CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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CONCEPTUALIZING AND INVESTIGATING
ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS:
A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

In the last decades, there has been a growing academic interest for the concept of organizational politics. Although this body of literature is expanding, the research remains fragmented in terms of theoretical and methodological approaches, and several conceptual ambiguities persist despite the accumulation of empirical data.

Using a systematic review methodology, this paper analyses the existent literature in the field of organizational politics by exploring two main sources of information: journal articles and books. The process of searching and assessing the literature is described in detail and the decisions made with respect to the inclusion/exclusion of the sources are accounted for at every stage. Overall, fifty one journal articles and seven books were systematically reviewed.

In the conceptual analysis of the core sources, the focus was on the way the concept of organizational politics is conceptualized and investigated in the existent literature. In a first part, the strengths and the shortfalls of various theoretical frameworks are discussed, in an attempt of conceptual integration. The findings are organized around three umbrella-concepts: organizational politics, political behaviours and political skill. In a second part, the research methods used in this field are carefully examined. Qualitative approaches were found to be less frequent than quantitative ones. Moreover, these last ones have been grouped into a methodological taxonomy. This in-depth analysis of the literature points out the implications that methodological choices have for the conceptual clarity of the field.

Finally, several limitations of this systematic literature review are acknowledged. Opportunities for future research in the field of organizational politics are discussed, as related to the progress of the doctoral project.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Overview

Organizational politics are a fact of life. Despite the widespread awareness of the existence of workplace politics, suggested by anecdotal evidence, this facet of organizational life remains controversial and has been a taboo in management studies until approximately three decades ago.

More interest was given to this topic once the idea of organizational rationality began to be challenged in managerial research. Rational models of organizations imply a unity of purpose amongst individuals, who are supposedly driven by the accomplishment of consensually embraced corporate goals and expected to behave rationally all through the process of achieving these goals. Taking a more realistic view on organizational life, political models of organizations acknowledge the existence of conflicting interests within the organization, and consider organizational politics to be the process through which these interests are expressed, defended and negotiated.

Political skills are particularly vital for managers and leaders. There is an increasing call for politically aware and politically skilled leaders, whether it comes to dealing with external policy, formal politics, organizational strategy or internal politics (Hartley & Branicki, 2006). Within the internal corporate arena, leaders' work is political by nature, because they have to balance multiple individual interests in coherent organizational processes. Moreover, political skills are not only important to effectively exert power, but they are also a key to acquire organizational power. From this perspective, attempting to understand power and effective leadership without taking into account organizational politics seems unrealistic.

Research trying to account for the persistent gender imbalance at managerial levels in corporations has invoked, amongst other factors, women's differential use of influence tactics in the workplace. Because political behaviours are strongly related to power and influence processes, they are a potential tool to facilitate women's access to leadership roles or to enhance their performance in these roles. The few studies that have explored gender patterns in the use of political behaviours suggest that women are less politically

skilled in the workplace. However, the literature on gender and organizational politics remains very scarce and there is a clear research gap to address in this regard.

1.2.   Aim of the review

In order to address this research gap, it is essential to have a thorough understanding of the relevant conceptual frameworks. With this purpose, the literature was systematically reviewed in order to analyse in a structured and transparent manner the existing evidence in a specific area of research – that of organizational politics. Therefore, the first aim of the current paper is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge in the field of organizational politics. Secondly, this review should provide future directions of doctoral research and methodological insights.

1.3.   Structure of the paper

This paper is structured in several parts. This first chapter has provided an overview of the topic and the aim of the current paper. Chapter II presents a scoping study meant to position the concept of organizational politics in the existing literature. The fields of literature relevant for understanding this concept are briefly described (organization theory, organizational behaviour and social/organizational psychology) and the research questions emerging from this scoping study are formulated. These questions are to be addressed in more depth in the current systematic literature review.

In chapter III, I present the methodology chosen to carry out the systematic literature review. The review protocol developed was approved by the panel members involved in the mid-year review of our Master of Research programme. This protocol presents and provides a rationale for the sources of information that were used in the review (databases, books), the methods used to collect the information (search strings, cross-referencing) and the criteria for including or excluding academic papers.

The findings of this systematic search are presented in Chapters IV and V. Firstly, descriptive findings are provided in Chapter IV, by presenting the type of papers

included in the review. Moreover, Chapter V contains the conceptual synthesis of the findings extracted from the core papers included in the review.

The findings are discussed and put into perspective in Chapter VI, along with a retrospective analysis of the process itself of systematically reviewing the literature. Additionally, directions for further research are also explored.

CHAPTER II

POSITIONING THE FIELD OF INQUIRY

"When you mix people and power, you get politics." - Winston Churchill

"Politics is how interests and influence play out in an institution." - Benjamin Franklin

2. Overview

Although the political nature of organizations has been widely acknowledged by anecdotal evidence, this facet of organizational life has only recently become a topic of consistent academic interest. There is an increasing recognition that the rational model of organizations has severe limitations in understanding workplace realities. Today's corporations are more fluid and operate in a more unpredictable environment than some decades ago, making them more likely to become "political arenas" (Mintzberg, 1983). It thus becomes unrealistic to address power dynamics in the workplace without understanding politics.

There is currently little consensus in the definition of the core concepts related to politics in the workplace. However, the term "organizational politics" is generally used to refer to the existence of multiple competing interests within the organization and the influence processes enacted to manage them. Political behaviours are clearly related to power and influence processes. Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) argue that political behaviours have more weight on decision-making when people have to operate in a changing environment and to deal with unstructured decisions; politics are therefore more frequent at the higher organizational levels, requiring leaders to be politically skilled.

Despite indisputable progress over the last decades, women still remain under-represented at managerial levels in corporations (Singh & Vinnicombe, 2003). One explanation brought for this state of facts concerns women's differential use of influence tactics in the workplace. Very few studies have explored gender patterns in the use of political behaviours, suggesting that women are less politically skilled in the workplace. From this perspective, political behaviours become a potential tool to facilitate women's access to leadership roles or to enhance their performance in these roles.

In this chapter I will briefly present key studies and theories relevant for the understanding of some core concepts related to organizational politics and gender. Three fields of knowledge are addressed with this purpose: organization theory, organizational behaviour and social psychology.

2.1.   Organizational Politics: The Organization Theory Perspective

Historically speaking, writings about organizational politics first appeared in the classical organization theory literature, in relation to the concept of organizational rationality. The rational model of organization namely assumes that human behaviour is not random, that corporate goals are clear and decisions are objective. Unity is a core element of the principle of organizational rationality - unity of purpose and agreement over the choice of strategies, amongst the employees who are expected to act rationally and in accordance with the consensually agreed goals.

The idea of human rationality has been mostly explored in relation to decision-making in organizations. Simon (1957) is one of the most prominent names amongst those who have questioned the idea of rationality in decision-making, by noticing that real decision-makers in organizations rarely posses exhaustive knowledge about the available alternatives and their consequences. Apart from these cognitive limitations, he also pointed out limitations related to social factors, highlighting the existence of conflicting preferences that decision-makers have with respect to the alternatives pursued. Simon used the term of "bounded rationality" to describe this set of limitations preventing individuals in organizations from being totally rational.

One major implication of the idea of bounded rationality is the acknowledgement of different individual preferences for goals and means within organizations. This suggests that in the decision-making process, factors related to power, influence and politics also play a role. In a similar vein, March (1962, in Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004) viewed corporations as political coalitions and criticized rational models for failing to take into account individual agendas and preferences within organizations.

An alternative approach in the organization theory literature has been to realistically acknowledge the fact that power struggles and political manoeuvres are prevalent in organizations. More recent political models of organizations have questioned the assumptions of organizational rationality and addressed the more or less formal process of negotiation between individuals or departments over the goals to pursue and the appropriate means for pursuing them (Hatch, 1997). The influence processes enacted to defend these multiple interests have been labelled as "organizational politics".

Jeffrey Pfeffer (1981) defined organizational politics as "activities taken within the organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation where there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices." Explaining the relationship between power and politics, Pfeffer (1992) defined power as "the ability to influence behaviour, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance, and to get people to do things that they would not otherwise do", whilst politics are "the processes, the actions, the behaviours through which this potential power is utilized and realized".

In a simpler manner, Buchanan & Huczynski (2004) state that politics is about "who gets what, when and how." Butcher and Clarke (2002) argue that organizational politics constitute the "cornerstone for organizational democracy" by allowing the expression of multiple individual and group goals, developed under the umbrella of common corporate goals. Likewise, Buchanan and Badham (1999) show how politics can drive or facilitate organizational change.

2.2.   Organizational Politics: The Organizational Behaviour Perspective

Organizational behaviour researchers have also investigated organizational politics or political behaviours empirically, by focusing on individuals, as opposed to organizations as systems. However, the conceptualizations of core concepts related to organizational politics vary largely in this field. One strategy of reaching some conceptual convergence is to identify recurring themes across different streams of research.

In a literature review on this topic, Drory and Romm (1990) highlighted three defining elements of organizational politics: influence, informal means and conflict. Having a similar approach, Buchanan and Badham (2007) also point out five defining features of political behaviour: influence, self-interest, damage, backstage and conflict.

Self-interest or group interests are most commonly seen as motives behind political behaviours. In one of the pioneer papers on this topic, Frost and Hayes (1977) state that political behaviour is used to enhance or protect each individual's share of exchange in organizational processes. In a similar manner, Allen et al. (1979) define organizational politics as "intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups". They identify several political tactics used by managers: attacking or blaming the others, strategic use of information, impression management, support building for ideas, ingratiation, coalition building, associating with influential, and creating obligation. Influence is thus one salient aspect mentioned unanimously in the literature about political behaviours. Mintzberg (1983) considers organization politics to be influence techniques within a broader repertoire of organizational influence systems such as authority, expertise and ideology.

Drory and Romm (1988) examined employees' meanings of "organizational politics", noticing that behaviours labelled as political are mostly considered informal rather than formal, and also considered to be related to power achievement and motivated by concealed goals, incompatible with organizational goals. The authors suggest that there are compensatory relationships amongst these aspects defining organizational politics, and that different combinations of these elements lead people to label certain organizational situations as political. Their findings suggesting that politics are related to informal influence attempts are largely supported by the literature (Farrell & Petersen, 1982; Mintzberg, 1983). Moreover, Pfeffer (1981) also states that concealment of one's motives is typical for political behaviours; since politics is about dealing with conflicting interests by influence attempts, concealing motives is a way of avoiding the resistance that these influence attempts might generate.

In 1980, Gandz and Murray distinguished between definitions of workplace politics that focus on the use of influence and power for resource allocation and those that focus on self-serving behaviours at the expense of others in the organization. Their study shows that politics are a pervasive reality in the workplace and that the organizational processes perceived as the most politicized are those less formalized, with few established rules (interdepartmental coordination, delegation of authority, promotions and transfers). Along with lack of formalization, conflict is another contextual factor considered to favour political behaviour.

Finally, the idea of inducing damage by the means of political behaviour is also one recurrent theme (Buchanan & Badham, 2007). When self-interests or group interests are not compatible amongst each other or with organizational interests, being political can involve acting against others or the organization. However, not all political behaviour is necessarily harmful. Although political behaviours can be enacted for good causes and through harmless means, many authors focus on the negative dimension of politics.

Much research on organizational politics has been done by organizational behaviour researchers in the United States. One stream of research has focused on perceptions of organizational politics. Ferris and Kacmar (1992) developed a psychometric instrument designed to measure the extent to which employees consider their work environment to be political – Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS). They proposed a model exploring the antecedents and the consequences of politics perceptions, a model that has been extensively tested during the last decade (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997; Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey &Toth, 1997; Valle & Perrewe, 2000; Vigoda, 2001; Poon, 2002; Zivnuska, Kacmar, Witt, Carlson, Bratton, 2004; Treadway, Witt, Ferris, Hochwater, Perrewe, Goodman, 2005). However, the definition used for organizational politics and the subsequent operationalization of the concept are quite restrictive and revolve around themes such as self-interest at the expense of others' interests or lack of transparency and meritocracy in organizational procedures.

2.3.   Clarifying the Organizational Politics Construct

In sum, the organizational theory and organizational behaviour areas operate with slightly different definitions of organizational politics. Organization theorists tend to view politics as the expression of differing goals within the organization, as inevitable attempts of individuals or groups to defend their interests and to influence the allocation of organizational resources through informal means of persuasion, particularly in ambiguous situations. Although the purpose of political behaviours is considered to be mainly self-serving or group-serving, and the means to range from social (networking) to anti-social (scape-goating), this perspective does not necessarily label political behaviours as illegitimate. On the contrary, benefits associated with such behaviours are also highlighted: they are the democratic expression of different individual preferences (Butcher & Clarke, 2002), or facilitators for organizational change processes (Buchanan, 1999). This conceptualization signals a shift from the rational models of organization to political ones.

This shift is less obvious in the organizational behaviour area. Politics are generally thought to undermine organizational fairness and therefore political behaviours are considered illegitimate and exclusively self-serving (with self-interest being opposed to corporate interest). An important part of the research on workplace politics is published in the United States and seems to be driven by a quest for empirical validation of the conceptual models proposed in the 1990's, without consistent efforts to integrate the theoretical developments in the field. For example, these conceptual models have ignored one of the most comprehensive literature reviews published by Drory and Romm (1990) on this topic only a few years before. These authors proposed a definition that synthesises the essence of political behaviours: informal influence behaviours meant to influence the distribution of organizational resources, in situations when there are conflicting interests between individuals or groups in the organization.

One major problem of this area of research is that currently there is an inflation of concepts related to politics in the workplace. Organizational politics, political climate, political behaviours, political tactics, political skills, influence tactics, political influence

behaviour – all these concepts are often utilized interchangeably and signal the lack of theoretical maturity in this field of research.

2.4. Organizational Politics and Gender: The Social Psychology Perspective

Although the terms "gender" and "sex" have been used interchangeably, in social sciences and particularly in gender studies "gender" refers to the social construction of masculinity and femininity, rather than to biological sex per se. Social psychology has been a privileged discipline that developed theories about gender and for this reason, I will use this area of literature to explore gender patterns in the use of political behaviours in organizations.

2.4.1. Gender, power and influence

Power imbalance between men and women in organizations is still a widespread phenomenon. A tremendous amount of work in social sciences and especially in psychology has been dedicated to understanding the causes of these persisting disparities. Theories of gender stereotyping have accounted for socio-cognitive barriers faced by women when trying to emerge as leaders, the core idea being that stereotypes of women and stereotypes of managers have been and still are incompatible. Schein (2001) refers to this phenomenon using the expression "think manager-think male", Heilman and Okimoto (2007) frame it within the lack of fit theory, whilst Eagly and Karau (2002) explain it in terms of incompatible social roles. According to these theories, women trying to reach top-level positions in organizations are prone to prejudice because of the perceived incongruency between their group's stereotyped characteristics and the required attributes for success in this type of position (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Specifically, there is an estimated lack of fit between the communal qualities associated with women and the agentic qualities thought to be necessary for a successful leader. Schein's (2001) work documented the masculine construal of leadership in our society.

Recent research in social psychology has challenged the classical definition of prejudice as simple antipathy. The ambivalent sexism theory (Glick et al., 2000, 2004) states that sexism is a particular type of prejudice incorporating a deep ambivalence, rather than straightforward hostility. Benevolent sexism (a subjectively favourable, chivalrous ideology that offers protection and affection to women who embrace conventional roles and are accommodating) coexists with hostile sexism (antipathy toward women who are viewed as usurping men's power). The authors indicate that gender stereotypes can be described by using two dimensions – warmth and competence - and that according to these dimensions, the consensually held belief is that *"men are bad but bold and women are wonderful but weak"*. Therefore, women's positive characteristics (communality) are more directly related to liking, whilst men's positive characteristics (agency) are more directly related to respect and power.

The impact of these gender stereotypes was also explored in the study of social influence processes, showing that women are often encouraged to adopt stereotype-consistent influence behaviours. Normative patterns of interaction developed in groups generate a disadvantage for women, by devaluing their task-focused contributions and encouraging them to engage in relational behaviours rather than task-oriented behaviours (Carli & Eagly, 1999). Gender plays a role in the use of self-presentation as an influence tactic as well. Not only have women been found to be less assertive and less self-promoting then men, but when they display similar behaviours in these respects, the effects are often detrimental. Men are more easily influenced by women displaying self-effacing and tentative behaviours than by assertive women (Rudman, 1998). In a study on upward influence strategies in the workplace, Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) identified four types of influencers (Shotgun, Ingratiator, Tactician and Bystander) and notice that although aggressive influence tactics were negatively perceived for both men and women, women were rated significantly higher when they used friendly influence strategies or when they were simply passive.

Influence in social contexts has proven to be a function of both perceived competence and social attraction (Carli, LaFleur, & Loeber, 1995). It is widely acknowledged that women need to prove their ability in male-typed tasks more than their male colleagues.

However, once a women's success in a male-typed task becomes irrefutably acknowledged, other types of resistance are likely to occur in the form of social rejection (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004). Heilman and Okimoto (2007) observed that women are penalized for success at male tasks because of a perceived deficit in relational and communal attributes, implied by their success. Once these communal qualities are proven, social penalties (e.g. in likeability judgements) are tempered. The importance of social likeability judgements should not be underestimated in order to understand the results of social influence attempts, depending on the gender of the initiator.

In sum, there are substantial data suggesting that women engaging in identical power-related behaviours as men are perceived differently. The efficacy of influence behaviours is therefore moderated by the effect of gender norms and stereotypes.

2.4.2. Gender and political behaviours

Only four studies focusing exclusively on gender and politics have been published up to now (Arroba & James, 1988; Mainiero, 1994; Mann, 1995; Perrewe & Nelson, 2004). Amongst these, three of them are theoretical and only one presents empirical data. Relying on Marshall's (1984) observation that women entering the managerial world are reluctant to engage in politics, Arroba and James (1988) explain this phenomenon by women's perceived lack of competency in this area and their distaste for political activity. The authors distinguish two factors which affect political behaviour in organization: awareness of politics and predisposition to behave politically. Although it is stated that women might be less aware of political realities because of insufficient exposure to informal mechanisms of organizational power, no explanation is brought for their supposed "distaste" for political activities. The authors also suggest that women's greater interpersonal awareness could be exploited in order to increase women's political efficacy, constituting thereby a potential female advantage in the political game.

Mann (1995) argues that women fail to recognize the importance of politics because they are not sufficiently familiarized with the informal mechanisms of power (networking, power coalitions, and old boys' clubs). Similarly, Perrewe and Nelson (2004) state that women's career progression in organizations could be facilitated by their political skill, which would help them gain access to relevant inside information. They also point out that women believe that career success depends largely upon performance and expertise, and underestimate the importance of informal networks and political coalitions.

These three studies previously presented rely on a blend of theoretical arguments and anecdotal evidence. The only empirical data gathered on the topic was published by Mainiero (1994), who interviewed fifty five high profile executive women in the US. The author noticed that while taking on leadership roles, women seem to go through a process of political maturation, progressing from naïve to astute politicians. She described four stages of this political maturation process. Though valuable for the sample used, this study does not rely on a coherent theoretical framework to analyse and conceptualize the data gathered – there is virtually no definition given to organizational politics in the whole article, nor are essential previous writings on organizational politics taken into account.

It is thus clear that there is a call for further understanding of the impact gender might have on political behaviours. In this purpose, theories of gender stereotyping could be applied to understand women's reluctance to engage in political behaviours. Political behaviours can be considered male-typed because they are power-related behaviours and they are considered to serve self-interest or group interest. Since they involve defending personal or departmental interests when these interests differ from common organizational goals, there could be a potential lack of fit between women's stereotyped communal characteristics and political behaviours.

Moreover, engaging in certain political behaviours could render women less likeable, making them look on the one hand less socially sensitive, kind and sympathetic, and on the other hand more assertive and dominant. Penalties with respect to likeability would

compromise the main purpose itself of political behaviours – exerting influence, since social attractiveness plays an important role in influence processes, even in the workplace. Because women engaging in political behaviours may violate the prescriptive dimension of gender stereotypes, the social penalties triggered could negatively affect the efficacy of such influence behaviours.

2.5. Conclusion and research questions

The brief scoping of the three areas of literature shows that an increasing number of studies tackle aspects related to organizational politics, but the research on this topic remains extremely fragmented. Most of these studies begin by acknowledging the lack of consensus in the existing literature with respect to the definition itself of organizational politics and political behaviours. Although some authors have pointed out this lack of agreement and called for more academic consensus in the use of these concepts starting with the '80s (Gandz & Murray, 1980), articles published after 2000 in this field continue to make the same remarks.

The literature review previously presented showed that the OT and OB areas operate with slightly different definitions of organizational politics. Additionally, there is a clear need for further understating of potential gender effects in the use of political behaviours. Although the theoretical development of this gendered perspective in the field of politics is almost inexistent, is seems reasonable to assume that the use and the efficiency of political behaviours are moderated by gender effects, as it is the case for any other power-related behaviours.

My research interest concerns women's use of political behaviours in the workplace as means of achieving and exerting power in managerial or leadership roles. In the light of the scoping study presented, I think this could be achieved (a) by a better understanding of the concepts related to organizational politics and (b) by a further exploration of gender effects on the attitudes, use and perception of political behaviours. Key concepts and theories relevant for this purpose can be explored by drawing on three fields of academic literature: organization theory, organizational behaviour and social /

organizational psychology. Figure I below graphically presents the interplay of these areas as related to the research interest stated.

Figure 1. Mapping the field and positioning the research interest

SOCIAL & ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

- Gender stereotypes & roles
- Gender and social influence

ORGANIZATION THEORY

- Rational versus political organizational models
- Organizational politics

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- Organizational politics
- Political behaviour
- Political skill

Research interest:

POLITICAL BEHAVIOURS

OF WOMEN LEADERS

By the means of my doctoral research, I wish to understand how gender impacts the use of political behaviours in organizations and more specifically, whether there are sex differences in leader's political behaviours that might account for the gender imbalance at leadership levels.

Although the usual purpose of the systematic literature review is to identify a research gap, based on my current readings, I am inclined to think that this constitutes the research gap in my field. Therefore, in my case, the systematic review will serve three purposes:

1. Explore in more depths the areas of literature I rely on.
2. Confirm or discomfirm the existence of the research gap I identified.
3. Refine or reformulate the research question I stated.

In order to adress the research gap highlighted above, a first step is to explore how political behaviours are defined and measured in the existing literature. Further on in my doctoral research, since there is almost no literature on gender and politics, I intend to rely on existing literature on gender and influence, whose findings I think can be transferred and tested further on, while studying women's use of political behaviours. However, since the core concept of my doctoral research is "organizational politics", I consider I need to gain an overall mastery in this field, before tackling gender aspects of organizational politics. Moreover, the areas of organization theory and social / organizational psychology are not the focus of my research interest and their role is, at the time being, secondary in providing the theoretical foundation required to advance my doctoral research.

Therefore, I decided to adress the following question through by the means of the present systematic literature review:

How are organizational politics and political behaviours conceptualized and investigated in the existing literature?

Further on, in Chapter III, I describe the methodology used to accomplish this goal.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3. Overview

This chapter presents the methodology used to carry out the systematic review. It also points out the rationale for the decisions made at each stage of the systematic review, in an attempt to make the review as transparent and as replicable as possible.

The review followed four main steps:
- Systematic search
- Selection
- Quality appraisal
- Data extraction, synthesis and reporting

3.1. Consultation Panel

The aim of this review was to provide a thorough insight into the existing literature in the field of organizational politics, with a focus on the gendered dimension. Throughout this process, I sought the advice of several experts in my area of research or in the review process itself. Although practitioners' view is important for any research aiming to be relevant for practice, at this stage of my doctoral project it seemed premature to involve practitioners. On the other hand, since the main task was dealing with academic literature, I relied on the advice of several academics having expertise either in my research area or in the systematic review process.

My main support throughout the literature review process was my direct supervisor, Dr. Val Sigh. She has helped me extensively in focusing my research interests and managing the literature on organizational politics. In addition, Prof. David Buchanan and Dr. Martin Clark were also chosen as internal advisors, both of them having expertise in the area of organizational politics. David Buchanan has been giving me suggestions since the early stages of my doctoral project. In this particular project of reviewing the literature systematically, I asked his opinion with respect to the list of core articles that emerged after the search and the assessment stages. The same advice was asked from Martin Clark.

Moreover, along with my supervisor, Dr. David Denyer provided guidance in the process of adjusting the systematic review protocol initially developed in my scoping study. The protocol required more changes than expected and the scope of the review was narrowed down. Additionally, Heather Woodfield helped me deal more effectively with electronic database search and referencing issues.

3.2. Systematic Search

3.2.1. Databases

The aim of this review was to gather as much relevant knowledge as possible in the field of organizational politics. Although it is not realistic to hope that a literature review can be truly exhaustive, following a protocol and having to make my decisions explicit has helped me make sure that no major sources of information were ignored. Electronic databases constituted the main source of information. The databases searched and the rationale for choosing them is presented in Table 1 below.

3.2.2. Books

The books included in the review were found by using the snowball technique (cross-referencing), suggestions from members of the panel, and book reviews found by searching electronic databases. Many of the books reviews found online referred to books for practitioners or to self-help books, which were excluded from this review. Only books written by academics known in this field of research were included. As a general rule, I tried to include the books most frequently quoted by the authors of the core papers included in the review. Overall, seven books were included in the review, some of them being used only partially (e.g. chapters referring to organizational politics, when the whole book was an organizational behaviour reader).

Table 1. Electronic databases

Name of the data base	Description and rationale
ABI/INFORM Global	It is one of the most comprehensive and widely used databases for academic research in business and management. Covers over 2,700 publications across different management disciplines. It would be particularly helpful in exploring the areas of organizational behaviour and organization theory, depicted previously in the protocol by mapping the field.
EBSCO Business Source Premier	Provides full text access for more than 2,300 journals, including the world's top management journals. Covers all areas related to management, including organizational behaviour and organization theory.
PsycARTICLES	This database contains full-text articles in psychology, from journals published by the American Psychological Association and the Canadian Psychological Association. Provides access to 60 journals from 1894 to present and has a daily update. This database will help me keep up to date research in social and organizational psychology, related to gender stereotyping in the workplace.

3.2.3. Search strings

Keywords and search strings were chosen according to the research fields mapped out in the scoping phase (MRes mid-year review). These search strings initially tapped into the three areas of literature identified. However, since I decided to narrow the focus of my systematic review, I eventually used only the key words referring to the literature on organizational politics, therefore mainly in the field of organizational behaviour. Moreover, after several search attempts, I gave up some of the key words initially stated

in my scoping study (mid-year MRes review) and I kept only those likely to produce the most focused outputs. The final key words and search string are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Search string

String	Literature area
(organization* politics OR organisation* politics OR workplace politics OR office politics OR political behavio* OR political skill* OR political tactics) AND NOT (government* politic* OR nation* politic* OR policy making OR policy-making OR policymaking)	Organizational behaviour

Table 3 below presents the output obtained with the search string in the three databases used. In order to ensure a minimum level of quality and a manageable number of articles, the search was restricted to peer-reviewed papers and to "title and abstract" only. Moreover, papers published before 1970 were not taken into account, because the field of literature I examined was considerably less mature before that date.

Table 3. Outputs of the initial database search

Database	Papers found	Minus duplicates	Minus irrelevant content
ABI	530		
EBSCO	640		
PsychARTICLES	176		
Total	**Σ = 1346**	**701**	**317**

Although when using the search string, I restricted the search by trying to avoid articles that referred to government or policy making, about half of the papers pulled out still referred to that type of politics or to political behaviour as civic behaviour (voting, political preference, etc). Despite this important drop down after screening the abstracts, there were still 317 papers left referring to organizational politics.

3.3. Selection based on title and abstracts

The 317 papers about organizational politics, kept after eliminating papers with totally irrelevant content (e.g. governmental politics), were screened again based on abstract and content skimming. Three main categories were identified and removed from this review based on the following rationale:

(1) Papers whose main focus was not on organizational politics (e.g. that studied political aspects involved in decision-making, recruitment, pay, change or strategy). The theoretical part on this topic was almost always superficial and there was no interest in measuring the concept, therefore no methodological input. Most frequently, authors talked about politics to refer to the existence of conflicts and multiple views/interests in certain organizational processes. However, it is interesting to notice that those processes most frequently analysed from the political angle were organizational change, corporate strategy and decision-making.

(2) Papers focusing on specific influence behaviours (e.g. impression management, networking, etc). It was not the scope of the current paper to review the literature on all the range of influence behaviours that can potentially be political; nor would such a review have been exhaustive, since the key words used were not focused enough to elicit all relevant literature in these subfields of research. The reason my search elicited this kind of studies is actually related to a more or less random use of the term "political" in organizational behaviour research. Insufficient distinction is being made between influence behaviours in general and political behaviours.

(3) Finally, practitioners' papers and book reviews were not included in the review because they lacked the academic rigour to inform any decisions related to my doctoral project.

After removing these categories of papers, another 163 were left and assessed further on for the quality of their content.

3.4.   Quality appraisal for full papers

The full papers kept after this screening stage were assessed against more specific criteria of academic quality. In order to accomplish this, specific appraisal criteria were used for certain both theoretical and empirical papers. These criteria are detailed below.

Quality standards for conceptual papers

- Clear indication of the area(s) of literature or the discipline(s) supporting the discussion.
- Explicit identification of the theories / models used and their positioning into their area of literature.
- Comprehensive literature review – identification of key theories, authors, and discussion of the links between their arguments or models, as well as strengths and limitations of each perspective.

If a new model/ or theory is developed:

- Clear assumptions of new model.
- Indication about how the new model/theory incorporates existing knowledge.
- Indication about how the new model/theory contributes to the existing literature.
- Discussion about limitations and opportunities for further research.

Quality standards for empirical papers

- Clear indication of the theoretical perspective adopted.
- Pertinent literature review - identification of key theories, authors, and discussion of the links between their arguments or models, as well as strengths and limitations of each perspective.
- Logical links between theoretical framework, theoretical propositions, operationalizations, field-work and results (the ABCDE model proposed by Rose, 1982).
- A valid methodology – appropriate research design to address the research question, adequate sample size.
- Details about the data collection technique.
- Conclusions supported by the results and the sample (no overstatements and overgeneralizations).
- Overall consistency between the aims, method, results and conclusion of the research.
- Rigorous reporting and clear presentation of the results – tables, diagrams, etc.
- Discussion about the limitations of the study and the implications of the results, with link back into the literature used.

Furthermore, because I took into account both quantitative and qualitative studies, I used checklists to assess the merits of the methodology for each category of studies. These checklists were used as complementary tools to the previously listed quality criteria and concerned mostly methodological aspects of empirical papers. However, overall, empirical papers were assessed both on the overall quality standards presented above and on the checklist for the methodological part. Table 4 below presents the checklist with methodological criteria and their applicability to each type of empirical research.

Table 4. Checklist with appraisal criteria for qualitative and quantitative studies

Criteria	Relevance for each type of research	
	Qualitative	Quantitative
1. Clear statement of the purpose of the research.	X	X
2. Arguable choice of research design in relation with the research question. (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2005).		
a) Adequate research question to be addressed by qualitative methods (questions typically addressed by descriptive studies, such as "what", "who", "when" or "where"; for example, related to explorations of individual meanings).	X	
b) Adequate research question to be addressed by quantitative methods (the "why" question, typically addressed by causal studies).		X
3. Clear hypotheses, coherent with the theoretical framework and the research aim.		X
3. Meaningful sample selection and clear explanations in this regard (what participants were chosen, how and why).	X	X
a) Sample large enough to ensure theoretical saturation.	X	
b) Statistically representative sample.		X
4. Clear account of data collection (how, when, by whom data were collected).	X	X
5. Logical choice of variables, in relation to the theoretical framework used and the hypotheses formulated.		X
6. Adequate operationalisation of variables (do the instruments used measure what they claim to measure?).		X
7. Clear account of data analysis.	X	X
a) How the categories emerged, how many people coded the data, how were contradictory data managed, how were the biases acknowledged and minimised?	X	
b) Was the choice of statistical tests adequate to test the hypotheses (depending on the number of variables and the size of the samples)?		X
8. Clear account of the results (explicit findings, findings supported by evidence, discussion about the relationship between findings and the research question).	X	X
a) Logical inferences and interpretation of quotes into broader conceptual categories.	X	

b) Accurate reporting of the results of statistical tests, as presented in the output tables.		X
9. Adequacy of the conclusion (conclusion supported by the data and the results presented, logical claims of generalisability, pertinent links to theory).	X	X
10. Discussion about the limitations of the study, its relevance for practice and its contribution to existing knowledge.	X	X

Moreover, for the remaining core papers, I have developed a critical appraisal table (Table 5), on the basis of the materials received and the discussions we had in the Systematic Review course of our MRes programme. These criteria were Theoretical foundation, Methodological rigour, Quality of argumentation and Contribution to the field, and the scale ranged from 1 to 3.

Table 5. Critical assessment tool for full papers

Criteria	Level			
	Low = 1	**Medium = 2**	**High = 3**	**NA**
1. Theoretical foundation	Non-existent or little information about the literature used. Superficial understanding of main theories in the field.	Reasonable awareness of the key contributions in the field and demonstrated ability to use them in building the argument.	Complete review of the relevant literature. Makes clear use of existing theoretical arguments, compares them and assesses them in a critical way.	NA
2. Methodological rigour	Non-existent or inadequate explanations accounting for the research design chosen. Insufficient description of the sample.	The link between the theoretical argumentation and the choice of the design is clear. Acceptable data analysis and interpretation.	Clear rationale for sample and design choice. Adequate sample and sound data analysis. Very accurate interpretation.	NA
3. Quality of argumentation	The arguments are not clearly stated or are severely flawed. Unsupported generalizations. Oversimplification of other ideas/theories.	The argumentation is reasonably convincing and it reasonably incorporates core concepts of the theory presented.	The flow of the arguments is clear and persuasive. Arguments are well integrated into the existing theory. The conclusions are supported by thorough analysis and relevant examples.	NA
4. Contribution to the field	Little or no theoretical and methodological contribution to the field. Uses only existing ideas and methods.	Contribution only on specific aspects – theoretical or methodological. Builds on existing knowledge.	Excellent quality and contribution at several levels. Clear contribution to existing knowledge by rigour and originality.	NA

Figure 2 below summarises graphically the steps taken to select the core papers and the exclusion criteria used at each stage.

Figure 2. Steps in selecting the core papers

STEP 1 = 701 papers

Documents found in all electronic databases, after eliminating the duplicates.

⇩

STEP 2 = 317 papers
Filer type: adequacy of content
Excluded papers with totally irrelevant content, where the term "politics" referred to other form of politics than organizational politics (formal, governmental politics or political behaviour as civic behaviour – e.g. voting).

⇩

STEP 3 = 163 papers
Filer type: adequacy of content
Excluded 3 categories of papers: (1) focusing on other organizational processes, but discussing political aspects involved, (2) focusing on specific influence behaviours called political but with no reference to the field of OP and (3) practitioner papers and book reviews.

⇩

STEP 4 = 105 papers
Filer type: quality of content

Excluded papers that did not meet the quality criteria described.

⇩

STEP 5 = 50 papers
Excluded several papers from one stream of research, since they all used the same conceptualization and measures of OP, therefore it would not have served the purpose of the review to examine all of them. (Further explanations in Part IV.)

These 50 papers were the core papers reviewed. In addition to that, in order to cover at a minimum the literature on power, I used books and another theoretical paper reviewing the literature on power and gender, recommended by my supervisor.

3.5. Data extraction

The papers that met the assessment criteria have been summarized using a data extraction form presented in Table 6 below. This form contains the four criteria developed in the critical assessment tool; the corresponding scores were given for each criterion and then added. However, no absolute judgement was made based on the quality scores only. Some papers were used because of their strength on certain criteria, despite low quality scores on others. Moreover, others were included despite relatively low scores on all criteria. This was the case for those articles taking a gendered perspective on organizational politics: none of them was of high academic quality, but since there are currently only five papers published on this specific topic, it would have been absurd not to include them. The various strengths or weaknesses were nevertheless taken into account in the conceptual analysis of the literature.

Table 6. Data Extraction Form

Title
Author
Journal
Date of Publication
Volume
Month or season
Part
Page Numbers
Empirical / Theoretical
Qualitative / quantitative
Location
Sample

Quality criterion 1/ Theoretical foundation (1-3) =	
Quality criterion 2/ Methodological rigour (1-3) =	
Quality criterion 3/ Quality of argumentation (1-3) =	
Quality criterion 4/ Contribution to the field (1-3) =	
Overall quality score (1-12) =	
Key Findings	
Short Abstract	
Keywords	
Comments	

3.6.   Data synthesis

The evidence extracted by the procedure previously described was integrated into a coherent synthesis. This final narrative document reviews the main conceptualizations and measurements of organizational politics. In the subsequent chapters of this paper, these different approaches are compared, critiqued and the implications for my doctoral research choices are consequently discussed.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

4. Overview

In this chapter, I will present the main attributes of the 51 core papers chosen for the review. These papers are classified according to their publication date, journal, type (empirical vs theoretical), methodology (qualitative vs quantitative) or geographical location of the sample. Finally, a list of the books included in the review is also provided.

The papers found in electronic databases were grouped in two categories (group A and B) corresponding to existing research streams in the field of organizational politics. The empirical research on this topic is numerically dominated by a group of North American researchers who have developed the Perception of Politics Scale (POPS) and the Political Skill Inventory (PSI) (Ferris and collaborators). This stream of research is exclusively quantitative and employs the same definitions and measures in all the studies. Overall, 65 quality papers belonging to this research stream were found by systematic search of databases (group B). Additionally, there were another 40 papers using different conceptualizations or measures that constituted the other main group of articles (group A). Since my aim was to review different existing conceptualizations and methods of investigating organizational politics, it would have been purposeless and redundant to report detailed conceptual findings of all the papers published in group B. I thus decided to report conceptual findings for only 10 papers belonging to this category. These specific papers were chosen because: (1) they were the ones that initially developed and tested these theoretical models and instruments or (2) in addition to the POPS and PSI, they contained other types of measures of organizational political or political behaviours. Below I will report the descriptive findings for the core references consulted, which include: group A of studies, 10 papers from group B and the seven books included in the review.

4.1.   Core papers over time

The earliest papers included in the review were published in 1977, and the most recent in 2007. Table 7 presents the distribution of the core articles over time. However, it would not be cautious to draw conclusions about the evolution over time of academics'

interest in the topic, since the numbers do not take into account all the papers in group B, published after the '90s. If that were the case, a drastic increase of publications after the '90s would be easily observed.

Table 7. Core papers over time

Year	Number of papers
1977	2
1979	1
1980	3
1981	2
1982	1
1983	1
1984	2
1985	2
1988	4
1989	3
1990	2
1991	2
1992	1
1993	1
1994	4
1995	1
1996	1
1997	2
1999	3
2000	1
2001	4
2002	2
2003	1
2004	1
2005	3
2007	1
Total	**51**

4.2. Core papers according to type

Amongst the papers included, there were 34 empirical and 17 theoretical (see Table 8 below). With one exception, all the papers in group B were empirical. This is illustrative for authors' interest in theory testing versus theory building in this research stream.

Table 8. Type of core papers

Type	Papers
Empirical	34
Theoretical	17

4.3.   Empirical core papers by methodology

Amongst the empirical papers reviewed, most of them (N=26) used quantitative approaches to investigate politics, and seven undertook a qualitative approach. Only one study combined qualitative and quantitative research methods (Table 9).

Table 9. Empirical core papers by methodology

Methodology	Papers
Qualitative	7
Quantitative	26
Mixed	1

4.4.   Empirical core papers by geographical location

Moreover, as the data in Table 10 suggests, an overwhelming amount of empirical work in this field has been carried out in the United States.

Table 10. Empirical core papers by geographical location

Country	Papers
US	22
Canada	4
Israel	3
UK	2
China	1
India	1
Taiwan	1

4.5.   Core papers by journal

In order to have additional data on the quality of the core papers and the publication patterns in this field of research, in Table 11 below is provided a list of the journals and the corresponding number of core papers found in each. Journal rankings by Cranfield University and Association of Business Schools[1] are also provided, when available.

Table 11. Core papers by journal and ranking of journals

Journal name	Number of papers	Journal ranking	
		Cranfield	ABS
Human Relations	7	4	4
Journal of Organizational Behavior	7	3	3
Academy of Management Review	5	4	4
Journal of Business Ethics	4	3	3
Organizational Dynamics	4	3	3
Journal of Management	3	4	4
Organization Studies	2	3	4
Administrative Science Quarterly	2	4	4
IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management	2	3	-
Basic and Applied Social Psychology	1	-	-
Management Decision	1	1	1
Business Horizons	1	1	1
California Management Review	1	4	3
Journal of Managerial Issues	1	0	-
Journal of Business Research	1	2	3
Research in Organizational Behavior	1	-	-
Journal of Applied Psychology	1	4	4
International Journal of Management	1	-	-
British Journal of Management	1	3	3
Women in management review	1	1	2
Leadership and Organization Development Journal	1	1	1
Academy of Management Journal	1	4	4
Human Resource Development International	1	2	-
Journal of Managerial Psychology	1	1	-
Psychological Bulletin	1	4	-
Total	**51**		

[1] Cranfield ranking: 1=national, 4=world leading. ABS ranking: 0=non-recognized journal, 4=top journal.

4.6. Core papers by discipline

The journals and their respective papers were then clustered by discipline based on the subject groupings proposed by ABS (2007). Figure 3 below presents the distribution of papers according to discipline. Two disciplinary areas emerge quite clearly: organization studies (43% of papers) and general management (35% of papers).

Figure 3. Core papers by discipline
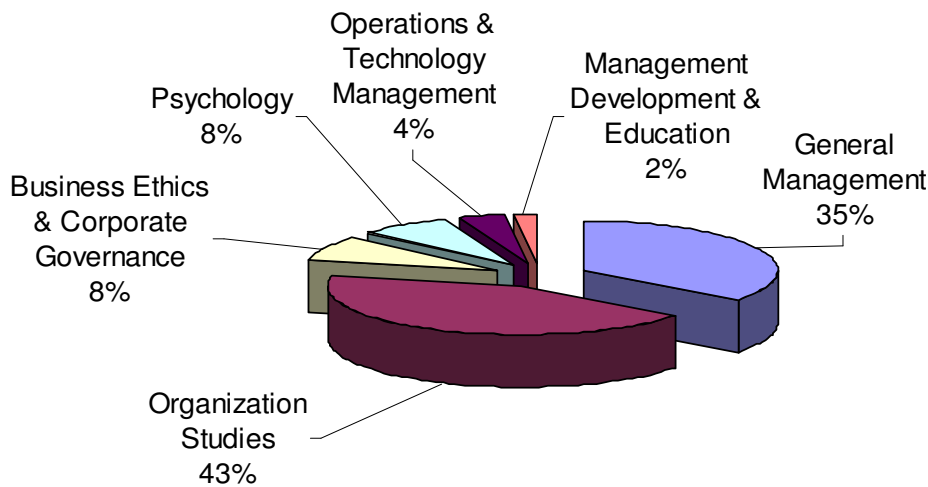
4.7. Books

A list of the books included in the review is provided in Table 12 below.

Table 12. Books, authors and publication year

Book title	Author(s)	Year
Power and Politics in Organizations	Bacharach, S. & Lawler, E.	1981
Organizational Behaivour. An Introductory Text (chapter 24 – Power and politics)	Buchanan, D. & Huczynski, A.	2004
Power, politics, and organizational change. Winning the turf game	Buchanan, D. & Badham, R.	2007
Power, Politics, and Organizations	Kakabadse, A. & Parker, C. (Eds)	1984
The Politics of Organizational Decision-Making	Pettigrew, A.	1973
Power in Organizations	Pfeffer, J.	1981
Power in and Around Organizations	Mintzberg, H.	1983

CHAPTER V

CONCEPTUAL FINDINGS

5. Overview

After modifying the initial protocol, the final purpose of this systematic review was to explore how the concept of organizational politics is defined and investigated in the existing literature. In order to do this, I will present the conceptual findings of the literature reviewed in two main parts. The first one, trying to summarize definitions of OP, will present the conceptual journal articles, books or book chapters and the theoretical part of the empirical papers. In the second part, only measures of concepts related to OP are discussed, in order to see how measurements of these constructs relate to conceptualizations. Both groups of journal articles (A and B) are taken into account in this conceptual synthesis.

5.1. Defining organizational politics

Lack of consensus about the definition of organizational politics continues to be an issue for researchers in this field. One factor that makes this field of research fragmented is the use of many related terms interchangeably: organizational politics, political behaviours, political tactics, political manoeuvres, political skill, etc. Therefore, before actually starting to report on the literature consulted, some conceptual clarifications are required. I will use three main concepts to structure my findings, based on the following distinctions:

- Organizational politics – the existence of multiple interests and goals, beyond the formal organizational agenda, and the social influence processes generated to defend them.
- Political behaviours – the observable behaviours enacted by individuals to pursue their goals. These various types of behaviours are designated by authors in this field either in a general manner as "tactics", "manoeuvres", and "strategies" or by naming certain influence behaviours specifically (e.g. impression management, ingratiation, networking).
- Political skill – ability to understand organizational politics and engage in political behaviours effectively.

Several conceptual themes emerging from the existing literature are discussed below. First, the relationship between politics, power and influence is discussed, in an attempt to define the general concept of "organizational politics" and to draw some conceptual distinctions. The concept of "political behaviour" is then explored by partially relying on certain conceptual frameworks proposed in the literature by Drory and Romm (1990) and Buchanan and Badham (2007). Furthermore, the concept of "political skill" is discussed, by highlighting the difference from political behaviours.

5.1.1. Organizational politics, power and influence

Power and politics are inextricably linked. These topics were actually treated together in most of the books or book chapters consulted. Although it is not the aim of the current paper to review extensively the concept of power, an overview of the conceptual links between power and politics will be briefly provided in this chapter section.

Power generally refers to one person's ability to influence the behaviour of another or to overcome resistance in achieving the desired outcomes (Pfeffer, 1981). Given the complex and abstract nature of this concept, reviewing the broad literature on this topic is not the scope of this paper. However, three trends of literature are briefly discussed (Kakabadse & Parker, 1984; Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004): power as a property of individuals, power as a relational phenomenon and power as a property of structures.

The first perspective focuses on power holders and considers power as a consequence of certain traits or skills that social actors posses. The locus of power lies therefore within individuals and the exercise of power is dependent upon their ability and will to mobilize those personal resources. Pfeffer (1992) discussed in more detail the sources of individual power, distinguishing between structural (formal position and role in the organization, access to information and other resources, importance of one's activity in the organization, etc) and personal sources (sensitivity, social intelligence, energy, toughness, etc).

The second perspective enlarges the previous one by placing the individual into his/her social interaction system. Conceptualizing power as a relational phenomenon allows for taking into account not only the agent, but also the target of the power relationship. Thus, power depends simultaneously on the agent's ability to influence and on the target's resistance to that influence (Bachararch & Lawler, 1981). One of the most well known taxonomies reflecting interpersonal dynamics in power is French and Raven's (1958, in Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004) description of the bases of power: reward, coercive, referent, legitimate and expert power.

Going beyond individuals and their social interactions, a third perspective on power looks at it as an embedded property of structures. In his attempt to define power, Lukes (1974) has analyzed several faces of power according to their visibility, ranging from overt, visible power to covert or institutionalised power. When power is clearly visible, it can be related to observable behaviour and can be exercised, for example, through decision-making when a conflict needs to be managed. A less visible way of exerting power is to establish agendas and keep specific issues on or off the decision-making agenda. Post-modern theories of power have particularly explored the importance of invisible norms as essential power mechanisms. Foucault (1975) analysed the role that discursive practices and knowledge play in constituting subjectivity and pointed out how power becomes pervasive by tailoring the very way individuals define reality and build their identities.

Conceptualizations of power have also varied according to the underlying organizational models with which researchers operate. Rational organizational models equate power with authority, which is meant to guide organizational actions towards the attainment of consensually pursued goals. The source of this legitimate authority is the formal organizational design and any type of power outside this authority is either ignored or deemed illegitimate (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004). Within this rational mindset, corporate strategy is supposed to be clear and driven by efficacy values, therefore managerial work consists of cascading down the corresponding goals by exerting their authority-based power to achieve them. In addition, political activities are seen as disruptive and illegitimate events.

Political theories of organization have challenged this traditional view of power, legitimizing or at least acknowledging the existence of differing individual or group interests and the influence processes engaged for defending them. Power is no longer reserved to those entitled by formal policies to exert it, but it is prevalent in the form of more or less obvious influence attempts made at all organizational levels. Pfeffer (1992) also noticed that political correctness hampers the study of power, since a choice-based vision of human action is always more comfortable than acknowledging the use of influence to get people do what they would otherwise not do. In addition, there is an excessive focus on individuals in research about power (this is particularly the case in the literature about leadership), with insufficient focus on the context. Pfeffer (1992) argues that the rational mindset, coupled with an interest for the de-contextualized power-holder, led to insufficient exploration of issues related to interpersonal influence in the workplace.

Trying to account for the gender imbalance of power in organizations, Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) analyse power resources at four distinct levels: social systems, organizational, interpersonal and individual. At the organizational and interpersonal levels, key sources of power fall within the sphere of informal influence and involve networking and coalitions for example. At an individual level, several social skills and personality traits (need for power and achievement, self-confidence) facilitate the path to power, thereby also to informal power. The literature reviewed by the authors revealed systematic gender differences favouring men in their access to and of power. Since these power sources are closely related to politics, it is not surprising that the few studies looking at gender and politics have actually pointed out women's reluctance to engage in politics.

"Politics" is a term generally describing the management of social groups and the decision-making processes involved in it. "Organizational politics" specifically refers to the existence of multiple competing interests within the organization and the influence processes enacted to manage them. Pffeffer (1981) defined organizational politics as:

> *"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."*

Drory and Romm (1990) argue that politics is related to power attainment because controlling resources increases power, and power itself is an organizational resource. Gray (in Kakabadse & Parker, 1984) states that politics is a deliberate attempt to change the balance of power in organizations. Explaining the relationship between power and politics, Pfeffer (1992) defined power as "the ability to influence behaviour, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance, and to get people to do things that they would not otherwise do", whilst politics are "the processes, the actions, the behaviours through which this potential power is utilized and realized". Similarly, Buchanan and Badham (2007) view power as "the ability to get people to do what you want them to do" and politics as "power into action, using a range of techniques and tactics". Drory and Romm (1990) distinguish politics from the exercise of authority or any formal job behaviour. Politics are thus related to behaviours going beyond organizational design or explicit norms and requirements, either because of the motives behind them or because of the tactics used to pursue them. Secrecy, backstage manoeuvring and hidden agendas are aspects constantly associated with this manner of exerting power (Farrell & Petersen, 1982; Buchanan, 1999). Moreover, confirming the informal nature of political behaviours and their distinctiveness from formal job requirements, Sussman, Adams, Kuzmits and Raho (2002) found that people tend to use different communication channels when sending politically motivated messages as compared to task-related messages: 57% of politically-related messages were communicated in face to face interactions, whilst work-related messages were sent relatively evenly via e-mail, telephone, memos and in face-to-face interactions.

Therefore, political behaviours involve at least two parties and are accomplished by exerting social influence. Since this influence is exerted to achieve objectives beyond the formal organizational agenda, numerous authors consider intentional informal influence as one major dimension of organizational politics (Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwich & Mayes, 1979; Gandz & Murray, 1980; Ralston, Giacalone & Terpstra, 1994;

Buchanan, 1999; Zanzi & O'Neill, 2001; Sussman, Adams, Kuzmitz & Raho, 2002).
Back in 1981, Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwich and Mayes argued that political
influence attempts are mostly directed hierarchically upwards. More recently, Zanzi and
O'Neill (2001) argued that the flattening of corporate hierarchies today has increased
the level of political activity in two ways: by reducing the opportunities for hierarchical
advancement and by increasing the frequency and importance of peer-to-peer
collaboration. It is thus not surprising that empirical studies have found political
behaviours to be more frequent in lateral work interactions rather that in vertical ones
(Sussman, Adams, Kuzmits & Raho, 2002). Therefore, although upward influence is
certainly political in its nature most of the time, political influence is not necessarily
directed upward. Additionally, the manner in which this influence is exerted and how
that varies according to its direction will be discussed below, in the part presenting the
means of political behaviours.

5.1.2. Political behaviours

In order to structure the heterogeneous literature referring to political behaviours, I have
taken into account three theoretical frameworks found in my core readings. These were
useful because they provided a broader view by trying to integrate multiple concepts
used in the literature on organizational politics. The frameworks will be shortly
presented below in chronological order and the links between them will be discussed
further more.

Vredenburgh and Maurer (1984) have proposed a process framework of organizational
politics, by focusing on three major elements: antecedent conditions, operating
mechanisms and outcomes. Figure 4 below illustrates the model proposed.

Drory and Romm (1990) carried out a literature review in the field of organizational
politics and created a model including the definition elements of this concept (Figure 5).
The authors specified three levels of analysis of organizational politics (individual,
group, organization) and three major conceptual categories describing politics:
outcomes, means and situational characteristics.

Figure 4. A process framework of organizational politics (Vredenburgh & Maurer, 1984)

Antecedent Conditions ➡

Operating Mechanisms

Political Sensitivity

Political Behavior

➡ Outcomes

Individual and Group Characteristics Situational Conditions

Decision to Pursue Goals Politically

Political Strategies and Tactics

Political Style

Intended and Unintended

Organizational Design and Normative Sanctioning
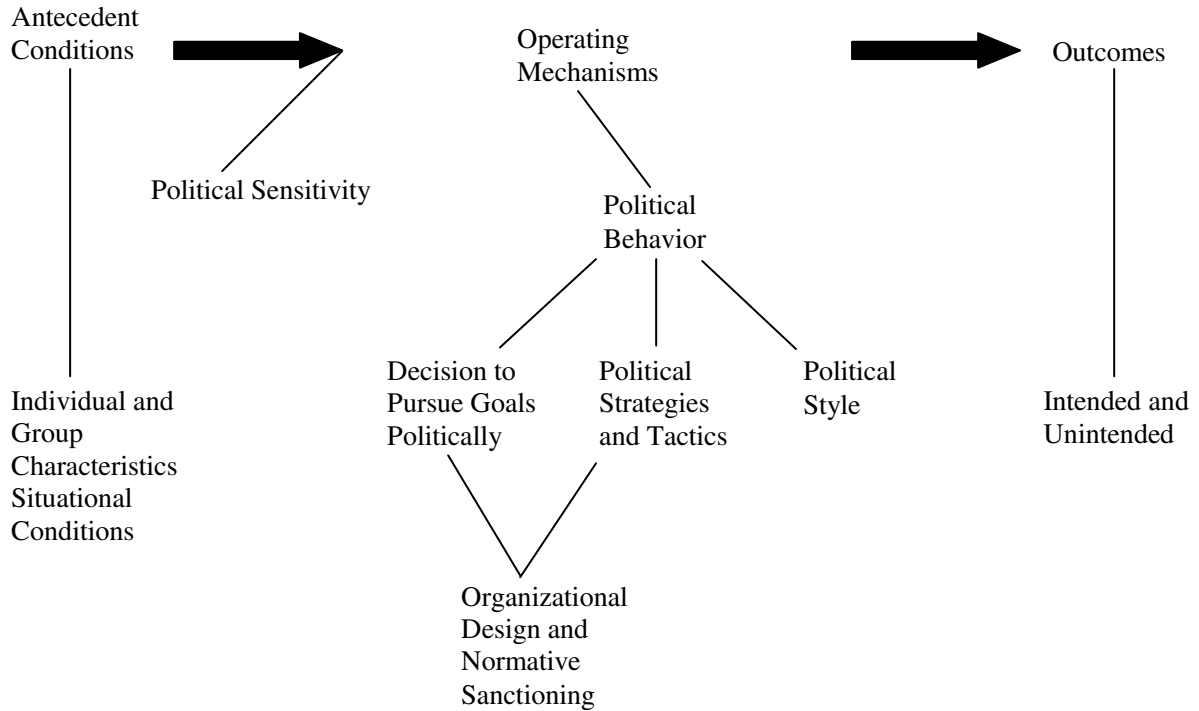
Figure 5. Organization politics definition elements (Drory & Romm, 1990)

Level of analysis		
Individual	Group	Organization
Outcomes	**Means**	**Situational Characteristics**
• Self-serving • Against the organization • Resources distribution • Power attainment	• Influence • Power tactics • Informal behaviour • Concealing motives	• Conflict • Uncertainty in decision-making

Buchanan and Badham (2007) used the A-B-C model of organizational politics, where A stands for antecedents, B for behaviours, and C for consequences. This model is depicted in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. The A-B-C of political behaviours (Buchanan & Badham, 2007)
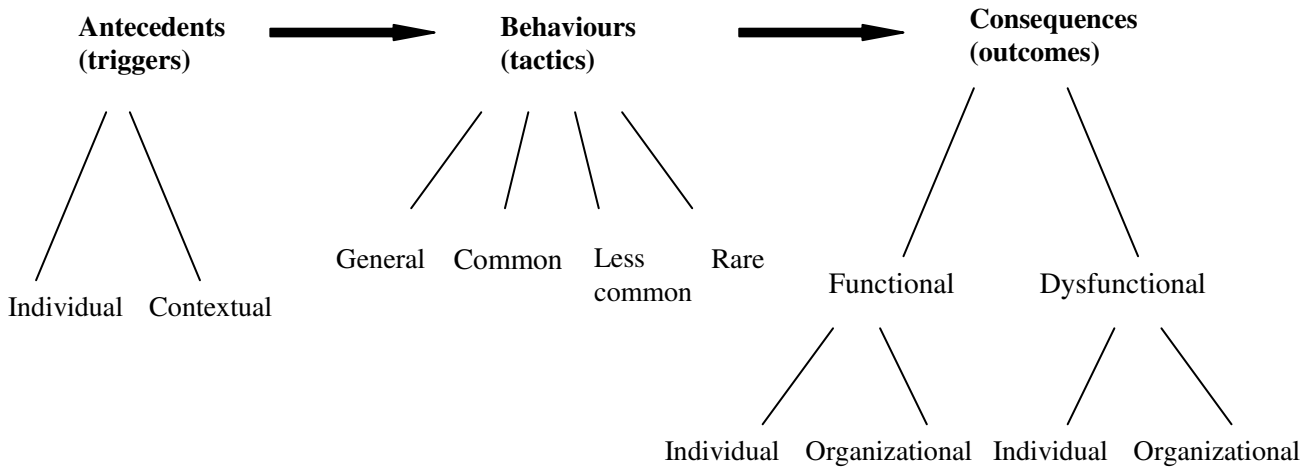
Although a more in-depth analysis of the concepts included in these models will be made in subsequent parts of this chapter, some clarification of the terminology is required at this point. The term "outcomes" is used in these models with different meanings: Vredenburgh and Maurer (1984) and Buchanan and Badham (2007) use it to refer to consequences of political behaviours, whilst Drory and Romm (1990) refer to outcomes pursued through political behaviours, therefore the goals – which partially fits into what the other two models call "antecedents". Moreover, the outcomes themselves, or consequences, of political behaviours are not actually addressed in Drory and Romm's framework. The final element of their model – "situational characteristics"- overlaps with the first elements of the other two models – antecedents; in addition, these models include individual characteristics as well.

The second element is more or less the same in all three frameworks and it refers to the actual political behaviours or tactics. With respect to this specific element, the frameworks have complementary merits: the ABC model provides a taxonomy of political tactics according to their frequency of use, whilst Vredenburgh and Maurer's

introduces two additional concepts related to political behaviours (decision to pursue goals politically and political style).

Finally, one concept is mentioned by Vredenburgh and Maurer (1984) only: political sensitivity. The literature review presented in the next subsection of this chapter will highlight some conceptual overlapping between what these authors called "political sensitivity" and the concept of "political skill" developed by Ferris et al. (2005).

Further on, I will present a conceptual synthesis of the literature referring to political behaviours by focusing on four main aspects: goals (why are political behaviours enacted?), means (how are political behaviours enacted?), determinants (what makes political behaviours more likely?) and consequences (what are the outcomes of political behaviours?).

5.1.2.1. Goals

Whilst tackling the nature of political behaviour, the majority of the papers and books reviewed mentioned *self-interest* and group-interest as the main goal. In one of the pioneer papers on this topic, Frost and Hayes (1977) state that political behaviour is used to enhance or protect each individual's share of exchange in the organizational processes. Schein (1977) also relates political behaviours with power struggles and individual interests incompatible with organizational interests. Allen et al. (1979) define organizational politics as "intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups". Porter, Allen and Angle (1981) even considered that defending self-interest through political behaviours involves threatening others' behaviours. Using the data synthesis Excel workbook (Apendix 1), a survey of the theoretical content in papers reviewed shows that overall the idea of self interest is mentioned in 31 papers out of 39. However, certain authors (Buchanan, 1999; Drory & Romm, 1990) pertinently argue that the issue of self-interest is not that straightforward. Firstly, self-interests are not necessarily opposed to organizational interests; they might even lead to the accomplishment of broader organizational goals (e.g. enhancing personal reputation increases leadership effectiveness). Secondly, self-serving motives

are not exclusively specific to political behaviours; therefore one cannot solely differentiate between political behaviours and other social/organizational behaviours on the basis of this criterion.

Along with this clear focus on self-interest, another recurrent idea is that political behaviours involve ignoring or damaging other peoples' interests (Porter, Allen & Angle, 1981; Zahra, 1985; Drory & Romm, 1988; Judge & Bretz, 1994). Mayes and Allen (1977) claim that either the ends or means of political behaviours are not sanctioned by the organization. Although not prescribed by formal rules, political behaviours are not always antisocial. The means or tactics chosen to engage in political behaviours range from social to antisocial, therefore it is not only the self-serving purpose that can make political behaviours harmful to others, but also the means associated.

Another purpose frequently associated with political behaviours is gaining or securing *organizational resources* or advantages. As a consequence of bounded organizational rationality, the distribution of resources is made not only based on formal rules and procedures, but also according to hidden agendas and influence attempts trying to defend them. Gandz and Murray (1980) distinguished between definitions of workplace politics that focus on the use of influence and power for resource allocation and those that focus on self-serving behaviours at the expense of others in the organization. The managers interviewed in their study named competition for resources as one of the most political issues in the workplace. Politics are also perceived to be more frequent at higher hierarchical levels, where the distribution of resources takes place (Zahra, 1985).

5.1.2.2. Means

Political aims are pursued through influence attempts. The literature suggests that a wide range of techniques, strategies or power tactics can be used in the political influence process. In fact, many papers found in the systematic search using the term "political" in their title or abstract studied only particular social influence behaviours, such as impression management, networking or coalitions. These behaviours could be political or not, according to more comprehensive definitions of organizational politics

that take into account the purpose and the context in order to label influence behaviours "political". There are numerous taxonomies of influence behaviour in the literature. Below I will present the ones most frequently quoted in the core papers chosen for this review.

Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwich, and Mayes (1979) have interviewed 87 managers, asking them to elicit examples of political tactics. The eight categories most frequently mentioned were: attacking or blaming others, use of information, impression management, support building for ideas, ingratiation, coalitions, association with influential and creating obligations.

Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) identified six patterns of upward influence in organization (reason, friendliness, assertiveness, bargaining, higher authority and coalition) and consequently four upward influence styles (Shotgun, Tactician, Ingratiator and Bystander). Shotgun individuals displayed high level of use of all six strategies, particularly assertiveness and authority. Tacticians and Ingratiators scored high on reason and friendliness respectively, and had average scores for the other influence strategies. Bystanders made a lower use of all these strategies overall, as compared to other profiles.

Ralston, Giacalone and Terprsta (1994) used a job tactics taxonomy overlapping to some extent with the previous typologies: Good Soldier (hard work), Rational Persuasion (earning consideration on the basis of abilities and accomplishments), Ingratiation, Image Management, Personal Networking, Information Control and Strong-Arm Coercion (illegal tactics such as blackmail).

Kumar and Ghadially (1989) focused on only four political behaviours - ingratiation, structure change, cooptation and threat - whilst Vredenburgh and Maurer (1984) describe eleven political strategies: accumulate and control resources, bargain, form coalitions/informal teams, orchestrate events, maintain personal flexibility, reduce dependence on others and instil dependence within others, engage in conflict, anticipate

and prepare for others' actions and reactions, cultivate good interpersonal relations, exploit others, and manage career.

A rich repertoire of influence tactics is described by Zanzi, Arthur and Shamir (1991): exchange of favours, cooptation, rituals and symbols, manipulation, mentoring, organizational placements, persuasion, copying with uncertainty, intimidation and innuendos, control of information, rule-oriented tactics, using surrogates, image building, rule-evading tactics, networking, ingratiation, super-ordinate goals, providing resources, use of expertise, piggybacking, blaming or attacking others, outside experts and coalition building. In addition to these tactics, Buchanan and Badham (2007) also mention: selective information, favouritism, avoiding criticism, using key players to support initiatives, stimulating debate, self-promotion, rewards, coercion, threat, blaming others for mistakes, taking credit for the work of others, using others to deliver bad news, highlighting other peoples' errors, compromising now to win later, misinformation, rumour spreading and blackmail.

Ferris and Kacmar (1992) refer to certain political tactics as well. These tactics can be identified by analysing the scale they have developed (POPS), but the theoretical foundation of their paper does not mention these behaviours explicitly, not does it provide further conceptual analysis for them. Some examples conveyed by the POPS are: favouritism, ingratiation, withholding or distorting information, coalitions, impression management, voicing, exchanges and reciprocity.

It is obvious that the repertoire of political tactics is potentially very wide. However, not all of them are alike. Zanzi and O'Neill (2001) assessed the social desirability of several political tactics and found significant differences amongst them. The tactics considered more desirable were: use of expertise, super-ordinate goals, image building, networking, persuasion and coalition building. The tactics deemed non-sanctioned were: intimidation, use of surrogates, blame or attack, manipulation, organizational placement, cooptation and control of information.

5.1.2.3. Determinants

Two major categories of causes leading to political behaviours are mentioned in the literature: structural and individual. Structural determinants refer to the context in which organizational behaviours appear, whilst individual factors refer to personality traits that predispose individuals to engage in political behaviours.

Structural factors

One of the contextual factors most frequently invoked is the existence of overt or covert *conflicts* within the organization. A typical trigger of conflict is the lack of agreement over the objectives to pursue (either because formal objectives are not embraced or because there are informal, parallel or opposed individual/group objectives) and the ways of pursuing them (Farrell & Petersen, 1982; Velasquez, Moberg & Cavanagh, 1983; Dill & Pearson, 1984; Vredenburgh & Maurer, 1984; James & Arroba, 1988; Zahra, 1989).

Ambiguity with respect to goals, roles or decision-making is also likely to increase the frequency of political behaviours (Pfeffer, 1981; Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984; Drory & Dromm, 1990; Novelli, Flynn, & Elloy, 1994). Gandz and Murray (1980) showed that the organizational processes perceived by managers as the most politicized were those less formalized, with few established rules (interdepartmental coordination, delegation of authority, promotions and transfers). Results obtained by Ferris and Kacmar (1992) support the negative relationship between degree of formalization and perceptions of politics. Moreover, *scarcity of resources* also stimulates political activity, since pursuing different goals within the organization would be much easier if sufficient resources were available. Not surprisingly, Buchanan and Badham (1999) and Gray and Ariss (1985) pointed out the importance of political behaviour during organizational change processes. Change brings together several contextual factors stimulating political activity: uncertainty and ambiguity, resource management, and redistribution of power.

Another structural factor favouring politics is the *centrality of one's activity* (departmental or individual role) within the organization. Departments or individuals

playing a central role have the ability to create dependency by controlling others' access to organizational resources (Pettigrew, 1973). Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwich and Mayes (1980) found that managers perceived certain departments more politicised than others (e.g. marketing, sales and boards). Consistent with these findings, many empirical studies showed that generally politics are considered more intense at higher organizational levels (managerial) and that this perception intensifies as one's own organizational power or status decreases (Drory, 1993; Novelli, Flynn & Elloy, 1994).

Individual factors

Studies also revealed a series of individual characteristics of social actors associated with the likelihood of engaging in or accepting politics in the workplace. Below are presented those most frequently mentioned in the literature reviewed.

Locus of control refers to individuals' beliefs about their own ability to control the events that surround them. Accordingly, a distinction has been made between internals and externals, with internals believing they have more control over their destiny and externals believing than outside forces shape their lives. Both Zahra (1989) and Kirchmeyer (1990) found that appetite for politics was positively related to externality.

As mentioned in the previous section, *status* plays an important role in predicting political behaviour. Status has generally been operationalized as position in the organizational hierarchy. Empirical data shows that employees at lower organizational level perceive management processes as being more political than higher level employees. They also consider politics less acceptable and perceptions of politics generate more job dissatisfaction for them (Drory, 1993; Novelli, Flynn & Elloy, 1994). Moreover, the behavioural means chosen to play politics were found to vary according to status: "softer" tactics are more frequently used by less powerful individuals and vice versa (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Sussman et al., 2002).

Need for power/achievement and *concern with status* in life were also found to predispose to politics (Allen et al., 1979; Zahra, 1989; Treadway et al., 2005). McClelland and Burnham (1976, in Porter, Allen & Angle, 1981) found need for power

to be widely specific to managers. Kirchmeyer's study of managers (1990) also indicated that the main predictor for women's involvement in politics was the need for power. Zahra (1985) showed that managers considered politics to be harder to avoid than non-managers due to their role. Therefore, managerial involvement in politics can be caused by both internal (individual, personality-related) and external factors (job responsibilities).

Machiavellianism is frequently associated with politics, especially with antisocial political tactics (Porter et al., 1981). Machiavellian individuals tend to initiate and control the dynamics of interpersonal relations; they are manipulative, rational and indifferent to social norms. The term "cynicism" is also used to refer to this personality style (Vredenbourg & Maurer, 1984).

Risk-seeking propensity is likely to favour political behaviour because this type of behaviour does not comply with rules formally expressed and commonly embraced (Porter et al., 1981). Effective political actors were described by managers as aggressive and devious, amongst other (Allen et al., 1979).

Sex is a demographic variable probably related to propensity towards political behaviours via moderating factors such as status, gender norms, etc. Although the research on gender aspects of politics is currently quite scarce, it consistently points out women's distaste for workplace politics.

5.1.2.4.   Consequences

A high degree of ambivalence is expressed in most of the studies, when it comes to assessing the consequences of political behaviours. Buchanan and Badham (2007) synthesise these outcomes by pointing out the functional and dysfunctional aspects for both individuals and organizations. This taxonomy will be used below to report finding from the literature review, in addition to the authors' own findings.

At an individual level, the main positive outcomes mentioned are related to career benefits and especially hierarchical progression and power achievement (Perrewe & Nelson, 2004; Mann, 1995). Engaging in political behaviours is positively related to high job performance especially for leaders and managers (Hartley & Branick, 2006), who see it as a way of getting things done (Madison et al., 1980). Political behaviours can enhance personal reputation (Hochwarter, Ferris, Zinko, Arnell & James, 2007), but can damage it as well (Buchanan & Badham, 2007). The managers interviewed by Madison et al. (1979) mentioned loss of power, strategic position or credibility as the main harmful effects of political behaviours for individual. Other negative outcomes for individuals are frustration, anxiety, discomfort on the side of the actor and the targets of political behaviours.

At an organizational level, Buchanan & Badham (2007) argue that political behaviours can have both positive and negative outcomes with respect to: effectiveness, conflict resolution, organizational change, communication. Similarly, Madison et al. (1979) showed that politics are considered by managers as a way of achieving organizational goals and getting things done, therefore strongly related to the good functioning or survival of the organization. Other organizational benefits mentioned by their respondents were increased visibility of ideas or people and better coordination and communication. However, authors belonging to the stream of research constituted by the papers in group B of this review pointed out mainly negative organizational outcomes related to politics or at least perceptions of politics: stress, negative job attitudes, decreased job performance, etc. The reason for this apparently paradoxical pattern of results lies in the way the concept of "organizational politics" is defined and especially measured. The items of the scale used by these authors convey an obvious negative evaluation of organizational politics. Given this tendency, it is not surprising that the consequences of perceiving the workplace as politicized are mainly negative. These aspects will be discussed in more detail in section 5.2 of this review.

5.1.3. Political skill

Another concept emerging from the literature on organizational politics is "political skill". This concept becomes important in order to assess the efficacy of political behaviours. The underlying assumption is that engaging in political behaviours does not necessarily mean that these behaviours are successful and that the political objectives behind them are achieved.

Based on the literature reviewed up to now, it seems sensible to consider that being politically skilled means (a) understanding organizational politics and (b) being able to engage in political behaviours effectively. There are several concepts related to these ideas in the literature. I will present each of them below and discuss the links between them, in an attempt to understand what makes an individual a successful political actor in organizational settings.

The most well known stream of research exploring the concept of political skill is developed by North-American researchers, many of whom have developed the Perception of Politics model as well. Drawing on concepts related to social effectiveness in the workplace, Ferris, Perrewe, Anthony and Gilmore (2000) defined political skill as an "interpersonal style that combines social awareness and the ability to communicate well". Being politically skilled means not only understanding the social and interpersonal dynamics, but also being able to adjust to it in a manner that inspires trust and conveys positive reactions from others; it implies the joint ability to "read" the organizational politics and to exert influence accordingly.

Ferris and collaborators (2000) state that political skills are different from other social skills in that they are aimed at achieving success in organizations. They involve social skills such as social intelligence, emotional intelligence, ego-resiliency, self-efficacy, self-monitoring, tacit knowledge and practical intelligence and they have a style component determined by the synergy of these various social skills. In this line of research, a self-reported questionnaire was developed, in order to assess political skills – The Political Skills Inventory (PSI) (Ferris, Treadway, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter &

Frink, 2005). Four dimensions of this construct were tested: social awareness, networking ability, interpersonal influence and control, and genuineness or sincerity.

Using this operational definition, Semadar, Robins and Ferris (2006) found that political skill was the strongest predictor of managerial performance. Douglas and Ammeter (2004) found empirical support for only two of the four dimensions of political skills (interpersonal influence/control and networking ability), which were strongly related to positive ratings of leaders' effectiveness. Leaders' political skill predicts perceived organizational support, trust, and organizational commitment (Treadway, Hochwarter, Ferris, Kacmar, Douglas, Ammenter and Buckley, 2004), and can also be an antidote for workplace stressors (Perrewe, Ferris, Frink, & Anthony, 2000; Perrewe, Zellars, Rossi, Kacmar & Raslton, 2004).

Mintzberg (1983) argued that efficient political actors must display two main characteristics: political will and political skill. By political will he referred to individual motivation to engage in political behaviours, whilst the political skill is the ability to execute these behaviours in an efficient way. Treadway, Hochwarter, Kacmar and Ferris (2005) brought empirical support to this conceptual distinction. Political will (operationalized as need for achievement and intrinsic motivation) predicted the likelihood of engaging in political behaviours, whilst political skill (measured with the PSI) moderated the relationship between political behaviour and emotional work. The concept of political will overlaps with what was previously presented as individual determinants of political behaviours (mainly personality traits).

Another conceptual overlap concerns the social awareness dimension proposed in the Political Skill Inventory. A similar concept is that of "political sensitivity" discussed by Vredenburgh and Maurer (1984) as a moderator between antecedent conditions / determinants of political behaviours (individual and structural factors) and the political behaviours / tactics themselves. The authors claim that the main components of the political sensitivity are the awareness of norms, an orientation towards covert processes and knowledge of significant others. Being aware of norms might make individuals conform or not these norms, but in either case efficient political behaviour involves anticipating the consequences of one's act in relation to ongoing norms. Moreover,

awareness of underlying, covert processes can be achieved by observing social interaction patterns and informal groups or coalitions or by reading signs of hidden agendas during meetings. Knowing significant others and their formal and hidden agendas provides a representation of how the organizational power web is structured around individual actors.

The same idea is conveyed by what Arroba and James (1988) called the "reading" dimension of political behaviours or by Mainiero's (1994) concept of "political naïveté". Accounting for gender differences in political behaviours, these authors argued that awareness of informal power structure and dynamics is achieved via socialization patterns that tend to exclude women (networking after office hours, old boys' club). However, awareness of politics and reluctance to engage in political behaviours might be distinct phenomena. Mainiero (1994) showed that women executives become more politically astute with experience, but Buchanan and Badham (2007) indicate that women are deliberately less willing to engage in aggressive political tactics. These data suggest that "knowing" and "wanting" might be two different factors accounting for political effectiveness. This is supported by the theoretical model proposed by Vredenburg and Maurer (1984), in which one dimension of political behaviours is the actual decision of pursuing goals politically.

Therefore, trying to synthesise this literature discussed, it can be argued that one dimension of the political skill construct as defined by Ferris et al. (2005) (awareness) is likely to predict the likelihood of engaging in political behaviours, whilst other dimensions (networking, interpersonal skills) are more likely to predict the effectiveness of such behaviours. However, one limitation of the Political Skill Inventory is that it does not assess whether individuals are willing or not to pursue goals politically.

5.2. Investigating organizational politics

Besides attempting to synthesize various conceptualizations of organizational politics, the current review also aimed to provide an overview of the way the concept has been investigated. Methodology is crucial because when it comes to testing theories by collecting empirical data, the measurement becomes the construct, independently of the theoretical claims made. Beyond this general rationale, another two underlying justifications are specific to my doctoral topic and project stage: (1) the current literature revealed very different methodological approaches, more or less coherent or compatible with the theoretical work in this field and (2) a thorough understanding of the choices and challenges in terms of methods is fundamental in helping me plan further stages of my doctoral research.

Based on the core empirical papers read, I have grouped the methodologies identified in several categories. First, a distinction was made between qualitative and quantitative approaches. Moreover, a taxonomy was proposed for quantitative approaches.

5.2.1. Qualitative approaches

Overall, six empirical studies using a purely qualitative methodology were included in the core articles. All of these studies have used structured or unstructured interviews. Some papers scored low on the quality assessment criterion related to methodology, due to poor reporting of the data collection and analysis techniques. Table 13 presents the type of questions used in each of these studies to explore the phenomenon of organizational politics.

Table 13. Summary of qualitative approaches to organizational politics

Paper & Authors	Interview Questions
Organizational Politics: Tactics and Characteristics of Its Actors (Allen, R.W.; Madison, D.L.; Porter, L.W.; Renwich, P.A.; Mayes, B.T., 1979)	1. "Organizational politics take many forms. What are the tactics of organizational politics of which you are aware?" 2. "What are the personal characteristics of those people you feel are most effective in the use of organizational politics?"

Organizational Politics: An Exploration of Managers' Perceptions (Madison, D.L.; Allen, R.W.; Porter, L.W., Renwich, P.A.; Mayes, B.T., 1980)	1. Define "organizational politics". 2. How frequent is the occurrence of politics in several functional areas. 3. How can the occurrence of politics can be helpful or harmful to the individual and the organization?
The Logic of Political Action: an Experiment with the Epistemology of the Particular (Buchanan, D. , 1999)	A narrative reported by a senior manager is analysed, but there is no indication of how this narrative was elicited. *No clear indication of interview questions.*
Politics and Organizational Change: The Lived Experience (Buchanan, D.; Badham, R., 1999)	1. Use and examples of political behaviour 2. Value of political skill for individual. 3. Contribution of politics to change & examples from personal experience.
On Breaking the Glass Ceiling: The Political Seasoning of Powerful Women Executives (Mainiero, L.A., 1994)	How women executives managed the politics of their corporations so that political relationships enhanced rather than detracted from their executive potential? *No clear indication of interview questions.*
Gender, Power and Office Politics (Bella, Y., 2005)	Participants were asked to express their working experiences of the relationship amongst gender, power & office politics. *No clear indication of interview questions.*

The interview questions are clearly reported for only four studies. Moreover, in some studies there is also a limited account of how the data were analysed. For instance, although Mainiero's study is valuable by its topic and sample, the methodological choices are not soundly argued and explained.

Generally, the purpose was to explore individual meanings, definitions, examples and attitudes with respect to politics. An aspect that is worthwhile noticing is that, based on the authors' reporting on methodology, the questions used did not have any judgemental or negative connotation. This seems to be quite different from the trend observed in quantitative methodologies used to study organizational politics.

5.2.2. Quantitative approaches

Quantitative measures were most frequently used in empirical studies about organizational politics. Several categories of quantitative measures were identified: measures of political behaviours, measures of attitudes towards politics, measures of the perceived degree of politicisation and measures of political skill.

5.2.2.1. Measures of political behaviours

Most of the measures identified (Table 14) referred to political behaviours and relied on various taxonomies of influence behaviours, amongst which the one proposed by Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) seems to be the most widely quoted and used. In addition, Zanzi et al. (1991) used a very rich list of influence tactics. Valle and Perrewe (2000) make an interesting distinction between proactive and reactive political behaviour, pointing out that research has mostly focused on proactive tactics.

Three variations were identified. In the most common case, political tactics or behaviours were named by the researcher (e.g. the term "coalition" constituted the item itself). Another option was to provide examples of political behaviours in critical incidents scales that described work situations. Finally, Hochwater et al. (2007) used items asking respondents to report how often they engaged in political behaviours, without actually defining these behaviours (e.g. "I spend time at work politicking").

Moreover, authors mainly used self-reported measures. Two exceptions were found in this respect: Sussman et al. (2002) asked respondents to assess how often they were the target of certain political behaviours, whilst Buchanan (2007, in press) asked respondents to assess how common certain political tactics were in their working environment.

Table 14. Measures of political behaviours

Measure	Descriptive & examples	Author(s)
POIS (Profiles of Organizational Influence Strategies)	Frequency of respondents' use of 6 upward influence strategies: reason, friendliness, assertiveness, bargaining, higher authority, coalition.	Kipnis & Schmidt (1988)

Vignettes	Uses 20 examples of political activities to measure: (1) how typical the behaviour is for respondents & (2) how political they perceive it. The vignettes labelled and described the behaviours; description available in the paper.	Kirchmeyer (1990)
Influence tactics scale	Respondent's use of supervisor-focused (e.g. ingratiation), job-focused (self-promotion, IM) & self-focused tactics.	Judge & Bretz (1994)
Political behaviours scale	Respondents stated how often they are target of 8 political behaviours: attack/blame, information use, impression management, support development, ingratiation, coalitions, obligations (Allen et al., 1979). Tactics were labelled and described; description available in the paper.	Sussman, Adams, Kuzmits (2002)
Political tactics scale	Frequency of respondents' use of political tactics: exchange of favours, cooptation, rituals &symbols, manipulation, mentoree, mentor, organizational placements, persuasion, coping with uncertainty, intimidation & innuendos, information control, rule-oriented tactics, using surrogates, image building, rule-evading tactics, networking, ingratiation, super-ordinate goals, provide resources, use of expertise, piggybacking, blame/attack others, outside expert, coalitions. Tactics were labelled and described; description available in the paper.	Zanzi, Arthur & Shamir (1991)
SUI scale (Strategies of Upward Influence)	38 scenario items based on 2 taxonomies. (1) Job tactics: good soldier, rational persuasion, ingratiation, image management, networking, information control, strong-arm coercion. (2)Western Values Taxonomy of behaviours: organizationally sanctioned (e.g. working hard), non-destructive legal (self-serving but not hurtful to others), destructive legal (hurtful to others) & destructive illegal (hurtful to others & illegal). Scenarios not provided in the paper.	Ralston, Giacalone & Terpstra (1994)
Political behaviours scale	Assesses respondents' use of four types of political behaviours: ingratiation, structure change, cooptation & threat. No examples of items or instructions are provided.	Kumar & Ghadially (1989)
Reactive political strategy scale	Assess frequency of respondents' use of 3 types of defensive political behaviours in the last 6 months: avoiding action (passing the buck, playing dumb, stalling), avoiding blame (playing safe, scapegoating, misrepresenting) & avoiding change (protecting turf).	Valle & Perrewe (2000)

Political behaviour scale	Self-report of frequency of use of political behaviours at work (5 items): "I spend time at work politicking", "I work behind the scenes to see that my group is taken care of".	Hochwater, Ferris, Zinko, Arnell & James (2007)
Influence tactics / actual organizational politics scale	42 items generated by combining previous scales. Respondents reported how frequently they used 3 categories of influence tactics: supervisor-focused, colleagues-focused and subordinates-focused. Examples from the paper refer to ingratiation, coalition, and networking.	Vigoda & Cohen (2002)
Self-promotion and ingratiation scale	Respondents self-reported about the use of only two political behaviours.	Harrell-Cook, Ferris & Dulebohn (1999)
Political tactics scale	Respondents rated the perceived frequency of 18 political tactics in their workplace. These tactics were identified from previous interviews with managers.	Buchanan (2007, in press, in Buchanan & Badham, 2007)

5.2.2.2.   Measures of attitudes toward organizational politics

Another group of measures used in the literature focused on attitudes towards politics. Table 15 below summarizes this category of measures found in the core articles. Two main trends were observed in assessing attitudes: (1) respondents were asked to make assessments about politics in general, without necessarily defining the term, or (2) respondents were asked to assess specific political behaviours and for this purpose some of the taxonomies presented in the previous subsection were used. Mixed examples were also found: for example, Zahra (1985, 1989) used mostly non-defining items to refer to politics, but also one item implying a negative definition of the concept ("One cannot progress without stepping on few people").

Attitudes were assessed on several aspects: ethicality, appropriateness or desirability of politics or political behaviours. Despite being called attitudinal scales by the authors themselves, in several cases the scales measured not only attitudes towards politics, but also beliefs about the occurrence and the effects of politics at an individual or

organizational level (Zahra, 1985; Buchanan, 2007). An example of belief frequently assessed refers to the pervasive nature of organizational politics; similarly, attitudes are measured by asking respondents if they consider politics ethical or if they like playing politics. Drawing a conceptual distinction between attitudes and belief is important because attitudes involve an emotional component that might be a stronger behavioural predictor than beliefs. Just because people agree that politics are pervasive, it does not mean they enjoy it or are willing to play it.

Drory and Beaty (1991) assessed not only attitudes toward politics, but also attitudes toward political actors in terms of perceived social attractiveness. This methodological approach can be very suitable to investigate aspects related to self-identity and social perception related to politics, particularly the relationship between gender identity and likelihood of engaging in political behaviours.

Table 15. Measures of attitudes toward organizational politics

Measure	Descriptive & examples	Author(s)
Personal orientation toward influence scale	Attitudes towards 6 influence strategies: coalition, upward appeals, assertiveness, ingratiation, exchange, reason (e.g. "How appropriate do you consider it to be…" How do you feel when you are the target of…").	Christiansen, Villanova & Mikulay (1997)
Attitudes toward organizational politics scale	Assesses agreement with statements about OP on 3 dimensions: ethics("Organizational Politics is not ethical"), reasons people play politics ("One cannot progress without stepping on few people", "To advance the career, one had to play politics") locus of OP ("Company politics is more common among top managers than middle or lower level managers") and effects of OP on organization ("Politicking threatens organizational goal accomplishment")	Zahra (1985, 1989)
Desirability of Political Tactics Scale	Respondents assessed the desirability of 24 political tactics proposed by Zanzi et al.(1991) (for details on this previous scale, see Table 14 above).	Zanzi & O'Neill (2001)
Attitudes toward politics	Respondents were given critical incidents and expressed attitudes toward: (1) the political actors (social attractiveness – e.g. friendly, cunning, considerate) and (2) the behaviour itself (ethicality, negative effect on organization, willingness to behave similarly).	Drory & Beaty (1991)

Ethical perceptions of SUI (Strategies of Upward Influence)	Respondents were asked to rate the ethicality of several influence tactics developed in the SUI (see details in Table 14 above).	Ralston, Giacalone & Terpstra (1994)
Attitudes and beliefs about politics	Respondents rated statements about the nature (e.g. ethical, challenging), the importance (e.g. for career progression) and the consequences of politics (reputation damage).	Buchanan (2007, in press)

5.2.2.3. Measures of perceived degree of politicisation

A third category of measures focused on the perceived degree of politicisation by assessing respondents' perception of the frequency of others' political behaviours in the workplace or of the weight that political factors have on formal organizational decisions (see Table 16). In general, no definition was provided for the term "politics".

Two studies designed instruments to measure political aspects of specific organizational processes. Prasad and Rubenstein (1992) explored politics in innovation and project management. In order to avoid social desirability biases, the authors made a debatable methodological choice by using the term "informal" instead of "political". Moreover, Tziner et al. (1996) explored politics in the performance appraisal process. A downside of their scale is that it refers to sources of bias other than political factors (e.g. the rater-ratee similarity bias).

Unlike most of the authors, Drory and Romm (1988) explored to which extent certain organizational situations were perceived as political, thereby contributing to the definition of the concept of "organizational politics". Their study makes an important contribution in terms of understanding what real people, and not researchers, mean by "organizational politics".

Finally, perhaps the most well known instrument in the field of organizational politics is the Perception of Politics Scale (POPS), developed initially by Ferris and Kacmar (1992) and tested in several stages. From this set of papers, Kacmar and Carlson's

(1997) study was included as a core paper in this review. Given its wide use in the literature, a more detailed examination of the scale and the model is provided below. The authors proposed a theoretical model exploring the antecedents and the consequences of politics perceptions, a model that has been extensively tested during the last decade (more than a half of the papers in group B have used POPS[2]).

Amongst the antecedents, they explored the role of organizational influences, suggesting that political behaviours are more likely to occur in less formalized working environments, at higher hierarchical levels, with a centralized power and an increased span of control (number of employees reporting to one supervisor). Moreover, characteristics of the job / work environment were also said to influence the perception of politicization. Job autonomy, job variety and feedback were expected to reduce ambiguity and therefore reduce the perceived degree of politicization. They predicted that the opportunity for advancement would correlate negatively with perception of politics, whilst the opposite effect would be created by the degree of interaction with other employees. The third category of antecedents refers to personal influences: sex, age and personality characteristics (Machiavellism and self-monitoring). Finally, several outcomes of politics perception are explored by this model: job withdrawal, job involvement, job anxiety and job satisfaction.

Many of the variables included in the Politics Perception model, especially amongst the antecedents, fit quite well with the managerial and organization theory literature on this topic. It is also of interest to explore the consequences for employees of perceiving their organization as politically charged. However, the main limitation of this stream of research is the very operational definition used for organizational politics.

In their initial article published in 1992, Ferris and Kacmar have proposed this measure of organizational politics perception based on a literature review previously published by Ferris, Russ and Fandt (1989, in Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1989). Revisiting this initial text, it is quite surprising to notice that the authors' working definition of organizational politics is formulated after a one page literature review. Organizational

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[2] See previous chapter for details.

politics are defined as social influence processes involving strategic behaviours used to maximize self-interest, which is either consistent or at the expense of others' interests. The existing literature on this topic seems insufficiently explored, which explains why the 5-items scale developed in 1992 covers only partially the conceptual richness of the field. Examples of POPS items are: "Favouritism rather than merit determines who gets ahead", "You can get along around here by being a good guy, regardless of the quality of your work" or "There are "cliques" or "in-groups that hinder the effectiveness around here". The definition used for organizational politics and the subsequent operationalization of the concept are quite restrictive and revolve around themes such as self-interest at the expense of others' interests or lack of transparency and meritocracy in organizational procedures. The implied definition of organizational politics has a negative evaluative content. In further articles, proponents of the POPS model (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001) make this standpoint explicit: organizational politics are considered to undermine organizational fairness, "because not everyone engages in politicking to meet their own objectives". The authors consider that employees choosing to opt out of politicking and to "adhere to proper procedures" are often frustrated because of the unfair distribution of organizational resources engendered by political actions.

Judging this stance within the broader conceptual framework provided by organization theory literature, it is clear that such a definition of organization politics is embedded with the principle of organizational rationality. Given this operational definition, it is not surprising that the proposed model of POPS obtained some empirical validation. Once politics are equated with unfairness, the consequences of perceiving the workplace as politicized can only be negative – job withdrawal, decreased job satisfaction and job performance, occupational stress, etc. The scale has thus a good predictive validity, but its construct validity is questionable. Therefore, the scale measures respondents' perception of what the authors call politics (mainly negative aspects of organizational life), but in the process of designing the questionnaire, common definitions of politics were not thoroughly explored, nor for individuals, nor in the existent literature.

Table 16. Measures of perceived politicisation

Measure	Descriptive & examples	Author(s)
Political influence climate scale	Frequency of others' use of influence at work on 6 dimensions "to get their way": coalition, upward appeals, assertiveness, ingratiation, exchange, reason.	Christiansen, Villanova & Mikulay (1997)
GIOP scale (General Innovation-Related Politics) PSOP scale (Project Specific Organizational Politics)	Measures perception of politicisation in decision-making related to innovation & project management processed. Uses the term "informal" instead of "political" & defines informal/political in the instructions.	Prasad & Rubenstein (1992)
Political climate scale	Respondents asked to what extent 10 organizational processes are influenced by "political power", as opposed to "technical professional considerations".	Drory (1993)
Critical incidents	Respondents asked to what extent they considered 15 situations as political. Variables manipulated in the construction of incidents: behavioural (formal, informal, illegal) & situational (power, conflict, against organization, concealed reason).	Drory & Romm (1988)
QPCPA (Questionnaire of Political Considerations in Performance Appraisal)	Respondents asses how typical is for the performance appraisal process to be influenced by factors beyond performance (e.g. revenge, self-interest, liking, similarity with boss, impression management, etc).	Tziner, Latham, Prince & Haccoun (1996)
Perceptions of Organizational Policies	Respondents assessed how frequently politics played a role in 17 organizational processes.	Novelli, Flynn & Elloy (1994)
POPS (Perceptions of Politics Scale)	Respondents rate their agreement with statements about politics concerning 3 main themes: general political behaviour ("People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down"), go along to get ahead ("Agreeing with the powerful ones is the best alternative in this organization", "Sometimes it is easier to remain quiet than to break the system") & pay and promotion policies ("I can't remember when a person received a pay increase or promotion that was inconsistent with published policies").	Kacmar & Carlson (1997)

5.2.2.4. Measures of political skill

Another measure extensively used in the literature focuses in the concept of political skill (see Table 17). The Political Skill Inventory (Ferris et al., 2005). The authors acknowledge the negative connotations associated with politics in the workplace but state nevertheless that they do not consider political skills to be negatively connotated. From their point of view, being political does not involve scape-goating, manipulating or other Machiavellic manoeuvres, but simply being socially effective.

Coming from the same authors that have developed the POPS model, this position is rather intriguing. It would seem conceptually coherent that their definition of political skill relies on the definition of organizational politics. Considering the fact that proponents of the POPS model equate organizational politics with unfairness and non-meritocracy in promotion on one hand, and political skills with social effectiveness, on the other hand, there is a clear call for further clarification of the theoretical links between these two constructs.

Table 17. Measure of political skill

Measure	Descriptive & examples	Author(s)
PSI (Political Skill Inventory)	Self-report on four dimensions: (1) social awareness ("I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others"), (2) networking ability ("I am good at building relationships with influential people at work"), (3) interpersonal influence and control ("It's easy for me to develop a good rapport with most people") and (4) genuineness or sincerity ("When communicating with others I try to be genuine in what I say and do").	Ferris, Treadway, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, Kacmar, Douglas & Frink (2005)

However, the scale itself has several merits. Firstly, the "awareness" dimension conveys understanding of certain dimensions of organizational politics, namely what others authors called "political sensitivity" or "ability to read politics". The next two dimensions measure skills related to specific influence behaviours – networking and building relationships. Although these behaviours have been identified as a part of the

political repertoire, it is not clear why the authors have decided to focus only on these specific ones when measuring political skill. Finally, insufficient conceptual justification is provided for the fourth dimension – perceived sincerity.

5.2.3. Mixed approaches

It is surprising to notice that studies combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies are very rare in the field of organizational politics. A valuable example in this respect is the research carried out by Gandz and Murray (1980). In the first section of their study, the authors have used a questionnaire to explore beliefs and attitudes about politics. The beliefs concerned the frequency of talk about politics in the organization, the perceived politicisation of eleven organizational processes and the organizational level in which politics are more prevalent. The attitudes referred to respondents' feelings about politics in terms of impact on: organizational effectiveness, executive effectiveness and general effect. In the second section of the study, respondents were asked to provide a "good example of workplace politics into action" from their personal experience. Content analysis was then performed on these narratives, making the results of their study more defendable by using triangulation.

Similarly, Buchanan and Badham (2007) have combined qualitative and quantitative methods by using a sequential approach. In a first stage, a repertoire of political tactics was identified by interviewing managers. In a second stage, these tactics were included in a broader survey about experiences of organizational politics.

5.3. Conclusion

The aim of the present review was to systematically examine the literature in the field of organizational politics, with a focus on the way the concept is defined and measured. The most salient feature of the current literature is the variety of terms, definitions and instruments used to address the issue of politics. Though still fragmented, this field of research has constantly grown since the '70s and fosters numerous research opportunities.

The conceptual findings of 51 core papers and seven books were clustered in several conceptual categories. The first sub-section presented findings referring to conceptualizations of organizational politics, clustered around several themes: (1) the relationship between organizational politics, power and influence, (2) political behaviours and (3) political skill. It is important to draw these conceptual boundaries in order to advance the research in this field and thereby our understanding of organizational politics.

The second sub-section presented findings concerning the methodological approaches taken in empirical studies of politics, by examining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Few qualitative studies were identified, but several of them reported quite poorly on the methodological issues. Based on the quantitative studies reviewed, a taxonomy of quantitative measures was proposed after carefully examining the myriad of scales and questionnaires previously used: measures of political behaviours, measures of attitudes towards politics, measures of perceived politicisation and measures of political skill. Each of these measures was presented and critiqued.

This in-depth analysis of the literature pointed out that designing the methodology carefully is actually crucial in respecting the conceptual distinctions discussed in the first section. Discriminating between political behaviour and other influence behaviours remains a major challenge, because certain influence behaviours can be political or not, depending on the purpose behind them. Several scales claiming to measure political tactics actually measured influence tactics. For instance, employees can network either for political reasons or just for to accomplish formal job-related goals. Items were rarely designed to convey the intention behind the influence behaviour itself, which makes it hard to draw sound conclusions (e.g. a high self-reported frequency of networking does not necessarily characterise a politically active employee). Thus, the complex nature of political behaviours is not always articulated in behavioural scales. Drory and Romm (1988) argued that behaviours are perceived as political via the interplay of several set of dimensions (informality, power attainment, concealment of motive, etc). Similarly, Buchanan (1999) showed that judgements about the ethicality or the suitability of political behaviours cannot be made out of context. These data suggest that a clear

boundary between political behaviours and other influence behaviours might be impossible to draw; these could be viewed instead on a continuum where influence tactics become political tactics depending on the variation of other factors. In this case, it might be more fruitful to think about the extent to which certain influence behaviours are or become political, rather than trying to separate them.

Another challenge of this field of research is the study of perceptions about organizational politics. Generally, the scales claiming to do this used tendentious items that already implied a negative definition of the concept. Other scales provided no definition of the concept, and assessed instead the degree of perceived politicisation of organizational processes. It is hard to compare results obtained using such different methods, since it is obvious that in the first case, respondents assessed what the researchers considered to be political, whilst in the second they relied on their individual meaning of politics (unknown to the researcher).

Finally, probably the most striking about this topic is the very way in which the literature has evolved on the whole. Two scales (POPS and PSI) have been preferentially used by researchers in the last decade. This formed quite a compact body of literature widely quoted, based on quantitative empirical studies exclusively. Researchers seem to be driven by the empirical validation of these instruments and models, without actually questioning their theoretical soundness. Facility of use of these scales and therefore faster publications are certainly factors accounting for this trend.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

6. Overview

This literature review was the most important piece of work carried out in the MRes programme and constitutes the theoretical foundation for the entire doctoral research project. The systematic approach in examining the literature was enabled by the specific training received during this academic year and provided me a thorough understanding of the organizational politics research field. As a consequence, I currently have a better idea how to position my own research within this field and which could be my contribution to knowledge. However, the review process and consequently its outcome have several limitations. Below I will acknowledge these limitations and also share some of my personal learning throughout the process.

6.1.   Limitations and personal learning

The scoping study carried out in May for the MRes review was a precursor of the systematic literature review. Three fields of literature were mapped out at that stage: organization theory, organizational behaviour and social / organizational psychology. A review protocol was then designed in order to address two research questions: (1) *How are organizational politics and political behaviours conceptualized and measured in the existing literature?* and (2) *What is the impact of gender on social influence processes, especially in working settings?*

The conceptual thinking and the first searches carried out in electronic databases until the completion of the actual systematic literature review led to consistent modifications of the initial protocol. Firstly, the initial search strings were refined and broke down into three main ones that taped into the areas of literature mentioned. The outputs of the database search carried out with the search strings indicated the need to narrow down the scope of the review[3]. The main learning point at this stage was to avoid over-committing when setting up a project plan such as the review protocol. Managing the literature can be more challenging than expected, so having tight plans and very high objectives from the start can quickly become overwhelming.

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[3] The rationale for this decision is presented in more detail in Chapter III.

The decision to address the first research question solely in the systematic review was also determined by a personal bias, related to the limits and the strengths of my own expertise. Having a background in social/organizational psychology, I felt I mastered better the literature on gender and informal influence than the one on organizational politics. In addition, since my research interests have evolved from impression management to politics, I started exploring this last area rigorously around December 2006, so about three months after having started the MRes programme.

A major difficulty I have encountered in the literature search based on key words was the related to the multiples meanings of the term "politics". Despite using restrictive key words to avoid documents related to formal governmental politics, the first outputs referred to that concept to an important extent and I spent a lot of time in the beginning managing literature of no relevance whatsoever to me, for the sake of excluding it systematically. Moreover, many of the core papers reviewed in the end had already been quoted in the scoping study, which points out the effectiveness of cross-referencing and semantic literature search. Therefore, I think the costs and the benefits of reviewing the literature systematically vary a lot according to the topic.

In terms of content, the main limitation of this review has to do with the literature on power, which is a theoretical field closely related to politics but nevertheless distinct and much broader. A restrictive approach was needed in order to manage this part of the literature; therefore I mainly covered it by using books already focused on power and politics. Doing a systematic search of databases with keywords in this field would have been a separate project in itself.

In terms of pros and cons of the systematic review process, the most rewarding part of the process was discovering pieces of academic work that were not necessarily widely quoted but that helped me identify conceptual links and thus integrate theoretically other pieces of work. On the other hand, I found tedious and quite frustrating the "accounting work" involved in the review, namely keeping track and constantly recounting the papers found or excluded. I am not sure if the benefits of doing this outweigh the time costs involved.

In sum, I think the major learning point for me was that it is crucial to shape the aim and the methods of the systematic review to the specificities of both the researcher carrying it out and the research topic. Approaching the review dogmatically would not serve its final purpose – that is to help the doctoral student progress his/her own research. I personally found it more useful to conceive it as an iterative process, rather than a sequential one in which the scoping study constitutes the starting point.

6.2.   Further research

The systematic literature review usually helps researchers identify a research gap that needs to be addressed. As I have already stated in my MRes review, this was not necessarily the case for me: since the literature on gender and organizational politics is strikingly scarce, the research gap became obvious at that early stage. Nevertheless, the review has helped me confirm this research gap. Besides the four papers already scoped previously, only one additional study was found on this topic (of average quality and insufficiently focused).

In addition, analysing the existent literature on organizational politics has mainly helped me define my research interest more accurately and identify areas in which I could make a contribution as a doctoral student. Briefly stated, I intend to explore gendered behavioural patterns with respect to politics, as well as their causes and consequences. I will consider two types of measures for this purpose: behavioural and attitudinal.

A first aspect to address concerns therefore the causes of women's distaste for politics. With respect to individually-related causes, I think a more accurate distinction between attitudes towards politics and opinions or beliefs about politics would advance our understanding of behavioural preferences. Political naiveté and political distaste might be two different causes accounting for gender differences in the use of political behaviours. Political naiveté involves a certain lack of awareness of informal power structures and the impact of hidden agendas on organizational decision-making; therefore, it has an underlying cognitive component supporting individual beliefs or

opinions about politics (e.g. their prevalence, their importance, etc). Political distaste overlaps more with the concept of "political will" discussed by Mintzberg (1983), which has almost not been empirically tested at all. Willingness to engage in politics certainly depends as well upon individuals' attitudes toward it, not just their awareness of it. This involves an emotional and axiological component, which is not been conveyed by existing measures such as the Political Skill Inventory. In order to explore this idea further on, I will draw on the feminist literature on women's voice (Gilligan, 1982) and the concept of authenticity.

Additionally, I will consider causes related to external factors, such as social perception or judgement. However, this interest for perceptions of politics cannot necessarily be addressed with current measures of politics perceptions (e.g. POPS). I am particularly interested in social perceptions of women engaging in political behaviours. Up to now only one study (Drory & Beaty, 1991) has explored how political actors are socially perceived. Social perception is tightly related to gender stereotypes and I think it would be worthwhile considering this explanatory path for my doctoral research and the whole literature on gender stereotyping in the workplace.

Therefore, by better mastering the literature on organizational politics and being able to situate my own interest within it, I came to understand what other fields of literature could be useful for my further research.

Finally, in terms of methodology, there is a clear need for more comprehensive studies; therefore, I am likely to use triangulation in my research. Using a qualitative approach in a first stage to elicit material and then build more quantitative measures (critical incidents or questionnaires) would provide a rich and relevant set of data. However, this sequential approach requires careful planning of the research steps within the doctoral timeframe.

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APPENDICES

A. Data extraction sheet for core theoretical papers

Legend

Quality criteria:

C1 = Theoretical foundation

C2 = Quality of argumentation

C3 = Contribution to the literature

Year	Author/s	Title	Publication	Definition of OP	C1	C2	C3	Overview	Observations
1977	Schein, V.	Individual Power and Political Behaviors in Organizations: An Inadequately Explored Reality	Academy of Management Review	power struggles, coalitions, maneuvring// individual interests incongruent with org. interests, influence// various tactics	3	2	2	Political behaviours are analysed within frameworks of power.	Good point - the difficulty of studying intetions whilst researching behaviours!
1977	Mayes, B.T.; Allen, R.W.	Toward A Definition of Organizational Politics	Academy of Management Review	ressource distribution, conflict, self-serving, control and influence, various tactics	3	2	3	OP= influence attempts to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned means.	Not sure that the influence management process model is easy to apply to real influence behaviours.
1981	Cavanagh, G.F.; Moberg, D.J.; Velasquez, M.	The Ethics of Organizational Politics	Academy of Management Review	informal power, unsanctioned means or ends, coalitions	1.5	2	2	Proposes ethical norms for political behaviour. Presents 3 approaches: utilitarian, individual rights, justice. Aims to offer an alternative to cynical views on OP: "dirty politics can be uplifted to organizational statesmanship by adhering to ethical principles."	Very normative & philosophical approach.
1981	Porter, L.W.; Allen, R.W.; Angle, H.L.	The Politics of Upward Influence in Organizations	Research in Organizational Behavior	social influence, discretionary, self/group interests, threat to others	3	3	3	Discusses: a)informal political norms in org & how they are learnt, b)situational factors, c)actor characteristics. Advances a model of political upward influece and research propositions.	Discusses methodological considerations for OP research (focusing on others' pol. behav. to reduce defensiveness) - programmatic research.
1982	Farrell, D.; Petersen, J.C.	Patterns of Political Behavior in Organization	Academy of Management Review	conflict of interests, power achievement, non-rational influence, backstage ressource allocation, beyond job requirements, self/group interest	3	2.5	2.5	Proposes 3 general dimensions of political behaviour: internal-external (corporation), vertical-lateral (hierarchy), legitimate-illegitimate + examples of behaviours for each category.	It could be worthwhile crossing this typology with gender patterns of influence behaviour, explored by other parts of literature. Good point that the OB research focuses only on legitmate

Velasquez, M.; Moberg, D.J.; Cavanagh, G.F.	Organizational Statesmanship and Dirty Politics: Ethical Guidelines for the Organizational Politician	Organizational Dynamics	influence, uncertainty, conflict, manipulation	1.5	2	2	Proposes ethical norms for political behaviour. Presents 3 approaches: utilitarian, individual rights, justice. Aims to offer an alternative to cynical views on OP: "dirty politics can be uplifted to organizational statesmanship by adhering to ethical principles."	Very normative & philosophical approach
Dill, D.D.; Pearson, A.W.	The Effectiveness of Project Managers: Implications of a Political Model of Influence	IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management	interest groups, coalitions, networks, conflict, barganing, informal power.	2	2.5	2.5	Compares rational & political organizational models. Discusses implications for managerial skills. Argues the need to develop managers' political skill.	Good general framwork, with organization theory concepts.
Vredenburgh, D.J.; Maurer, J.G.	A Process Framework of Organizational Politics	Human Relations	self-serving, nonsanctionned influence behaviours, intergroup conflict, covert means	2	2	2	Definition proposed for OP = (1) pursuit of self or group interests, (2) goals or means unsanctioned by formal org. rules or sanctionned by unofficial norms, (3) objective and subjective component (behaviours+perceptions). Proposes a process framework of OP: antecedents, mechanisms, outcomes. Antecedents: individual/group/contextual characteristics. Moderator: political sensitivity. Mechanisms: political behaviour (decision to pursue goals	Political sensitivity - interesting concept.
Gray, B.; Ariss, S.S.	Politics and Strategic Change Across Organizational Life Cycles	Academy of Management Review	ends not sanctioned by the org. or sanctioned ends through non sanctioned influence means//influence to protect self-interest//acquire or ncrease power when ambiguity//social influence, discretionary, self-interest, opposed to others' interests	2.5	2.5	2.5	Shows how politics can be used to facilitate strategic change. Specific tactics are deemed suitable for each stage: growth, maturity, decline.	Important implications for managers: political skill is vital for managers. Leaders' political style can be more or less suited to the strategy - so changing the leader with the strategy is logical.

Arroba, T.; James, K.	Are politics palateable to women managers? How women can make wise moves at work	Women in management review	ambivalence: manipulation, backstage, self-interest VS diversity of values & beliefs	1	2	2	A bidimensional model of political behaviour is proposed: reading & caring. Four styles described: clever, wise, inept, innocent.	The literature review is light-weight, but this is one the rare papers focusing on gender & politics.
James, K.; Arroba, T.	Politics and Management: The Effect of Stress on the Political Sensitivity of Managers	Journal of Managerial Psychology	challenge the rational model// competing interests, values in the organization// influence, power	1	2	2	A bidimensional model of political skill is proposed: reading (awareness to unawareness) & caring (self-serving to organizational serving). Four styles described: clever, wise, inept, innocent. Political skill = ability to deal with political situations. PS helps cope with stress.	Argues the importance of PS for managers from a stress-related perspective.
Drory, A.; Romm, T.	The Definition of Organizational Politics: A Review	Human Relations	informal inluence, levels: individual/group/org // lit reviewed around otucomes, means and contxt of OP.	3	3	3	Outcomes: self-serving goals incompatible with org goals, ressoucrce distibution, power. Means: influence, power tactics, informal behav, concealment of one's motives. Context: conflict, uncertainty.	Very sound lit review. Suggests minimum 3 chaacteristics of political behaviours: influence, informal means & conflict. Research directions are discussed.
Mann, S.	Politics and power in organizations: why women lose out	Leadership and Organization Development Journal	OP: awareness of power distribution, infornal influence, networks, coallitions	2	2	2	Highlights structural sources of power imbalance related to gender. Causes for women's reluctance to play politics: socialization (selfless), self-image, social skills (networking), self-esteem (estimated ability to reciprocate favours)	The theoretical part on OP is not very sound, but the one on spefic political behaviours is better. The links between different concepts are also interesting.
Butcher, D.; Clarke, M.	Organizational Politics: The Cornerstone for Organizational Democracy	Organizational Dynamics	competing intersts // distructive: misuse of power, secrecy // constructive: reconciliation of different interests	1.5	2	2	Highlights the positive aspects of politics - the democtratic side.	Interesting paralel with government politics.

2003	Butcher, D.; Clarke, M.	Redefining managerial work: smart politics	Management Decision	ambivalent conceptualization of OP: disfunctional self-serving behaviour vs reconciliation of diverse interests	2	3	2.5	Argues the pervasive nature of OP and the importance of managerial PS. Proposes the idea of "principled politics" - balance between self-interest and interests of others. Constructive politics is about choosing & defending worthwhile corporate causes. Building relationships (upward influence & networking) - key political skill.	Key skills for constructive OP: understanding of power dynamics, self-understanding, interpersonal skills. Through analysis of how OP shape managerial role.

B. Data extraction sheet for core empirical papers

Legend

Quality criteria:

C1 = Theoretical foundation

C2 = Methodological rigour

C3 = Quality of argumentation

C4 = Contribution to the literature

Year	Author/s	Title	Publication	Context	Emp/Thr	Quant/Qual	Sample	Method	Definition of OP	Operationalization of OP	C1	C2	C3	C4	Overview	Observations
1979	Allen, R.W.; Madison, D.L.; Porter, L.W.; Renwich, P.A.; Mayes, B.T.	Organizational Politics: Tactics and Characteristics of Its Actors	California Management Review	US	Empirical	Qualitative	87 managers	Interviews	intentional influence, self/group interests	Questions: political tactics known and characteristics of actors playing politics	1.5	2	2	3	Political tactics: blaming/attacking others, use of information, favourable self-image, developing support, ingratiation, coallitions, rewrard, coercition. Political actors: CEO-sensitive to others&situations, intelligent,ambitious//staff managers-sensitive,socially astute, not troublemaker//supervisors-agressive, popular,competent, rebelious, less emphasis on sensitivity.	Lightweight lit review and methodology, but big contribution at that time in the OP literature. Consistency in what are political tactics, less in what is a good politician -> flexibility of individual meanings!

| 1980 | Murray, V.; Gandz, J. | Games Executives Play: Politics at Work | Business Horizons | Canada | Empirical | Qualitative | 132 MBA alumni | Questionnaire | pervasive influence attempts | Respondents were asked to provide a good example of workplace politics. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | Political issues: favoritism in promotion, IM, power struggle, risk management, ressource competition. Political actors: leaders. Political behaviour: self-interest, conflictual maneuvring (covert&overt). Attitudes toward OP: mostly negative, but thought to be unavoidable & necessary. More politics perceived by low-income, female, single, religious respondents. Autonomous, varied jobs, with clear feedback led to less perceived OP. | Discusses implications for leaders' role with respect to OP: managing others' perception of processes being political // job satisfaction & OP // importance of transparency. Gives advice on how to cope with distructive politics (flight, fight, capitulate). |

| 1980 | Gandz, J.; Murray, V.V. | The Experience of Workplace Politics | Academy of Management Journal | Canada | Empirical | Quantitative & Qualitative | MBAs 428 questionnaires & 123 examples | Questionnaire & personal stories of OP | power, influence//ressource allocation// self-serving behaviour | **Questionnaire:** 1) talk about OP, 2) organizational processes perceived as politicized, 3)effects of OP (general, org., and leaders' effectiveness). **Story:** example of OP in action. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | OP are perceived to be more intense in: organizational processes with less formalized, at managerial levels (especially by non-managerial staff).// Attitudes towards OP: ambivalent (inevitable but not right).// Perceived policization affects job satisfaction.//Hierarchical position does not affect perceptions of politization.//Executives denied their environment was political - ideal of rationality? | Suggests that OP be defined as intentionally seeking selfish ends, opposed to those of others. |

| 1980 | Madison, D.L.; Allen, R.W.; Porter, L.W., Renwich, P.A.; Mayes, B.T. | Organizational Politics: An Exploration of Managers' Perceptions | Human Relations | US | Empirical | Qualitative | 87 managers (30 CEOs, 28 high staff managers, 29 supervisors) | Interviews | power into action, management of influence//context: uncertainty, importance of dept./indiv. to the org. | Questions: how frequent OP are in 9 functional areas, how can OP be harmuful/beneficial to indiv/org? | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | Managers share perceptions of OP: high incidence growing with hierarchy//context:large size, ambiguity & conflict//self-serving, power related//more frequent in marketing, sales, board & org change processes//+and-outcomes for ind&org | OP related to uncertainty, importance of the activity to org and to indiv. Career progression - main ind. benefit of OP. OP related to formal authority, but different from it. |

| 1985 | Zahra, S.A. | Background and Work Experience Correlates of the Ethics and Effect of Oraganizational Politics | Journal of Business Ethics | US | Empirical | Quantitative | 302 managers | Questionnaire | manipulative, selfish behaviour// ethically debatable, perceived differently depending on background | Items about OP - ethicality, reasons to play politics, locus & effects of OP | 1.5 | 2 | 2 | 1.5 | Women and older staff found OP less ethical. Younger staff and low & mid level managers considered OP more imp. to advance career. Experienced managers felt the org forces them to play politics.//More OP at the top. Some managers saw benefits of OP (communication). Background & experience were not significantly related to OP views. | Not clear how are items like and how they were develped. They seem rather negative. |

| 1988 | Drory, A.; Romm, T. | Politics in Organization and its Perception within the Organization | Organization Studies | Israel | Empirical | Quantitative | 193 students | Critical incidents | informal or illegal, against org. goals, power attainment, conflict, concealed motive | 15 critical incidents rated on 7 defining elements of political behaviour: formal, informal, illegal, conflict, power, concealed motive, against the org. | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | Behaviours: informal considered more political than formal & illegal. Situations: concealed motive and against org. more political than conflict. Supervisors perceived these 3 types of situations less political. No difference for behaviours. | Perceptions of OP are more dynamic and flexible depending on moderators such as positon, gender, etc. Argues that the additive approach to OP be replaced by a compensatory one. |
| 1989 | Kumar, P.; Ghadialy, R. | Organizational Politics and Its Effects on Members of Organizations | Human Relations | India | Empirical | Quantitative | 278 managers | Questionnaire | influence, IM with boss, career progression// ambivalence: goal achievement, recognition, status vs mistrust, suspicion | 18-items scale measuring ingration, structure change, cooptation, threat (Kumar, 1983 unpublished) | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | Political behaviours are found to relate negatively with interpersonal trust and positively with alienation. | Superficial literature review on OP. The rationale for operationalizing political behaviours in 4 specific behaviours is not clear. Moreover, the scale used is not annexed nor previously published. |

| 1989 | Zahra, S.A. | Executive Values and the Ethics of Company Politics: Some Preliminary Findings | Journal of Business Ethics | US | Empirical | Quantitative | 302 managers | Questionnaire | individual/group goals different from formal organizational goals// power, self-serving, unsanctioned behaviour// unsactioned ends or means//the org might benefit as well// moral ambivalence: OP deemed necessary by managers | 17 OP items loading on 3 factors: ethics, effect and executive success. | 2 | 2 | 2.5 | 2 | Executives' perception whether OP are ethical or not depend more on managerial values than background. High anomie, external LOC, concern with status and low acceptance of others lead to perception of OP as ethical. | Items about OP attitudes are very tendentious (negative) - e.g. "Politicking threatens organizational goal accomplishment" and not "Politicking contributes positively to goal accomplishment". |

| 1990 | Kirchmeyer, C. | A Profile of Managers Active in Office Politics | Basic and Applied Social Psychology | Canada | Empirical | Quantitative | 225 managers | Questionnaire | influence, ressource distribution, self-interest// tactics: attack, inf. control, IM, ingratiation, coalitions | Vignettes 20 political incidents involving managers. Respondents rated how typical the action was for themselves and how political they perceived it to be. | 1.5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | No effect of level, job type and sex on the degree of political activity. Neen for power predicted women's political involvment. External LOC predicted men's. | Prototype of political player: high-self monitoring man with external-type beliefs in a difficult world or a power-motivted woman. |

1991	Drory, A.; Beaty, D.	Gender differences in the prception of organizational influence tactics	Journal of Organizational Behavior	US	Empirical	Quantitative	152 mid-level managerial employees in service & industrial firms	Experimental - Critical incident (developed after interviews with employees)	influence attemps meant to protect an actor's share of organizational ressources // power & conflict	**Script:** to have suport for a computer purchase, collegue A offers support to B in another issue and threatens to	1.5	3	3	3	Males are more tolerant of political behaviour. Subjects of both sexes are more tolerant of political behavior when 1) political manipulators are of their own sex and 2) the victim of the behavior is a member of the opposite sex. Both	Literature review very short, concise but relevant nevertheless. The scale measuring attitudes towards political behaviours is tendentious (negative).
1991	Zanzi, A.; Arthur, M.B.; Shamir, B.	The relationship between career concerns and political tactics in organizations	Journal of Organizational Behavior	US	Empirical	Quantitative	212 business school alumni	Questionnaire	influence tactics related to career concerns	Political tactics scale: frequency of using exchange, cooptation, mentoring, intimidation, networking, ingratiation, coalitions	1.5	2.5	3	3	4 career concerns: personal success, org. involvt., skill devpt., autnomy. External career concerns are more related to political tactics than internal. Networking strongly related to career concerns. Skill devlpt concern had - impact of networking tactics.	Gender& type of career concerns! Women are less concerned with external career?.

1992	Prasad, L.; Rubenstein, A.H.	Conceptualizing Organizational Politics as a Multidimensional Phenomenon: Empirical Evidence from a Study of Technological Innovations	IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management	US	Empirical	Quantitative	108 employees involved in project management (23 companies, 45 projects)	Questionnaire	influence, conflicting interests, coalitions, ambivalent consequences, prevalent in decision-making// general and specific aspects, depending on org. processes	Scale with core decisions in project management - to asses how formal or informal the procedure was.	2	2	2	2	Argues that OP is a multi-dimensional phenomenon (general&specific aspects).	Highlights the perceptual nature of OP and argues that OP should be studied from the respondents' perspective.
1993	Drory, A.	Perceived Political Climate and Job Attitudes	Organization Studies	Israel	Empirical	Quantitative	200 employees (public&private firms)	Questionnaire	power, conflicting personal/group interst, scarce ressources, uncertainty, unit interdependence	Political climate scale: asseses what factors (technical or political) impact most organizational decisions (promotion, perf. appraisal, etc).	2	3	2	2.5	Explores effect of OP perception on job attitudes. Political climate leads to more negative job attitudes for low-status employees (gender, hierarchical position).	The term "political" is explicit in the scale, as compared to other studies where "informal" was used.

1994	Ralston, D.A.; Giacalone, R.A.; Terpstra, R.H.	Ethical Perceptions of Organizational Politics: A Comparative Evaluation of American and Hong Kong Managers	Journal of Business Ethics	US & China	Empirical	Quantitative	161 US & 144 Chinese full-time professionals	Questionnaire with scenario items	self-serving, informal influence// ressources distribution	Strategies of Upward Influence (SUI): 38 scenario items. Perceiced ethicality was assesed for: good soldier, rational persuasion, ingratiation, IM, networking, information control, strong-arm coercion	2	2.5	3	2.5	Points out cross-cultural differences in ethical perceptions: US managers deemed good soldier, rational persuasion, IM & ingratiation more ethical than Chinese ones, which prefered instead information control and string-arm coercition.	The literature review on OP is not very exhaustive. OP operationalized as upward influence strategies. The contribution lies mainly in the cross-cultural comparison of perceived ehticality of influence strategies. OP is a wider concept, but differences in perception of influence
1994	Mainiero, L.A.	On Breaking the Glass Ceiling: The Political Seasoning of Powerful Women Executives	Organizational Dynamics	US	Empirical	Qualitative	55 female executive	Interviews	political skill related to career progression	NA	1	1	2	2	Proposes a 4 stage model of executive maturation: political naivete, building credibility, refining a style, shouldering responsibility. Reluctance to politics, but awareness of how important it is.	The theoretical part is far from being sound and the methodology is not described in a very accurate manner. However, the paper cannot be ignored since it's the only empirical study focusing exclusively on women's political skills.

| 1994 | Judge, T.A.; Bretz, R.D. | Political Influence Behaviour and Career Success | Journal of Management | US | Empirical | Quantitative | 873 past graduates (m=35 years, m=4 years in current job) | Questionnaire | self-interest (same or opposed to others' interest)// illegitimate// related to career success | 19-items scale measuring influence behaviours: supervisor-focused, job-focused. | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | Focuses only on self-promotion and ingratiation. Job-focused tactics (self-promotion) predict negatively career success, and supervisor-focused ones (inrgatiation) predictic it positively. | The examples of items used are only positive (e.g. ingration, IM). The conceptualization of political behaviours is restrictive. |
| 1994 | Novelli, L.; Flynn, W.R.; Elloy, D.F. | Perceptions of Organizational Policies in an Autonomous Work Team Organization | International Journal of Management | US | Empirical | Quantitative | 387 employees in a plant | Questionnaire | unsanctioned means or ends, personal (ambition, different goals)& structural (ressources, conflict, ambiguity, change, top level) causes// downsides | How often politics played in 17 organizational processes | 2 | 1.5 | 2 | 2 | OP are not perceived lower in autnomous teams vs interdepent. OP perception decreased as hierarchical level increased. OP distinct from job attitudes. | Not clear what org processes were rated as political. No indication of internal consistency of scale. |

1996	Tziner, A.; Latham, G.P.; Price, B.S.; Haccoun, R.	Development and validation of a questionnaire for measuring perceived political considerations in performance appraisal	Journal of Organizational Behavior	Canada	Empirical	Quantitative	157 managers	Questionnaire	power, self-interest, ends non sanctioned by the org. or sanctioned ends through non sanctioned means	30 items about political sources of bias in PA: relation with employees, secure ressources, IM, favours, revenge,etc,	1.5	2.5	2	2	Focuses on OP in performance appraisal and validation of the scale. Good reliability, validity, etc.	Contributes more to the PA literature than the OP one.
1997	Christiansen, N.; Villanova, P.; Mikulay, S.	Political influence compatibility: fitting the person to the climate	Journal of Organizational Behavior	US	Empirical	Quantitative	138 academic employees	Questionnaire	influence, ambivalent effects, aims or means non sanctioned by the org., self-serving // tactics (Kipnis: assertiveness	**Political influence climate**:18 items - how often Kipnis' political tactics are used in their departments. **Personal orientation**	2	3	2.5	2.5	Explored the fit between one's preference for influence tactics and the corporate political climate (PIC-political influence compatibility). PIC correlates positively with satisfaction with co-workers	PIC could be a valuable concept to explore women's attitudes towards OP.

1999	Buchanan, D.	The Logic of Political Action: an Experiment with the Epistemology of the Particular	British Journal of Management	UK	Empirical	Qualitative	1 manager	Single case study	conflict // covert, cunning, informal influence // 3 dimmensions of political action: context, tatctics & outcomes	?	3	2	3	3	Conceptual findings about OP: YES ambivalence, covert means, change driver // NOT always unprofessional, illegitimate, divisive, self-serving, driven by conflict	The effects of OP are contextual. Points out that many conceptualizations are reductionist because of this, not necessarily inaccurate.
1999	Buchanan, D.; Badham, R.	Politics and Organizational Change: The Lived Experience	Human Relations	UK	Empirical	Qualitative	5 senior managers	Interviews	different goals& preferred strategies, devious, manipulative, power into action, informal, illegitimate goals or means, conflict, uncertainty	15 questions about the use and examples of political behaviour, importance of political skill, OP in change.	3	2	2.5	2.5	Concrete examples of OP. Argues it is important for the change agent to engage in power dynamics. Pol. behav. Is pervasive, context-dependent, sometimes objectionable, both self-serving and org. serving, with ambivalent consequences.	The importance of contextual factors matches the ideea of dynamic perceptions of what is political or not.

2001	Zanzi, A.; O'Neill, R.M.	Sanctionned Versus Non-sanctionned Political Tactics	Journal of Managerial Issues	US	Empirical	Quantitative	288 MBA students	Questionnaire	self-serving, nonsanctionned or illegitimate influence behaviours// ambivalent// sanctioned and non sanctioned tactics	**Questionnaire 1**: frequency of use of 24 political tactics (Zanzi,91). **Questionnaire 2**: perceived social desirability of those tactics.	2	2	2	2.5	Factor analysis was performed on the 24 items - 2 factors for both use and desirability: sanctioned and non sanctioned tactics. Frequency of use did not correspond to desirability (sanctioned ones were perceived more desirable than used).	Simple methodology, but important contributiom. Shows that some political tactics are considered socially acceptable. No analysis by sex.
2002	Sussman, L.; Adams, A.J.; Kuzmitz, F.E.; Raho, L.E.	Organizational Politics: Tactics, Channels, and Hierarchical Roles	Journal of Business Ethics	US	Empirical	Quantitative	265 respondents	Questionnaire	influence, personal goals, IM, behaviours beyond those prescribed by the org.	taxonomy (Allen, 79): attack or blame, inf. use, IM, developing a base of support, ingatiation, coallitions, obligations.	2	3	3	3	Explores political messages and media usage. Political tactics found to be channel and sender specific. Different channels used: political messages sent mostly face 2 face, task messages sent face2face, memo, phone,	Interesting way of avoinding bias: ask respondents to rate political messages they receive, not those they send. To explore: distinction between self and relationship

2005	Bella, Y.	Gender, Power and Office Politics	Human Resource Development International	Taiwan	Empirical	Qualitative	19 female clerical workers	In-depth interviews & observation	politics is about gaining & retainig power // informal attempt to protect self-interest// pervasive	Questions about working experiences related to gender, power and OP.	1	2	1	1	Describes many structural and behavioural barriers making women powerless (cultural values, gender stereotypes, occupational segregation,etc). However, the issue of OP is hardly adressed in presenting and interpreting the data.	The title is misleading. The issue of OP is not really tackled. The terms is used to refer to power and the powerless status of women clerks.
1988	Kipnis, D.; Schmidt, S.	Upward-Influence Styles: Relationship with Performance Evaluations, Salary, and Stress	Administrative Science Quarterly	US	Empirical	Quantitative	172 employees	Questionnaire	NA	POIS	NA	3	3	3	Study of influence tactics, not OP directly. 4 patterns identified: Shotgun, Ingratiator, Bystander, Tactician.	Included b/c the taxonomy is widely used to assess political behaviours & the paper is in top 10 quoted amongst other core papers.

1997	Kacmar,M.K.; Carlson, D.C.	Further Validation of the Perceptions of Politics Scale (POPS): A Multiple Sample Investigation	Journal of Management	US	Empirical	Quantitative	2758 respondents	Questionnaire	social influece attempts to protect self-interest// ambivalent effects pervasiveness,	12 items about general political behaviour, go along to get ahead, pay & promotion.	1.5	2	1	2	3 factors of OPP: supervisor behavior, political behaviour, go along to get ahead, pay & promotion.. Very negative view of OP (lack of meritocracy, transparency, etc).	Very poor lit review. Contribution by linking the issue of OP to other constructs & providing a measure, but does not advace understanding on OP itself.
2001	Andrews, M.C.; Kacmar, M.K.	Discriminating among organizational politics, justice, and support	Journal of Organizational Behaviour	US	Empirical	Quantitative	418 employees	Questionnaire	self-interst, informal, illegitimate, unfair	POPS	1.5	2.5	1.5	2	OP are considered subversive for organizational fairness.	Very "technical" paper.

Vigoda, E.	Reactions to organizational politics: A cross-cultural examination in Israel and Britain	Human Relations	Israel & UK	Empirical	Quantitative	303 Israel & 149 Britain public personnel	Questionnaire	influence, self-interest	POPS	1.5	2.5	2	2	POPS affected British employees more strongly than Israeli. POPS affect negatively work attitudes.	Given the definition of OP, the corelation with other work factors is not surprising.
Treadway, D.C.; Hochwarter, W.A.; Kacmar, C.J.; Ferris, G.R.	Political will, political skill, and political behavior	Journal of Organizational Behaviour	US	Empirical	Quantitative	193 employees	Questionnaire	influence, non sanctioned means or ends, self-interest & threat to others' interests	Political behaviour scale: self-report of use of pol behav.// PSI	2	3	2.5	2.5	Distinguishes between political will and skill. Will = need for achvt.& intrinsic motivation. Skill = PSI. Political behaviour is predicted by political will.	Political will vs political skill?
Ferris, G.R.; Treadway, D.C.; Kolodinsky, R.W.; Hochwarter, W.A.; Kacmar, C.J.; Douglas, C.; Frink, D.D.	Development and Validation of the Political Skill Inventory	Journal of Management	US	Empirical	Quantitative	226 undergraduate students & 124 employees	Questionnaire	no def of OP// political skill - ability to understand & to influence other to enhance personal/org objectives	PSI: 40 items intially, 18 in the end	1	2.5	2	2	Tested psychometric qualities of the PSI.	Conceptual inconsistency in the definition of PS vs OP.

2001	Vigoda, E.; Cohen, A.	Reactions to organizational politics: A cross-cultural examination in Israel and Britain	Human Relations	Israel	Empirical	Quantitative	303 public personnel	Questionnaire	same as other POPS papers	same as other POPS papers	1.5	2	2	2	Brrithish employees more affected by politics than Israeli.	Contribution in terms of sampling.
1999	Harrell-Cook, G.; Ferris, G.R.; Dulebohn, J.H.	Political behaviours as moderators of the perceptions of organizational politics-work	Journal of Organizational Behaviour	US	Empirical	Quantitative	123 employees	Questionnaire	same as other POPS papers	same as other POPS papers	1.5	2	2	2	Political behaivours = self-promotion & ingratiation	
2007	Hochwarter, W.A.; Ferris, G.R.; Zinko, R.; Arnell, B.; James, M.	Reputation as a Moderator of Political Behavior-Work Outcomes Relationships: A Two-Study	Journal of Applied Psychology	US	Empirical	Quantitative	732 employees	Questionnaire	same as other POPS papers	same as other POPS papers	1.5	2	2	2	Reputation moderated the relation between political beh & work outcomes	The concept of reputation appears in qualitative studies (eg Buchanan)
2000	Valle, M.; Perrewe, P.	Do politics perceptions relate to political behaviours? Test of an implicit assumption and expanded model	Human Relations	US	Empirical	Quantitative	260 employees	Questionnaire	same as other POPS papers	same as other POPS papers	1.5	2	2	2	Relates POPS to political behaviours themselves.	Interesting disctinction between reactive & proactive political behaviours