

Conflict Management as Correlate of Secondary School Organizational Performance in Ogun State**Muraina Kehinde Olubunmi¹ and Akinbode Olusola Samuel²**¹Department of Educational Management, Tai Solarin University of Education,²Department of Educational Foundations and Management, FCE, Abeokuta¹ekutikehindeolubunmi@yahoo.com; ²akinbode.olusola@gmail.com**Abstract**

This study examined the correlation between conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun state, Nigeria. The study used descriptive survey design. A sample of 100 public secondary schools out of 474 in Ogun State, 100 principals out of 474 principals, and 1000 teachers out of 15320 teachers in the state was drawn for the study using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The study developed and used two sets of questionnaires tagged "Principal Conflict Management Style Questionnaire (PCMSQ)" and "School Organizational Performance Questionnaire (SOPQ)" with correlation coefficient (r) of 0.74 and 0.77 respectively. The inferential statistic of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient was employed to analyse the data, and the null hypotheses developed for the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between competitive conflict management, collaborative conflict management, compromising conflict management, accommodating conflict management, avoiding conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State. It is therefore recommended among others that the secondary school principals should be trained on conflict management strategies and their appropriate uses to enhance school organizational performance. Finally, the teachers should at all times encourage collaboration and harmony among themselves so as to improve school performance and in turn achieve school goals and objectives.

Keywords: Conflict Management; Organizational performance; Competitive; Collaborative; Compromising; Accommodating; Avoiding.

Introduction

Performance is a multifaceted feature that depends on many aspects, including work values and organizational commitment (Gutierrez, Candela, & Carver, 2012). As an indicator of productivity, performance has been highly demanded throughout the history of education, either from teachers or from students. Bhusan (2007) saw organizational performance as the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission through sound management, strong governance and a persistent rededication to achieving result. According to Beard (2011), where basic pay is given to employee based on the employees' skill levels and on the experience. This will improve the employee productivity. Inadequate basic pay as a monetary reward also give a great impact to the employee performance such as lateness, absenteeism, low performance, feeling of grievances and other which can bring a major problem to the organization (Omolayo & Owolabi, 2007).

Conflict remains an integral part of any organization since human beings are social beings who must relate his environment via communication on a daily basis. In the process of relationship with others within the society especially in the work place, conflict is likely to surface among colleagues on certain issues. Conflict is inherent in organizations, and managing it is a function of the leaders. As the nature of organizations has evolved over time, so have the role of conflict in them and the work of the leader in responding to conflict situations. Tschannen-Moran (2001) claimed that conflict refers to some form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within individuals or 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 pertains to the opposing ideas and actions of different entities, thus resulting in an antagonistic state. Azamosa (2004) observed that conflicts involve the total range of behaviours and attitudes that is in opposition between owners/managers on the one hand and working people on the other. It is a state of disagreement over issues of substance or emotional antagonism and may arise due to anger, mistrust or personality clashes.

Greg (2012) affirmed that conflict is inevitable and has the potential for beauty, but at the same time, there is also a "beast" lurking in it if we mishandle our conflicts. This is so because no two people have the same expectation, thought, opinions or needs. Thus, as posited by McNamara (2013) conflict is not the problem, however, poor

management of the conflict. Conflict is problems when it hampers productivity, lowers morale, causes more and continues conflicts cause's inappropriate behaviours. It should be noted that conflict can be both disruptive and constructive. Conflict is disruptive if it lowers the morale of people, leads to a poor self-concept, and reduces intergroup cooperation (Van Deventer, Kruger, Van der Merwe, Prinsloo & Steinman, 2003). Conflict is constructive if it clarifies issues of importance, solves problems, and helps in the building of cohesiveness among people (Robbins, 2000).

Flippo (2012) stated that the major factor militating against organizational productivity is conflict between individual groups of individuals and the management. In any work situation, people are bound to have different interests and aspirations which may tend to conflict with each other. Hence, management is committed to pursuing a goal of profit maximization policies, while the workers through their unions, what higher wages and lucrative welfare packages which tends to result in higher cost of doing business to the management. Conflict in an organization will depend on the degree with which the manpower is met with opposition in protecting their interest, values and goals.

Damachi (2009) emphasized that if the workers right and employee prerogative are trampled upon, it could also cause conflict. These include pay, condition of service, and fringe benefits among others. Additionally, the following are other sources of conflicts within an organization; sharing of resources manpower, money materials, equipment and space required among departments. Resources are very scarce; people will always have to compete for them and the end result will lead to conflict. In majority of the cases, it is the way in which people used to decide to respond to those disagreement that would identity whether a conflict situation might result, or not. To most managers therefore, the issue is not whether conflict will occur, but how they will effectively respond to it.

Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and also establishing a structure for management of conflict on an environment (The Foundation Coalition, 2006). Kuhn & Poole (2000) viewed conflict management as the practice of identifying and handling conflict in a sensible, fair and efficient manner. Conflict management requires such skills as effective communicating, problem-solving and negotiating Conflict management involves implementing strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict. Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills and establishing a structure for management of conflict in your environment (Rahim, 2002). Van Tonder, Havenga & Visagie (2008) identified the following as the manifestations of conflict: decline in performance; hostility towards colleagues; decline in cooperation; experiencing of depression; contemplating job change; withdrawing from colleagues and developing health problems.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find out the correlation between conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun state.

Nigeria. Specificity, this study:

1. examined the relationship between competitive conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State, Nigeria.
2. examined the relationship between collaborative conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.
3. found out the relationship between compromising conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.
4. explored the relationship between accommodating conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.
5. found out the relationship between avoiding conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the course of the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between competitive conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between collaborative conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between compromising conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between accommodating conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between avoiding conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Research Procedure

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. A sample of 100 public secondary schools out of 474 in Ogun State, 100 principals out of 474 principals, and 1000 teachers out of 15320 teachers in the state was drawn for the study using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The study developed and used two sets of questionnaires tagged “Principal Conflict Management Style Questionnaire (PCMSQ)” and “School Organizational Performance Questionnaire (SOPQ)” with correlation coefficient (r) of 0.74 and 0.77 respectively. The questionnaires have two sections; the first section elicits information on the respondents’ demographic data while the second section contains 10 items each that solicit responses from the principals and teachers on the subject matters respectively. They were constructed on a 4-point Likert format ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’. The inferential statistic of Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation coefficient was employed to analyse the data, and the null hypotheses developed for the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

The results of the study are presented according to the hypotheses developed for the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between competitive conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Table 1: Relationship between Competitive Conflict Management and Secondary School Organizational Performance

	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Competitive conflict management	School organizational performance
Pearson correlation	10.25	2.66	1	.692*
Competitive conflict management Sig (2 - tailed)				.000
N			1322	1322
Pearson correlation	10.80	3.42	.692*	1
School organizational performance Sig (2-tailed)			.000	
N			1322	1322

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Decision: Significant

The competitive conflict management was correlated with secondary school organizational performance. From the Table 1 above, the result showed a Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = 0.692$; $p < 0.05$ which means that the hypothesis, which state that, there is no significant relationship competitive conflict management and secondary school organizational performance is rejected. The competitive conflict management has significant relationship with secondary school organizational performance.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between collaborative conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Table 2: Relationship between Collaborative Conflict Management and Secondary School Organizational Performance

	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Collaborative conflict management	School organizational performance
Pearson correlation	14.94	5.03	1	.904**
Collaborative conflict management Sig (2 - tailed)				.000
N			1322	1322
Pearson correlation	10.80	3.42	.904**	1
School organizational performance Sig (2-tailed)			.000	
N			1322	1322

** Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Decision: Significant

The collaborative conflict management was correlated with secondary school organizational performance. From the Table 2 above, the result showed a Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = 0.904$; $p < 0.05$ which means that the hypothesis, which state that, there is no significant relationship collaborative conflict management and secondary school organizational performance is rejected. The collaborative conflict management has significant relationship with secondary school organizational performance.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between compromising conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Table 3: Relationship between Compromising Conflict Management and Secondary School Organizational Performance

	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	compromising conflict management	School organizational performance
Pearson correlation	18.69	4.80	1	.632**
Compromising conflict management Sig (2 - tailed)				.000
N			1322	1322
Pearson correlation	10.80	3.42	.632**	1
School organizational performance Sig (2-tailed)			.000	
N			1322	1322

** Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Decision: Significant

The compromising conflict management was correlated with secondary school organizational performance. From the Table 3 above, the result showed a Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = 0.632$; $p < 0.05$ which means that the hypothesis, which state that, there is no significant relationship compromising conflict management and secondary school organizational performance is rejected. The compromising conflict management has significant relationship with secondary school organizational performance.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between accommodating conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Table 4: Relationship between Accommodating Conflict Management and Secondary School Organizational Performance

	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Accommodating conflict management	School organizational performance
Pearson correlation Accommodating conflict management Sig (2 - tailed) N	33.50	13.05	1 1322	.447** .000 1322
Pearson correlation School organizational performance Sig (2-tailed) N	10.80	3.42	.447** .000 1322	1 1322

** Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Decision: Significant

The accommodating conflict management was correlated with secondary school organizational performance. From the Table 4 above, the result showed a Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = 0.447$; $p < 0.05$ which means that the hypothesis, which state that, there is no significant relationship accommodating conflict management and secondary school organizational performance is rejected. The accommodating conflict management has significant relationship with secondary school organizational performance.

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between avoiding conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State.

Table 5: Relationship between Avoiding Conflict Management and Secondary School Organizational Performance

	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Avoiding Conflict Management	School organizational performance
Pearson correlation Avoiding Conflict Management Sig (2 - tailed) N	15.78	5.37	1 1322	.288** .000 1322
Pearson correlation School organizational performance Sig (2-tailed) N	10.80	3.42	.288** .000 1322	1 1322

** Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Decision: Significant

The avoiding conflict management was correlated with secondary school organizational performance. From the Table 5 above, the result showed a Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = 0.288$ $p < 0.05$ which means that the hypothesis, which state that, there is no significant relationship avoiding conflict management and secondary school organizational performance is rejected. The avoiding conflict management has significant relationship with secondary school organizational performance.

Discussion of Findings

This study found that there is significant relationship between competitive conflict management, collaborative conflict management, compromising conflict management, accommodating conflict management, avoiding conflict management and secondary school organizational performance in Ogun State. This result might not be unconnected the fact that competitive conflict management approach has to do with expertise or persuasive ability to exercise control over the subordinates. Collaborative conflict management approach involves the use of participative leadership style, to foster an environment of cooperation and collaboration that typically enables employees to function effectively as a team. This will enable the school principal quickly diagnoses issues that hinder team productivity, takes prompt corrective action to resolve disagreements and helps the team members to develop the skills necessary to resolve conflicts on their own, without management intervention.

Also, compromising conflict management approach makes both sides in a conflict give up something in order to gain an agreement. This will help the secondary school teachers overcome interpersonal conflicts and promote acceptance of other cultures and experiences in the workplace. Accommodating conflict management approach promotes harmony and fosters a productive work environment. Avoiding conflict management approach may involve defining the root cause of the problem, encouraging active listening, negotiating a resolution and reminding participants to forgive each other once the conflict is over, this will go a long way in fostering a productive team (Graham, 2009). The result of this present study is in agreement with the finding of Friedman, Tidd, Currall, and Tsai (2000), who found that the most common used conflict resolution strategy among the employees as well as the management is the use of avoiding approach. This present study's finding also agrees with Rahim (2002), who identified that compromising conflict management positively correlated with team performance in the organization. It should be noted that if conflict is not properly handled in the organization, it can degenerate to organizational failure. This is in agreement with Fabunmi and Alimba (2010) in their study that principals' poor management of conflict in secondary schools result in poor academic performance.

Conclusions

Conflict is a normal part of any social organization. The challenge of conflict lies in how one chooses to deal with it. Utmost priority should be given to conflict management by the school principals in order to achieve school goals. This study therefore concluded that both competitive, collaborative, compromising, accommodating, and avoiding conflict management approaches are very effective in managing conflict in secondary schools; therefore, the secondary schools' principals should be versatile in the use of these conflict management strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, it is therefore recommended that seminars should be organized regularly by the ministry of education to train the principals and teachers about conflict in organization, its causes and resolution. The secondary school principals should also be trained on conflict management strategies and their appropriate uses to enhance school organizational performance. Finally, the teachers should at all times encourage collaboration and harmony among themselves so as to improve school performance and in turn achieve school goals and objectives.

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