

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF
DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF DEPOSIT MONEY
BANKS IN EDO CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>The study examined the relationship between conflict management and employee performance of Deposit Money Banks in Edo Central Senatorial District, Edo State. The study was anchored on Relational Dialectics Theory (RDT), introduced by Leslie Baxter and Barbara Matgomery (1988). Survey research design and primary data source were employed by the researcher. Questionnaire was used to elicit information from respondents of the deposit money banks in Edo Central, Edo State. A population of one hundred and seventy-two (172) was used by the researcher. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the collected data. Findings obtained from a test of the hypothesis reveals that there exists a strong significant positive relationship between collaboration strategy and employee performance (employee commitment) since r value=0.79 (79%). Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that there exists a strong significant positive relationship between Conflict Management and Employee Performance of the studied Deposit Money Banks in Edo Central Senatorial District, Edo State. Based on that, the researcher recommended that management of the studied deposit money banks should strive towards an effective adoption of collaboration strategy of conflict management as it could impact the performance level of employees.</p>	<p>Conflict Management, Collaboration Strategy, Employee Performance, Employee Commitment.</p>

Introduction

Increasing complexity in the operating environment of business organizations provide fertile ground for conflicts in the workplace. Workplaces tend to breed conflict, including those resulting from harassment, discrimination and tribal differences (between employees;between employees and their managers; particularly newly assigned managers). Conflict among workers in an organization is inevitable. If it is managed properly, it could serve as a catalyst for innovations and can have a positive effect on organizational performance (Obasan, 2021). Conversely, unmanaged conflict negatively impacts employee performance. When organizational managers ignore workplace conflict, they send a notice that unsatisfactory behaviours and attitudes are acceptable (Abdul & Sehar, 2015).

Conflict is a fragment of organizational existence and may occur between individuals, between individual and group, and between groups (Adomie&Anie, 2015). While conflict is generally perceived as dysfunctional, it could also be beneficial because it may mean that the issue on ground ought to be examined from different perspectives. Conflict has both positive and negative implications (Russell & Jerome cited in Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul-Azeez & Ajemunigbohun, 2020). It could be positive when it encourages creativity, new countenance at old conditions, the vindication of points of view, and the offshoot of human skill to help solve interpersonal differences. On the other hand, conflict can be negative when it creates resistance to change, establishes unrest in organization or interpersonal relations, fosters distrust, builds perceived defeat, or widens the gap of misunderstanding.

Conflict is described as the presence of discrepancy that occurs when goals, interests or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible and frustrate each other's attempt to achieve goals in an organization (Kazimoto, 2018). Conflict could evolve as a result of communication gap between individuals in a business organization (Abdul & Sehar, 2015). Workplace conflict is a way of life in any institution as long as a group of persons compete for jobs, power, respect and recognition (Adomie & Anie, 2015). Therefore, the duty of management is not to suppress or avoid all conflicts, but to manage them in an appropriate manner so as to enhance and prevent them from affecting employee performance level within the organization.

A constructively managed conflict induces a positive performance, while destructively managed conflict heats up the work environment to bring closely dislocation and polarization of the entire workplace with reduction in output level and organizational performance (Akanji, 2018). A well-managed conflict aims at the enhancement of employee performance which is necessary for organizational well-being. Through good conflict management strategies, defects in the organizational decision-making are exposed which may prompt managers to seek changes required for positive solutions. Hence, management are disadvantaged if they fail to seek adequate conflict management strategies aimed at impacting employee performance, because the outcome of the application of an effective strategy will result in good communication, time management, good cooperation and supplement corporate efficiencies (Obasan, 2021). Amusan, (2016) contends that some conflict management strategies are competing, collaboration, accommodating, compromise and avoidance.

This study focused on collaboration strategy. Empirical research findings have provided insights into causative factors of workplace conflict. Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul -Azeez and Ajemunigbohun (2020) found inadequate resources, different expectation, competition, failure of cooperation, interdependence and communication gap as factors that have caused conflicts in the Nigerian banking industry. In several establishments in Nigeria today particularly organizations in Edo State, internal (intrapersonal) and interpersonal conflicts are consuming so much organizational time that these organizations tend to treat conflict management as if it is their primary duty (Ojielo, 2015). This development is largely due to the inability of management of these organizations to handle conflict management the way they handle other organizational factors like information, human resources, and financial management systems. This is evidenced by unhealthy rivalry between and among sub-units and individuals within an organization, concealing of vital information in workplaces (Ojielo, 2015). The focal point of this study is deposit money banks in Edo Central Senatorial District of Edo State, Nigeria.

Deposit money banks are basically saddled with the responsibility of rendering quality financial services to customers. As a result of the disagreement that ensues between one manager and another manager, superior and sub-ordinate as well as peers from time to time, these unresolved disputes and

disagreement disrupt the quality assurance model postulated by these financial institutions. Previous management scholars have suggested different conflict management strategies to the management of these institutions. Amusan's (2016) study of five (5) brewing firms in South-East Nigeria agrees with this observation. His study revealed that the inability of managers of Nigerian firms to bring conflicting parties together could impact employee performance level. Obasan (2021) also examined conflict management as it relates to employee performance of First bank Nigeria Plc, Lagos state. Findings of the study revealed that unresolved conflict could make the work environment toxic. And a toxic work environment could retard organizational performance.

Despite the suggestions of some previous scholars such as Amusan (2016) and Obasan (2011) observations of the researcher reveals that there seems to be traces of unresolved conflicts in business organizations in Edo State. The overall aim of this study is to examine the relationship between conflicting management and employee performance of some selected deposit money banks in Edo Central Senatorial District of Edo State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study seeks to determine the relationship between collaboration strategy and employee commitment.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Conflict Management

Conflict management is seen as a broad thought involving conflict resolution and all forms of mechanisms used in the effective management of conflict within and outside the business environment (Mohammed, 2006). According to Mohammed (2006), it is a long organizational activity aimed at reducing the negative impact of conflict whenever it is about to arise. In other words, conflict management is an organizational process whereby people handle grievances, stand up for what they consider to be right against what they consider wrong. Conflict management requires a group of analytical and human skills. It influences individual wellbeing, individual achievement and organizational accomplishments (Carsten, Arne, Bianca, Esther, & Aukje as cited in Yusuf & Anuar, 2014). As such, conflict management involves several processes necessary for limiting the negative aspect of conflict and to breed the positive aspects of conflict with the motive of improving learning and individual or group outcomes, including productivity or merit in an organizational circumstance (Rahim, 2011). Conflict management is deemed to be successful if it has achieved its aim by procuring a win-win approach or consensual agreement which is acceptable to both parties. From the foregoing, conflict management can be referred to as the various procedures used by managers to resolve disputes in an organization.

Dontigney (2018) contends that some conflict management strategies are accommodation strategy, avoidance strategy, collaboration strategy, compromise strategy and competition strategy. Also, Amusan, (2016) contends that some conflict management strategies are competing, collaboration, accommodating, compromise and avoidance. This study focused on collaboration strategy. This conflict management strategy was chosen by the researcher because the researcher seeks to ascertain the effect the chosen strategy could have on the performance of the chosen deposit money banks in Edo Central senatorial district.

Collaboration Strategy

There is cooperation and the hunt for a mutually beneficial outcome, when each party to conflict desire to fully satisfy the concerns of all parties, that is high concern for self and others (Ezeanyim, 2010). As such, the aim of the parties is to solve the conflict by clarifying differences rather than by accommodating various points of probability through openness, exchange of information, and evaluation of differences so as to proffer solution acceptable to both parties. This strategy builds a friendly environment and an atmosphere where both employers and employees feel free and confident to share their knowledge and perception in order to arrive at a single view point. Prein as cited in Rahim (2005) is of the opinion that this kind has two distinctive elements: conflict and problem solving. Rahim (2005) asserts that collaboration strategy is useful for effective distribution of complex problems especially when one party alone cannot solve the problem. Collaboration strategy is a process that creates room for a conducive atmosphere where the aggrieved parties rob mind together in order to come to a truce. Robbins, Judge, Millett and Waters-Marsh (2018) contend that collaboration strategy is used when the concerns of both parties are too important to be compromised; when intention is to learn, when the insights from people are to be merged with different perspectives; when commitment is to be gained by incorporating concerns into a consensus; when feelings that have interfered with a kinship are to be worked out, when there is a high tiers of trust; when a person does not want to have full responsibility and when it is necessary to build long-term relationships.

Employee Performance

Kotler and Armstrong (2002) assert that employee performance is measured in terms of the quality of output (goods and services) produced by the employee. Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of behavior (Armstrong, 2002). Wright and Geroy (2021) opine that employee performance is a function of organizational performance. Therefore, in order for an organization to achieve a high performance level, employee have to be motivated so as to spur their performance. Kinicki and Kreitner (2017) assert that employee performance is higher in happy and satisfied workers. Therefore, management should strive to ensure that they have a motivated workforce in order to attain firm targets. Employee performance can also be seen as the job related activities of an employee and how well they are executed. Kinicki and Kreitner (2017) opine that some employee key performance indicators are: Turnover rate, time required to complete task, product quality, return on training investment, revenue per employee, 360 degree feedback score, employee core competency profile, employee engagement level, organizational citizenship behavior, human capital value added, organizational flexibility, employee innovation, employee commitment, job satisfaction and employee turn-over intention.

Employee Commitment

Employee commitment continues to be one of the most popularly researched subjects in the field of management (Chen & Francesco, 2018). Chen and Aryee (2017) affirmed that commitment of employees is an important instrument for improving the performance of the organizations. Adekola, (2022) defined commitment as being a positive evaluation of the organization and the organizations goals. Goutam (2018) contends that employee commitment could be defined as a bond between an individual (the employee) and the organization (the employer). The level of employee commitment could be impacted by their involvement in the goal setting process of an organization. Miller and Lee

(2021) identified three types of commitment; affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

Theoretical Framework

Relational Dialectics Theory (RDT): This study leaned on Relational Dialectics Theory (RDT), introduced by Leslie Baxter and Barbara Matgomery (1988). This theory explores the method in which groups or individuals jointly manage conflict through verbal interaction to manage conflict and rebuttal as opposed to psychology. This theory focuses on maintaining relationship even through contradictions that arise and how relationships are managed through coordinated talk. RDT assumes that the kinship which are composed of opposing leanings are constantly changing, and tensions arises from intimate connection (Mayer, 2022). The main belief of RDT are: Contradictions - The thought is that the contrary has the qualities of its opposite. People could seek to be in a relationship but still requires their space; Totality - The sum comes when the opposites unite. Thus, the context is balanced with contradictions and only then it reaches totality; Process - Comprehended through various social processes. These processes simultaneously continue within a connection in a recurring manner; Praxis - The fraternization progresses with experience and both persons or groups interact and communicate effectively to meet their needs. Praxis is a thought of practicability in making decisions despite having opposing ideas and needs.

This theory is relevant to this study because when the conflicting parties of the focused deposit money banks collaborate by coming to settle their differences through face to face communication, it could impact the competitive position of the focused deposit money banks in focus.

Empirical Review

Adilo, (2019) examined conflict management and employee performance of brewing firms in South-East Nigeria. Survey design was used, a sample size of 618 was used, data were collected from five (5) brewing firms in South-East Nigeria through the questionnaire, regression analysis was used to analyze the collected data. The study revealed that all the conflict management strategies studied namely negotiation, collective bargaining, joint consultation and alternative dispute resolution and collaboration strategy were found to have significant positive closeness with employee performance.

Amusan, (2016) examined the impression of conflict management on employee performance of Sunseed Nigeria limited, Zaria. The study adopted survey formatting and is cross sectional in nature. The population of the study consists of 112 employees of Sunseed Nigeria Limited, Zaria. Multiple regression was utilized in analyzing the data. The study found that collaboration strategy and avoidance strategy have positive significant stamping on employee commitment of Sunseed Nigeria Limited, Zaria.

Olukayode (2015) investigated the stamping of conflict management on employee performance in a Nigerian manufacturing firm in Lagos. Participants comprised 250 employees selected through the use of stratified random sampling technique. Data were generated through the utility of validated structured questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze data collected from the respondents. Employing Spearman correlation analysis, the consequences of the empirical experiment showed a significantly positive association between conflict management strategies (collective bargaining, collaboration, compromise, and accommodation) and employee performance.

Abdul and Sehar(2015) examined conflict management and employee performance of Askari bankLtd, Pakistan. Survey design was used, questionnaire was the data collection tool employed, frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, variance, factor analysis and ratio analysis were applied to analyze and interpret the data collected from 201 respondents. Findings revealed a junction between collaboration strategy and employee commitment.

Taha and Gomes (2018) examined conflict management and employee performance of manufacturing firms in Bangladesh. Survey design was used, questionnaire was the data collection employed, a population of 50 respondents were used for the study, Pearson Correlation was used to analyse the collected data. Findings revealed that compromise strategy impacts the turnover intention of the focused manufacturing firms in Bangladesh.

Gap in Knowledge

None of the empirically reviewed studies examined conflict management as it relates to employee performance of deposit money banks in Edo Central Senatorial District of Edo State. This is the gap in knowledge that this study seeks to fill.

Research Methodology

Area of Study: This study was carried out in Ekpoma and Uromi which are towns in Edo Central Senatorial District of Edo State. Uromi is a town located in Esan North East Local Government Area, Edo central senatorial district, Edo State, Nigeria. It is a town originally inhabited by the Esan speaking tribe of Edo State. Ekpoma is a town located in Esan West Local Government Area, Edo central senatorial district, Edo State, Nigeria. It is a town originally inhabited by the Esan speaking tribe of Edo State.

Research Design: Survey research design has been chosen for the study. Survey research design was chosen because it enables the researcher to observe what happens to the sample elements without manipulating them.

Population Size: The following constitutes the population for this study; First Bank of Nigeria Plc, Ekpoma (26); First Bank of Nigeria Plc, Uromi (29); United Bank for Africa Plc, Ekpoma (22); United Bank for Africa Plc, Uromi (24); Access Bank Nigeria Plc, Ekpoma (18); Access Bank Nigeria Plc, Uromi (21); Fidelity Bank Nigeria Plc, Ekpoma (17); Fidelity Bank Nigeria Plc, Uromi (15). This gives a total population of one hundred and seventy-two (172). Two of the banks First bank and United bank for Africa Plc represent the old generation bank, while the other two Access bank and Fidelity bank Nigeria Plc represents the new generation banks.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique: Census or complete enumeration sampling was used for the study. This is because the study population of one hundred and seventy-two (172) is a manageable size. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents of the focused organizations.

Types of Data and Data Sources: Primary source of data was utilized for this study. It was ensured by physically visiting the deposit money banks of study through a field survey.

Instrument of Data Collection: The data collection tool employed by the researcher was the questionnaire. It was designed on a five point Likert Scale. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity of Instrument: Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure. The content and face validity test was used by the researcher. This was ensured by some management experts who made sure that all the studied variables were captured in the research instrument (questionnaire). This is a measure of the consistency of a particular instrument employed by a researcher.

Reliability of Instrument: The Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was used for the study. Suwannoppharat and Kaewsa (2015) assert that a reliability coefficient of 0.696 and above is acceptable. Therefore, a benchmark of 0.696 was used for the study. To test the reliability of the measuring instrument, 18 copies (about 10%) of the copies of the questionnaire to be distributed was administered to respondents at Uda Microfinance Bank, Ekpoma.

Table 1: Scale: Reliability Statistics for Conflict Management
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.828	15

Since the Cronbach's Alpha score of the reliability statistics for conflict management 0.828 is greater than 0.696, it shows that the instrument is reliable.

Table 2: Scale: Reliability Statistics for Employee Performance
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.814	15

Since the Cronbach's Alpha score of the reliability statistics for employee performance 0.814 is greater than 0.696, it shows that the instrument is reliable.

Techniques of Data Analysis

Mean was used to analyze the research questions earlier formulated. For the inferential statistics, the earlier formulated hypotheses were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The analysis was aided by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

Results and Discussion

Results

Analysis of Returned and Unreturned Questionnaire

Table 3 Analysis of Returned and Unreturned Questionnaire of Studied Deposit Money Banks in Edo Central Senatorial District, Edo State

Returned (Un-mutilated)	
55	1
0.12%	9
Returned (Mutilated)	
5	0
2.91%	0
Unreturned	
2	1
6.98%	0
Total Copies Administered	
72	1
00.00%	1

From Table 3 above, out of the one hundred and seventy two (172) copies of the questionnaire administered, one hundred and fifty five (155) un-mutilated copies (90.12%) were returned, five (05) mutilated copies (02.91%) were returned while 12 (06.98%) copies were not returned. Based on that, one hundred and fifty five (155) copies of the questionnaire were used for the analysis.

Analysis of Research Question Using Descriptive Statistics

This section analyzes the research questions using mean statistics. Since it's a five-point likert scale, a bench mark of 2.5 acceptance region was used by the researcher.

Research Question

What is the relationship between collaboration strategy and employee commitment?

Table 4: Collaboration Strategy

Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean
Q1	155	3.7806
Q2	155	3.7548
Q3	155	3.2774
Valid N (listwise)	155	

The mean scores of the responses from the questions relating to collaboration strategy on the studied deposit money banks are >2.5. This makes the responses acceptable for the study.

Table 5: Employee Performance (Employee Commitment)

Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean
Q1	155	3.7032
Q2	155	3.6968
Q3	155	3.2129
Valid N (listwise)	155	

The mean scores of the responses from the questions relating to employee performance (employee commitment) on the studied deposit money banks are >2.5. This makes the responses acceptable for the study.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant positive relationship between collaboration strategy and employee commitment.

Table 6: Test of Hypothesis

Correlations			
		Col_Strat	Emp_Com
Col_Strat	Pearson Correlation	1	.787**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	155	155
Emp_Com	Pearson Correlation	.787**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	155	155

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings obtained from a test of hypothesis one reveals that there exists a strong significant positive relationship between collaboration strategy and employee performance (employee commitment) since r value=0.79 (79%). Since p -value $0.00 < 0.05$, it show that the results is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Findings

Findings obtained from a test of the hypothesis revealed that there exists a significant positive relationship between collaboration strategy and employee performance. This is in tandem with the study

of Adilo, (2019) who examined conflict management and employee performance of brewing firms in South-East Nigeria. The study revealed that there exists a significant positive relationship between collaboration strategy and employee performance. The study of Abdul and Sehar(2015) who examined conflict management and employee performance of Askari bank Ltd, Pakistan is also in line with findings obtained from a test of hypothesis one. Findings revealed a relationship between collaboration strategy and employee performance. The study of Oparanma, Hamilton and Ohaka (2019) who conducted a study on managerial strategies to conflict management of not for-profit organizations in Port Harcourt also aligns with findings obtained from a test of hypothesis one. Findings obtained from a test of the hypothesis shows that there exists a significant positive relationship between collaboration strategy and employee performance.

Conclusion

Base on the findings obtained from a test of the earlier formulated hypotheses, the researcher boldly concludes that there exists a significant positive relationship between conflict management and employee performance of deposit money banks in Edo Central senatorial district of Edo State. Specifically, the researcher observed that a relationship exists between collaboration strategy and employee commitment of the studied deposit money banks in Edo State, Nigeria.

Recommendation

As a follow-up to the conclusion of the study, the researcher recommended that management of the studied deposit money banks should strive towards an effective adoption of collaboration strategy of conflict management as it could affect employee performance level.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire Items on Conflict Management and Employee Performance

Options: Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Undecided = UD, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD. Please tick (/) as it represents your view

	Questionnaire Item for Independent Variable (Conflict Management)					
No	Collaboration Strategy	SA 5	A 4	UD 3	D 2	SD 1
1	Face to face communication during conflict management in your organization by parties and mediators involved is necessary.					
2	Exchange of information by aggrieved parties during conflict management in your organization is a welcome development.					
3	Evaluation of ideas brought forth by aggrieved parties during conflict management can foster peace.					

	Dependent Variable (Employee Performance)					
	Employee Commitment					
1	You are emotionally attached to your organization.					
2	You feel carried along by your manager.					
3	You are always concerned about the progress of your organization.					