



Role of power and politics in an organisation: A study

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Abstract

Organisation is a coalition of interest, so exists in the identification and solution of the problem. In the process of negotiation for consensus, politicking take place. Therefore, the existence of power and politics is the inevitable phenomena in every organization. In order to be managed and to be managed in the organization efficiently every individual starting from the top to bottom needs to have knowledge of power and politics in the organization.

Keywords: Power politics inevitable knowledge, organisation, consensus etc.

Introduction

Structure is required for every organization. Structure creates position in the organization. Position gives power and authority to individuals. It is the power through which individuals control the activities of the organisation. Therefore, individuals try to gain position in order to exercise power in the organization. Power is also necessary for the efficient functioning of the organization. The power structure of any organization is revealed through organizational chart. However, power can be acquired formally and informally as well. When the top management of the organization understand the source of power, it becomes easy for them to manage power and politics in favour of the organization while minimizing their negative effects. The success of a manager depends upon how efficiently and accurately he/she is able to analyse the organizations power structure and politics accurately.

Importance of power factor in an Organisation For a variety of reasons, power is very important and needed in the organization. Not Only the organization needs power for its functioning, but people in the organization seek power because of the following reasons:

- Power is used in the organization to control the people and other resources so that they cooperate and help to achieve an organization current goals.
- Power can also be used to engage in politics and influence decision making process an order to help promote new and more appropriate organizational goals.
- It is the power which influence complexity, formality and centralization of activities in the organization

Sources of Power

The heading authorities on power French and Raren have divided an individuals power into two sources. They are formal and informal.

1. Formal Power: The formal power comes from the position being occupied by the person in the organizations. It is derived from the organization structure and position being occupied by individuals in the organization structure. Higher the position in the organization structure more is the power being enjoyed by the person occupying that position.

In act when an individual accepts some formal position in the organization to performing day to day duties and responsibilities. The organization gives formal power and authority to the person to accomplish the job related to task and duties.

There are four type of formal power found in organization:

1. Legitimate Power
2. Reward Power
3. Coercive Power
4. Information Power

Informal Power

Informal Power is not formally given by the organization. The existence of this power is not revealed anywhere in the organization structure. Thus people possessing informal power do not have positional power. But they are as powerful as the person occupying the positions in the organizations. It is possible because of their knowledge, skills, personality, etc. Accordingly informal power an be broadly categorized power into three types such as expert power, referent power, chrismatic power.

Concept of Organisational Politics

Pettiberg (1973) defined organizational politics as activities in which manager engage to increase their power and to pursue goals that favour their individual and group interests. According to Pfetter (1981) organizational politics involve those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain. One's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices.

Employees working in the organizations can engage in political behvaiour to gain promotion or influence organizational decision making in their favour. In fact, politics in the unauthorized use of power which increases or protect ones own personal interest.

Power and Politics: Power and closely related with each other. Organisational Politics is associated with resources allocation, conflict resolution and decision making process in organization. Politics is fact of life for almost every organization. When employees in organizations convert their power into action. We describe them as being engaged in politics.

Normally it is seen that individuals who have good political skills have the ability to use their bases of power effectively in the organization.

Individuals play politics to gain more power in organization, to have command over resources, to have their more voice in decision-making and to fulfill their individual goals.

Types of Political Behavior

The Political behavior of the individuals in the organization can be broadly divided into two categories such as: legitimate, illegitimate.

- Seren and Mary Ann Von have suggested seven categories of political activity in the organization which are discussed below:
- Attacking and Blaming Others.
- Selectivity Distributing Information.
- Controlling Information channels.
- Forming Coalitions.
- Cultivating Networks.
- Creating obligations.
- Managing Impressions.

Conclusions

Power Structure of an Organisation is revealed from organization chart. It shows only the formal sources of power being possessed by the individuals, group and the department in the organisation.

Unorganisational Politics is self-serving behaviour, which is not sanctioned by the organisation. Never the less people play politics to be part of the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organisation.

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