Workplace Conflict On Productivity and Emotional Stability of Employee

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ABSTRACT

Some recent observers noticed that employee productivity nearly on all kind of organizations is diminishing on a day-to-day basis, particularly in the field of education. The researcher found a number of factors that affected the productivity of employees. One of the major factor contributing to the productivity of employees is workplace conflicts. Therefore, the main goal of this study was to examine the workplace conflicts and its effect on the employee productivity and emotional stability. This research also examined a mediating role of workplace politics between the workplace conflicts and employee productivity among the members of the faculty of education Adekunle Ajasin university, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. Stratified sampling technique was used to collect the data from concerned population by using structured questionnaire. To achieve the goals of study different statistical techniques were used by using SPSS. Reliability test was used to check the data reliability. Furthermore, t-test analysis was used to investigate the relationship between workplace conflicts and employee productivity. The finding of this test showed that the relationship between workplace conflicts and employee productivity is negative. Macro process tool was used to investigate that whether workplace politics mediates the relationship between workplace conflicts and employee productivity. The finding of this test showed that workplace conflicts significantly predict emotional stability of employee and employee productivity.
Keywords: Workplace conflict, workplace politics, employee productivity.

Introduction

Conflict is inevitable among humans be it at home, church or in organization; especially when there is an interaction between two or more individuals, groups or organizations; this is largely caused by differences in individual perception, goal, interest, ideas, feelings, values, that conflict with each other. According to Shetach (2012), Conflict is part of social and business life hence, it is found everywhere. Conflict can be seen as a reality of social life that exists at all levels of society; it can be

said to be as old as man. Due to immense social interaction that takes place in an organization, conflict is unavoidable however; its management determines whether the result will be positive or negative. Scholars asserted that many types of relationships such as families, churches, marriages, nations, ethnic groups, and organizations experience conflicts (Deutsch, Coleman & Marcus 2006; Afful-Broni, 2012).

When conflict is mentioned people tend to perceive it as negative and hardly look at it from a positive angle. We have functional and dysfunctional conflicts; those conflicts that compel us to be creative problem resolvers to maintain a healthy workplace, and come up with a structure that will enable the organization benefit from diversified employees while creating opportunity for redevelopment and acquiring of new skills can be classified as functional conflicts. While those conflicts that negatively affect employees both psychologically and emotionally, that also leads to low productivity can be classified as dysfunctional conflicts. It is imperative to note that how conflicts are managed will determine its outcome either functional or dysfunctional.

While conflict is generally perceived as dysfunctional, it can also be functional; conflict has both positive and negative effects. It can be positive when it enhances creativity, clarification of points of view, and the development of human capabilities to handle interpersonal divergences. There is no anomaly in organizational conflict because it produces or presents an opportunity for modification and settlement between the aggrieved parties for the well-being of both the employees and the organization (Osad & Osas, 2013). Conflict can be negative when it creates resistance to change, establishes uproar, interpersonal relations distrust, low productivity, organizational ineffectiveness (Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul-Azeez, & Ajemunigbohun, (2010).

Tabitha and Florence (2019) referred to individual conflict as "man against self" conflict, in which such individual state of mind is largely dictated by circumstances within or around him or her. Such as anger, addiction, depression, frustration, confusion, this could result in aggression. It could be a conflict of values, of priorities in which man continues to battle or contend with his mind and habits leading to difficulties in deciding on a goal. It posits that interpersonal conflict is a conflict that occurs between two or more individuals working together in groups or crew. From the organizational view, this can also be referred to as worker to worker or lateral conflict because it occurs mostly among employees on the same hierarchy; this conflict is part of life and it is present in every organization (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2011).

Nistorescu (2019), also views this kind of conflict as a means through which an individual or a sector prevents another from achieving the desired goal; he states that if not checkmated early could lead to dangerous situations in future that will affect organizational effectiveness. Sometimes conflict could be covert, not all conflict ends in physical exchange of blows or use of weapons. Conflict could be inter-group, this could occur due to differences between two or more groups such as departments or workgroups in an organization, communities, and ethnic groups.

Pandy (2019) asserts that this kind of conflict may occur from lack of mutual agreement, differences in group goals, limited resource, poor communication channel, overlapping responsibilities, struggle for recognition, etc., hence, management of conflict by managers will determine if it will lead to functional or dysfunctional outcome. Managers in an organization should be able to identify types of conflict that will enable them to apply an appropriate strategy that will create positive results. Organizational conflict crops up when there is disagreement on how a job or task should be executed; this could be disagreement between individual, inter-personal or intergroup; how this conflict is managed will determine its outcome.

According to Riaz and Junaid (2011), ineffective managed organizational conflict leads to reduced confidence levels, stress, and frustration as well as produces anxiety which could cause humiliation, disengagement. It also produces more conflict and destructively affects the entire organization.

Effective conflict management enhances organizational development through employee dedication, enthusiasm, absorption it also boosts morale, and stimulates individuals which will in turn lead to organizational productivity.

Organizational effectiveness is one of the measures of performance that is used to assess how outputs interact with the economic and social environment.

Zheng, Yang and McLean (2010), opined that productivity generally determines the policy objectives of the organization or the extent to which organizational goals are realized. Productivity is sometimes used to replicate all inclusive performance of an organization because it is broader compared to other concepts of organizational performance. Ability to execute a function with optimal levels of input and output determines the productivity of any organization (Amin & Shila, 2015). Business environment is highly dynamic and ever changing due to globalization, any organization that wants to be relevant and gain competitive advantage must enhance their organizational productivity.

Education is the second field of work in which conflicts mostly occur after the government field (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter, 2011). When two or more people, countries, nations and groups disagree with some topics then conflicts may occur because of the difference in ideas, behaviours, perceptions, interests, attitudes, politics (Afzal, Khan and Ali, 2009). Therefore, as per (Moily, 2008) conflict occurs because of tensions between individuals and society, poor governance, historical background, and socioeconomic condition. It was also stated by (Agwu, 2013) that difference in personality backgrounds, functional interdependence, autonomy, and status arise conflicts. When a person avoids the other person's achievements, conflict also arises (Hotepo, Sokere, Azeez, and Ajeminigbohun, 2010). (Hussain and Mujtaba, 2012) stated that conflicts between employees in workplace create stress for the employees and become the reason of low performance for the organization. The nature of the workplace conflicts effect on employee productivity and consequently affect the competitiveness of the organization.

Employee productivity and morality are affected by the performance and reward management effectiveness of an organization (Yazici, 2008). Firm has a competitive advantage when a company retains high levels of performance compared to its competitors (Harmon, 2014). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, remunerations and rewards are the factors affecting productivity (Khan, Farooq and Ullah, 2010). Employee motivation is the most influential factor of productivity (Kulchmanov and Kaliannan, 2014). (Raza, 2012), highlighted the previous statements which is to find a way to improve productivity so employees can perform better and vice versa.

Improving employee skills and providing trainings are other factors that maximize the productivity (Nielsen, 2013). In addition, (Euske and Lebans, 2006) defined that the productivity of employees is not only financially dependent, but also non-financially dependent, which ensure a level of organizational objectives and goals. Productivity is an element of capacity and inspiration, where capacity contains the skills, an asset required to carry out assignments. While an inspiration is depicted as an internal power that drives individuals to act towards something. It is also said that employees are more susceptible to turnovers if they are unsatisfied and therefore losing motivation to show good performance. A happy and satisfied worker has higher productivity and it is easier for the management to motivate high performers to reach firm goals (Kinicki and Kreitner, 2007).

Many researchers defined workplace politics as actions that impact activities, behaviours and, decision-making by using power. Bouckenooghe, Zafar and Raja (2015) implied workplace politics in a workplace as the pre-mediated use of individuals' power to fulfil a person's interests and goals at their workplace. There are two streams that elaborate workplace politics studies (Ferris, 2002).

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The first is older tactics and behaviors of politics influence (Bodla and Danish, 2013) and the second is the perceptions of employees in their working environment of workplace politics. The growing phenomena and the most debatable topic of these days are workplace politics. Over the past few decades, the studies on workplace politics have increased (Gull and Zaidi, 2012). Conflict is a part of organizational life and may occur between individuals, between individuals and groups, as well as between groups that may come out as a result of workplace politics (Lammer, 2009). Eze (2011) argued that workplace politics is a self-serving behaviour that looks for the expense of others to achieve self-esteem, advantages and benefits. Workplace politics in tertiary organizations often seeks to secure or maximize individual interests or, on the other hand, keeping away from negative results inside the organization (Ferris and Kacmar, 2011). Employees in tertiary organizations are always engaged in politics to pursue individual goals. While workplace politics is a correlation of employee conflict, Udoye (2011) saw conflicts as dysfunctional, that could be important as this might make an issue to be displayed in various point of view. Politics include the human component and the resulting relationship is political which has to be overseen and managed carefully, maturity and sincerity before it increases uncontrollably (Krietner and Kinicki, 2004).

Statement of the problem

Conflict has been viewed as evil, but constructive conflict management is a high point for any organization. Hence, conflict management is the means of reducing the dysfunctional aspect of this phenomenon while increasing the functional aspect of it. Workplace conflict is to create a very good conducive workplace atmosphere free of resentment, incivility, violence, which could lead to physical, psychological or financial damages to both employees and the organization.

Effective work place conflict becomes an essential tool to encourage employee engagement and to maintain Competitive advantage. Conflict is frequently seen as dysfunctional but it has been established that it is not every conflict that results in negative effects on organizations but some have positive effects on team participation.

Research Hypotheses
1. There is no significant relationship between workplace conflicts and employee productivity.
2. There is no significant relationship between workplace conflicts and employee emotional stability.
3. Workplace conflicts do not significantly predict employee productivity and emotional stability.

Methodology
This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It is a form of descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data for systematic description of existing situation or phenomenon. The population consisted of all employees in tertiary institution in Ondo State. A simple random sampling technique was used to choose the sample for the study. The sample of the study consisted of 200 employee across Ondo State. The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled Workplace conflicts and employee productivity an emotional stability (WCEPES). 200 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 200 were returned. The instrument was divided into sections; sections A contain personal data of the respondents. While section B contains the item to answer the question raised. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researcher. Test-retest technique was used by the researcher; the questionnaire was distributed to some sample of twenty youth in Ekiti State. After two week interval the same instrument was re-administered to the same set of employee. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the correlation coefficient which was 0.82 which certified that the questionnaire was reliable. Data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage and t-test.

Results and Discussion

H_0: There is no significant relationship between workplace conflicts and employee productivity.
Table 1: Pearson correlation of workplace conflicts and employee productivity.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r_{cal}	r_{table}
Workplace conflicts	100	1.84	0.982	0.168^*	0.195
Employee productivity.	100	2.21	1.122		

*P<0.05

Table 1 shows that $r_{calculated}$ (0.168) lesser that $r_{tabulated}$ (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between workplace conflicts and employee productivity.

Hypothesis Two

H_0: There is no significant relationship between workplace conflicts and employee emotional stability.
Table 2: Pearson correlation of workplace conflicts and employee emotional stability.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r_{cal}	r_{table}
Workplace conflicts	100	1.97	1.185	0.382^*	0.195
Emotional stability	100	2.06	1.188		

*P<0.05

Table 2 shows that $r_{calculated}$ (0.382) greater that $r_{tabulated}$ (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between workplace conflicts and employee emotional stability.

Hypothesis Three

H_0: Workplace conflicts do not significantly predict employee productivity and emotional stability.
Table 3: Pearson correlation of external employee productivity and emotional stability.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r_{cal}	r_{table}
Employee productivity	100	1.97	1.185	0.432^*	0.195
Emotional stability	100	2.06	1.188		

*P<0.05

Table 3 shows that $r_{calculated}$ (0.432) greater that $r_{tabulated}$ (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that Workplace conflicts do not significantly predict employee productivity and emotional stability.

Conclusion

Conflict is part of daily social life that is inevitable; therefore it is imperative that the manager identifies the nature and significance of conflicts in an organization as well as recognizing levels or types of conflict. Therefore, when conflict is properly managed, it enhances learning, creates the spirit of teamwork and cooperation; which is capable of increasing organizational innovation due to diversity of workforce, thereby leading to effectiveness or performance in an organizational setting.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the findings;

1. The employer should try as must as possible to reduce the workplace conflicts to a barest minimum and produce an enabling environment for employee productivity.

2. An atmosphere free of conflicts will bring about an emotional stability for the employee; an emotional stable individual will contribute immensely to the organization.
3. The high the workplace conflicts, the poor the productivity and emotional stability, the employer should create an atmosphere free of conflict to increase the productivity of their employee and their emotional stability.

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