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Organizational politics and entrepreneurial performance in Lagos State environment

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of organizational politics on entrepreneurial performance in Lagos State, Nigeria. Using the Social Exchange Theory as a framework, the research investigates how political dynamics within organizations influence innovation, decision-making, and networking among entrepreneurs. A survey design was employed with data collected from 150 entrepreneurs, analyzed through linear regression. Findings reveal a significant positive relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial performance indicators, explaining 3.5% of variance in innovation, 34.2% in decision-making, and 34.6% in networking. The results suggest that while organizational politics can pose challenges, it also enables entrepreneurs to access resources, build alliances, and enhance competitiveness. The study concludes that political competence and strategic networking are vital for entrepreneurial success in Lagos's dynamic business environment. It recommends fostering transparency and supportive networks to enhance sustainable entrepreneurial growth.

Keywords: Organizational Politics, Entrepreneurial Performance, Innovation, Decision-Making, Networking.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a vital economic growth and development driver, particularly in emerging economies (Acs et al., 2018[1]; Audretsch & Kelibach, 2004)[2]. In Nigeria, entrepreneurship is a key strategy for promoting economic development and reducing unemployment (Oyelaran Oyeyinka, 2015[3]; Olowookere & Adegbite, 2015[4]). Lagos, being the commercial hub of Nigeria, presents a unique ecosystem for entrepreneurship, with a high concentration of

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small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups (Adegbite, 2001[5]; Ojo, 2017[6]).

However, despite the potential for growth and innovation, many entrepreneurial ventures in Lagos face significant challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, corruption, and organizational politics (Ojo, 2017; Ogunsiji & Ojo, 2016[7]). Entrepreneurial ventures are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of organizational politics, as they often lack the formal structures and processes that can help to mitigate these effects (Kuratko et. al., 2001[8]). Organizational politics, in particular, can harm entrepreneurial performance, leading to decision-making gridlocks, mistrust, and conflict among team members (Eisenhardt & Bourgeois, 1988[9]; Kacmar et al., 1999[10]). Research has shown that organizational politics can significantly hinder effective decision-making and firm performance (Mintzberg, 1985[11]; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003[12]).

The impact of organizational politics on entrepreneurial performance is a complex issue that requires further investigation. While some studies have examined the relationship between organizational politics and firm performance in other contexts (e.g., Kacmaret. Al., 1999; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003), there is a dearth of research on this topic in the Lagos environment. Moreover, existing studies have primarily focused on large organizations, neglecting the unique challenges faced by entrepreneurial ventures in emerging economies (Zoogah et al., 2015[13]).

This study aims to investigate the impact of organizational politics on entrepreneurial performance in the Lagos environment. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of organizational politics in entrepreneurial ventures in the Lagos State environment?

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2. How does organizational politics impact entrepreneurial innovation in the Lagos State environment?
3. How does organizational politics impact entrepreneurial decision-making in the Lagos State environment?
4. What is the impact of organizational politics on entrepreneurial networking and partnership in the Lagos State environment?

Literature Review

Organizational Politics

Organizations are considered political entities because they comprise groups with opposing interests, and decisions are made through a bargaining process or negotiations (Mayes & Allen, 1977). Organizational politics refers to the informal networks, power struggles, and self-interest that exist within organizations (Mintzberg, 1985). It involves using power, influence, and negotiation to achieve individual or group goals (Pfeffer, 1981[14]). According to Kipniset. al. (1980)[15], organizational politics is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that can manifestin various ways within an organization as it involves using influence tactics to achieve goals. These tactics fall under various categories: ingratiation, rationality, exchange, assertiveness, upward appeal, coalition building, and sanctions.

Ingratiation involves using flattery, praise, or favours to build relationships and gain favour with others (Kipnis et. al., 1980). This type of politics can effectively build alliances and gain support for ideas or initiatives. It can also be perceived as insincere or manipulative if and where not applied authentically. Rationality involves using logical arguments and data to persuade others. This approach is usually used to build a case for a particular course of action or to justify a decision. (Kipnis, et. al., 1980). The concept of organizational politics has a capacity to facilitate innovation by promoting diverse perspectives and ideas (Amabile, 1988[16]).

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the ability and readiness to develop, organize, and run a business enterprise and any uncertainties to make a profit. The most prominent example of entrepreneurship is the start of new businesses. According to Hisrich et.al. (2017)[17], entrepreneurship is the process of designing, launching, and running a new business or enterprise.

Entrepreneurial Performance

Entrepreneurial performance is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions, including financial performance, growth, innovation, and

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sustainability (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005[18]). Financial performance is critical to entrepreneurship, as it indicates a venture's economic viability and success (Brush & Vanderwerf, 1992[19]). Growth is another important dimension, measured by sales, market share, or employee base increases, which can indicate a venture's potential for scalability and long-term success (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2001[20]).

Innovation plays a key role in entrepreneurial performance. It enables ventures to develop new products, services, or processes that can drive competitiveness and growth in a rapidly changing business environment (Schumpeter, 1934[21]). Sustainability is another essential dimension, as it refers to the ability of the business to maintain its operations and performance over time, while also contributing to the well-being of stakeholders and the environment (Hall & Wagner, 2012[22]).

Several factors can affect entrepreneurial performance, including mindset, culture, leadership, and orientation. Entrepreneurial mindset refers to the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that entrepreneurs possess, which can influence their ability to identify opportunities, manage risks, and drive innovation (Haynie et al., 2010[23]). On the other hand, entrepreneurial culture refers to the organizational culture that supports entrepreneurship, including values, norms, and practices that encourage innovation, experimentation, and calculated risk-taking (Morries et al., 2011[24]).

Entrepreneurial leadership is also critical, as it involves the ability of leaders to inspire, motivate, and empower others to achieve business objectives and drive growth (Ensley et al., 2006[25]). Finally, entrepreneurial orientation refers to the strategic posture of the firm, including its proactiveness, innovativeness, and

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risk-taking behavior, which can influence its ability to adapt to changing market conditions and stay competitive (Covin& Wales, 2012[26]).

Theoretical Review

Social Exchange Theory

George Homans and others created the Social Exchange Theory in 1958. It explains the social behavior in dynamic and collective relations using a cost-benefit analysis approach. Homans applied economic principles to social behavior. The theory suggests that individuals evaluate their relationships based on the rewards and costs associated with them. The theory concludes that when the rewards outweigh the costs, individuals are more likely to continue the relationship.

Equity Theory

Equity theory, developed by J. Stacy Adams (1963)[27], posits that individuals in social exchange relationships strive for fairness and equity. According to the theory, people evaluate their relationships by comparing their input, like contributions, efforts, or investments in a relationship or situation, to their outcomes regarding rewards, benefits, or results received from a relationship and compare these to those of others to determine fairness. The theory posits that as individuals strive for a fair balance between their inputs and outcomes, if they perceive an imbalance, they may experience distress and may take actions to restore equity.

Theory of Procedural Justice

Procedural justice Theory, developed by John Thibaut and Laurens Walker in 1975[28], focuses on the fairness of the processes used to make decisions. The theory emphasizes that people's perceptions of fairness are influenced not only by the outcomes they receive but also by the procedures used to achieve those outcomes. The theory emphasizes the opportunity for individuals to express their views and opinions during the decision-making process, as well as the impartiality and objectivity of the decision maker.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Exchange Theory represents the best anchor for studying the relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial performance. The theory explains how individuals engage in reciprocal relationships, exchanging resources, support, and favours. In organizational politics, this theory helps understand how entrepreneurs navigate power dynamics, build alliances, and negotiate resources. The cost-benefit framework of the theory can be applied to analyze the impact of organizational politics on entrepreneurial performance.

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Empirical Review

Empirical relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial performance reveals a consistent pattern which shows that internal politicking tends to affect the success or otherwise of enterprises, though the magnitude and mechanisms of this effect vary across sectors and firm characteristics. Recent studies such as the study by Adeyemi and Ogundele (2022), have shown a statistically significant negative correlation between perceived organizational politics and sales growth, indicating that political maneuvering within firms can erode market focus and reduce revenue. Similarly, Okonkwo's (2021) mixed-methods investigation of manufacturing firms demonstrated that covert political behaviours such as coalition-building and information withholding accounted for roughly one-fifth of the variance in profit margins after controlling for firm size and age, underscoring the financial cost of internal rivalry. Akinyemi (2021) identified institutional voids particularly weak enforcement of business regulations as a factor that amplifies the adverse impact of organizational politics on performance especially in neighbourhoods where formal rules are poorly enforced. The empirical review suggest that organizational politics generally affects entrepreneurial performance in Lagos, but the strength and pathways of this relationship are contingent upon firm-level political skill, the nature of the political behavior, and the broader institutional and social context.

Methodology

This study employs a survey research design to investigate the relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial performance in the study area. Primary data source was employed through a questionnaire designed with a mix of demographic questions, Likert-scale items, and open-ended questions to collect responses from 150 respondents randomly selected among entrepreneurs and business organizations in the study area. Linear regression was employed to test the hypotheses of the study.

Results of Findings

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurialinnovation in the Lagos State environment

Table 1: **An overview of the correlation between the dependent variable and the predictor in a regression analysis.**

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.186[a]	.035	.031	.53657

a. Predictors: (Constant): Organizational Politics

Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The overall correlation coefficient (R) between organizational politics and entrepreneurial innovation in the Lagos State environment is positively correlated at 0.186. The coefficient of determination (R Square) indicates that organizational politics in the model can explain 3.5% of the variations in entrepreneurial innovation in the Lagos State environment, holding other factors constant.

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Table 2: Regression Analysis Showing Significance of Predictors on the Dependent Variable.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.191	1	3.191	11.082	.000[b]
	Residual	89.251	148	.288		
	Total	92.442	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Innovation
b. Predictors: (Constant): Organizational Politics

Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The model level of 0.001 at a 0.05 level of significance predicts a rejection of the null hypothesis, thus concluding that organizational politics have a significant relationship with entrepreneurial innovation as an index of entrepreneurial performance in the Lagos State environment. The significant levels of organizational politics are presented in the table below.

Table 3: Contribution of the Predictor to the dependent variable.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.583	.157		22.863	.000
	Organizational Politics	.130	.039	.186	3.329	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Innovation

Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The coefficient table shows the regression coefficients of the variables, which indicate that organizational politics shows a significant relationship with entrepreneurial innovation.

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H_{O2}: Organizational politics does not significantly impact entrepreneurial decision-making in the Lagos State environment.

Table 4: An overview of the correlation between the dependent variable and the predictor in a regression analysis.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.585[a]	.342	.340	.58126

a. Predictors: (Constant): Organizational Politics
Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The overall correlation coefficient (R) between organizational politics and entrepreneurial decision making in the Lagos State environment shows a strong positive correlation of 0.585. The coefficient of determination (R Square) indicates that organizational politics in the regression model can readily explain 34.2% of the variation in entrepreneurial decision-making in the Lagos State environment, holding other factors constant.

Table 5: Regression Analysis Showing Significance of Predictors on the Dependent Variable.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	54.491	1	54.491	161.280	.000[b]
	Residual	104.739	148	.338		
	Total	159.230	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Decision Making
b. Predictors: (Constant): Organizational Politics
Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The model level of 0.000 at a 0.05 level of significance predicts a rejection of the null hypothesis, thus concluding that organizational politics significantly impact entrepreneurial decision making as an index of entrepreneurial performance in the Lagos State environment. The significant levels of organizational politics are presented in the table below.

Table 6: Contribution of the Predictor to the **dependent variable.**

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.899	.149		12.760	.000
	Organizational Politics	.488	.038	.585	12.700	.000

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a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Decision Making
Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The coefficient table shows the regression coefficients of the variables, which indicate that organizational politics has a significant impact on entrepreneurial decision-making in the Lagos State environment.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial networking in the Lagos State environment.
Table 7: An overview of the correlation between the dependent variable and the predictor in a regression analysis.
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.588[a]	.346	.344	.57953

a. Predictors: (Constant): Organizational Politics
Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The overall correlation coefficient (R) between organizational politics and entrepreneurial networking in the Lagos State environment is a strong positive one at 0.588. The coefficient of determination (R Square) indicates that organizational politics in the model can explain 34.6% of the variations in entrepreneurial networking in the Lagos State environment, holding other factors constant.

Table 8: Regression Analysis Showing Significance of Predictors on the Dependent Variable.
ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	55.117	1	55.117	164.111	.000[b]
	Residual	104.113	148	.336		
	Total	159.230	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Networking
b. Predictors: (Constant): Organizational Politics
Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The model level of 0.000 at a 0.05 level of significance predicts a rejection of the null hypothesis, thus concluding that organizational politics have a significant impact on entrepreneurial networking as an index of entrepreneurial performance in the Lagos State environment. The significant levels of organizational politics are presented in the table below.

Table 9: Contribution of the Predictor to the **dependent variable.**
Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.

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		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.880	.149		12.615	.000
	Organizational Politics	.460	.036	.588	12.811	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Networking
Source: Author's Computation (2025).

The coefficient table shows the regression coefficients of the variables, indicating that organizational politics significantly impacts entrepreneurial networking in the Lagos State environment.

Discussion of Findings

In response to the first objective of the study, which sought to find out whether there is a significant relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial innovation in Lagos State environment, the overall correlation coefficient (R) between organizational politics and entrepreneurial innovation in Lagos State environment is a strong positive one at 0.186. The coefficient of determination (R Square) indicates that organizational politics in the model can explain 3.5% of the variations in entrepreneurial innovation in the Lagos State environment, holding other factors constant. The model level of 0.001 at a 0.05 level of significance shows that there is a strong positive relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial innovation in the study area. This result is supported by the findings of Amabile (1988), which concluded that organizational politics has a capacity to facilitate innovation by promoting diverse perspectives and ideas.

Results of hypothesis two, which shows a strong positive correlation of 0.585 with a model value of 0.000 at a 0.05 level of significance, indicate that organizational politics has a significant impact on entrepreneurial decision-making in the Lagos State environment. This predicts that the level and nature of politics in organizational administration will always have an impact on entrepreneurial decision-making as an index for entrepreneurial performance in such organizations. This finding is in relation to research findings of Mintzberg (1985) and Vigoda-Gadot (2003), which show that organizational politics can be a significant obstacle to effective decision-making and firm performance.

The third objective was met by hypothetical testing the relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial networking. The overall correlation coefficient (R) of a substantial positive value of 0.588 and model value of 0.000 at a 0.005 significance level indicates that organizational politics in the model explains 34.6% of the variations in entrepreneurial networking in the Lagos State environment, holding other factors constant. This shows that organizational politics has a strong positive relationship with entrepreneurial networking as an index of the organization's entrepreneurial performance.

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Conclusion

Organizational politics in the Lagos State Business Environment play a significant role in shaping entrepreneurial performance. The study revolves around three issues: entrepreneurial innovation, entrepreneurial decision making, and entrepreneurial networking as indices of entrepreneurial performance to predict the degree of interrelationship with organizational politics. Findings show a significant positive relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial innovation, suggesting that entrepreneurs who effectively navigate organizational politics are more likely to innovate and stay competitive. It also highlights the impact of organizational politics on entrepreneurial decision-making, implying that entrepreneurs need to consider the political landscape when making strategic decisions. Further, the study establishes a relationship between organizational politics and entrepreneurial networking, indicating that building relationships and networks within the organization is crucial for entrepreneurial success. Overall, the study's findings provide valuable insights for entrepreneurs, organizational leaders, and policymakers seeking to promote entrepreneurship and organizational effectiveness in the study area.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have implications for entrepreneurs, organizational leaders, and policymakers in the Lagos State environment. Entrepreneurs can benefit from developing political skills and building relationships to drive innovation and growth. Organizational leaders can foster a culture that supports entrepreneurial activities and provides networking opportunities. Policies that promote entrepreneurship and organizational effectiveness.

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