

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN
NIGERIA**

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OKOLIE, ASABA, DELTA STATE ABSTRACT**

The study examined conflict management and organization effectiveness in Nigeria Specifically, the study Examine the effect of Collaborating strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigeria and to ascertain the effect of compromising strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigeria, Two research questions and hypotheses were articulated for the study in line with the objectives. The study made use of descriptive survey and the area of study was in Nigeria. Total population for the study included 15 organizations with 200 staffs and the sample size was 120 while 110 copies were used for the study. Research instruments were validated and reliable. Descriptive analysis was carried out on the research questions and hypotheses were tested using regression. The study reveals that conflict management has positive affiliation on organization effectiveness in Nigeria organizations. It was recommended among others that conflict management should be given more courtesy in both public and private organizations in Nigeria and strategy should be put in place that could be of help to reduce conflict in industries in Nigeria.

Key words: *conflict management and organizational effectiveness*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

According to Kornhanser, Dubin and Russ (1954), conflict can be referred to as "the total range of behaviours and attitude that express opposition and divergent orientation between individual, owners and managers on one hand and working people and their organization, on the other hand. Furthermore, a conflict situation is therefore one that is characterized by the inability of those concerned to iron out their

differences, and this does not necessarily have to result in strikes. Flanders (1968) defined conflict as the difference between an actual state of affairs and a desired state of affairs. Conflict refers to some form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted by or unacceptable to one or more members of another group. Conflict can arise between members of the same group, known as intergroup conflict, or it can occur between members of two or more groups, and involve violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension, known as intergroup conflict. Conflict in groups often follows a specific course. This period of conflict escalation in some cases gives way to a conflict resolution stage, after which the group can eventually return to routine group interaction once again (Harvard Program on Negotiation Glossary, "Conflict" 2013). Conflict is a social factual situation in which at least two parties (individuals, groups, states) are involved, and who strive for goals which are incompatible to begin with or strive for the same goal, which, can only be reached by one party and want to employ incompatible means to achieve a certain goal (Schmid, 1998). The organizational conflict in business organizations is disagreement by individuals or groups within the organization, which can center on factors ranging from resource allocation and divisions of responsibility to the overall direction of the organization; conflict is the perception of differences of interests among people (Thompson, 1998) In other words, conflict

is the gap between where one is and where one wants to be. Crises are un-expected problem that lead to disaster if not resolved quickly in an acceptable manner. No one can avoid crises and the intensity of the corporate crises in the modern world.

Conflict is an inevitable byproduct of inter-personal dealings. This is particularly true of work groups because-they generally are expediently assembled collection of individuals with different back grounds, perceptions attitudes, and value.

Conflict can be good, bad or ugly and it can be managed in goods, bad and ugly ways. In an organization the issue that generate the most, emotion and frustrated comments is conflict within the organization, we generally do not look at conflict as opportunity but we tend to think about conflict as unpleasant, counter- productive and time consuming.

An addition, conflict is a belief or understanding that one's own needs, interests, wants, or values are incompatible with someone else's. Conflict also involves an emotional reaction to a situation or interaction that signals a disagreement of some kind. Conflict also consists of the actions that we take to express our feelings, articulate our perceptions, and get our needs met in a way that has the potential for interfering with someone else's ability to get his or her needs met (Meyer, 2004).

Conflict is a process of social interaction involving a struggle over claims to resources, power and status, beliefs, and other preferences and desires. The aims of the parties in conflict may extend from simply attempting to gain acceptance of a

preference, or securing a resource advantage, to the extremes of injuring or eliminating opponents (Bisno, 1988). The conflict amongst individuals may also be increasing in both private and public sector organizations (Havenga, 2005).

Conflict that occurs in organization need not be destructive, provided the emergency associated with conflict harnessed and directed towards problem solving and organizational improvement, however managing conflict effectively requires that all parties understand the nature of conflict, in the workplace.

The dysfunctional view of organizational conflicts imbedded in the nation that organization are created to manufacture goods by creating structure that perfectly define job responsibilities, authority and other' job functions, like a clockwork, watch each "Cog knows where it fits, knows how it relates to other part. This traditional view of organization value orderliness; stability and the repression of any conflict that occurs. Using the timepiece analogy we can see the sense in this. What would happen to traditional watches decide to become less traditional, and redefine their role in the system?

To the "Traditional" organizational thinkers, conflict implies that the organization is not designed or structured correctly or adequately common remedies would be to further elaborate job descriptions, authorities and responsibilities, increase the use of central power (discipline), separate conflicting members etc.

This view of, organization and conflict problems. Unfortunately most of us consciously or unconsciously value some of the characteristic of this "orderly" environment. Problem arise when we not realize that this ways of looking at organization and conflict only fits organization that work in routine ways where innovation and change are virtually eliminated.

The functional view of organizational conflict sees conflicts as a productive process, one that can stimulate members of the organization to increase their knowledge and skills and their contribution to the organizational innovation and productivity unlike the position maintained above, this more modern approach organization then NEEDS conflict so that diverging views can be put on the table, and new views of doing things can be created.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

Conflict in an employment relationship has been an issue of continuing interest and debate. Conflict is a common occurrence in organizational life. It occurs when a desire goal or objective, the desire to obtain more in both economic (wages and benefit) and non-economic (contract provisions and operation practices) areas. Labour union also expects to make these gains via the bargaining process, the grievance and arbitration procedure and management default.

The organized private sector on the other hand, resists all efforts of the union to restrict management freedom to make decision necessary to run business

profitably. Conflict in organized private sector like banks is endemic and such various procedures have been developed for the available amicable settlement of these disputes. One of such procedures lies in the institutionalization of grievance device like collective resolution of these conflicts determine the success or otherwise of the organization. Organizational leaders need to manage conflicts between individuals in order to have a positive effect on organization. Conflict management is necessities that must be ensured in any organization, as no organization actually exist without the existence of conflict. This is the essence for the need to understand the word conflict.

Many of the studies on the effect of conflict management on organizational performance were done outside Nigeria. These studies particularly focus on educational institutions and manufacturing organizations. Research on conflict management and bank organizational performance are very few. In Nigeria, most of the available studies about conflict management such as Adebile and Ojo (2012), Osioma, Osioma and Chukwuemeka (2012), Bankole and Lawal (2012), Fatile and Adejuwon (2011), Ige, Adeyeye and Aina (2011), and Obasan (2011) investigated causes of conflicts across various organizational settings and suggested several measures or strategies for managing organizational conflict. These researches were also theoretical studies whose findings were subjectively based on researchers' personal opinions. It is noted that the past studies did not give attention

to the impact of conflict management on organizational performance, as well as highlighting effective conflict management strategy that can stimulate better organization performance. It is perceived that the strategies developed by management to resolve or manage conflicts could increase subordinates' satisfaction and subordinates with high levels of satisfaction are more likely to be committed to the organization, thereby, improving organizational performance. This study set out to find out the impact of conflict management on effective and efficient service delivery and performance in banking industry in Nigeria. Given the fact that conflict is inevitable in organizations (a normal part of organizational life) and banks occupy a delicate position in the economic equation of any country such that their (good or bad) performance invariably affects the economy of the country (Wilson 2006), it is important to research into how banks manage their conflicts.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the study is to know the effect of conflict management on organization effectiveness, specifically the objective include to:

1. Examine the effect of Collaborating strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations.
2. Ascertain the effect compromising strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the objectives the following research questions were formulated to guide this study

1. To what extent does Collaborating strategy affect client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations?
2. To what degree does Compromising strategy influence client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations?

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses which are stated in the null form are formulated for the purpose of the study:

H01: There is no significant effect of collaborative strategy on clients/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations.

H02: There is no significant effect of compromising strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations.

2.0 Conceptual Framework

2.1 Concept of Industrial Conflict

According to Nicholas and Keczy (1981) industrial conflict can be defined as "the total range of behaviour and attitude that express opposition and divergent orientation between industrial owners and managers on the one hand and working people and their organization on the other hand. Furthermore conflict is a situation of disagreement between two parties. A conflict situation is therefore one that is

characterized by the inability of those concerned to iron out their difference and this does not necessarily have to result in strike.

According to Ibeku A. (1982) industrial relation can simply be defined as the resolution of industrial conflict. Conflict between management and union workers occur and under this circumstance the best tool of the union is strike. Trade dispute usually center around pay increase, employees, dissatisfaction, benefits and other things affecting the conditions of work.

Conflict management according to Obisi-Chisi (1996) consists of diagnostic processes, inter-personal-styles, negotiating strategies and other interventions that are designed to avoid unnecessary and conflict and reduce or resolve excessive conflict.

2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Hierarchical effectiveness is the degree or degree which the association achieves its proposed objectives (Vigoda, 2003; Sowa et al., 2004). Effectiveness is measured as far as achievement of results (Etzioni 1960). Additionally, authoritative effectiveness can be characterized as a state in which the association:

- (i) Achieves its missions,
- (ii) Secures the capital it requires,
- (iii) Works under anxiety assuaged conditions,
- (iv) Keeps up its customers glad and,

(v) Tries to keep the representatives satisfied

(Marquardt, 2002; Swanson and Holton, 2009). "Effectiveness" implies diverse things to various associations, yet we can concur that it implies survival and a focused edge in the 21st Century (Mihaicz, 2012). According to Richard et al. (2009), authoritative effectiveness catches hierarchical execution in addition to the bunch interior execution results ordinarily connected with more productive or powerful operations and other outside measures that identify with contemplations that are more extensive than those essentially connected with financial valuation, for example, corporate social duty.

Compromising

Compromising is middle in both confidence and helpfulness. While compromising, an individual has the target of finding a convenient, commonly worthy arrangement that somewhat fulfills the two gatherings. Compromising may mean part the distinction, trading concessions, or looking for a brisk center ground position (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974).

Spaho (2013) proposed "compromising requires accomplishing of harmony amongst individual and regular interests" Rahim (2002) said compromising style includes give-and-take whereby the two gatherings of the conflict enthusiastically surrender and comment a commonly adequate choice. For this situation there is no champ or failure.

Client/Customer Satisfaction

According to Neupane (2014), Customers/clients are the principal part for the achievement of any business. In this way, estimation of customer satisfaction is getting to be noticeably essential for the long haul effectiveness of any association. Wilson (2002) contends that client satisfaction is equivocal and complex in nature, and it frequently comprises of different parts that are measured with various strategies under various conditions.

Customer/Client satisfaction is a component of the administration quality that is esteemed by customers. Client satisfaction is the discernment or judgment made by customers for administrations got (Ariani, 2015). Customer satisfaction is an element of the administration quality that is seen and esteemed by customers. Customer satisfaction is the recognition or judgment made by customers for administrations it gets. Satisfaction can likewise be a man's sentiments of delight or disillusionment that outcomes from contrasting an item's apparent execution or result with their desires (Kotler& Keller, 2009, p. 789).

As indicated by Cochran (2003), benefits and incomes are just the consequences of satisfying customers' desires and needs. As indicated by Chen (2004), comprehension of customer satisfaction level may help an organization to upgrade their customer administrations. The higher customer satisfaction prompts more elevated amount of repurchase goal, customer support and maintenance of

customers. Also, devotion and higher satisfaction prompts increment income, money streams and benefit of the firm (Reichheld, 1996).

Quality of work-life (QWL)

Cummings and Worley (1997) said quality work life is a "Nonexclusive idea that covers a man's emotions about each measurement of work, and a mindset about individuals, work and association that includes a worry for representative prosperity and authoritative effectiveness". Feldman (1993) characterized Quality Work Life as the nature of connection amongst representatives and the aggregate workplace.

Quality work-life is an exhaustive way

to deal with an organization to make employees work more than others and give more prominent employment satisfaction (Balc, 1995; Travis, 1995). Sirgy et al. (2001) characterized quality work life as "not exclusively representatives' feelings, mentalities and assumptions about their activity yet in addition translation of all conditions and satisfaction of workers needs by the representatives and also their view of this satisfaction and conditions".

2.3 Theoretical Framework

BEHAVIOURAL OR CONTEMPORARY THEORY GILBERT & FORBES (1970)

The behavioral or contemporary view, also known as the human relations view, emerged in the late 1940s and held sway through the 1970s. It argues that conflict is

natural and inevitable in all organizations and that it may have either a positive or a negative effect, depending on how the conflict is handled. Performance may increase with conflict, but only up to a certain level, and then decline if conflict is allowed to increase further or is left unresolved. This approach advocates acceptance of conflict and rationalizes its existence. The interactionist view assumes that conflict is necessary to increase performance. While the behavioural approach accepts conflict, the interactionist view encourages conflict based on the belief that a harmonious, peaceful, tranquil, too-cooperative project organization is likely to become static, apathetic, stagnant, and unable to respond to change and innovation. This approach encourages managers to maintain an appropriate level of conflict—enough to keep organizations self-critical, viable, creative, and innovative.

2.4 EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Hotepo et al. (2010) investigate the effect of organizational conflict on organizational performance. The study employs descriptive research design and uses questionnaire to collect data from 96 managers in some selected Airlines, Road Transport and Insurance companies in Lagos Metropolis. The research revealed that limited resources is the major cause of conflict and that conflicts have both negative and positive effects on organization, but when managed properly, the positive effects can be used to encourage organizational innovativeness and build cooperation among the employees.

Uchendu, Anijaobi-Idem and Odigwe (2013) examined the relationship that exists between principals' conflict management and organizational performance in Cross River State, Nigeria. The authors employed questionnaire to gather their data. The instrument was a 4 point likert type scale consisting 32 items. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used in analyzing the data. The result of the analysis revealed that, there is a significant relationship between principals' conflict management in terms of teacher-teacher conflict (TTC), teacher-student conflict (TSC), principal-teacher conflict (PTC) and organizational performance.

Adomi and Anie (2006) investigate the pattern of conflict management in Nigerian libraries. The researchers employed descriptive design and questionnaire to collect data from professional and para-professional staff of three Nigerian University libraries. Majority of the respondents perceive conflict as positive and can be stimulated by library managers. The study further found out that interpersonal conflicts are the dominant conflicts in Nigerian libraries, and accommodation ranks highest as technique of conflict avoidance.

Rahim (2001) reported a positive correlation between democratic management styles and organizational stability. He noted that democratic strategies would promote inclusion in decision and by consequence workers identification with decisions and commitment to the organization. Schramm-Nielsen (2002) indicated that a confrontation style dealing with group conflict was used to a significant degree

in higher than in lower performing organizations. Lang (2009) commented on the integrating style of handling conflict which shows that this style results in high joint benefits for the parties. While Rahim (2004) have suggested that the nature of leadership power in an organization mediates the needs of conflict management strategies. Thus, organisational stability may be maintained even when the leader is low in conflict management because workers sometimes exhibit acceptance behaviour over the superior's attitude thus reflecting apathy and subjugation with little manifestation of aggression (Kilmann, 2008).

Kazimoto (2013) analyzed the elements of a conflict management process and leadership organizational change and the benefits of managing conflict. The author concludes that leadership approaches are the key important factors for conflict management. The study recommends that managers in various organizations should encourage open communication policy, so that all employees get the right information at the right time.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Survey research design was deemed most appropriate for this research. It involves obtaining information directly from a group of individuals by passing out questionnaire. Such questions may be presented orally; on paper or in combination

so far the response to the questions comes from the person (participant) or persons (participants) addressed in the questionnaires. The beauty of survey method lies in the versatility. According to Asika (2000), the survey is the only practical way to procure many types of research information as well as the most economical way in many other situations. Where other methods are possible, they are likely to be more difficult and expensive.

It is also believed that survey methods are most appropriate when a researcher aimed at describing or producing some phenomena. This is because they rarely involve complex manipulation of independent variables or random assignment to conditions. They are generally not used for testing cause and effect hypothesis.

3.2 POPULATION OF STUDY

This study takes a critical look at conflict management in Nigerian organization. As it affects organizational effectiveness, the Nigerian organizations were considered as the sample population. To maximally achieve the objective of this research, a purposive sampling method was applied to these Nigerian organizations.

Age of Nigerian organization s was used as the first criterion. A branch that is above 20 years is expected to have fully imbibed the Nigerian organization conflict management policy. This led to the selection of 15 Nigerian organizations at first for the survey. The second criterion used was a branch with a minimum of 200

staff members; an indicator that such a branch has about four core business departments in line with management. Therefore, this researcher came up with (a side the head office) 15 Nigerian organizations that are above 20 years that have a minimum of 200 members of staff. Each of them can be said to be a true representation of a typical Nigerian organization in terms of core business functions and conflict management.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

The need to enhance easy comprehension and analysis prompted the use of the frequency distribution table to present the data gathered. The tools used in analyzing the data collected include simple percentages, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The study also employed Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) method to determine the effect of conflict management on organization effectiveness. The regression model is represented as:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y = Organization Effectiveness (OE)

α = Constant Term

β = Beta coefficients

X1 = Collaborating strategy (CS)

X2 = Compromising strategy (CS)

$\epsilon =$ Error Term

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Summary of hypothesis test

H₁: there is significant effect of collaborative strategy on clients/customer satisfaction.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	177.612	1	177.612	34.871	.000 ^b
	Residual	664.135	109	7.141		
	Total	841.747	110			

Dependent Variable: conflict management

Predictors: (Constant), organizational effectiveness

The Anova table above show that the F value is at 34.871 and the sig level is at .000 which is lesser than .05, that is the probability level. This signifies that there is significant effect of collaborative strategy on clients/customer satisfaction in Nigeria organizations. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there no significant effect of collaborative strategy on clients/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organization is rejected.

H₁: compromising strategy significantly influences client/customer satisfaction.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.252	1	2.252	4.549	.000 ^b
	Residual	839.495	109	9.027		
	Total	841.747	110			

Dependent Variable: organizational effectiveness

Predictors: (Constant), compromising strategy.

The Anova table above shows that the F statistics at 4.549 and the significant level at .000 which is lesser than the probability of .05. This therefore means that compromising strategy significantly influences client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organization. There the null hypothesis which states that compromising strategy does not significantly influence client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organization is rejected.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

As earlier indicated, the research investigated the effect of conflict management on organization effectiveness in Nigerian organizations. To explore the findings, the discussion of the findings was guided by the objectives and research questions stated in chapter one of this thesis. The study aimed at getting answers to research questions referred to above. And it revealed that there is significant effect of conflict management on organization effectiveness in Nigerian organizations. Also, the study revealed that effect of conflict management on organization effectiveness.

5.0 Summary of findings

The study aimed at investigating the effect of conflict management on organization effectiveness. The research was also in response to the gap in scholarly work in the area of organizational competitiveness. The followings are the objectives of the study through which the study was centred on:

1. Examine the effect of Collaborating strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations.
2. Ascertain the effect of compromising strategy on client/customer satisfaction in guaranty Nigerian organizations.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that:

1. There is significant effect of Collaborating strategy on client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations
2. Compromising strategy influence client/customer satisfaction in Nigerian organizations

5.3Recommendations

The study raised pertinent policy issues, which should be accorded priority attention for development. However, in drawing up these policy issues, we will be guided by the following critical success factors of manpower planning and training in Nigeria in particular:

- 1) Government policies and strategies that support the conflict management and organizational effectiveness to enhance economic growth. The sum allocated to the economic sector has always fallen short of the UNESCO recommendation of 26%. If

government has any interest in developing conflict management and effectiveness in different organization in the economic sector, government must make deliberate effort to continually increase budgetary allocation to trade union to meet their request. Head of civil service should formulate policy programmes where government Agencies and Parastatals forward their strategy on conflict management, with a plan to mitigate between conflict management and organizational effectiveness

- 2) Labour union to build up the base for conflict management and resolve issues that can hinder economic growth and organization effectiveness for long term investments. Government agencies and private sectors through their Human Resource department should map-out long term conflict resolution programmes that are in line with the objectives of the organization and those that match employee's abilities and skills that will enhance effective performance. Also, government should make it compulsory for banking and financial institution worker to undergo relevant training programmes especially in the senior cadre before being promoted to the next level.

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