives and goals to employees and intra organizations groups as well as sharing organizational values and beliefs among employees (Demirel, 2019). In conclusion, organizational politics refers to actions by individual members such as managers and employees which are directed towards the goal of furthering their own interest without regard to the wellbeing of others and the organization.

Perceptions of organizational politics refers to actions by organizational members that are perceived to be self-interested and directed toward furthering own goals (Kacmar & Baron, 2009). Some examples of these actions include withholding information from co-workers; failing to enforce policies and procedures appropriately; using flattery to get favours; shifting blame; and maligning others to make one look better. Although organizational politics are not sanctioned behaviors, Ferris et al. (2002) claimed that they are present in varying degrees in all organizations. Because it is difficult for an individual to determine accurately if another’s behaviors are self-serving. Organizational politics researchers have focused almost exclusively on perceptions of such behaviors. Ferris et al. (2002) also pointed out that people’s behaviors and attitudes in such settings are largely a result of their perceptions. Thus, when perceptions are high in an organization, organizational members feel a great deal of uncertainty and ambiguity because they do not know what actions will be rewarded, punished, or even recognized. Not surprisingly, previous researchers found that these perceptions are consistent predictors of negative outcomes (Byrne, 2005; Ferris et al., 2002; Harris & Kacmar, 2005; Kacmar and Brown 2009; Rosen et al., 2006; and Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010).

Traditionally, managers are known for making political decisions that may derail or move the organization forward. It is therefore critical to interrogate managerial practices as part and parcel of the organizational political developments. Morehead & and Griffin (2009) provide interesting results of a survey on managers’ perception of political behaviors. The results of the survey revealed that political behaviors are influenced salary decisions in their organizations, influences hiring decisions, is more prevalent at higher levels of the organization than at lower level, is unfair, unhealthy, and irrational; and is an undesirable but unavoidable facet of organizational life. The survey also shows that political behaviors in organizations like power is pervasive. Instead of ignoring or trying to eliminate political behaviors, managers might more fruitfully consider, when and how politics can be used constructively. As eluded by Morehead and Griffin (2009), managers blame ambiguity of goals; scarce resources; changing technology and environment, the impact of non-programmed decisions and organizational change as causative factors for political behaviors. However, managers perceive that political behaviors can successfully be addressed by way of controlling information and lines of communication, using outsiders experts; controlling the agenda; game playing, image building; building coalitions and controlling decision parameters.

Organizational politics refers to actions by organizational members that are perceived to be self-interested and directed toward furthering members’ own goals without regard for the wellbeing of others or the organization (Kacmar & Baron, 2009). Some examples of these actions include withholding information from co-workers; failing to enforce policies and procedures appropriately: using flattery to get favours; shifting blame; and maligning others to make one look better. Although organizational politics are not sanctioned behaviors, Ferris et al. (2002) claimed that they are present in varying degrees in all organizations. Because it is difficult for an individual to determine accurately if another’s behaviors are self-serving, organizational politics researchers have focused almost exclusively on perceptions of such behaviors. Ferris et al. (2002), pointed out that people’s behaviors and attitudes in such settings are largely a result of their perceptions. Thus, when perceptions of organizational politics are high in an organization, organizational members feel a great deal of uncertainty and ambiguity because they do not know what actions will be rewarded, punished, or even recognized.
The Organizational Politics Theory

This study draws from Ferris, et al. (2002) model of perceptions of organizational politics. The model suggests that organizational politics perceptions are affected by a set of organizational influences, a set of job/work environment related influences, and a set of personal influences (Ferris et al., 2002). The model also specifies several outcome variables that will be affected by perceptions of organizational politics, which are described later in this paper, under consequences of perceptions of organizational politics. These outcomes include employee work-related attitudes and behavioral outcomes (Cohen, 2105). The model indicates that the relationships between perceptions of organizational politics and outcome variables are moderated by control and understanding. Furthermore, Ferris et al. (2002) state that perceptions of organizational politics mediate the relationships between antecedents of perceptions of organizational politics (predictors) and consequences. The antecedents of the perceptions of organizational politics model have been identified, taking the conditions that have been thought to contribute to political behavior (e.g., ambiguity, uncertainty, the belief that political behavior is instrumental in gaining advantage or rewards, workplace norms for political behavior) into consideration (Ferris et al., 2002). The model also specifies several outcome variables that will be affected by other organizational politics outcomes. These outcomes include employee work-related attitudes and behavioral outcomes (Cohen, 2105). The model indicates that the relationships between organizational politics and outcome variables are moderated by control and understanding. Furthermore, Ferris et al. (2002) state that perceptions of organizational politics mediate the relationships between antecedents of perceptions of organizational politics (predictors) and consequences. The antecedents of the perceptions of organizational politics model have been identified, taking the conditions that have been thought to contribute to political behavior (e.g., ambiguity, uncertainty, the belief that political behavior is instrumental in gaining advantage or rewards, workplace norms for political behavior) into consideration Ferris et al., 2002).

Research and Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research design gathering data from a sample of 1400 participants who were randomly selected from the population of 2210 employees. A total of 358 completed questionnaires were returned by the cut-off date. Of the 358, 11 were discarded as they were incorrectly completed, giving an effective response rate of 24.78%. The study employed the statistical software programme SPSS 21.0 for Windows to analyse the data. Exploratory factor analysis was used as a tool to measure aspects of organizational politics. The primary objective was to identify underlying constructs in the data set. In pursuit of this objective, “exploratory factor analysis” was used as a statistical tool. However, before factor analysis could be employed successfully, the data were subjected to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s test of sphericity to ensure that the sample was adequate, and that the data was suitable for factor analysis (Field, 2007:619). KMO values of at least 0.6 should be present for factor analysis to be considered, although values between 0.5 and 0.7 are too low (Du Plessis, 2009:26). According to Fields (2007:640), values between 0.7 and 0.8 are regarded as good while values between 0.8 and 0.9 are excellent. Values between 0.9 and 1 are superb.

Analysis and Findings

KMO and Bartlett’s Test

The adequacy of the sample and the suitability of employing factor analysis were determined by the KMO measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett test of sphericity. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was performed to ensure that the sample employed was adequate. Table 5 presents the results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: The KMO and Bartlett’s Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KMO and Bartlett’s Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMO Measure of Sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity. Approx. Chi-Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher compilation

The KMO value for the study was 0.906. This signifies that, statistically, the sample is adequate. The high KMO value more than 0.90 signifies an excellent sample. Regarding the Bartlett’s test of sphericity, the value is below 0.005. This means that the strength of the relationship among variables is not strong. Resultantly, this measure shows that factor analysis is a suitable statistical techniqueto analyse the data.
Exploratory factor analysis

The exploratory factor analysis identified three factors by means of Varimax rotation. According to Field (2015:749), Varimax is a method of orthogonal rotation that attempts to maximize the dispersion of factor loadings by loading a smaller number of variables highly onto each factor resulting in a more interpretable cluster of factors. Factor loadings equal and above 0.40 are significant and used in the analysis (Statistica, 2016). Table 6 below shows that all 23 statements loaded onto four factors. The factor loadings are shown in the table below. The four factors explain a very favourable cumulative variance of 74.28%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is common to push the blame on others</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infighting is prevalent among employees</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticisms among peers is common</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiding of important information is common</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favoritism is common</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers support each other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The central government controls the department</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers make decisions that derail the organization</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The department is regulated by rules</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The department is regulated by policies</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The department does have clear objectives</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees are not sure on how to achieve targets</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees feel that they can accomplish personalgoals</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees are not sure whether their employment contracts can be renewed</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions are made through consultations</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backstabbing is common in this department</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossiping is a common phenomenon in this department</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees’ views are upheld</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The department relies on informal communication for advertising new jobs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The department relies on informal communication when inviting employees to staff meetings</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions are based on favoritism</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers’ decisions are upheld</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees are not sure of what their targets are</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of variance explained</td>
<td></td>
<td>42.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative %</td>
<td></td>
<td>42.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher compilation

Factor 1: Managerial behavior

A total of eight statements, namely 10, 13, 11, 9, 8, 12, 7 and 6 loaded on factor 1. All the statements under factor 1 relate to the way managers deal with organizational politics within the state-owned electricity entity. The factor is thus labelled as managerial behavior. Statement 10, 13 and 11 are above 0.80 which suggests that respondents are dissatisfied with the way managers perceive organizational politics. The factor explains a variance of 42.42%. Managers are expected to behave in a manner that successfully reduces dysfunctional politics. Contrary to this, the finding suggests that managers at the national electricity are part of the problems they contribute to a dysfunctional work environment. For example, they engage in negative criticism, blame their peers, favor other employees, and make disastrous decisions. Managerial behavior plays a major role in an organization which is predominantly politicized. According to George and Konstantinos (2011), managers negatively contribute to negative politics by withholding support for employees in a politicized environment. Thus, George and Konstantinos (2011), argue that the support given by a manager to an employee is a determinant factor to organizational success. It is clear from the article that respondents (employees) are not happy with managerial behavior when dealing with political challenges that they encounter. Jennifer et al. (2012) argues that managerial support to the employee is of critical importance as it provides emotional or instrumental resources. To the state-owned electricity entity, such behavior on the part of a manager would be unproductive as it affects the morale of the employees. Cohen et al., (2000), are of a similar view when they assert that, unsupportive managerial behaviors is detrimental to the employee’s motivation. Hence, managerial behaviors has a negative effect of reducing productivity at the state-owned electricity entity.

Factor 2: Poor managerial communication

Statements 24, 25, 22, 21, 18, 19 and 16 are all loaded on factor 2 and are related to poor communication of objectives within the state-owned electricity entity. The factor is thus labelled as poor communication of objectives. Seven factor loadings out of eight are above 0.75 which shows a good fit to the factor. It, however, gives support that, communication of objectives at the state-owned electricity entity is problematic. For a massive organization such as the state-owned electricity entity, effective communication is a basic requirement. Without effective communication, the organization is destined to collapse. The rules, regulations and policies
serve as the communication tool for the state-owned electricity entity. Unfortunately, respondents are not happy with the overall communication of objectives. The factor explains a variance of 16.59%. Literature reviewed underscores the importance of communication of organizational objectives as a pillar of strength underpinning the success of the organization. Ince and Gul (2021) posit that organizations that fail to effectively communicate objectives to its internal stakeholders such as the employees, is unlikely to meet its targets. The state-owned electricity entity has fallen prey to this as respondents have decried that objectives are not effectively communicated.

**Factor 3: Unexpected managerial behavior**

Five statements namely: 2, 3, 1, 4, and 5 all loaded on factor three with statements 2, 3 and 1 reflecting factor loadings above 0.80. Statement 4 had a factor loading of 0.748 while statement 5 had one of 0.539. All the statements loading onto this factor deal with unexpected employee behavior, suggesting that employee behavior at the state-owned electricity entity is problematic. This suggests that employees at the state-owned electricity entity engage in dysfunctional politics. The factor explains a variance of 9.01%. Judy et al. (2007), identifies a lack of trust by employees towards their managers as a recipe for unexpected employee behavior leading to gossiping and backstabbing as examples, thereby negatively affecting performance effectiveness and the general healthy flow of work processes.

**Factor 4: Unhealthy managerial practices**

Only three statements namely 17, 23, and 20 loaded on factor 4. All the statements relate to unhealthy managerial practices at the state-owned electricity entity. The factor loadings confirm that an unhealthy managerial practice presents problems for the organization, in particular engaging in favoritism, poor decision-making as well as setting unrealistic targets for the employees. The factor explains a variance of 6.24%. Managers are at the fulcrum of the organization; as such their practices must unite employees, support the organizational goals as opposed to engaging in favoritism and making decisions that derail the organization. Managers must be good politicians, they should shun favoritism, gossiping and backstabbing just to name a few. Butcher and Clarke (2012) posit that managers who are good politicians must be able to read hidden agendas, work on the informal and formal decision-making processes and be able to decipher the sub-text of what is said and not said. Politics is so central to managerial work; therefore, skillsto improve managerial practices should also be central to the development of managers (Clarke, 2012). Managers at the state-owned electricity entity do engage in managerial practices that are counterproductive (unhealthy) as reflected by the findings.

**Reliability**

Table 7 shows the reliability of the four factors. It is clear from the table that all the factors have returned reliability coefficients which is well above the required 0.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sets</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>0.927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>0.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td>0.889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4</td>
<td>0.859</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These high alpha coefficients indicate that the four factors possess excellent reliability and internal consistency.

**Conclusions**

The purpose of the study was to investigate organizational politics as a cause of the electricity generation crisis in emerging economies, with a particular focus on Zimbabwe, by empirically measuring organizational politics perceptions. The findings revealed that poor communication of objectives, unexpected managerial behavior, and toxic managerial practices were prevalent organizational practices at the national electricity entity. Managers and employees are the primary participants in the political game.

The finding indicates that supervisors at the state-owned electricity company contribute to a dysfunctional work environment and are therefore part of the problem. They engage in negative criticism, place responsibility on their peers, favor other employees, and make disastrous decisions, among other behaviors. According to George and Konstantinos (2011), managers contribute negatively to negative politics by withholding support for employees in a politically charged environment. They contend that a manager's support for an employee is a determining factor in the success of an organization. It is evident from the article that respondents (employees) are dissatisfied with managers' perceptions of and responses to the political challenges they face. Jennifer et al. (2012) contends that managerial support for the employee is crucial because it provides emotional and instrumental resources. Such conduct on the part of a manager would be counterproductive for the state-owned electricity company, as it would have a negative impact on the morale.
of the employees. Cohen et al. (2000) concur that unsupportive managerial behavior is detrimental to the motivation of employees. Therefore, managerial conduct has a deleterious impact on the productivity of the state-owned electricity company.

The article also found that the state-owned electricity entity’s communication is problematic; it lacks effective interactive communication of organizational objectives across the board. Organizations therefore require effective communication of objectives to enable the workforce to be part and parcel of what is prevailing in the organization. Ince and Gül (2021) assert that communication of organizational objectives facilitates internalization of goals and policies by all employees, gives the idea that employees are important in the communication process, increases job satisfaction, maintains the operation of the organization, and attains the objectives of the organization. The efficiency of an organization is dependent on effective communication of objectives as much as administration (Zhou & Ferris, 2015). The study revealed that managerial failure to communicate objectives was cause for concern. If the state-owned electricity entity effectively communicates the objectives of the organization across all departments, there is guaranteed to be support for the organizational objectives by most of the workforce.

In the article, undesirable managerial behavior is identified as problematic. Accordingly, trust between employees and management has been identified as the dependent variable that leads to desired or undesirable employee conduct. (Judy et al., 2017) If there is trust between employees and management, the organization will be productive, efficient, and flexible, with low employee turnover. The prevalence of backstabbing and gossiping as unanticipated employee behaviors at the state-owned electricity company serves as evidence of the high levels of mistrust between employees and management. Unhealthy managerial practices have been identified as problematic for employees at the state-owned electricity entity, with managers being blamed for their negative perceptions leading to unfair labor practices. At the state-owned electricity entity, unfairness in resource allocation and staff promotions is prevalent. A managerial influence is essential for altering the landscape of the state-owned electricity company. The decisions they make regarding resource allocation, promotions, and labor issues have a significant impact on the overall performance of an organization. For instance, it was predicted that the suspension of the general manager would impact the present power crisis facing the state-owned electricity entity (Amajony, 2019). The manager's perception of political forces from the side (.0638) suggests that employees viewed managers as failing or unable to deal with government involvement.

Organizational politics has the potential to influence the effectiveness and efficacy of organizations through a variety of organizational processes, such as performance evaluation, resource allocation, and enhancing managerial decision-making (Aino & Sini, 2022). The study revealed that poor managerial behavior, poor managerial communication, unanticipated managerial behavior, and unhealthy managerial practice hinder organizational life at the state-owned electricity entity. Therefore, the research suggests that managers receive regular internal and external training on contemporary managerial behaviors. Managers must be up-to-date on current or situational behaviors in their respective industries, and in particular, all employees holding managerial positions must attend periodic evaluation sessions on expected managerial behaviors in public organizations. The majority of managers lack managerial experience; therefore, providing them with managerial development courses would enhance their managerial knowledge and conduct.

The objectives of the organization must be communicated to all employees. Therefore, the article suggests implementing a precise communication strategy for the objectives. For instance, the organization's objectives must be included in the mission statement, explained and taught to all employees, and prominently displayed on company bulletin boards so that everyone is aware of the organization's goals.

A code of ethics and conduct must be compiled, communicated, and signed by all employees. Experts should develop the code in consultation with employees. In this code of ethics and conduct, “unwanted employee behaviors” will be laid out in detail, along with the proposed action for those who violate the code. The code would also address issues concerning toxic managerial practices and the repercussions for managers who engage in such practices.

The quantitative approach of the study may have limited the quality of the information senior managers could have added to the questionnaire. This was because senior management refused to be interviewed, citing the study as a witch hunt. To reduce the limitation, the study targeted the entire population in order to acquire a wider range of data. In addition, the questionnaire was meticulously crafted and evaluated by subject matter experts to ensure data collection efficacy. Using a random sampling technique, every member of the population was given an equal opportunity.

An analogous study could be conducted using a mixed-methods approach to explore the perspectives of senior managers on the nature of organizational politics within SOEs. A similar study could also be conducted in other nations, bearing in mind that the electricity generation crisis has spread beyond the SADC region.

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Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to restrictions.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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