

The study of conflict management and Employee Performance in Selected Broadcasting Stations in South East-Nigeria.

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-----ABSTRACT-----

Conflict is inevitable in human societies whether real or imaginary. Media organizations not exempted. At a minimal level, it can lead to creativity and greater performance because individuals struggle within the conflict situation to bring out the best in them. However, when conflict exceed certain level and move more into negative tendency, it becomes an obstacle and challenge to both individual and organization performance, leading to communication and employee performance, organizational structure and employee performance and interpersonal conflict and employee performance.. The purpose of this study is to explore the effect of conflict management on employee performance in selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State. The total population of study amount to 851 employees of selected broadcasting station in Enugu State (ESBS, NTA, FRCN), which comprises of 66 employees of ESBS, 102 employees of NTA, and 683 employees of FRCN. Descriptive survey method was adopted as the research design. The sample size was 272 using Taro Yamani technique. Stratified sampling techniques was used. The researcher employed both primary and secondary source of data. The method of data collection was the questionnaire. The data collected for the study were presented and analysed using Pearson correlation coefficient. It was found that poor communication will affect employee performance, poor organizational structure will affect the performance of the employee and interpersonal conflict is a threat to employee performance in selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State, Nigeria. This study concluded that conflict is a regular feature in corporate organizations which arises whenever there is disagreement between individual or group of individuals and management. It is recommended that there should be effective interpersonal relationships, and effective management employee relationships. This should be underscored by democratic management style. This will ensure that employee's problems are well addressed and opportunities are always offered to them to achieve their goals.

Keywords: Conflict management, Employee Performance and Broadcasting Stations

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I. INTRODUCTION

Conflict has gradually become an inevitable situation in every establishment as well as media organizations in Nigeria. The dynamic nature of the society in which we reside may bring about inconsistencies which eventually lead to conflicts. According to Rahim (2002), conflict generally refers to differences in opinions and perceptions concerning a particular issue at a particular period of time. It is a process that begins where one party perceives that another party has harmfully affected, or is about to affect something that the first party cares about adversely (Robbins, 2005). It is a form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted by or unacceptable to one or more members of another group. It is actions that we take to express our feelings, articulate our perceptions, and get our needs met in a way that has the potential for interfering with someone else's ability to get his or her needs met (Meyer, 2004). Conflict is not a new phenomenon in the history of human beings. It always exists as long as human beings live together and it is an inevitable part of human experience or existence (Francis, 2006). Assefa (2001) also notes that, as long as there is the concept of society, organization and the existence of people, there is undoubtedly conflict no matter the extent as well as the source of it. Conflict can arise between members of the same group, known as intergroup conflict, or it can occur between members of two or more groups, and may involve violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension, known as intergroup conflict. The aims of the parties in conflict may extend from simply attempting to gain acceptance of a preference, or securing a resource advantage, to the extremes of injuring or eliminating opponents. In other words, when two groups or individuals pursue incompatible interests and needs which could either be political, economic, social or cultural, conflict is likely to occur (Bukari, 2013).

Since conflicts is unavoidable, there is therefore the need for organizations to learn to deal with them effectively to minimize their negative impact and maximize their positive impact (Almost, 2006).The incompatibilities which lead to conflict could bring about both negative and positive outcomes. However, the

positive or negative impact of conflict on the individual and organization would basically depend on how it is managed. Accountemps, (2006) in his research indicates that management executives are spending twice as much time settling employees' disputes than they did a decade ago. If conflicts are managed properly by applying the best course of action, the organization can increase its performance in terms of utilizing the scarce resources and achieving the organizational objectives (Awan, and Anjum, 2015). Conversely, unmanaged conflict negatively impacts on employee's performance. Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, establishing structures of conflict models, putting strategic measures as well as approaches in place (Petkovic, 2008). It involves implementing strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict and to increase the positive aspects of conflict at a level equal to or higher than where the conflict is taking place. It is not concerned with eliminating all conflict or avoiding conflict. Conflict management does not necessarily imply conflict resolution. Conflict management involves designing effective macro-level strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict in order to enhance learning and effectiveness in an organization (Rahim, 2002). Conflict spurs individual to perform adequately but when it goes to the extreme, it intervenes with individual performance.

Performance on the other hand, is the ability to carry out a job well (Armstrong, 2006). It relates to a set of financial and nonfinancial indicators which offer information on the degree of achievement of objectives and results (Lebans, and Euske, 2006). Performance may be used to define what an organization has accomplished with respect to the process, results, relevance and success. Employee performance is about directing and supporting employees to work as effectively and efficiently as possible in line with the needs of the organization (Babin, and Boles, 2000). This includes job satisfaction, commitment and perceived psychological contract (Armstrong, 2000). It is also the contribution of employees to make them attain goals (Herbert, John & Lee 2000). It can be manifested in improvement in production, easiness in using the new technology, highly motivated workers. Employee performance is a performance measure encompassing both efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, employees are more willing to get involved in conflict management, goal setting or problem solving activities, which subsequently result in higher performance in organizations, media establishments not excluded (Addison, and Wagner, 1997).

Media, whether government, or private play an important role in the society. They function as a space in which the conflicts arising in society can be openly expressed, and solutions for peace generated. These media organizations are however not immune from conflict. To a large extent, these organizations experience diverse forms of conflict challenges. As rightly observed by Thompson (1988), in public organizations as well as in private organizations, disagreement among individuals or groups within the organization can centre on factors ranging from resource allocation and division of responsibility to the overall direction of the organization. In other words, conflict among employees in an organization is unavoidable; rather it is the nature of complex organizations. However, if managed properly, it can have a positive impact on employee's performance (Dana, 2000).

II. METHOD

Participants

A total of 272 workers participated in this study, 21 person from Enugu State broadcasting station, 33 person from National television and 218 from Federal radio corporation of Nigeria. With a mean age of 1.45 and standard deviation of .49 their age range were 18-20 4.8%, 21-30 38.2%, 31-40 37.1%, 41 and above 19.9%. The number of males was 107, and the number of females was 165. Participants were selected from different departments: administration 57 21.0%, program 38 14.0%, news 51 18.8%, marketing 37 13.6%, store/procurement 20 7.4%, engineering 27 9.9%, finance/account 21 7.7% and audit 21 7.7%. The stratified sampling technique was used amongst the ranges of respondents which are employees of ESBS, NTA and FRCN. The Rangan Kamaisan proportional allocation method was adopted to allocate the questionnaire to the various segment of the population.

Instruments

The conflict management and employee performance questionnaire developed by Igbokwe (2020) was used to gather data. The face (expert) validity of the instrument was ascertained by two experts from the Faculty of Management Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awaka, whose suggestions /opinions were incorporated to make sure that the instrument contains the appropriate items that measure up with what is studied and completely removed words and items that will confuse the respondents and a reliability co-efficient of 0.91.

Procedure

The researcher went to different organizations after obtaining permission from the management, sorted the persons selected from each department, have gathered the designated place after introducing themselves and the work they intends to research on. A consent letter was shared to the respondents to fill and after wards only those who filled the consent form among the staff of selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State. (ESBS, NTA, FRCN) were given the questionnaire to filled and collected back the same day at the different locations. The questionnaires were distributed through some research assistants.

Area of the study

This study was conducted in selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State. Namely; Enugu State Broadcasting Station (ESBS), Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN).

Design and Statistics

The study is a descriptive survey research and the correlation coefficient statistical tool was used for data analysis.

III. RESULTS

Table 1 of Correlations

	Communication	Employees Performance
Communication	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.254**
	N	272
Employees Performance	Pearson Correlation	.254**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	272

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the analysis above, it shows that the probability value (0.003) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis and conclude that poor communication will affect employee performances among selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State, with a correlation value of 0.254.

Table 2 of correlations

	Organisational Structure	Employees Performance
Organisational Structure	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.317*
	N	272
Employees Performance	Pearson Correlation	.317*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028
	N	272

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In testing the second hypothesis, the analysis shows that the probability value (0.028) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher therefore accepts the alternative hypothesis and concludes that poor organizational structure will affect employee performances among selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State, with a correlation value of 0.317.

Table 3 of correlations

	Interpersonal Conflict	Employees Performance
Interpersonal Conflict	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.147**
	N	272
Employees Performance	Pearson Correlation	.147**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011
	N	272

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In testing the third hypothesis, the analysis shows that the probability value (0.011) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher therefore accepts the alternative hypothesis and concludes that interpersonal

conflict will affect employee performances among selected broadcasting stations in Enugu State, with a correlation value of 0.147.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study showed that poor communication will affect employee performances among selected broadcasting stations in South East Nigeria. The findings of this study is supported by the previous studies, Otoo (2015) noted that completeness, concreteness and consistency of communication significantly affect workers performance positively, similarly, Allen, 1992, Rhoades and Eisenberger. 2002, Anchor, 2009 observed that adequacy and accuracy of information is an essential component of effective communication which eventually leads to efficiency, productivity and output growth. Asamu (2014) observed that effective communication has impact on workers performance. This assertion can be linked to Ayatse (2005) who observed that communication is needed to establish and disseminate the goals of the enterprise. This is because the competencies and skills they possess will enable them to exhibit work behaviours appropriate and relevant to the performance of the job". Also, the contextual theory affirms the above result through the contention of (Pearce 1994, 1995; and Cronen 1991, 1995) that for communication to effectively have impact on workers performance there is need for the message passed across to be properly understood by workers in a particular organization.

The result of this study revealed that poor organizational structure will affect employee performance. This is in line with the findings of the previous studies, Timothy (2012) assert that a decentralized organization can act more quickly to solve problems, more people provide input into decisions, and employees are less likely to feel alienated from those who make decisions that affect their work lives. Also, task routine affects staff productivity both positively and negatively depending on the time frame and the individual worker's preference for either task routine or variety. This is in line with the studies of Bradley (2011), McClain and Thomas (2003), Tucker, Nembhard and Edmondson (2007) pointed out the two- sided effects of task routine on employee productivity. Further they observed that a significant positive relationship existed and still exists between narrow span of control and efficiency. This finding however, only partly agrees with Meier and Bohte's model of span of control which emphasized wide spans at the initial stage of production. It is also in disagreement with Robbins and Timothy (2012) who assert that narrow spans encourage overly tight supervision and discourage employee autonomy.

The findings of this study reveal that interpersonal conflicts affect employee's performance. This is in agreement with the previous findings, Jackson & Maslach, (1982); Shirom, (1989); Ganster & Schaubroeck, (1991); GolLeiter & Maslach, (1988) observed that negative behaviors are due to stressful environment which increase employee turnover and absenteeism. The implication is that employees who have interpersonal conflicts in an organization create a political environment which leads to negative consequences. Inam (2011) noted that interpersonal conflict was positively related to interpersonal deviance, organizational deviance which clearly shows that if employees have interpersonal conflicts then its leads to interpersonal deviance such as sexual harassment, verbal and physical aggression and organizational workplace deviance such as theft, putting little effort in to work and sabotage. Caitlin (2012) proposed that recovery experiences (i.e., psychological detachment, relaxation, mastery, no work control, positive work reflection, negative work reflection, and social activities) would moderate the relationships between workplace interpersonal conflict and both general and work-related employee well-being.

V. CONCLUSION

Conflict is a regular feature in corporate organizations which arises whenever there is disagreement between individual or group of individuals and management. Conflict in organization have adverse effect in overall performance of the employee. In broadcasting stations, various strategies are adopted in managing the conflicts but the strategy adopted in each instance depends on the nature of the conflict and the person involved. The strategies adopted are largely effective in resolving the conflicts. However, the re-occurrence of specific conflict is not mainly due to ineffective conflict management but the dynamic socio-economic situation. Organizational conflicts adversely affect employees and management as well as their relationships. It impacts negatively on employee performance and productivity, which in turn lowers organizational output.

It is recommended that the management should ensure adequate communication channel in the organization. This will enable free flow of information from the superior down to their juniors.

Besides, the structure of an organization includes the hierarchy, procedures, reward systems and many others. In certain situations, alteration of the structure of the organization may positively or negatively influence the employee performance in the organization. Therefore, Individual aims and organizational goals should not be compatible. Individuals should ensure that their selfish interests do not conflict with organizational goals. Otherwise, personal interests should be re-aligning with organizational interests.

Conflict of interests:

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately affected their report of the findings of this research.

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