Conflict management practices and organizational teamwork in the manufacturing sector: A study of Nigerian bottling company plc

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Abstract

The problem of conflict in engaged rapport has long been a topic of discussion and debate. Traditionally, leaders have been seen solely responsible for resolving organizational disagreements, and they have often held firm views on the matter. As a result, the research looks at the effects of conflict management tactics on collaboration via an empirical lens. Moreover, simple random sampling approach was utilized to pick two hundred twenty-four (242) respondents among personnel of Nigerian bottling firm plc while two hundred and forty (240) units of the questionnaire were filled and used for analysis. The study utilized simple percentage to assess the questionnaire responses, and employed Pearson Moment Correlation to test the formulated hypotheses. However, the study found that status discrepancies significantly impact teamwork, overlapping authority significantly impacts teamwork, and insufficient resources significantly hinder teamwork. Therefore, it is recommended that a true organization recognizes its own difficulties and challenges as organizational concerns, and works together to find cooperative solutions to the identified problems. This is because the peaceful coexistence of the manufacturing unions implies the peaceful existence of the organisation.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Teamwork, Status Inconsistencies, Overlapping Authority, Scarce Resources.

Jel Classification Codes: M10, M12, M19, M50, M54, M59

1. Introduction

Conflict resolution is an essential ability for survival in today's highly competitive environment. At work or at home, confrontation is unavoidable. As a result of the unequal distribution of resources in an industry or a state, conflict emerges (Akindamola, 2017). Conflicts of interest are unavoidable as a result of the distinctive organizational character of today's work organizations, whether in the industrial or service industries. These conflicts of interest emerge in communities due to restrictions on freedom, status, and resources (Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul-Azeez, & Ajemunigbohun, 2010). As an inevitable and integral part of any employment relationship, workplace conflict is common and can take many forms, regardless of how effective management strategies are. It's a never-ending cycle that thrives in structured communities where individuals with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and ideologies engage with one another. However, disagreements in the workplace are common and can lead to solutions that benefit both the business and its employees (Osad & Osas, 2013). Kazimoto (2013) defines conflict at work as "the presence of disharmony that emerges when the objectives, interests, or standards of different individuals or groups are incompatible and block one another's endeavor to achieve objectives in an organization." Disagreement and difference of opinion amongst coworkers is a natural and inevitable result of transactional rapport, which is a kind of communication. As long as there is competition for power, positioning, security and recognition, workplace conflict will always exist in every organization (Adomie & Anie, 2015).

Therefore, it is not the job of management to completely control or settle all conflicts; rather, it is to oversee their evolution so that they do not impede organizational performance. If disagreements are managed constructively, they may lead to improved performance (Akanji, 2005). On the other hand, if they are managed destructively, they can heat up the work environment, producing dislocation and polarization of the entire group (Akanji, 2005). Thus, it follows that the goal of a well-managed conflict is to enhance organizations so as to promote performance in the workplace. Organizations may be motivated to adopt improvements and explore constructive alternatives when they discover vulnerabilities in their decision-making processes through effective conflict management tactics. Consequently, for management to improve organizational performance, disagreements must be resolved quickly. This will lead to better communication, better time management, excellent cooperation, and enhanced corporate productivity (Obasan, 2011).

An understanding of the instrumental factors contributing to conflict in the workplace has been shed by the results of the empirical research. In their study of the Nigerian service provider, Hotepo et al. (2010) found that disagreements arose due to a lack of assets, different expectations, competitiveness, a failure to collaborate, interdependence, and communication problems. Several

factors contribute to workplace conflict in the Nigerian banking sector, according to Obasan (2011). These include unacceptably low wages and working conditions, poor communication between management and staff, management's anti-union attitude, and an absence of effective methods to prevent workplace conflicts. According to Tsevendorj (2008), who also studied in the banking business for Philippian, problems with perception, values, and beliefs, as well as communication breakdown, are pretty important causes of conflict. Therefore, most organizational conflicts in the workplace are motivated by economic incompatibility.

Conflict in the workplace is inevitable; high-performing companies are those that master the art of conflict management and use it to their advantage on a regular basis to reach their objectives. Organizations in Nigeria have, as is traditional, fretted over how dispute resolution could affect the country's corporate image (Mugal & Khan, 2013). The majority of the country's research has been conducted on the manufacturing and service sectors. There has been no change in the empirical research landscape, which largely targets the industrial sector (Ebe, Iyiola & Osibanjo, 2014). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to try to fix the problem by educating industrial organization management on the strategic value of conflict management as a tool for enhancing company performance.

2.0 Literature review

2.1 Conceptual clarification

Organizational leaders had traditionally taken a hard line when it came to resolving conflicts. This method, however, fails to take into account the reality that conflict—which may have positive and negative effects on individuals—is an inevitable part of working in any business (Ebe, Iyiola & Osibanjo, 2014). According to research, many Nigerian companies nowadays treat dispute as if it were their main business, devoting so much resources to dealing with internal (intrapersonal) and interpersonal disagreements (Ojielo, 2017). One reason for this tendency is that conflict management systems are not studied as thoroughly by Nigerian executives as information, HR, and financial management systems. Rather of seeing conflict as a whole, they handle it individually, as if it were happening in a small town. Conflict has become dysfunctional in certain organizations due to the lack of logical investigation and management of workplace issues. Using Nigerian Bottling Business Plc as a case study, we investigated how different methods of conflict resolution affected administrative output in this setting. One of the overarching themes is an analysis of conflict management from an empirical perspective.

Practice teamwork; other objectives include investigating the effect of conflict resolution on teamwork building to determine the effect of work performance. Two hypotheses were generated and tested.

H1 There is no significant effect of dispute resolution on team work building

H2 There is no substantial effect of conflict soft skill on team work brainstorm

Any social system can be characterized by environmental conflict. Because of how ubiquitous it is, some have argued that it is the fundamental building block for understanding social reality (Ajala, 2003; Alimba, 2010). Conflict in human grouping is common, according to Otite (2011), since people and groups in certain sociocultural and geographical places pursue different but equally important goals. Therefore, individuals consistently perceive conflict as the foundation for growth and progress. Despite the common perception of conflict as unpleasant, unnatural, dysfunctional, and upsetting, when handled correctly, it can signal a healthy transformation (Okwuise, 2023; Edwards, 2012; Hammed & Ayantunji, 2002).

Conflict is defined as a state of considerate disagreement and difference over something that at least one party perceives as vital by Schramm-Nielsen (2002) and Azamosa (2004), respectively, and as the total range of conduct and methods that oppose detailed owners and managers and working people. Lederach (1995) provided a definition of conflict as a persistent issue stemming from fundamentally different values, objectives, and principles. Conflict is defined by Fisher et al. (2014) as an interpersonal dynamic in which two or more entities have or perceive to have competing objectives. Consequently, it dictates that conflict is not an isolated incident but rather an ongoing partnership that follows man through his whole existence.

Yesufu (2014) asserts that "conflict is a common and predictable element of everyday life." Depending on the context, the issue at hand, it might have positive or negative effects. In most cases, when people aren't on the same page, they waste time and energy, which in turn leads to decreased output, layoffs, and estrangement. Organizational conflict can take many forms, including disruptions, strikes, sabotage, absenteeism, work-to-rule, lockouts, and so on. The most common way that conflicts are expressed is through strikes. This means that there are many different ways in which conflict might show up, such as lockouts, pilfering, labor turnover, sabotage, and strikes.

Conflict is defined within the framework of work relations as the unavoidable presence of disagreements among and among any and all parties involved in the workplace. Conflict is natural and not necessarily destructive, according to many writers on the topic of conflict and industrial disputes. Rather, the result of conflict is controlled or determined by the people involved. Conflict may be seen as either essential to the work relationship or as secondary, depending on one's view

or broader assessment of the partnership's history, function, and structure. Manufacturing relations researchers have shown, both historically and now, that there is a pluralist, mixed-motive perspective of the employment relationship that holds that management and labour have competing interests and that this will lead to conflict.

On the other hand, Kazimoto (2013) defines teamwork as a technique of combined work that may involve different tasks, but commonly centers around the notion of unified duty, where each member contributes a portion of a jointly created paper document that reflects the group's shared understanding. Unlike group work, which relies on reciprocity, collaboration relies on dialogue. Discussion happens when everyone shares their perspectives and the group listens to them. Objectivity is necessary in conversation to present and pool each member's ideas appropriately. It may take longer than interchange, but with practice, a timekeeper, and a limited amount of teaching, groups can build fair arguments that are also time-efficient (Okwuise, Kifordu & Oghoghomeh, 2020). Due to the frequent sharing of duties, the natural outcomes of collaboration dialogues are mediation and submission. While no member's strength gets in their own way, the outcome always shows the best intellect and importance of each group member.

When individuals put their minds to something and work together, they form a team. The purpose of team building is to assist a group of individuals in reaching their objectives. It entails stages such as describing team goals, documenting restrictions to goal attainment, confronting identified challenges, and allowing goal fulfillment. According to Fajana (2002), teamwork involves assigning duties to each organization member, tackling trials equitably, and constantly seeking incremental advancements.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The theories that support this study are the Karl Marx Conflict theory which is the anchor theory for this study, supplemented by the Edward Hall's Iceberg Model of culture.

2.2.1 Conflict Theory

Many ideologies that emphasize class conflict have their origins in the work of the controversial German philosopher and political agitator Karl Marx (1818–1883). In Marx's conflict theory, materialist historical interpretation, dialectical analysis (dialectical materialism), seriousness toward existing social formations, and the political need of revolution or, at most, change were all pillars. Marx started with the idea that the structure of society is shaped by financial groupings, especially property ownership. Thus, one's occupation, especially that which leads to the supply of food, clothes, and housing, is the most crucial factor in determining one's social life. Everything in society was profoundly affected by the social structure of labor and the abilities utilized in production, according to Marx (Okwuise, et al., 2020). All value in society, he argued, comes from

human labor. Marx argues that the most crucial aspect of capitalist society is private property, which is characterized by a small number of individuals possessing capital.

Capitalists (the bourgeoisie) and workers (the proletariat), whose sole asset is the time they spend working, are cast as antagonistic opposites in this system. Because they cultivate their workers by paying them less than what they're worth, owners are seen as profiteers. This boils down to the crux of labor disputes. Class conflict, according to Marxist theory, is the driving force behind the incessant organizational change that occurs in all societies. The ongoing fight for control between employers and employees is seen by Marxists as an expression of the bourgeoisie's hegemonic authority and social links in the workplace. For Marxists, there is no difference between political and class conflict.

2.2.2 Edward Hall's Iceberg Model

The iceberg model, developed by Edwin Hall in 1979, is a metaphor for an iceberg used to explain a complex system. It emphasizes that the structure, which is the entire framework within which an individual, group of individuals, and entire organization operate, determines the outcomes (performance, culture, and dynamics) of the organization. This structure stems from a belief system about how work is done within the organization's context, as well as the motivation behind such beliefs. In conflict management, one classical idea is the ability to distinguish between the demands (positions of the conflicting parties) and their interests and needs. These interests and needs are often easier to reconcile than the demands (positions) of the conflicting parties (Shapiro, 2014; Epley, 2015).

Hall proposed a theory that compared the culture of an organization to an iceberg, where the external or conscious part represents the tip. These are the behaviours that are inherent within the organization and are visibly exposed. The internal or unconscious part of the iceberg, which is the internal or unconscious part of the iceberg, further subdivided into two sections, symbolizes the organs. The first part of the internal part of the iceberg, located slightly below the surface, is shallow and not too deep; it symbolizes the organization's belief system and the motivations behind these beliefs. The second half of the internal part submerged in the iceberg is the values and thought patterns within the organization (Shaules, 2016; 2017). This helps to shape the tripartite relationship of organizational conflict within the organization because the individuals, groups, and organization that make up the triparty often differ in values and thought patterns, which is the foundation of every conflict in an organization.

The manager's ability to understand the organization and use the iceberg model as a framework simplifies conflict resolution and management within the organization. Edward Hall's "Iceberg model" is a solution-oriented leadership framework that assists in identifying and addressing

problems before they escalate and disrupt the organization's activities. It helps in conflict resolution and management because it gives the management and the organization easy access to the root cause of conflict before it becomes unmanageable, thereby allowing organizations to go about their operations seamlessly (Kitayama & Salvador, 2017; Fantini, 2019).

3.0 Material and methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, and the target population [627] for this study covered all the workers of Nigerian bottling firm Plc in its Lagos headquarters office in Lagos State. As such, the study utilizes stratified random sampling techniques to pick personnel at Nigerian Bottling Company plc. We selected the sample from the staff using a simple random sampling procedure. The research study employs a questionnaire to gather information from the respondents. The researcher adopted Pearson moment correlation coefficient to determine the significant effect of conflict management practices on teamwork as the border line in the interpretation of the outcomes.

4.0 Results and discussions

Hypotheses I

Ho: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution and team work.

Table 1: Correlations

		Conflict resolution	Team work
Conflict resolution	Pearson Correlation	1	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	240	240
Team work	Pearson Correlation	.592**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	
	N	240	240

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

Using a significant value of (.005) and a Pearson correlation value of (.592**), the first hypothesis that was tested found that conflict resolution has a substantial impact on teamwork. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. This provides strong evidence that dispute resolution has a noticeable impact on team performance.

Hypotheses 2

H$_{02}$: There is no significant relationship between conflict soft skill and team work.

Table 2: Correlations

		Conflict soft skill	Team work
Conflict soft skill	Pearson Correlation	1	.792**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	240	240
Team work	Pearson Correlation	.792**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	240	240

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

Hypothesis two tested, using Pearson correlation implies that there exists a positive significant effect of conflict soft skill on team work at Pearson correlation value (.792**) and the significant value of (.000). Hence the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that there no significant effect of conflict soft skill on team work.

4.1 Discussion of findings

The study examined hypotheses to see if conflict management strategies may foster cooperation in a manufacturing firm. To begin, the study looked at the possibility that there is no correlation between conflict resolution and team-work in industrial companies by testing the null hypothesis. The results showed that in industrial companies, there is a strong correlation between conflict resolution and teamwork. Teamwork in manufacturing organizations within the model explains 59.2% (0.592) of conflict resolution, while other variables outside the model explain the remaining 40.8%. The findings of Ebe and Osibanjo (2014); and Mugal and Khan (2013) in their various studies corroborate this finding.

Hypothesis two tested in the null form if there is no significant relationship between conflict soft skills and teamwork in manufacturing organization. The result obtained further revealed that 79.2% (0.792) of conflict soft skills can be explained by teamwork within the model, while 20.8% (0.208) can be explained outside the model. This finding is consistent with the result of the studies conducted by Ojielo (2017), and Tsevendori (2008).

The results obtained therefore enable the researchers to assert that conflict management practices are catalyst for teamwork in the manufacturing organization, using Nigerian Bottling Company Plc as a study.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

As a result of the findings above, the following conclusions were deduced, which are that conflict arises as a result of formal and informal relationship within the organizations; and conflicts resolution is a pre-requisite for effective teamwork in the manufacturing industry; and that conflict soft-skill is needed to be able to manage conflict resolutions, hence leading to effective and efficient teamwork in manufacturing industry. Organizations have to effectively mange its conflict to get the best from its individuals and team effort, which is collective and often times due to the diverse nature of members of the team is always hard to achieve.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the result of the findings and the conclusions deduced the following recommendations were made

i.   Organizations, when faced with a dispute, should prioritize measures that advance industrial social equality. Such strategies should incorporate understanding of employees' perspectives, be open to discussing and debating contentious issues, using agreed-upon methods for managing internal conflicts, and following through on agreements made during the resolution process. It is important to address potential sources of conflict using established frameworks for conflict prevention. Also, instead of ignoring conflict situations, it's better to identify them and deal with them immediately. Having a clear understanding and accurate interpretation of all information and instructions is crucial for manufacturing organization employees to effectively handle conflict.

ii. To ensure this, officers of the organization should formally instruct their staff on the use of written guidelines (e.g., memos, circulars, etc.) and procedures to prevent communication breakdowns. Due to employees' varying levels of education, work experience, and knowledge, it is important for supervisors and management staff to communicate with their subordinates about the results of conflict resolution in order to establish a shared understanding of the issues and conflicts that arise within the organization. This will help to minimize the occurrence of misrecognition of the actual problems that arise in manufacturing organizations and other related concerns.

5.3 Ethical consideration and research integrity

This research was conducted by the researchers and is guided by the following research ethical considerations and integrity, which are that:

   i.   this study is the original work of the researchers;

   ii.   data generated were primary source from survey study conducted by the researchers for the sole purpose of this study and strictly for making inference;

   iii.   this study was carried out in good faith with the sole objective of academic study and for generalizing opinion aimed at deducing inferences and making recommendations;

   iv.   the Jomeino as a journal outlet and the establishment it represents is therefore and totally exempted from any misdemeanor and falsification of data that may arise as a result of publishing this study; and

   v.   that data privacy of respondents and their information was strictly adhered to.

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