



Conflict Management Strategies as Determinant of Teachers Job Satisfaction in Lagos State Senior Secondary Students, Education District V

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates conflict management strategies as determinant of teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools, Education District V. Survey research design was used in conducting the research. The study population consists of all teachers in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos State. A sample of 125 respondents were selected through simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire titled Conflict Management Strategies and Teachers Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (CMTTJSQ) was developed to obtain data from the respondents after ascertaining its validity and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.75. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical method was used to analyse the formulated hypotheses. Findings from this study revealed that there is no significant relationship between avoiding conflict management strategy and teachers job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, with ($r = .773$; $N=125$; $p < .05$); also results obtained from hypothesis two indicates that there is a significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers job satisfaction in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, with ($r = .812$; $N=125$; $p < .05$). This study concluded that conflicts and crisis in school management have diverse causes which vary with places and times; the effects can be negative and/or positive depending on how they are managed. Finally, the study recommended that school managers can use avoidance conflict management strategy while dealing with trivial issues in public senior secondary schools in Education District V. Collaborating conflict management strategy which has been proved to be the best conflict management strategy should be adopted by principals in public senior secondary schools in Education District V.

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Introduction

Conflict is the dispute between two parties over conflicting goal. Incompatibility of goals brings about conflict in the work place. Every individual come into an institution with difference goal which might conflict each other and sometimes even antagonize the general objective of the institution. Nnamara (2019) observe that conflict over roles, teacher noncompliance with principal's directives, principal disregard for teacher's welfare, communication gap, teacher indiscipline, truancy and rivalry between principals and teachers hinders the attainment of school objectives. Conflict between principal and teachers in the past has witness both parties writing petition against themselves to the ministry of education and this mean no good not only to both parties but also the achievement student academic success.

Conflict is an act of discontentment and contention which either the workers or employers of labour utilise to put excessive pressure against each other so as to get their demands. Also, conflict between principal and teachers no doubt will affect academic activities, which is the primary objective of the school in the first place. In line with this, Igbokwe et al (2020) posited that conflict is the order of the day in schools as teachers hardly accept their delegated responsibilities like monitoring students' behaviour, mark registers, prepare lesson plans, record financial report, and mark assessment and examinations.

Conflict in a school affects the climate of the school and the outcome depends on the level in collaboration with the unity of purpose between the principal and teachers as designated or stipulated. Consequently, concentration on curriculum implementation could be disrupted by conflict.

Moreover, time and energy that would have channeled to work are directed to trivial issues that border more on personality or role conflict and at the end, the students are the ones that suffer it.

Job satisfaction on the other hand has to do with the comfort and fulfillment that an individual have toward their job while performance measure how well an individual has done in executing the task on

his/her job. When an individual is satisfied with his/her job such individual assert more effect into that job to achieve the desired result. Eme (2018) observe that there is a direct relationship between job satisfaction and performance as satisfaction enhances performance. Some teacher see teaching as a means of survival while some sees it as a hobby thereby making them committed to the job to actualize the soul of objective of the occupation.

Conflict management strategies are strategies used by principals to tackle misunderstanding that occur between the latter and the teachers, teacher to teachers, teacher to students, and student to students. Readiness to accept blame before or during conflict resolution could reduce argumentative conversation. Hence, peace can reign if conflict can be properly managed accordingly. It is always good for principals to first know the type of conflict management strategies they should adopt before settling any forms of conflict. The researchers observed that poor usage of conflict management strategies has caused a lot of job dissatisfaction among the teachers. This the reasons the researchers tends to show principals on how to adopt avoidance conflict management strategy and collaborating conflict management strategy to settle conflict amicably in senior secondary school in Lagos State Education District V.

Research Hypotheses

H01: Avoiding strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V.

H02: Collaborating strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V.

Literature Review

Conflict Management Strategy

Conflict is a disagreement over an issue; sometimes such disagreements may be positive or negative. Any outward attitude capable of charging up the political

or social environment is likely to culminate in conflict. Greed, covetousness and impunity, among other acts are capable of producing a breakdown of human relations thus resulting in organisational conflict (Olubor, 2017).

Avoidance Conflict Management Strategy

Avoidance involves neglecting the conflict or deny the availability of conflict as one seeks for neither own concerns nor others. Methods of doing this include changing the subject, putting off a discussion until later, or simply not bringing up the subject of contention as stated by. This is a strategy in managing conflict that tends to affect teachers' effectiveness, when there is a conflict in the school instead of confronting the conflict, sometimes this conflict maybe between teachers and administrators, most teachers tend to avoid it and the same problem continue and remain, and sometimes affect teachers in their effectiveness in the class and school in general (Amie-Ogan & Eziri, 2021).

Avoiding strategy is a strategy that occurs when one party in a potential conflict ignores the conflicting issues that give right to the conflict. This strategy is typified by delegating controversial decision, accepting default decision and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings. It can be appropriate when victory is impossible, when the controversy is trivial, or when someone else is in a better position to solve the problem. Okoth (2012) was of the view that school managers who were fond of using avoidance strategy to manage conflict ended up in more conflict. However, in many situations, this is a weak and ineffective approach to take. Avoidance strategy become functional when: one party believes that the other party cannot face confrontation, one or both parties lack confrontation skills. Disaster is likely to ensure if confrontation takes place.

Avoidance management strategy has the tendency to prompt counter productive work behaviour (Kehinde, 2011). When using this conflict mode a person knows there is a conflict but decides not to deal with it by ignoring, sidestepping, being non-committal or withdrawing from the issue or

interaction. It puts parties in a lose/lose relationship where a choice is made not to address the feelings, views or goals of either party. It is used when there is a tendency for people, or groups in conflict to withdraw from the conflict situation or remain neutral. Managers using this strategy are neither assertive nor co-operative. Avoidance management strategy is used due to the fact that people perceive conflict to be evil, unnecessary or undignified and people avoid it by withdrawing, or simply leaving the scene of conflict.

Avoiding technique is in favor of exercising indirect rather than direct power of managing conflicts. They drew attention to negative effects of reward and coercive power because these may breed negative feelings and result in superficial solutions to conflicts. They advocated methods such as structuring the group, directing an inclusive group process, and managing the external boundaries of the group. Restructuring would rely on legitimate power. Rahim, (2002) suggests that avoiding technique of conflict management may take the form of pushing back a concern until a better time or simply pulling it out of a hazard situation. This technique of conflict management often reflects little concern towards the issues or parties involved in conflict, and denying to acknowledge the existence a conflict in public.

Collaborating Conflict Management Strategy

Collaborating strategy is the type of conflict management in which the parties to a conflict tries to work together with each other. It seeks to resolve conflict by placing maximum focus on both groups' concerns. The collaborative strategy views conflict as problems to be solved and finding creative solutions that satisfy all the parties' concerns. Collaboration takes time and if the relationship among the parties is not important, then it may not worth the time and energy to create a win-win solution. It is commonly named as problem-solving strategy (Amie-Ogan & Eziri, 2021).

Additionally, collaboration fosters respect, trust, and builds relationships. To make an environment more

collaborative, conflict must be addressed directly and in a way that expresses willingness for all parties to get what they need. Collaborating strategy is employed in conflict management when the concern is to satisfy both parties. It is highly assertive and highly cooperative; the goal is to find a “win/win” solution (Olubor et al 2017).

Wager (2013), using this strategy supports open discussion of issues, task proficiency, and equal distribution of work amongst team members and development of creative problem solving. Those who prefer collaboration strategy resolve conflicts in the best way which is accepted by all concerned parties. They view the strategy as one that tackles the conflict issues openly and frankly without taking sides and also communicating with all the parties.

This strategy is appropriate to use frequently in teachers’ environment and very ideal for their effectiveness and therefore its underuse can result in using quick fix solutions, lack of commitment by other team members, disempowerment, and loss of innovation and morale hence poor effectiveness of teachers. Baumgartner (2012) added that collaboration is the way to achieve the best outcome on important issues as well as build good relationships since it takes into account all of the parties’ underlying interests. When this approach is adopted in the school, it makes sure that the needs of teachers involved in the conflict are satisfied.

Research Method

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of teachers in Lagos State senior secondary schools Education District V.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select 125 teachers. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select the participants from five

public senior secondary schools in Lagos State Education District V.

A self-structured instrument divided into two: Conflict Management Strategy Questionnaire (CMSQ) and Teachers’ Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ) were formulated from data collection.

The questionnaire contains items designed and obtained information from the respondents. The questionnaire is divided into two sections (A and B). Section A of the questionnaire contains the personal data of respondents. The section B contains items structured in line with a four point Likert rating scale with their corresponding scores of strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1).

Test-retest reliability method was conducted within an interval of two weeks to establish the reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to twenty participants for the first time. After a period of two weeks, the same questionnaire was administered to the same participants. The data generated were subject to Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient to ascertain the consistency of the instrument.

The data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using percentage and frequency count for demographic information of the respondents. The research hypotheses formulated were tested using simple linear regression with the aid Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

Hypotheses Testing

H01: Avoiding strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V.

Tests	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	519.387	3	173.129	1.278	.000 ^b
Residual	13005.523	121	135.474		
Total	13524.910	124			

R = .196^a; R Square = .038; Adjusted R Square = .008

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers Job Satisfaction

b. Predictor: (Constant), Avoiding Strategy of Conflict Management

Table 1 shows that avoiding strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V, $F(3, 96) = 1.278$; $p > .05$. Since the F-ratio was not significant at .05 Alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that avoiding strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers

job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V was not rejected. The avoiding strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V.

H02: Collaborating strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V.

Table 13 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	202.389	3	209.389	8.730	.000 ^b
	Residual	12733.111	121	152.086		
	Total	12935.500	124			

R = .737^a; R Square = .744; Adjusted R Square = .741

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers Job Satisfaction

Table 2 shows that collaborating strategy of conflict management has significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V, $F(7, 35) = 8.730$; $p > .05$. Since the F-ratio was significant at .05 Alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that conflict strategy of conflict management has no significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V was rejected. The collaborating strategy of conflict management has significant influence on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Education District V.

Discussion of Findings

Finding obtained from hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant influence of avoiding strategy of conflict management on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools Education District V and this is in tandem with Kehinde (2011) who observed that avoidance management strategy has the tendency to prompt counter productive work. When using this conflict mode a person knows there is a conflict but decides not to deal with it by

b. Predictor: (Constant), Collab Strategy of Conflict Management

ignoring, sidestepping, being non-committal or withdrawing from the issue or interaction. It puts parties in a lose/lose relationship where a choice is made not to address the feelings, views or goals of either party. It is used when there is a tendency for people, or groups in conflict to withdraw from the conflict situation or remain neutral. Managers using this strategy are neither assertive nor co-operative. Avoidance management strategy is used due to the fact that people perceive conflict to be evil, unnecessary or undignified and people avoid it by withdrawing, or simply leaving the scene of conflict. This finding is consistent with earlier findings of Fisher et al. (2011) that the avoidance resolution strategy could effectively serve as a profitable venture for all members of the university community (comprising management, staff, students and entrepreneurs) when the roles and contributions of each member is not ignored or avoided with its associated confrontation of conflicts that could heighten employee un productivity and university development questions. Furthermore, this finding aligns with the position of Cheta-Maclean and Tobins (2023) that the integration of avoidance

conflict resolution strategy would soothe, appease or conciliate disputing parties by delaying conflict in order to adequately give university management more time to effectively assess the situation and figure out the best way to approach conflict situation through the promotion of open and effective communication, feedback and effective decision making in universities in Nigeria.

Findings from hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant influence of collaborating strategy on teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State senior secondary schools Education District V and this is in tandem with The results are in consistent with Wager (2013) who used this strategy supports open discussion of issues, task proficiency, and equal distribution of work amongst team members and development of creative problem solving. Those who prefer collaboration strategy resolve conflicts in the best way which is accepted by all concerned parties. This strategy is appropriate to use frequently in teachers' environment and very ideal for their satisfaction and therefore its underuse can result in using quick fix solutions, lack of commitment by other team members, disempowerment, and loss of innovation and morale hence poor satisfaction of teachers. This aligns with the position of Cheta-Maclean and Tobins (2023) that appropriately managed conflict stimulates the existence of collaboration with the propensity to increase open and effective communication, feedback and effective decision making. Alluding to this, Fisher et al. (2011) stated instituting collaboration as an effective conflict resolution strategy intensifies focus on the sharing of information and identification of issues and options for timely settlement. While Ololube (2024) ascribed collaboration as an effective procedure for collective bargaining, teamwork, building a positive relationship and effective communication between the parties that would have otherwise being in dispute, disagreements or conflicts in the university.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that conflict management strategies are important determinants of job satisfaction among teachers of Lagos State Education District V. It can further concluded that conflict management strategies identified such as effective avoidance and avoidance and collaborating influenced the relationship between conflict management strategies and teachers job satisfaction in Lagos State Education District V. The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study.

- a) Collaborating conflict management strategy which has been proved to be the best conflict management strategy should be adopted by teachers in public senior secondary schools in Education District V, Lagos.
- b) Teachers should also adopt the compromising conflict management strategy when dealing with issues of less importance to enhance their effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Lagos state.

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