



GLOBAL WORKPLACE POLITICAL RISK AND ITS HR IMPLICATIONS: INSIGHTS FROM CROSS-NATIONAL SURVEYS.

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Abstract: Political risk has become an increasingly important feature of contemporary work environment, influencing Organisational stability and employee experiences. This paper examines how workplace political risk is manifested within organisations and how it affects employee attitudes, behaviours, and well-being; this was done by drawing on evidence from cross national survey studies. The seminar adopted a desk-based review approach to synthesize findings from different countries and sectors. The seminar shows that politicised work environments are commonly associated with lower job satisfaction and commitment, higher turnover intentions, and the emergence of counterproductive work behaviours. The seminar further highlights the moderating role of human resources systems and leadership practices in shaping how political risk is perceived and managed at work. The seminar contributes to a clearer understanding of the strategic role of HR in fostering more resilient, equitable, and sustainable workplaces under conditions of persistent political uncertainty.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

An increase in political risk has been a major factor in the running of Organisations over the years. In this context, political risk at work has become a central concern of human resource management, whereby Human Resource Management (HRM) has to manage not only compliance and staff issues, but also the wider social and psychological consequences of political uncertainty for employees and Organisations alike (Chang & Pak, 2024; Malik & Sanders, 2021). Political risk does not come only from external forces as the inner dynamics of Organisational politics are an important source for political risk in the workplace (Chang & Pak, 2024; Naeem et al., 2017). Perceptions that Organisational decisions are influenced by self-interest, favouritism, and informal power structures instead of transparent and equitable rules are a particularly potent internal risk to employees and institutions alike (Khuwaja et al., 2020; Pakpahan & Hutahayan, 2025). When employees have the feeling of politicised and selfish

decision-making processes, they become psychologically exited from the organisation and conduct behaviour to the Organisation's productivity and cooperation, such is further intensified when these feelings are combined with rumination about external crises and threats to job security (Bakare, 2024; De Clercq & Pereira, 2024).

Importantly, organisational responses to political risk can themselves be sources of resilience, helping to stabilize the relationships of employments and the continued functioning of Organisations under volatile political conditions (Aban et al., 2019; Labrague et al., 2017). This seminar is based on these interrelated developments and the increasing realisation that political risk has become a part and parcel of modern Organisational life. Drawing on evidence from large scale employee surveys, cross national comparative data sets and integrating review across management, human resource management and political science (Karim et al., 2021; Labrague et al., 2017). The paper explores how political risk is experienced in the workplace, how it influences employee attitudes,

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behaviours and well-being and how human resource system can respond effectively. Drawing from evidence in different countries, sectors and levels of analysis, the seminar aims to help people management and to develop a critical understanding of the role of HR in creating more resilient, equitable and sustainable workplaces in the face of persistent political uncertainty.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Globally, organisations are increasingly faced with environments that are influenced by political uncertainty, unstable policies and increased politicisation of institutions (Malik & Sanders, 2021; Mofokeng & Dlamini, 2022). These circumstances do not stay outside organisations, but instead they find their way into the working places through budget instability, job insecurity, decisions and poor view of equity (Mofokeng & Dlamini, 2022; Singh & Singh, 2019). The more a political risk escalates to become a persistent condition, the more employees become exposed to uncertainty that influences their attitudes towards their jobs, behaviour at work and their psychological coping mechanisms (Dal Corso et al., 2020; Singh & Singh, 2019). The available literature has demonstrated that unfavourable employee performance including low job satisfaction and commitment, high turnover intentions and development of undesirable work behaviours are linked with workplace political risk (Dal Corso et al., 2020; Obeng & Atan, 2024). Nevertheless, most of this evidence is disjointed, specific to context, sector or nation. Therefore, a lack of built-in knowledge exists regarding the functioning of political risk within various national environments and organisational frameworks and especially when comparing between developed and emerging economies. Moreover, although human resource systems and leadership practices are commonly considered as the possible mechanisms of handling the uncertainty in the workplace (Chang & Pak, 2024; Malik & Sanders, 2021), their impact on the response to political risk has not been studied in a cross-national perspective. In the absence of a clearer knowledge of how the HR practices can ease or enhance the effect of political risk, organisations would run the risk of instituting reactive or ineffective responses to people management. The necessity of this seminar is to

generalise the cross-national evidence on the political risk in the workplace and to clarify what it means to the HR management in the conditions of political uncertainty.

1.3 Objectives of the study

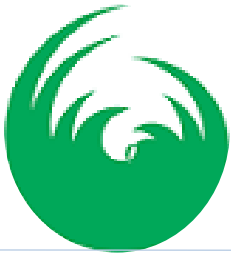
The main Objective of this paper is to examine how workplace political risk affects employees and Organisations across different national contexts and to assess the role of human resource systems in responding to these challenges. The following are specific objectives:

1. To assess how political risk is experienced and manifested within workplaces across different countries and sectors.
2. To examine the influence of workplace political risk on employee attitudes, behaviours, and well being using evidence from cross-national studies.
3. To assess how HR systems and leadership practices can reduce the negative effects of political risk.

1.4 Significance of the study

This seminar adds to academic knowledge since it gathers evidence across countries, sectors and institutional backgrounds to give a broader picture of workplace political risk and implications. The seminar goes beyond the results of employee attitudes, behaviours and well being by combining all the results into a more holistic picture of how a political risk can influence the work experience. Additionally, the seminar applies to HR practitioners and organisational leaders who have to deal with political unstable situations. The study offers evidence-based information about the ways organisation may minimise the adverse consequences of employees and ensure stability, fairness and engagement in an uncertain environment due to the emphasis put on the role of HR systems, leadership styles and supportive practices. Also, the seminar is policy relevant especially to the organisations and institutions in the emerging economies where politicisation is more pronounced. Lastly, the seminar helps to make people management decisions more informed in case of continuing political uncertainty.

1.5 Scope of the study



This seminar is restricted to conceptual and empirical overview of the political risk at the workplace and its HR implications. It dwells on the experiences of political risk in organisations and its effect on the attitude, behaviours and well being of employees in various national settings. The seminar is based on the evidence provided by developed and emerging economies specifically on the public sector, healthcare, hospitality and other related organisational contexts. Another point the paper discusses is how human resource systems and leadership practices can act as a response to political risk at workplace and the buffering and moderating role of them. Nevertheless, the seminar does not presuppose primary data gathering or hypothesis testing; it is based on already existing cross-national research as well as evidence collected by surveys. The conclusions are therefore descriptive and explanatory as to increase insight but not to make casual statements.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual review

2.1.1 Organisational Politics

Organisational politics would be considered as being related to political risk, but it will be conducted according to the workplace. It describes informal power relations and selfish actions in which individuals or groups of people attempt to impact decision making, gain access to resources or political interests. (Chang & Pak, 2024; Takeuchi et al., 2022).

2.1.2 HRM and Political Risk

The issue of human resource management is very important in dealing with political risk as well as organisational politics. Organisational Politics can be minimised, and adverse impacts can be diminished with the help of the leadership practices and open policies and HR systems that support employee engagement and well-being. Political risk awareness in HR strategies allows organisations to react to external political unpredictability more effectively and internal political dynamics in a manner that helps them to remain resilient, equitable, and sustainable in performance (Chang & Pak, 2024; Hartwell & Devinney, 2021).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Institutional theory

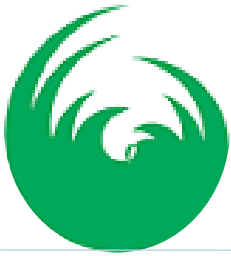
Institutional theory is usually traced to the work of Philip Selznick who established the foundations of institutional theory during the late 1940s and 1950s by emphasizing the extent to which Organisations become influenced by social values, rules and institutional theory was subsequently developed by John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan and further developed by Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell who explained the process by which Organisation conform to political and regulatory environments in order to gain legitimacy (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1987). Institutional theory provides a framework to understand the cross-national differences in the HR practices by highlighting the fact that Organisations are deeply embedded in the different political, legal and regulatory environments (Risi et al., 2023).

Political risk theory

Political risk theory was developed in the field of international business and political economy, with early theory being associated with Raymond Vernon, whose work in the 1970s on the effect of government actions on the multinational enterprise. The theory was better conceptualized by Stephen J. Kobrin who formally defined political risk to be uncertainty caused by political decisions and events and deal with political risk across countries. Political risk theory offers a critical lens for understanding the influence of uncertainty arising from the actions of government and policy reversals, political instability and conflict on Organisational decision-making beyond traditional investment concerns (Kornienko, 2025; Panesh, 2025).

2.3 Empirical review

The nature of Organisational politics has strong impact on HRM in that it determines the process of decision making, performance of the employees and organisational dynamics. Organisational politics is usually considered negative; however, it can be both constructive and harmful to HR practices (Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010). It has been found that organisational politics perceptions are correlated with low job satisfaction, low organisational



commitment, elevated stress and elevated turnover intentions, but the relationship with job performance is not as clear (Miller et al., 2008). Political environment in organisations comes with various bases which include personal, positional, connection and informational power bases, which must be known and controlled by HR managers to promote a functional political environment (Landells & Albrecht, 2013). High performance work systems (HPWS) are interrelated with organisational politics and personal political ability and affect the result of employee performance; highly politically skilled employees are likely to have a better performance even in a politically charged environment (Chang & Pak, 2024).

3.0 Methodology

This seminar follows the qualitative review, desk-based method and uses the existing cross-national survey research and peer reviewed literature on workplace political risk and human resource management. The academic journals and institutional reports on the topic of political risk, organisational political and employee outcomes were searched in a set of relevant studies of various national settings. The chosen data were themed to explore trends affected by employee attitudes, behaviours and well-being, the impact of HR systems and leadership practices.

4.0 Political Risk and Employee outcomes: Evidence from cross-National studies

4.1 Political Risk and Employee Attitudes

Across national contexts, political risk and politicization of the work environment consistently correspond to less favourable employee attitudes. In federal US agencies, higher budget volatility as an indicator of a contentious political environment is associated with increased intent to leave the agency, whereas staffing volatility is linked to a preference to move within government rather than exit public service, indicating differentiated attitudinal reactions to distinct dimensions of political turbulence (Ali, 2020). In hospitality Organisations in Serbia during the COVID-19 crisis, pandemic-related job insecurity and Organisational changes reduce job motivation and job satisfaction and increase turnover intentions, highlighting

how macro-level crisis and policy responses translate into negative work attitudes at the workplace level (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2021). Perceptions of Organisational politics are repeatedly associated with lower job satisfaction and commitment in public sector and healthcare settings in emerging economies. In a large Pakistani public electricity utility, paternalistic and servant leadership styles are positively related to job satisfaction and commitment, and these relationships are partly explained by reduced perceptions of Organisational politics, suggesting that lower perceived politics correspond to more positive attitudes (Khuwaja et al., 2020). In Nigerian local government councils, perceived lack of transparency and politicized promotion practices are associated with reduced engagement and weakened commitment, reflecting a strong link between internal political games and negative work attitudes (Osahon, Osazevaru et al., 2025).



4.2 Political Risk and Employee Behaviour

Evidence from public sector and healthcare contexts in Ghana and Nigeria indicates that political dynamics inside Organisations are strongly linked to behavioural outcomes. In Ghanaian public hospitals, perceptions of Organisational politics show a significant positive association with turnover intentions (Obeng et al., 2025). Structural equation models further show that Organisational politics positively predicts psychological safety and work engagement, but higher work engagement is negatively related to turnover intentions and psychological safety is positively related to intentions to leave, indicating a complex behavioural pattern in politicized hospitals (Asare Obeng & Atan, 2025). In Nigerian public hospitals, perceived Organisational politics is strongly and positively associated with counterproductive work behaviour among nurses, whereas job stress does not significantly predict such behaviour when politics are controlled, suggesting that political games are a more salient driver of deviance than general strain in this setting (Ogbozor et al., 2025).

4.3 Political Risk and Employee Well-being.

In Ghanaian hospitals, Organisational politics is significantly and positively linked to psychological well-being, and psychological well-being in turn is positively related to turnover intentions, indicating that employees who are better able to navigate political environments may both feel psychologically well and be more prepared to leave (Obeng et al., 2025).

4.4 HR systems and leadership responses

HR-related systems and practices under conditions of crisis and politicization show both buffering and amplifying roles. In Poland, a cross-sector survey of Organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates that a combined configuration of “hard” HRM strategies (financial measures) and “soft” HRM strategies (well-being support) enhances work motivation, job satisfaction, and Organisational commitment, which in turn improve job and Organisational performance, indicating that strategically designed HR systems can sustain positive attitudes and performance amid

macro-level instability (Bieńkowska et al., 2022). In Romania, supervisor support and promotion opportunities are negatively associated with perceived job insecurity, and instability shows a significant negative relationship with overall job satisfaction; this suggests that supportive and opportunity-rich HR practices partially buffer insecurity-related attitudinal decline in an emerging market context (Nemteanu et al., 2021). In public sector Organisations characterized by politicization, specific HR-relevant levers are linked to more favourable outcomes. In Pakistan’s public electricity sector, paternalistic and servant leadership reduce perceptions of Organisational politics and are associated with higher job satisfaction and commitment, indicating that leadership style operates as an internal HR resource shaping how politics are perceived and how attitudes form (Khuwaja et al., 2020).

Discussion

This seminar focused on the experience of political risk in the workplaces and its effects on employee attitudes, behaviours, and well-being in various national settings. Empirical research findings on cross-national studies indicate that, political risk is not limited to the macro-level instability, but rather it is carried into the routine workplace by Organisational politics, job insecurity and policy uncertainty (De Clercq & Pereira, 2024; Nemteanu et al., 2021). The politicized work environments across the fields and nations are always linked to decreased levels of job satisfaction, decreased commitment, and amplified turnover inclinations, which substantiates the perspective that political risk is a collective workplace stressor (De Clercq & Pereira, 2024; Labrague et al., 2017). Employee behaviour is complex to be determined by political risk; the turnover intentions and counterproductive work behaviours in the public sector and healthcare settings are closely correlated with Organisational politics perceptions (Beenish Khan & Amir Azam, 2022; Mercado et al., 2022). Meanwhile, there is a group of employees who seem to be capable of working in politicized settings, indicating that political risk can never generate a consistent effect but combines with personal coping mechanisms and Organisational situations (De Clercq & Pereira, 2024;



Obeng & Atan, 2024). These trends can be attributed to the institutional and political risk theories that consider how political and regulatory environments affect the Organisational processes and employee experiences. The results also bring out human resource systems and leadership practices that moderate (Bedi & Schat, 2013; Obeng & Atan, 2024). Positive leadership, open HR policies and balanced HR policies that have a mix of financial security and employee well-being are facilitative in mitigating the adverse impacts of political risk (Abdullah & AL-Abrow, 2023; Mosquera et al., 2025). This highlights the strategic position of HR in influencing the interpretation and management of political uncertainty in Organisations.

5.0 Conclusion

This seminar paper discussed the workplace political risk and implications of the human resource on the topic using cross-national survey evidence. The paper has shown that political risk has a great impact on employee attitudes, behaviours, and well being, and politicised work environments are often linked with negative outcome of employees. The reaction of the employees to the political risk, however, is not universal and relies on the institutional backgrounds and organisational states. Another aspect revealed in the seminar is that human resource systems and leadership practices are very vital in mitigating the impact of negative political risk. The HR responses can be effective to promote the stability of employees and help to create more resilient and balanced work environments. Considering the reoccurring political instability in organisations, political risk management has become a mandatory element of the modern management of human resources.

5.1 Recommendations

Organisations that are being run in the face of political uncertainty must intensify on clear and equitable HR practices to minimise the organisational politics and job security. Employee trust is maintained through clear communication, merit-based system of promotion and regular HR policies. Development of leadership that enhances supportive and ethical leadership should be

emphasised because such leadership styles counter the adverse impacts of politicalisation in the workplace. Moreover, programs of HR which actually balance financial and well-being of the employees that could be adopted will help to increase motivation, commitment and strength in times of political instability.

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