

The Influence of Conflict Resolution on Job Commitment of Non-Teaching Staff in Public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of conflict resolution on job commitment of non-teaching staff in Nigerian public universities. A descriptive survey research design was used in the study. Six universities were used. The sample consisted of 80 non-teaching staff. Conflict resolution questionnaire (C.R.Q) were used to obtain data for the study. The study showed that non-commitment of staff manifests by inadequate to adopt creative thinking in resolving conflict, non-inviting the parties involved in resolving conflict, inability to ensure resolution among his staff, inability to invite other stakeholders and inability to take consensus decision in resolving conflict. The study also revealed that the level of job commitment of non-teaching staff in public Universities in southwest, Nigeria was high and non-teaching staff showed high affective commitment when their contributions were acknowledged by management in terms of conflict resolution. It was recommended that University management should develop more effective conflict resolution mechanisms, such as mediation teams and grievance hotlines, because conflict resolution showed no significant relationship with commitment ($r = 0.029$, $p > .05$) thus, indicating a need for improvement.

Keywords: Conflict resolution, Commitment, Management, Non-teaching staff.

INTRODUCTION

Management is the dynamic process of attaining organizational goals in an ever-evolving environment by effectively balancing efficiency, effectiveness and fairness. It involves maximizing the use of limited resources while coordinating and collaborating with others to achieve desired outcomes (Griffin, Phillips, & Gully, 2020). Features of Management involved Organized Activities: without organized activities, two groups of people cannot be involved in the performance of activities. All organizations have one thing in common: they want to progress efficiently towards the achievement of their goals through the coordinated efforts of people. Existence of objectives: An objective or set of objectives should exist towards which the organized group activities are directed. Without objectives, it becomes difficult to define the direction in which organized activities would lead to. According to Robbins and Coulter (2022), management involves coordinating and overseeing the work activities of others to ensure tasks are accomplished efficiently and effectively through collaboration and resource optimization. Relationship among resources: Organized activities meant to achieve common goals are brought about to establish certain relationships among machine, materials and people.

Management is a structured process that involves planning, organizing, leading, and controlling resources—both human and material—to achieve specific performance outcomes efficiently and effectively (Daft & Marcic, 2021). At its core, management is about achieving results through people, utilizing their skills and efforts to attain both individual and organizational goals (Robbins & Coulter, 2022). Management today is increasingly viewed as a collective and distributed function, not confined to top or line managers alone. Instead, it is a collaborative influence that includes human resource professionals, supervisors, team members, and even self-

managed employees (Mintzberg, 2021). This perspective acknowledges that decision-making and influence occur at multiple levels within an organization, thereby making management a shared responsibility across functional units (Yukl & Gardner, 2020).

To this study, Conflict resolution is the process by which managers end a dispute and reaching an agreement that satisfies all parties involved (non- teaching staff). It allows managers to resolve conflict by engaging non-teaching staff affected by the conflict to change their view, gain from the conflict and be effective in their job. Conflict resolution are the lubricants for peace, harmony, and orderliness in the workplace (Özyildirim & Kayıkçı's 2017). Conflict resolution techniques improve positive relationships with other stakeholders in the organization, according to Omene's (2021) investigation of conflict management techniques as a requirement for successful organizational performance.

Statement of the problem

Most of the Nigeria universities managers today are not adopting creative thinking and a consensus decision in resolving conflict which have cause division and discrimination among staff which yielded to crises and chaos within the institution. Misunderstanding and wrong interpretation of conversation have led to conflict among staff due negligence of manager to invites the parties the involve in conflict to resolve the dispute. Serious attention is needed to look for a means to create room for conflict resolution among staff in order to move the institution to height of their carrier and it also a lubricants for peace, harmony, and orderliness in the workplace.

The purpose of the study:

1. to examine the relationship between conflict resolution and job commitment of non- teaching staff in southwest public Universities.
2. the level of job commitment of non- teaching staff in public Universities in southwest, Nigeria.
3. The following research question was raised to guide the study:
4. what is the level of job commitment of non-teaching staff in public universities in southwest Nigeria ?

The following null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution and job commitment of non- teaching staff in public university across southwest Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job commitment is the emotional and psychological bond that individuals develop with their organisation, reflecting their identification with its goals and their willingness to contribute to its success (Meyer & Allen, 2021). Employees who are deeply committed often experience a strong sense of belonging, alignment with organisational values, and dedication to the institution's goals (Allen & Shanock, 2016). These individuals tend to demonstrate higher levels of perseverance, increased productivity, and a proactive attitude toward contributing beyond their assigned duties—all of which significantly enhance overall institutional performance (Nguyen & Tran, 2020; Bagtasos, 2018). A key component of organizational success is employee commitment, which reflects an individual's personal sense of responsibility toward the mission, vision, and objectives of their institution. When non-teaching staff demonstrate high levels of commitment, organizational productivity improves significantly.

Non - teaching staff are the staff that don't teach in class room but support the school activities and its main functions. The non-teaching staff play a significant role in achieving the goals and objectives of the education service. Non-teaching staff members carry out a variety of administrative tasks for faculty, students, the community, and other officials in educational institutions, (Garaba, 2022). Due to the work of non-teaching staff, the teaching staff spend less time on non-teaching activities such as bursary, store keeping and catering (Lawrent, 2019) which all contribute to creating conducive learning atmosphere for students. Non - teaching staff help in

the performance of teaching staff's daily activities in schools, (Mwaisumo, 2016). In supporting this point, Garaba (2022) contended that non-teaching staff perform several administrative duties in school to staff, students, the community and other officials. Non-academic staff account for approximately one-quarter of school personnel, highlighting their critical role in supporting institutional operations and student outcomes (Webster et al., 2021). Non-teaching staff are fundamental in their contribution towards quality education, as well as safe and positive learning environments.

The concept of Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution are the lubricants for peace, harmony, and orderliness in the workplace (Özyildirim & Kayıkçı's 2017). As a result, there has been much debate among academics over the rates of dissatisfaction among non-teaching staff members with their supervisors and colleagues. According to Adeyemi and Ademilua's (2012) research, non-teaching employees typically disagree with their management when there is a wage gap, unequal resource distribution, or partiality. According to Mba (2013), when choosing a strategy to prevent returning to the same problem in the future, it is important to identify the reasons of conflict. In order to resolve conflict, avoidance and compromise strategies should be used, respectively (Mba, 2013; Mayowa, 2015). In addition, According to Yusuf-Habeeb and Kazeem (2017), conflict can be resolved amicably through the use of avoidance and compromise techniques. Rahim (2012) found that effective conflict management enhances employee satisfaction and commitment by creating harmonious workplace relationships.

Conflict resolution techniques involving integrating, cooperating, and compromising show a strong positive correlation with non-teaching staff commitment. In addition, Oginni and Afolabi (2014) revealed an effective link between conflict-handling strategies and employee dedication in Nigerian organizations. However, the present finding aligns with Afzalur Rahim's (2011) later argument that conflict resolution influences commitment only when employees perceive conflicts as threatening or affecting core job functions. If conflicts are bureaucratic or interpersonal in nature, their resolution may not significantly impact commitment. The present result also agrees with Adeniji and Osibanjo (2012), who found that conflict management in Nigerian institutions often focuses on administrative compliance rather than employee well-being, thereby limiting its effect on commitment.

The impact of conflict resolution play a significant role on university non - teaching staff and managers in term of dispute resolution among staff/ staff, staff/ student, staff/ manager. A recent study of Adilo (2019) opined the connection between organizational performance and conflict management in certain breweries in southeast Nigeria and found a strong positive correlation between the two. Using various methodology, empirical studies have looked at conflict resolution techniques and other factors in many businesses and nations. In their investigation of the impact of conflict management styles on the job commitment of non-teaching staff in Pakistan, Akhtar and Hassan (2021) discovered that, in contrast to other conflict management methods, integrating style predicted workers' commitment. Conflict resolution techniques improve positive relationships with other stakeholders in the organization, according to Omene's (2021) investigation of conflict management techniques as a requirement for successful organizational performance.

Conflict resolution challenges

There has been much debate among universities over the rates of dissatisfaction among non-teaching staff members with their supervisors and colleagues. According to Adeyemi and Ademilua's (2012) research, non-teaching employees typically disagree with their management when there is a wage gap, unequal resource distribution, or partiality. challenges among staff, students, managers within an organization due to lack of project teams possess the incapability to manage their negative emotions through emotional intelligence, adverse reactions to conflict are likely to diminish which result to inability to facilitates effective communication, incompetent to fosters creativity in addressing complex challenges, and discourages the exchange of knowledge and information among staff which seek alarm for restitution / conflict resolution for prompt inter-relationship to enhance effectiveness and efficiency among staff in an organization to achieve their missions and goals. According to Mba (2013), when choosing a strategy to prevent returning to the same problem in the future, it is important to identify the reasons of conflict. In order to resolve conflict, avoidance and compromise strategies

should be used, respectively (Mba, 2013; Mayowa, 2015). In addition, According to Yusuf-Habeeb and Kazeem (2017), conflict can be resolved amicably through the use of avoidance and compromise techniques. According to Dialoke and Edeh's (2017) study shown the association between conflict resolution and non-teaching staff work commitment in Rivers State, Nigeria. In the study of Özyildirim and Kayıkçı (2017) examined conflict management among school administrators in state schools in Muratpaşa, they found that the most common method was compromise, while the least common strategies were dominance, avoidance, and others. Osabiya (2015) studied the best practices for resolving disputes in the Nigerian public sector and discovered that compromising may be utilized to resolve disputes between management and non-teaching staff, which increases the non-teaching staff's commitment to their jobs.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study collected data and information from sample which describe various information on population.

Population and Sample

The study's population consisted of 800 non-teaching staff which are administrative officers, school officers, secretaries, clerical officers, and Universities managers (Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Registrars, Deputy Registrars, Librarians, Bursars, Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments, Heads Units) across six public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the study sample. In the first stage, three states (Osun, Ekiti and Ondo) were chosen from the six southwestern states which were selected using simple random sampling. In the second stage, selection of two universities (one state and one federal) were selected in each state, making a total of six universities. In the third stage, proportional sampling was used to select non-teaching staff from each university and the fourth stage involved using purposive sampling to select managers from each university making a total of 24 managers. The final sample comprised 80 non-teaching staff and university managers selected through this procedure.

Instrumentation

The data for this study were gathered, using two instruments: the Managerial Duties Questionnaire (MDQ), which included a conflict resolution items, and the Job Commitment of Non-Teaching Staff items. The two instruments were administered to respondents on two occasions in two weeks to establish internal consistency. The data collected were correlated and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, the test-retest reliability coefficients obtained were .67 for the MDQ and .85 for the JCNTSQ, indicating that both instruments were sufficiently reliable for the data collection.

Data Analysis

data collected for the investigation were gathered and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, means and standard deviations) to answer the research question, while the research hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at the .05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Level of Job Commitment of Non-Teaching Staff

The level of job commitment of non-teaching staff in public universities in southwest Nigeria was determined using a mean cut-off mark of 3.00: items with a mean score at or above the cut-off were classified as reflecting a high level of job commitment, while items below the cut-off were classified as reflecting a low level. Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis of job commitment of non-teaching staff.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of job commitment of non-teaching staff in public Universities (N = 300)

N	Items	Excellent (%)	Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Makes full use of work time schedule for the daily duties	29 (9.7)	163 (54.3)	97 (32.3)	11 (3.7)	0 (0.0)	3.70	0.69	High
2.	Is intelligent to carry out his/ her duties without being supervised	38 (12.7)	154 (51.3)	93 (31.0)	15 (5.0)	0 (0.0)	3.72	0.75	High
3.	Passes appropriate information to the staff	59 (19.7)	98 (32.7)	117 (39.0)	20 (6.7)	6 (2.0)	3.61	0.94	High
4.	Encourages others to work hard	16 (5.3)	116 (38.7)	105 (35.0)	49 (16.3)	14 (4.7)	3.24	0.95	High
5.	Does his/ her work without being supervised	9 (3.0)	141 (47.0)	108 (36.0)	40 (13.3)	2 (0.7)	3.38	0.78	High
6.	Makes use of the available resources given by the authority	39 (13.0)	166 (55.3)	95 (31.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.81	0.64	High
7.	Ensures effective and efficient outcomes from the little resources given	53 (17.7)	149 (49.7)	77 (25.7)	9 (3.0)	12 (4.0)	3.74	0.92	High
8.	Always utilizes the little resources given	49 (16.3)	139 (46.3)	94 (31.3)	18 (6.0)	0 (0.0)	3.73	0.80	High
9.	Always wastes the resources given to him / her	45 (15.0)	118 (39.3)	92 (30.7)	45 (15.0)	0 (0.0)	3.54	0.92	High
10.	Ensures that the work was done perfectly with the little resources without seeking for another one	64 (21.3)	100 (33.3)	110 (36.7)	12 (4.0)	14 (4.7)	3.63	1.01	High
11.	Always confident of his/ her work among the staff	25 (8.3)	120 (40.0)	96 (32.0)	45 (15.0)	14 (4.7)	3.32	0.98	High
12.	Ensures that work was done competently without bias mind	33 (11.0)	148 (49.3)	74 (24.7)	45 (15.0)	0 (0.0)	3.56	0.88	High
13.	Knows the right things to do without being forced	36 (12.0)	164 (54.7)	100 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.79	0.64	High
14.	Ensures good result, in the sense that others emulate him/ her	38 (12.7)	153 (51.0)	73 (24.3)	19 (6.3)	17 (5.7)	3.59	0.98	High
15.	Ensures that he/ she does his/ her duties without pressure from the leader	0 (0.0)	113 (37.7)	140 (46.7)	47 (15.7)	0 (0.0)	3.22	0.70	High
16.	Is up and doing in all his/ her undertaking without	10 (3.3)	97 (32.3)	131 (43.7)	50 (16.7)	12 (4.0)	3.14	0.87	High

	delay within the organization								
17.	Ensures collaboration of work among his/ her co-workers	5 (1.7)	94 (31.3)	150 (50.0)	44 (14.7)	7 (2.3)	3.15	0.77	High
18.	Completes all the work given without delay	14 (4.7)	85 (28.3)	118 (39.3)	65 (21.7)	18 (6.0)	3.04	0.96	High
19.	Ensures organizations are promoted among others by being recognized	7 (2.3)	103 (34.3)	139 (46.3)	42 (14.0)	9 (3.0)	3.19	0.81	High
20.	Keeps records of both students and academic staff on a daily basis	47 (15.7)	134 (44.7)	89 (29.7)	30 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	3.66	0.86	High
21	Ensures thorough job performance among his/ her colleagues within the system	41 (13.7)	126 (42.0)	96 (32.0)	13 (4.3)	24 (8.0)	3.49	1.04	High
22	Provides positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behavior	10 (3.3)	116 (38.7)	141 (47.0)	33 (11.0)	0 (0.0)	3.34	0.72	High
23	Has adequate knowledge of his/ her daily activities	29 (9.7)	123 (41.0)	114 (38.0)	34 (11.3)	0 (0.0)	3.49	0.82	High
24	Makes other staff aware of consequences for misconduct	90 (30.0)	68 (22.7)	108 (36.0)	34 (11.3)	0 (0.0)	3.71	1.01	High
25	Creates a supportive and pleasant climate for his/ her leaders	0 (0.0)	105 (35.0)	124 (41.3)	56 (18.7)	15 (5.0)	3.06	0.86	High
	Mean						86.87	4.01	

Mean Cut-Off: 3.00

Table 1 showed the level of job commitment of non – teaching staff in public Universities in southwest, Nigeria. Based on the mean cut-off mark of 3.00, all the 25 items were high (accepted) with no item rejected. The mean score was used as the bench mark which shows that the level of job commitment of non – teaching staff in public Universities in southwest, Nigeria, is high since the mean values of all the 25 items exceeded the mean cut-off.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between conflict resolution and job commitment of non- teaching staff in public universities in southwest, Nigeria.

Table 2

Relationship between conflict resolution and job commitment of non- teaching staff in public Universities

Variables	N	Mean	Stand Dev	r-cal	P-value
Conflict Resolution	300	16.69	2.10	0.029	0.622
Job Commitment	300	86.87	4.01		

Note. * $P > 0.05$. M= Mean; SD= Standard Deviation; r= pearson correlation coefficient between conflict resolution and job commitment.

Table 2 showed that the calculated correlation coefficient of 0.029 was not significant at 0.05 level of significance because the P-value (0.622) > 0.05 . The null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that there was no significant relationship between conflict resolution and job commitment of non- teaching staff in public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It was, however, revealed that there was no significant relationship between conflict resolution and job commitment of non- teaching staff. It suggests that resolving conflicts alone may not be sufficient to influence the commitment levels of non-teaching staff in the studied universities. One probable explanation is that non-teaching staff may view conflicts as normal organizational occurrences and, therefore, do not associate management's handling of conflicts with their personal job dedication. Additionally, if conflict levels are generally low or conflicts involve issues perceived as minor, their resolution may not substantially affect commitment. This finding contradicts earlier studies such as Rahim (2012) who found that effective conflict management enhances employee satisfaction and commitment by creating harmonious workplace relationships. Oginni and Afolabi (2014) reported a positive relationship between conflict-handling strategies and employee commitment in Nigerian organizations. However, the present finding aligns with Afzalur Rahim's (2011) later argument that conflict resolution influences commitment only when employees perceive conflicts as threatening or affecting core job functions. If conflicts are bureaucratic or interpersonal in nature, their resolution may not significantly impact commitment. The present result also agrees with Adeniji and Osibanjo (2012) who found that conflict management in Nigerian institutions often focuses on administrative compliance rather than employee well-being, thus limiting its effect on commitment. The implication is that universities must move beyond procedural conflict resolution and adopt participatory, employee-centered approaches that address deeper workplace concerns.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study established that non-teaching staff in public universities in Southwest Nigeria demonstrated a high level of job commitment. Conversely, conflict resolution showed no significant relationship with job commitment, suggesting that these areas may require improved strategies or more effective implementation to enhance their impact.

RECCOMENDATIONS

1. University management should develop more effective conflict resolution mechanisms, such as mediation teams and grievance hotlines, because conflict resolution showed no significant relationship with commitment, thus indicating a need for improvement.
2. The management should pay their staff promptly, so that it would cause conflict among staff and managers in the University.

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