

ENSURING ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION THROUGH HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE BANKING SECTOR

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Abstract

Increasing uncertainty and complexity in the operating environment of organizations provide fertile ground for the beginning of conflict in the workplace. This study was conducted to examine the effect of human relations in resolving conflicts in an organization using deposit money banks in Delta State as a case study. The study, anchored on the human relations theory, adopted the survey research design hence data were collected through the use of questionnaires as research instruments. The findings of the study indicate that human resources management style, employee job description, and alternative dispute resolution strategies all have positive effects on organizational conflict resolution in surveyed deposit money banks in Nigeria. The study therefore concludes that positive human relations is important in resolving conflicts in an organisation and recommends amongst others the need for management to adopt the use of alternative dispute resolution strategies to avoid the attendant costs and manhour lost inherent in litigations.

Keywords: *Organization, Conflict Resolution, Human Relations, Banking Sector.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Increasing uncertainties and complications in the operating environment of organizations provide abundant ground for the start of conflict in the workplace. Work environments are breeding grounds for conflict, including those arising out of harassment, discrimination, and personality clashes (between employees, employees, and their managers, particularly recently assigned managers) (Adilo, 2019). Conflict among workers in an organization is inevitable.

However, Abdul and Sehar (2015) contend that if it is managed properly, it will bring a catalyst for change and can have a positive impact on employee satisfaction and the performance of the organization. Conversely, conflict when not managed properly, negatively impacts both employee satisfaction and job performance. When corporate managers overlook workplace conflict, they drive a message that substandard job performance and incongruous behavior are acceptable (Abdul & Sehar, 2015; Akkerman & Torenvlied, 2021).

Conflict is a part of organizational life and can arise between persons, between the individual and the group, and between groups. Although conflict is generally seen as dysfunctional, it can also be constructive because it can cause a problem to be presented from diverse standpoints. It has both positive and negative impacts depending on the angle it is viewed. According to Dhiaulhaq, McCarthy, and Yasmi (2018), workplace conflict is deemed progressive when it inspires creativity, new expressions of old situations, the explanation of points of view, and the development of human proficiencies to handle interpersonal variances. Dhiaulhaq et al. (2018) claim that conflict can be undesirable when it produces opposition to change, creates disorder in organization or interpersonal relations, raises cynicism, builds a sense of defeat, or amplifies the chasm of misinterpretation. It is defined as the presence of dissonance or disharmony that arises when objectives, benefits, or values of different personalities or groups are irreconcilable and frustrate each other's 'attempt to achieve goals in an organization. It is a communication process and an unavoidable moment of transactional relationship manifesting in difference and dissonance with and between individuals and groups in the work environment. In this context, organizational conflict is a fact of life in any workplace as long as people will compete for jobs, power, recognition, and security (Gomathy, Alitha, Sowjanya, & Jahnavi, 2022).

Efficient human relation in a business entity has been adjudged to play an essential role for the human resources department of effective planning, control, design, and discharge of responsibilities and authority to various employees to reach or meet the organizational goals and objectives. In achieving these, the human resources department in any corporate concern is expected to use human resources management expertise and skills to manage or resolve conflict in the task, obligations, responsibilities, and establishments. As companies would like to leave their original tenacity, every aspect of the human resource department, the line staff, the subordinate staff, or the clerks must be put into deliberation (Gomathy & Hemalatha, 2021). This therefore indicates that a well-managed engagement aims at the perfection of organizations for motivating performance in the work environment. Through noble conflict

management and resolution strategies, flaws in corporate decision-making are uncovered which may be a timely signal for the organization to implement changes and search for progressive solutions. Hence, management especially human resources managers are duty bound to manage and resolve conflict appropriately for the sake of increasing workplace harmony and by extension improving organizational performance because the consequence of such action will bring about good communication, time management, upright collaboration, and growth in employee productivity (Ekankumo & Koye, 2014; Obasan, 2021; Iyamu & Salami, 2011; Oseremen & Osemeke, 2015).

The Problem

While workplace conflict does not currently receive much attention in the literature on people and human resources management, there is a solid consensus that firms will likely pay a significant price if workplace conflict issues are not resolved successfully (Oseremen & Osemeke, 2015; Adilo, 2019; Gomathy, Alitha, Sowjanya, & Jahnavi, 2022). In the worst-case scenario, working days can be lost as a result of some form of industrial actions and strikes but, more conceivably, illness and rate of absenteeism may surge, and employee-absenteeism relations may become tense if not estranged. Disagreement at the workplace may even hamper organizations from fashioning easy-going structures to succeed in today's perplexing business environment. While there is widespread consensus on the hypothetically destructive effects of conflict, there is no one view on what constitutes an effective conflict resolution and management system.

Empirical research findings have provided insights into the causative factors of workplace conflict. A study by Adilo (2019) established lack of funds, dissimilar expectations, rivalry, lack of collaboration, interdependence, and communication complications as factors responsible for conflicts in the Nigerian banking industry. Relatedly, in the banking sector in Nigeria, Obasan (2021) identified undesirable terms of engagement, poor human relations between management and workforces, non – non-consultation with staff before taking key decisions affecting them, the anti-union posture of management and lack of effective mechanisms for deterrence of conflict as multiple causal factors of workplace conflict. Thus, most workplace conflicts have financial and goal discordancy orientations in the work environment. In many organizations in Nigeria today especially the banking industry, internal (intrapersonal) and interpersonal conflicts are consuming so much organizational time and attention that corporate businesses are starting to look as though conflict is their primary

business (Oseremen & Osemeke, 2015). This development is largely due to the inability of leaders in Nigerian work organizations to view the management and resolution of conflict as systematically as they view information, and human resources, and manage them to enhance and not to detract from organizational performance. Instead, conflict is viewed and handled piecemeal and is considered a local event with taxable consequences, Kifordu et'al(2020).

The conflict has thus become dysfunctional in some organizations due to the incapacity to plan for, observe, manage, and resolve organizational conflicts rationally. This is demonstrated by a variety of workplace behaviors, such as the high frequency of strikes, the unhealthy rivalry between and among sub-units and individuals within an organization, sabotage at work, labor turnover, absenteeism, lack of productivity, general inefficiency, high rate of industrial accidents, low morale, withholding of critical information, and a host of others (Adilo, 2019; Oseremen & Osemeke, 2015).

This study is motivated by two factors. Firstly, empirical evidence on the relationship between human relations and organization conflict resolution has produced divergent results. In particular, in the banking sector context in Nigeria, studies on the effect of human relations on conflict management and resolution are scarce. A few studies such as Okpu and Jaja (2014), Udoh, Opusunju, and Dusu (2016), Ekankumo and Koye (2014), Adilo (2019), and Osabiya (2015) have examined conflict resolution and management in the context of promoting employee's productivity and general corporate performance.

Secondly, the few studies conducted to examine the relationship between human relations and conflict resolution provided divergent results showing that further empirical investigation still needs to be conducted in the area. For instance, Turkalj, Fosic, Dujak, and Strossmayer (2013), and Gomathy et al. (2022) find conflicting results on the relationship between conflict resolution and human relations in organizations. This study seeks to fill these gaps.

Research Questions

- i. To what extent does human resources management style assist in resolving organizational conflict?
- ii. What effect does employee task definition have on organizational conflict resolution?
- iii. How does alternative dispute resolution strategy influence organizational conflict?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Human resources management style does not assist in resolving organizational conflict

H₀₂: Employee tasks definition does not have a positive effect on organizational conflict resolution

H₀₃: Alternative dispute resolution strategy does not have a positive influence in resolving organizational conflict

2. LITERATURE UNDERPINNING

Organizational Conflict

Organizational conflict is synonymous with disagreement, complaint, dispute, and crises (Etim & Okey, 2013). These are conflicts occurring at varying degrees. Conflict is a situation in which people, groups, or corporate bodies think is unfair and complain or protest about it. Conflict is a disagreement between organization members and groups arising from the fact that they often engage in independent work activities and from the fact that they have different tastes, goals, values, or perceptions (Ekankumo & Koye, 2014). Conflict explains a state of serious disagreement and argument about something perceived to be important by at least one of the parties involved (Schramm-Nealsen, 2022). Its presence creates disharmony in the organization. Conflict is said to be inevitable when there is a human factor involved. Conflict is an unavoidable and persistent part of organizational life. Obasan (2021) observes that organization or industrial conflict involves the total range of behavior and attitudes that is in opposition between owners or managers on the one hand and working people on the other. The Centre for Multiparty Democracy (2020) observes that conflict exists when there is an interaction between two or more individuals, groups, or organizations where at least one side sees his thinking, ideas, perceptions, feelings, or wills contradicting with that of the other side and feel that they cannot get what they want because of the other side.

Conflict is a likely result of contact with family, friends, and colleagues as well as between managers and their subordinates (Darling & Walker, 2021). Folger, Scott, Poole, and Stutman (2005) define conflict as the interaction of independent people who perceive incompatibility and the possibility of interference from others as a result of this incompatibility. Conflict is a problematic situation, differing perceptions, and desired outcomes, interdependence, potential which adversely affect the relationship between individuals (Cahn & Abigail, 2017). Conflict is a human and social problem that involve mutual hostility, differences, disagreements, and

opposition resulting in man's inhumanity to man, the use of violence, and turning point or crises. Conflict is a process where one party perceives rightly or wrongly, that another party is opposing the first party's interest and, therefore, about to cause harm to it. It is viewed as a form of disagreement or argument, or an incompatibility in the views, opinions, principles, and so forth of two or more individuals (Nnabuiife, 2009). Conflict and crises are permanent features of life that we have come to live and cope with and resolve from time to time. Their existence cannot be terminated in life unless we want to terminate life itself. Conflict is a process of social interaction and a social situation, where the interests and activities of participants, confront, block, and disable the realization of one party's objectives. Conflict is an everyday phenomenon in organizations and it is impossible to avoid. It is possible to manage them if we recognize the conflict signs in time (Gomathy & Hemalatha, 2021).

In conclusion, conflict is defined within the context of work relationships as inevitable disagreements between and within any or all of the actors in the workplace. The views of various writers on the concept of conflict and industrial conflicts have established that conflict is inevitable and that it is not inherently dysfunctional rather its outcome depends on how it is handled or responded to by the parties involved. Whether the conflict is seen as central or ancillary to the employment relationship, however, depends upon the conceptualization or larger view of the origins, function, and structure of this relationship.

Human Relations

Human relations as a concept is an important part of individual career success. It is defined as relations with or between people, particularly in a workplace setting. Because a company depends on good human relations through its organizational structure, developing these skills is important. The goal of human relations is to ensure that the company's employees are as happy and productive – not the latter at the expense of the former – as possible. Human resources somewhat disregard interpersonal interactions and treat company employees primarily as, well, resources (Adilo, 2019; Gomathy, et al., 2022; Uwa, 2014).

Human relations refers to the study of how people relate to each other in group situations, especially work, and how communication skills and sensitivity to other people's feelings can be improved. According to Adilo (2019), human relations deals with motivating people in organizations to develop teamwork that effectively fulfills their objectives and achieves organizational objectives. In the words of Mizanur and Tanjela (2015), human relations is a

process of effective motivation of individuals in a given situation to achieve a balance of objectives that will yield greater human satisfaction and help accomplish company goals.

In both public and private sector organizations, human resources management has exerted a growing influence on workplace conflict management. Trade unions have long played a key role in employment conflict. However, as Saundry (2016) states, the rapid decline in the incidence of collective expressions of industrial conflict across developed economies has become a defining feature of modern employment relations. Currie et al. (2017) argue that since the 1980s, approaches to resolving workplace conflict have shifted away from an emphasis on unionized representation that relied on a collective approach to handling conflict. Colvin (2012) describes how the emergence of new forms of individually based employment rights relations de-emphasizes power in the employment relationship. Formal grievance procedures that have traditionally relied on union representation to balance power between employee and employer, ensure procedural fairness, and help prevent conflict are now less prominent (Currie et al. 2017). The advent of the 'strategic' approach to human resource management has contributed to a significant re-envisioning of the way that personnel managers understand the conflict in the workplace. Human resource policies are the formal rules and guidelines that organizations use to manage hiring, training, assessing, and rewarding employees (O'Riordan, 2017). Contemporary approaches to human resource management emphasize an advisory or, strategic role for human resources.

Human Resources Management Style

Human resource management (HRM) is the strategic approach to the effective and efficient management of people in a company or organization such that they help their business gain a competitive advantage. It is designed to maximize employee performance in service of an employer's strategic objectives (Elenkov, 2022). To effectively manage human resources, organizations will have to implement innovative HRM practices. HRM practices differ from one organization to another and from one country to another. Researchers have classified HRM practices into broad-ranging categories such as 'best practice,' or 'high-performance' (De Kok & Uhlaner, 2011; Heneman & Berkley, 2019), 'sophisticated' (Golhar & Deshpande, 2017), and 'professional' (Gnan & Songini, 2003). According to Chandler and McEvoy (2000), one question remains in HRM research: is there a single set of policies or practices that represents a 'universally superior approach' to managing people? Theories on best practices or high commitment theories suggest that certain HRM practices, either separately or in combination,

are associated with improved organizational performance across the world. Chien (2014) identified seven practices as best practices: employment security, selective hiring, self-managed teams/team working, high compensation contingent on organizational performance, extensive training, reduction in status difference, and sharing information. Redman and Matthews (2018) identify an 'HRM bundle' of key practices, which support service organizations' quality strategies. Saxena and Tiwari (2009) also identified training and development, employer–employee relations, recognition through rewards, culture building, career development, compensation, and benefits as important HRM practices that are sustainable, (Kifordu, 2022).

First off, using a participative management approach requires both a task-oriented and a people-centered approach. This manner emphasizes how the specified task for the employee fits into the overall scheme. Where assistance and feedback are required, this approach will deliver. As a result, attention is given to both the work and the person and connections needed to complete it. When workers have relevant experience and deadlines that allow for sufficient time to focus on both the task and the individual, this method may be employed. It might be acceptable if more direct management is needed. This style does not focus on the person, but rather focuses on getting the task done; hence it tends to be more of a task-oriented style (Jackson, Schuler & Jiang, 2014).

Second, a manager who employs a collaborative management style thinks it is advantageous (or necessary) for individuals to operate in groups. As a result, this style frequently necessitates a people-centered strategy. The most crucial factor is relationships, and if everyone gets along well, the assignment will be completed smoothly. Given the nature of the task and the environment, this method has the advantage that it allows the management to combine the resources and skills of a variety of people. The organization can gain a lot from using a team approach (Jackson, Schuler & Jiang, 2014).

Also included in an autocratic management style is the task-oriented style. Relationships come second in importance to getting things done. This kind of management frequently dictates what must be done and operates on the "my way or the highway" principle. This style of management can also be described as a taskmaster. When deciding who does what, how it should be done, and when it should be done, this person exercises their authority (Jackson, Schuler & Jiang, 2014). The employees' opinions are regularly sought after in a participative approach, though. Instead of the manager making all the decisions, setting goals, formulating strategies, and

deciding on targets is seen as a group endeavor. On the other hand, a free-rein approach provides employees complete discretion over how things will be accomplished. Although the management may set some goals, it is up to the staff to determine how they will be achieved. In other words, the leader tends to remain far from the routine tasks but is accessible to assist staff members in handling any issues that may arise (Jackson, Schuler & Jiang, 2014).

Employee Tasks Description

Job descriptions for employees are written statements that outline the responsibilities, tasks, qualifications needed, working hours, and reporting structures for a specific position (Farahbod, Salimi, & Dorostkar, 2013). Job descriptions are created using objective data from job analyses, knowledge of the competencies and abilities required to do a task, and the requirement for an organization to increase performance and productivity at work (Mollel, Mulongo, & Razia, 2017). A corporation can effectively explain its direction through the creation of excellent job descriptions, which also help employees understand their place in the organization's overall scheme. To attain clarity of purpose and improved performance, an effective job description aids in coordinating an employee's goals with those of the business (Khan, Ishaq, & Nawaz, 2013). In the areas of HRM such as job grading and classification, career routes, career advancements, addressing grievances relating to the duties and obligations at the workplace, work measurement, and working improvements, effective job descriptions are highly helpful. Employee responsibilities also include the establishment of performance standards, authority restrictions, training and development opportunities, creating a positive work environment, and fostering open lines of communication between employees and customers as well as between them and their employers (Farahbod, Salimi, & Dorostkar, 2013). Ishaq (2015), further argued that the information on an effective job description will be useful for job evaluation, job redesign, performance management, and organizational change. According to Ishaq (2015), for organizations to avoid repetition of work and overlapping of duties, the job description of employees should be designed and structured to help achieve organizational goals and objectives.

According to Mollel, Mulongo, and Razia (2017), job description is one of the primary outputs provided by systematic job analysis. Simply stated, a job description is a written statement of what the job entails. Many changes occurring in recent years have increased the need for such job descriptions; they include the incredible number of organization restructuring that has occurred the need to implement new and creative ways to motivate and reward employees; the

accelerated rate at which technology is changing work environment and new, more stringent federal regulation of employment practices through legislation. Mollel, Mulongo, and Razia (2017) further state that the job description should reflect; (i) job title (ii) purpose (iii) accountabilities (iv) scope of the job (v) production requirements, and (vi) general activities.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Strategy

The process of seeking out non-litigation options to settle a civil or commercial issue since litigation can be costly, time-consuming, and labor-intensive is known as alternative dispute resolution (ADR). Litigation and the employment of ADR procedures must be done separately; they cannot coexist. ADR should normally be utilized before bringing a lawsuit, though it might potentially be used earlier depending on the particulars of each case. Alternative dispute resolution is governed by the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, which applies to the entire Nigerian federation. ADR is also legally supported under Section 19 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution (as amended), which mandates that international disputes be settled through arbitration, mediation, conciliation, negotiation, and adjudication.

Methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution

Following from the above, the following are the main methods of alternative dispute resolution methods available for settling disputes in Nigeria.

Negotiation - A dispute or impending conflict can be resolved through negotiation, which is a process where the parties come together voluntarily, either in person or through representatives, to discuss their differences and try to come to a consensus or resolve the conflict on their own and without the help of a third party. As there is no involvement of a third party, negotiation differs from other forms of alternative dispute resolution processes (Ekankumo & Koye, 2014).

Mediation- A neutral and impartial third person, known as the mediator, is invited by the opposing parties to mediate the resolution of the conflict via their mutual agreement. Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution procedure. To enable the parties to establish their consensual settlement or agreement, the mediator fosters dialogue, encourages understanding, focuses the parties on their interests, and employs innovative problem-solving strategies. The mediation process is typically voluntary because neither party is required to accept the mediator's recommendations. The mediator is typically jointly procured by both parties (Ekankumo & Koye, 2014).

Conciliation- Conciliation as an alternative dispute method involves a neutral third party who can give an opinion or suggestion. It is a system of ADR where a third party known as the conciliator uses his best endeavours to bring the disputing parties to a voluntary settlement of their dispute. Conciliation is regulated by **the Arbitration and Conciliation Act (ACA) Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2004.**

Arbitration- Arbitration is the most initiated method of ADR where parties to a dispute submit to a third party called an arbitrator or arbitral tribunal for the resolution of their dispute. The decision of the arbitrator or arbitral panel called an award, is binding on the parties and enforceable by the courts. Arbitration is regulated by the **Arbitration and Conciliation Act (ACA) Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2004** and also regulated by the Lagos State Arbitration Law, 2009.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the human relations theory. The human relations theory of management began development in the early 1920s. Today, it is essential to every firm, and employee success depends on their mastery of the relevant ideas and abilities. Elton Mayo, an organizational theorist and psychologist with Australian ancestry, started his Hawthorne studies—research on how group behavior impacts individuals at work—in the 1920s. Taylorism, or the use of science in the workplace to increase production, at the time, saw people as machines that could function in immoral or unrealistic circumstances. Contrarily, Mayo popularised the concept of the "social person," which states that companies should treat people as individuals with unique needs rather than as robots (Colvin, 2012). According to the human relations management philosophy, people want to be a member of a team that fosters growth and development. As a result, if workers feel appreciated and are driven to engage, they will view their work as important and become more productive, producing high-quality work (Colvin, 2012).

The human relations theory is deemed acceptable for this research study since it can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to obtain universal agreement while managing people with different personality types, worldviews, and aspirations. Managers must therefore feel at ease and be knowledgeable about dispute resolution. Corporate management must be able to consider individual viewpoints and ensure that every person feels heard and understood when dissent occurs. Management must collaborate with all parties to develop a solution where

everyone is at ease moving forward after analyzing the supplied information. Even though it is hard to always make everyone happy, effective conflict resolution techniques help preserve or restore team cohesion when disagreements arise.

Empirical Review

The connection between human relations and conflict resolution has received little attention in management literature. However, studies bordering on conflict resolution and corporate performance, employee productivity, and efficiency are varied and diverse. For instance, Gomathy et al. (2022) aimed to establish the links that exist among conflict operation, communication, and connections at work by providing empirical evidence. 132 employees from two major manufacturing enterprises in Ghana were tested using the cross-sectional check approach, and the findings showed a significant positive association between conflict operation and communication at the plant. The study also showed a strong correlation between the functioning of conflict and relationships at work. Similarly, Adilo (2019) examined organizational performance and conflict management with particular reference to a few breweries in the South East of Nigeria. The study indicated a strong positive association between organizational performance and all of the conflict management techniques examined, including negotiation, collective bargaining, joint consultation, and alternative dispute resolution. As an evaluation research, Obasan (2011) conducted an empirical investigation of the effect of conflict management on company productivity. Utilizing a student t-distribution to determine the significance of 82 responses and a selective selection strategy to distribute the questionnaire to 150 respondents representing all First Bank of Nigeria Plc staff cadres (Lagos Branch). It was discovered that issues with perception and values are the main causes of conflict within the company. An empirical study on resolving labor disputes in Nigerian teaching hospitals was also conducted by Ekankumo and Koye (2014) who concluded that management would achieve greater results if they encouraged collaboration by establishing a labor-management committee (LMC), which would meet frequently to debate and find solutions to concerns that might not be covered by collective bargaining. Olukayode (2015) used data from manufacturing companies in Nigeria to assess the effect of workplace conflict management on organizational performance. 250 employees were chosen as participants using the stratified random selection technique. The results of the empirical testing indicated a considerably favorable link between conflict management tactics (collective bargaining, compromise, and accommodation) and organizational performance using Spearman correlation analysis.

Organizational performance was negatively affected by non-integrative conflict management techniques (competition, domination, and avoidance). The outcome of the regression analysis also showed that there was a strong positive link between the collective bargaining approach and organizational performance. Additionally, the results of the study showed that conflicts in the workplace were caused by a variety of organizational experiences based on economic and goal incompatibility orientations. Dispute between the union and management was shown to be the most common kind of industrial conflict in the company.

Osabiya (2015) investigated Nigeria's public sector's approach to handling conflicts. The study concentrated on the factors that influenced an organization's choice to seek out an alternative to standard disciplinary and grievance procedures for addressing conflict. It also examined the facilitators and barriers to integrating mediation into workplace culture and practice. To ascertain the cause of conflict and its resolution in the Nigerian Public Service, two hypotheses were developed. Descriptive statistics are used in the study to examine the information gathered from a sample of 170 Nigerian Public Service workers. The results demonstrated that disputes can be settled through agreements between employees and management. Conflict in a company might result from different leadership philosophies. Alternative dispute resolution and the effectiveness of Shell Nigeria Plc's Port Harcourt Branch were studied by Udoh, Opusunju, and Dusu (2016). The primary goal is to assess the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution in the Port Harcourt branch of Shell Nigeria Plc. Data were gathered from primary sources at specific points in time. The Ordinary Least Square method was used, and the results show that mediation, arbitration, and other forms of alternative dispute resolution had a considerable positive impact on the Port Harcourt branch of Shell Nigeria Plc. Okpu and Jaja (2014) looked at worker commitment and group consultation in the Nigerian banking sector. A sample size of 357 employees from the banks in Nigeria's South-South region were used as respondents for the cross-sectional survey. According to the results of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation, joint consultation had a strong positive correlation with employees' affective commitment but no significant association with their continuation and normative commitment. According to the study, employees who participate in Joint Consultation show limited continuity and normative commitment but are emotionally engaged with their firms.

Finally, Turkalj, Fosic, Dujak, and Strossmayer (2013) analyzed conflict management in organizations by analyzing several conflict management approaches and illustrating visually the link between the intensity of conflict and organisational performance. They used structured

questionnaires and secondary sources to get their data. According to the study's findings, managers and employees should be able to discern between conflicts that are personality-focused and those that are business-focused. They should then work to maximize conflict that is business-focused while minimizing conflict that is personality-focused.

Gap in Literature

Numerous empirical studies have been carried out to investigate the connection between organizational conflict resolutions. Much of the research focused on the impact of conflict management and resolution on organizational performance, as can be observed from the literature review. It is also noted that the majority of earlier studies on the relationship between employee commitment, productivity, and performance used a range of conflict management strategies.

The analysis of the literature also revealed that there is no agreement among researchers about how conflict resolution affects organizational outcomes. Given that the majority of earlier studies focused on how conflict management or resolution can affect employees' productivity and, consequently, business success, a gap in the literature has emerged. By studying how human interactions inside the company, as proxied by human resources management styles, job description, and alternative dispute, aid in minimizing conflict within the business, this study departs from earlier studies.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study seeks to examine the relationship between human relations and organizational conflict resolutions in the banking industry in Nigeria. Since data were collected from primary sources by way of the distribution of structured questionnaires, the study adopted a survey research design.

Delta State Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, and Industry estimates that 173 commercial banks are operating at different locations in Delta State (Ministry of Commerce, Tourism and Industry, 2021). Using a purposive sampling technique, 34 banks representing 19.6 percent of the population of banks in the State were randomly selected. Further, five (5) employees each from among thirty-four (34) deposit money banks that were randomly selected from the state's three senatorial districts were chosen using a convenient and simple random sample technique. 170 questionnaires were sent throughout these banks for employees to complete to achieve this

goal. To evaluate the questionnaire's reliability, a pilot study was conducted. Ten respondents were included in the sample for the pilot study. Using the Cronbach Alpha test, this reliability analysis produced a reliability coefficient of 0.67, which is consistent and reliable. Additionally, the chi-square analysis was used to test the hypotheses developed for this study at a 5% level of significance.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

There were 170 copies of the questionnaires issued and retrieved representing 100 percent. According to the respondents' demographic breakdown, male respondents make up 61 percent of the population while women make up 39 percent. The distribution also reveals that age groups between 30 and 45 years have the highest percentage 42 percent.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: The human resources management style does not assist in resolving organizational conflict.

Table 1. Hypothesis One Table Statistics

Questions→	1	2	3	4	5	OE	EE	(OE-EE)	(OE-EE) ²
Strongly Agree	79	72	81	79	48	359	212.5	146.5	21462.3
Agree	35	15	24	32	20	126	212.5	-86.5	7482.25
Disagree	7	54	47	9	49	166	212.5	-46.5	2162.25
Strongly Disagree	49	26	18	50	53	196	212.5	-16.5	272.25
Total	170	170	170	170	170	850	850		31379
X² cal. (OE-EE)²/EE									36.91

KEY: X² = Chi-square, OE = Observed Frequency, EE = Expected Frequency.

Source: Fieldwork, 2022.

Decision: From the table, the calculated X^2 is 36.91. The X^2 table value, given a degree of freedom of 12 and 0.05 significant level is 21.026. Since the calculated chi square value is more than the table value ($36.91 > 21.026$) we therefore have enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that the human resources management style does assist in resolving organizational conflict in manufacturing firms in Delta State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two: Employee tasks definition does not have a positive effect on organizational conflict resolution

Table 2: Hypothesis Two Table Statistics

Questions →	1	2	3	4	5	OE	EE	(OE-EE)	(OE-EE) ²
Strongly Agree	96	96	101	115	81	489	212.5	276.5	76452.25
Agree	41	34	31	43	46	195	212.5	-17.5	306.25
Disagree	11	21	27	11	14	84	212.5	-128.5	16512.25
Strongly Disagree	22	19	11	1	29	82	212.5	-130.5	17030.25
Total	170	170	170	170	170	850	850		110301
X² cal. (OE-EE)²/EE									129.76

KEY: X^2 = Chi-square, OE = Observed Frequency, EE = Expected Frequency.

Source: Fieldwork, 2022.

Decision: From the chi-square table, the critical value is 21.026 using a 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. The X^2 calculated from the above table is 129.76. Since the calculated value is more than the critical value, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative which states that employee tasks definition does have a positive effect on organizational conflict resolution

Hypothesis Three: Alternative dispute resolution strategy does not have a positive influence in resolving organizational conflict.

Table 3: Hypothesis One Table Statistics

Questions →	1	2	3	4	5	OE	EE	(OE-EE)	(OE-EE) ²
Strongly Agree	92	23	55	41	80	291	212.5	78.5	6162.25
Agree	36	112	43	51	32	274	212.5	61.5	3782.25
Disagree	31	25	46	57	24	183	212.5	-29.5	870.25
Strongly Disagree	11	10	26	21	34	102	212.5	-110.5	12210.25
Total	170	170	170	170	170	850	850		23025
	X² cal. (OE-EE)²/EE								27.09

KEY: X² = Chi-square, OE = Observed Frequency, EE = Expected Frequency.

Source: Fieldwork, 2022.

Decision: From the chi-square table, the critical value is 21.026 using a 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 12. The X² calculated from the above table is 27.09. Since the calculated value is more than the critical value, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative which states that alternative dispute resolution strategy does have a positive influence in resolving organizational conflict.

Discussion of Findings

The study examines the association between human relations and organizational conflict resolution using deposit money banks in Delta State as a case study. The findings of the study are discussed below:

Firstly, the study revealed that a good human resources management system is well practiced in the surveyed manufacturing firms. It was also observed that there is an effective job description schedule in place that defines employees’ roles and responsibilities. Based on survey results, it can be established that the deposit money banks implement the use of alternative dispute resolution strategy before thinking of escalating any official issues to the

law court. Secondly, the study is also able to establish that human resources management styles and practices have a significant influence on the resolution of organizational conflicts in the bank. This finding implies that when a firm adopts the inclusive human resources management style, it encourages harmony and reduces conflict in the organization. Okpu and Jaja (2014), Ekankumo and Koye (2014), and Adilo (2019) in their separate empirical studies reported similar results.

Further, the study also revealed from the statistics that an employee's job description enhances harmony and reduces the likelihood of conflict in the organization. This finding implies that when an employee's job is specified, there will be minimal conflict resulting from encroachment or neglect of duties. Studies such as (Turkalj, Fosic, Dujak & Strossmayer, 2013; Okereke, 2014) conform to this result. Finally, the study revealed that effective implementation of alternative dispute resolution strategies enhances harmony and can help in minimizing organizational conflict. This implies that when management ensures that disputes are resolved amicably without recourse to courts, there will be goal alignment in the organization thus promoting peace among staff. This result is in agreement with Gomathy et al. (2022).

6. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to empirically examine the role of human relations in resolving conflicts in an organization. In achieving this aim, the study obtained data through a survey on variables that were believed to have a relationship with human relations and organizational conflict resolution. The factors this study focused on are human resources management style, employee job description, and alternative dispute resolution strategies. Findings showed that human resources management style, employee's job description, and alternative dispute resolution strategies all have a positive effect in resolving conflicts in the organization resources managers should imbibe the culture of getting close to members of staff to understand where and when there are grievances.

Recommendations

1. There is a need for managers of banks to continue to make use of employee job descriptions. This has become important because it will spell out job functions and reduce conflicts among staff.

2. Management should adopt the use of alternative dispute resolution strategies to avoid the attendant costs and manhours inherent in litigations in the courts.

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