



Conflict Management Practices and Performances of Civil Servants in Enugu State

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Abstract

The study evaluated the conflict management practices and Performances of civil servants in Enugu state. The specific objectives were to: examine the relationship between avoidance strategy and output; and ascertain the relationship compromise strategy and level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state. The study adopted descriptive survey. The primary source of data was questionnaire. A total population of 1107 staff was used. The adequate sample size of 285, using Freund and William's statistic formula at 5 percent margin of error. 265 staff returned the questionnaire and accurately filled. Data was analyzed and the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to test the hypotheses. Findings showed that Avoidance strategy had significant positive relationship with the output ($r = .402 < .790, p < .05$) and Compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .355 < .976, p < .05$). The study concluded that avoidance strategy and compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the output and level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu State. The study recommended among others that Organizations should enact laws and rules that will guide issues that may lead to conflict in the organisations and as well attach penalties.

Keywords *Conflict Management Practices; Performance; Civil Servants; Enugu State*

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Introduction

Where there are people, there is conflict. The word “conflict” tends to generate images of anger, fighting, and other ugly thoughts that leave people bruised and beaten. Conflict is not uncommon in the workplace, and it is not always good. They are usually taken in a negative association. However, this is inaccurate as conflicts are necessary for healthy relationships. It all depends on the approach we use to resolve the conflict (Tutorials, 2023). In the workplace, there are many instances in which conflict can happen between coworkers, and when it does, it is important to resolve the situation before it escalates. Conflict often is a byproduct when there’s human interaction, so responding professionally requires conflict-resolution strategies. Human interaction may sometimes lead to conflict, so response and resolution require conflict resolution strategies (Herrity, 2022).

Conflict is part of any work environment that conflicts exist isn't the issue, but having an effective conflict communication strategy to resolve that conflict, if it begins to impact the business is crucial for any manager. While conflict can be a creative fuel that helps teams compete and work more productively, without proper conflict management, it can easily blow up and bring everything to a dead stop. Conflict is a struggle and a clash of interest, opinion, or even principles which will always be found in the society. Herrity, (2022) defined conflicts as struggles that can arise during an active disagreement of opinions or interests, so it’s important to understand how to navigate and resolve them. It arises out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions, also whenever individuals have different values, opinions, needs, interests and are unable to find a middle way (Juneja, 2015).

Organisational performance is high at moderate levels of conflict. Employees tend to lose their concentration and focus in work if they are engaged in conflicts. Individuals lose interest in their jobs leading to zero output. They invest all their energies in fighting with each other and as a result the goals of the organization are never met. No organization can survive if the targets are not achieved. Conflict among workers in an organization is inevitable. If it manages properly, it will bring catalyst for change and can have a positive impact on employee satisfaction and performance of the organization. Conversely, unmanaged conflict negatively impacts both employee satisfaction and job performance (Awan & Sehar, 2015).

Employees in various organisations are organized into manageable groups in order to achieve common goal, therefore, the probability of conflicts to arise is very high. Conflicts have both negative and positive outcomes to the individual employees and the organization at large. There is no one source of conflicts which occurs in organisations at all levels of management. In any organisation, there are many causes of conflicts; however, conflicts within an individual usually arise when a person is uncertain about what task is expected to do, if not clearly defined by the supervisor or the person in charge. Furthermore, if the tasks of individuals working as a group are not clearly defined by the management they will lead to more conflicts (Ongori, 2009). Not all conflicts are bad and not all conflicts are good. People tend to view conflict as a negative force operating against successful completion of group or common goals. Conflict can create negative impact to groups but may also lead to positive effects depending on the nature of the conflict. The present study seems to examine the conflict management practices and Performances of civil servants in Enugu state.

Statement of the Problem

Conflict, arguments, and change are natural parts of our lives, as well as the lives of every agency, organization, and nation. When a dispute arises, often the best course of action is negotiation to resolve the disagreement. Conflict resolution is a way for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement among them. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional. Conflict exists when two people or groups disagree, and the disagreement causes friction. One party needs to feel that the other’s point of view will have a negative effect on the final outcome. Conflict is a perception meaning it only really exists if it’s acknowledged by the parties that are experiencing it.

Conflict can have damaging or productive effects on organisational performance. Some conflicts have their basis in how people behave, while others come from disagreements about the nature of the team’s work and how it is being accomplished. Conflict is often caused by factors related to individual behaviour, disagreements about the team’s work as well avoidance of strategies that may be used to tackle the issues of conflict such as avoidance strategy and

compromise strategy. Whether a conflict is productive or not can depend on how team members perceive it, as well as how it affects progress toward the team's goals.

Conflict resolution through negotiation can be good for all parties involved. Often, each side will get more by participating in negotiations than they would by walking away, and it can be a way for organisation to get resources that might otherwise be out of reach. Conflict over and over again been thought to be a dysfunctional outcome, a result of poor communication and lack of trust between co-workers is associated with words like violence and destruction, as such employees are encouraged to avoid it at all costs as it lingers the level of output and clientele satisfaction of civil servants.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the conflict management practices and Performances of civil servants in Enugu state. The specific objectives were to:

- i. Examine the relationship between avoidance strategy and output of civil servants in Enugu state.
- ii. Ascertain the relationship compromise strategy and level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What is the relationship between avoidance strategy and output of civil servants in Enugu state?
- ii. What is the relationship compromise strategy and level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state

Statement of the Hypotheses

The following Hypotheses guided the study

- i. Avoidance strategy has no significant relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state
- ii. Compromise strategy has no significant relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state

Significance of the Study

Organization/ employees: These studies on conflict management practices will help managers to understand that conflict do not only bring up negativity influence in the organization but as well brings about positive influence in the organization. Most conflict will help some team members see their shortfalls and as such work towards which in turn improves their performance.

The study will also help employees to understand better what conflict is all about and the best strategy through which it can be solved.

Academicians: the study will further serve as a reference material to future researchers.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study include:

Content scope: the content scope of the study was conflict management practices and Performances of civil servants in Enugu state.

Subject scope: the subject scope of the study were avoidance strategy and compromise strategy as the components conflict management practices (Dependent variable), output and level of clientele satisfaction as the components of the performance (Independent variable).

Geographical scope: The geographical scope of the study is Enugu State, Nigeria.

Time Scope: the time scope of the study is 2021-2023

Review of the Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Conflict

Conflicts are inevitable part of organizational life since the goals of different stakeholders such as managers and staff are often incompatible (Adomi and Ojo, 2015). Conflict is an unpleasant fact in any organization as long as people compete for jobs, resources, power, recognition and security. Organizational conflict can be regarded as a dispute that occurs when interests, goals or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible with each other. This results into a situation whereby they frustrate each other in an attempt to achieve their objectives. Conflict arises in groups because of the scarcity of freedom, position, and resources. People who value independence tend to resist the need for interdependence and, to some extent, conformity within a group. People who seek power therefore struggle with others for position or status within the group. Conflict is a part of organizational life and may occur between individuals, between the individual and the group, and between groups (Jung, 2013).

Management

Management is the administration of an organization, whether it is a business, a nonprofit organization, or a government body. It is the art and science of managing resources of the business. Management includes the activities of setting the strategy of an organization and coordinating the efforts of its employees (or of volunteers) to accomplish its objectives through the application of available resources, such as financial, natural, technological, and human resources (Dill, 2021). Management is regarded as the most important of all human activities. It may be called the practice of consciously and continually shaping organizations (Tutorialspoint, 2021). Management is a multipurpose organ that manages a business. Workers and work Management is the integrated process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling and coordinating between all the activities or we can say from small scale activities to large scale activities, we can also say it as success desired, result oriented pool of activities followed by day-to-day work to, year to year and decade to decade as soon (Mohta, 2022).

Practices

Practice in an instructional setting may be effective if repeated. Practice changes the human body physically and psychologically as it increases in skill level. Organisational Practices are the behaviours & actions in an organization. The Organisational Practices convert the values and ideals in an organisation's culture into practical actions and movements that keep the organization running actively, and more importantly on an upward trajectory in terms of business and profit margins (Tejavath, 2016). Practices are one of the Five Ps of an organization which includes purpose, philosophy, priorities, practices and projections. Organizational Practices are located immediately outside of the Core Culture. Organizational Practices are not the elements of Core Culture. Instead, they are the behaviours that convert core ideals to actions. Practices make the organization credible. And, they keep the culture alive. Practices include the everyday habits of employees. These habits must align with the Core Culture. If the core culture changes, employee roles may need to change. With those changes, there will be changes in behaviour. Therefore, resulting in changes in some everyday habits. When this happens, employees demonstrate alignment with the core principles and value (Margolis, 2023).

Components of the Conflict Management Strategies that Formed Part of Objectives

Avoidance Strategy

Avoidance coping, also known as avoidant coping, avoidance behaviours, and escape coping, is a maladaptive form of coping that involves changing our behaviour to try to avoid thinking or feeling things that are uncomfortable. In other words, avoidance coping involves trying to avoid stressors rather than dealing with them. It may seem that avoiding stress is a great way to feel less stressed, but this isn't necessarily the case; often, we need to deal with things so we either experience less stress or feel less stressed by what we experience without avoiding the problem entirely. The other broad category of coping is "active coping" or "approach coping," which is coping that addresses

a problem directly as a way to alleviate stress, (Uniquemindcare, 2023). Avoidance coping also known as avoidant coping, avoidance behaviours, and escape coping is a maladaptive form of coping in which a person changes their behaviour to avoid thinking about, feeling, or doing difficult things. Avoiding stress might seem like a great way to become less stressed, but this isn't necessarily the case. More often than not, confronting a problem or dealing with a stressor is the only way to effectively reduce the stress it causes. We strive for "stress management" rather than "stress avoidance" because we can't always avoid stress, but we can manage it with effective coping techniques. The other broad category of coping is called "active coping" or "approach coping." This type of coping addresses a problem directly as a means to alleviate stress (Scott, 2022).

Compromise Strategy

Compromise is a basic negotiation process in which both parties give up something that they want in order to get something else they want more. Compromises usually occur in win-lose situations -- when there is a fixed pie to be divided up, and whatever one side gets, the other side loses. In compromise situations, neither side gets all of what they really want, but they each make concessions in order to reach an agreement that is acceptable to both. When there are multiple issues to be negotiated, then parties may make additional concessions. The basic idea is that each party gives up something that the other party values but that they themselves do not care about, (Brad, 2003). Compromising conflict style is a valuable tool for managers, particularly when you're dealing with multiple parties with differing interests. The Latin *compromissum* means "a mutual promise." And the French compromise means "accord." Compromise brings about agreement, but it doesn't necessarily solve underlying issues. Compromise is frequently an arrangement where there's a mutual concession: a middle ground is reached and both parties give up something to get something. It can produce a solution, and everyone may move on momentarily, but the parties may feel discontent in the long term. Compromising and collaborating both involve opposing parties getting their needs met. The main difference is to what extent those needs are met. Compromising means that both sides make concessions, so each party is somewhat satisfied but not entirely satisfied with the outcome.

Performance

Performance is an act of staging or presenting a play, concert, or other form of entertainment. In the work place, job performance is the hypothesized conception or requirements of a role. There are two types of job performances: contextual and task. Task performance is dependent on cognitive ability, while contextual performance is dependent on personality (Ivan and Cary, 2015). Performance is achieved when all efforts are focused towards achieving the set objectives and meeting customer's satisfaction. Objectives and customer satisfaction cannot however be accurately measured. Performance means both behaviours and results. Behaviours are emanating from the performer and turn the performance of an abstract concept into a concrete action. Not being just tools of obtaining some results, behaviours are by themselves outcomes - the product of the physical and cerebral exercise submitted for the execution of tasks and can be judged apart from results (Bourguignon, 2017). Task performance relates to behavioural roles that are recognized in job descriptions and remuneration systems. They are directly related to organizational performance, whereas contextual performances are value-based and add additional behavioural roles that are not recognized in job descriptions and covered by compensation; these are extra roles that are indirectly related to organizational performance (Paul, 2011).

Components of Performance that formed part of the objectives of the study

Output

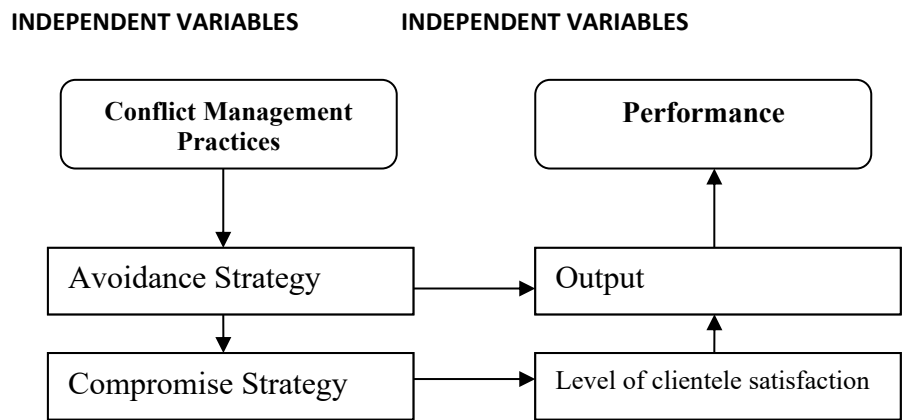
Output is the measure of the product of an organization. Output in manufacturing firms is the quantity of goods or services produced by the firm within a specified or given time. For an organization to produce an output to the organization must first have an input. Output is the amount of energy, work, goods, or services produced by a machine, factory, company, or an individual in a period. It could also be referred to as the desired result from a project or contractor as stated in (Business Dictionary, 2019; Ede, & Mbah, 2020). A machine, factory, business, or person's output is defined as the quantity of energy, labor, products, or services produced in a given period. Production, in general, refers to the objects created. In terms of output, the production unit denotes the total quantity of things produced during a period of time as well as the various production expenses (Essays, 2018; Mbah, & Ajagu, 2020). The number of consumers visited over a certain period is sometimes referred to as an output. If the

production of the organization decreases as a result of changes in the external or internal environment, the organization must adapt (Kotler, 2018).

The Level of Clientele Satisfaction

Customer services levels refer to the quality of service a company provides to their clients or customers. Many industries measure customer service in levels ranging from unsatisfactory to exceptional. Each business may follow its own customer service model to track their level of service, though core components of high-level customer service are consistent across all industries. Being mindful about the level of service you or your company provides can help your business make strategic decisions to provide better experiences for your customers. Customer services levels refer to the quality of service a company provides to their clients or customers. Many industries measure customer service in levels ranging from unsatisfactory to exceptional, (IndeedEditorialTeam, 2023; Ede, & Mbah,2020). Customer retention is one of the most important metrics for Seas companies like QuestionPro. Getting new business is much more expensive and takes a lot more time than building an existing relationship. Customer satisfaction and loyalty is the most important thing for a business relationship to last and is successful. Customer happiness is a big part of how loyal a customer is. Customers who aren't happy have a lot of options, so they won't think twice about taking their business elsewhere if they're not happy. It's important to figure out how to measure and track customer satisfaction because it can be both a sign of growth and a warning sign of customer churn, (QuestionPro, 2023).

Conceptual Framework of the Study



Theoretical Framework

Conflict Theory

The study will adopt Conflict Theory (Karl Max, 1848). Conflict theorists are of the view that there are groups in the society that have different interests. In this regard they believe that social arrangement will tend to benefit some groups at the expense of others. Because of existence of the different interests, the potentials and the likelihood of conflict is always present. According to this theory, some groups come to dominate others and to win for themselves a disproportionate share of the society's political power, which includes wealth and privileges in the society at the expense of the less powerful ones. They also incriminate the activities of the less powerful while they protect that of the powerful persons such situations according to this theory creates violence. The theory is of the view that, the masses are not bound to society by their shared values, but by coercion at the hands of those in power. This perspective emphasizes social control, not consensus and conformity. Groups and individuals advance their own interests, struggling over control of societal resources. Those with the most resources exercise power over others with inequality and power struggles resulting. There is great attention paid to class, race, and gender in this perspective because they are seen as the grounds of the most pertinent and enduring struggles in society which often lead to political violence (Anderson and Taylor, 2009).

Empirical Review

The Relationship between avoidance strategy and output of civil servants in Enugu State

Omisore and Okofu (2014) carried out a study on Staff Recruitment and Selection Process in the Nigerian Public Service: What is to be done? The recruitment and selection of staff in any organization be it public or private sector is of paramount importance to the organization. This is so because it is the staff that turns the vision and mission of the organization into reality. Thus, the objectives of any organization can only be realized through the effective coordination of the human resource (staff) of the organization. This paper attempts an examination of the process of staff recruitment and selection in the public service of Nigeria. Five relevant research questions were raised and addressed. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected from respondents to the questionnaire designed for this purpose. The results obtained showed that merit is often jettisoned on the altar of ethnicity and religion in recruitment into the public service in Nigeria. Since the public service is directly controlled and regulated by the government, the Nigerian Federal Character Principle was largely complied with. The study also reveals that though there are stipulated periods for recruitment and selection into the public service, these are often sidelined.

Onyeka and Nwankwo (2016) conducted a study on the Effect of Tax Evasion and Avoidance on Nigeria's Economic Growth. This paper examined the impact of tax evasion and avoidance on growth of the Nigerian economy. The study adopted the ex-post facto research design and data were obtained from Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin for the period 1999 - 2012. The Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) model was used to test the hypothesis. The result emanating from the findings suggests that tax evasion and avoidance had negative significant impact on growth of the Nigerian economy.

Amadi & Onyia, (2019) conducted a study on a Strategic Approach to Gender Issues in Enugu State Civil Service. This paper examined the issue of gender mainstreaming in our society with special focus on strategic approach to gender issues in Enugu State Civil service. This study was carried out in Enugu State secretariat where the majority of the State ministries are located. Eight research questions were formulated. The main objective of the study was to ascertain the level of application of gender mainstreaming in Enugu State Civil service. Survey design was employed and population of 12,560 civil servants was used. A sample of 400 respondents was drawn through probability sampling method by cluster, stratified and simple random techniques. The data were analyzed by the use of frequency tables and simple percentages. Findings indicated that the extent of gender mainstreaming in the study area was too low; unequal distribution of position, power and privileges exist between men and women; women occupy very low status; while men occupy high status the relation of production between men and women was complementary and supplementary relation and that sexism, patriarchy, poor mainstreaming and gender discrimination are factors responsible for the women's low status; low productivity, non-cordial relationship and poor utilization of women's potentials were the effects of poor gender mainstreaming and that the solution to the poor gender mainstreaming include elimination of gender stratification, appropriate training in gender analysis etc.; serious involvement of men in gender and development work, adequate synergy between women and men etc. were recommended.

Okonkwo, Okafor, and Okolie (2023) carried out a study on Nigeria Empirical Evidence on Talent Management Practices and Performance of State-Owned Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State. The study was on the effect talent management practices and performance of State-Owned Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State. The specific objectives were to; examine the relationship between employee promotion and research output in state owned tertiary institutions in Enugu state, evaluate the relationship between employee engagement and meeting deadline in state owned tertiary institutions in Enugu state and determine the relationship between participatory leadership development and employees' job satisfaction in state owned tertiary institutions in Enugu state. The study used the descriptive survey approach. The primary source of data was used. The administration of questionnaire was utilized. A population of 2,025 staff of three selected tertiary institutions namely Esut, Escet and IMT Enugu and 344 was sample size was used using Yamane (1967) formula. Data was presented and analyzed by mean score (3.0 and above a greed while below 3.0 disagreed) and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. The hypotheses were analyzed using correlation statistics tool. The findings revealed that employee promotion had positive relationship with research output in state owned tertiary institutions in Enugu state ($r=95, n= 223) = .697 < 0.974, p<.05$), employee engagement had positive relationship between with meeting deadline in state owned tertiary institutions in Enugu

state ($r = 95, n = 223$) = .533 < 0.958, $p < .05$) and participatory leadership development had positive relationship between with employee job satisfaction in state owned tertiary institutions in Enugu state ($r(95, n = 223) = .614 < 0.968, p < .05$). The study concluded that talent management practices had positive relationship with performance of State-owned tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Kagucia and Poipoi (2023) carried out a study on the Effect of Avoidance Conflict Resolution Strategy on Employee Performance in the Kenyan Public Universities. The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of Avoidance Conflict Resolution Strategy on employee performance in Kenyan Public Universities. The study was conducted in seven public universities. Specific objectives were to establish the effect of avoidance strategy on employee performance in Kenyan Public Universities and to determine the effect of the organizational factors on the relationship between avoidance conflict resolution strategy and performance of employees in the public universities in Kenya. Designs employed were descriptive survey and Karl Pearson moment Correlation. Target population was 5189 teaching staff from seven Kenyan public universities. Stratified Random Sampling was used to obtain a sample size of 519 employees. Primary data collection was through questionnaires while secondary data was collected through document analysis. Content validity of the data collection instruments was established by carrying out an assessment by experts. Cronbach's alpha score was computed to establish the document's reliability. The alpha score was 0.845. Descriptive statistics such as means, percentages and frequency counts were used while inferential statistics involved use of Karl Pearson moment Correlation. The results indicated that the strategy had a positive effect on employee performance. It was concluded that avoidance conflict resolution strategy affects employee performance and that organizational factors moderate the relationship between avoidance and employee performance. The recommendations were that avoidance style should be used when dealing with trivial matters and a win-win or a lose-lose orientation is required. The findings of the study may help scholars as a source of research data, University Managements and the Government in resolving conflicts in Public Universities and Human Resource Practitioners in identifying and implementing conflict resolution policies in their institutions.

The Relationship #compromise Strategy and Level of Clientele Satisfaction of Civil Servants in Enugu State

Uwa (2014) conducted a study on Conflict Management Strategies and Employees' Productivity in a Nigerian State Civil Service. This study examines the role of conflict management strategies on employees' productivity in a Nigerian civil service. Four conflict management strategies were considered which include collective bargaining, negotiation, avoidance and imposing. The descriptive survey design was adopted and self-developed questionnaire tagged Conflict Management Strategies and Employees' Productivity Questionnaire was used in the data collection. The reliability of the instrument was tested and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.92 was obtained for the whole instrument. Taro Yamane formula was used in determining sample size and stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting 240 respondents from a cross-section of four ministries in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, South-South, Nigeria. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression were used to analyse the hypotheses. Collective bargaining and negotiation showed a significant positive contribution to employees' productivity while that obtained for avoidance and imposing were significantly negative. Also, collective bargaining and negotiation were significantly positively related to employees' productivity.

Ayaga and Nnabuko (2019) carried out a study on Competitive Strategies and Customer Satisfaction in the Telecommunications Industry in Nigeria. Competition is a fact of life for most businesses. Companies strive to stay ahead of others. The Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) sector in Nigeria became active in 2001 after the commencement of operations of network service providers as a result of the deregulation of the telecommunications industry which ushered in competition. The overall objective of the study was to ascertain the effect of competitive strategies on customer satisfaction in the mobile phone sector in Nigeria. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja was the study area. The population of the study consists of all GSM firms and their customers in Nigeria. However, the target population was 1,727,866 GSM customers in the FCT. A sample size of 400 GSM customers was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Regression and Pearson product correlation (r) was used to test the hypotheses facilitated by the statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Findings reveal a significant positive relationship between competitive strategies and customer satisfaction. Based on these findings, the researchers recommend that GSM service providers should make efforts at crafting competitive strategies that are customer friendly to avail the desired satisfaction.

Okoro, Eze & Ike (2021) carried out a study on Linking Job Performance of Civil Servants to Psychological Contracts. This study examined relationship between job performance of civil servants and psychological contracts in the states of the South East geo-political zone. The participants comprised 3062 (males: 1098 and Females: 1964) drawn using purposeful random sampling technique from the population of civil servants in the states of the South-East geo-political zone of Nigeria. Three instruments were used for data collection, they include; Psychological Contract Scale which is an 18- item questionnaire, Psychological Contract Inventory (PCI), which is a 14 – item questionnaire and Performance Evaluation Report which is a 12- item questionnaire. Cross-sectional survey design was adopted while multiple regression analysis was applied as statistical tests. The results indicated that jointly, psychological contracts (transactional, relational breach and/fulfillment) jointly predicted civil servants’ poor job performance of $R^2 = .008$, $F(3, 3058) = 8.64$, $p = .001$ and independently as well. The result, also, showed that psychological contract breach prevailed over psychological contract fulfillment among civil servants in relation to their job performance ($M = 35.90$; $SD = 12.45$) and that psychological contract breach significantly and negatively correlated with job performance of civil servants ($r = -.04$, $p < .01$). It was concluded that that civil servants in South-East geo-political zone are having transactional psychological contract and not relational, in the same vein, they reported having breaches in their psychological contracts which affected their performances poorly.

Agbodike & Ugwu (2021) carried out a study on the Effect of Performance Appraisal on Service Delivery and Employees Development. This study examined the Performance appraisal and service delivery of employees in Enugu State Civil Service.” The need for the research work arose due to the comparatively less attention that has been given to the nature of performance appraisal practices in the Nigeria civil service and specifically in Enugu State Civil Service, despite its imperative impact on employee’s productivity. The study made use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The population of the study is 2,079, while the sample size is 335. The simple random sampling techniques was applied to select the sample for the study while the data collected were presented and analyzed with frequency, percentage, and chi-square(χ^2) analysis. The study determined the extent performance appraisal has improved job satisfaction and motivation in Enugu State Civil Service. These include opportunity for advancement, positive attitude to work, training, involving in decision making, salary increment, and promotion. It also determined the extent performance appraisal has improved employees’ potentials in Enugu State Civil Service. The study shows that career development, leadership opportunity, drive to be successful, future improvement, focusing on organizational objective, solving real life problems, are the ways performance appraisal has improved employees’ potentials to an extent in the selected ministries in Enugu State Civil Service. The study recommended that there should be a clear standard that define each trait in the appraisal system, the appraisal system should be devoid of bias, and there is need to hold the appraisers to objectivity in reporting the appraisal results of employees. It also recommended that the performance appraisal system should be free from unnecessary leniency in which virtually all the employees get high rating; there should be an effective mechanism for checking bias, impartiality and unnecessary leniency that characterize performance appraisal in Enugu State Civil Service, among other things. The study concluded that if the Enugu State Civil Service uses performance appraisal strategically and relate it with human resource activities and policies it can improve the competencies, motivation, capabilities, and performance of its employees.

Masud, Saif, Rasheedul, Abdul, Ibrahim and Binoy (2023) conducted a study on Job Satisfaction: A Study on the Civil Service Field of Administration. Satisfaction at work is especially vital in a developing nation like Bangladesh, where the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) officers are the country's most valuable and significant human resource. Despite obstacles, the government of Bangladesh has made significant efforts in recent years to encourage and influence public employees, notably BCS (administration) cadre officers, to increase their efficiency and activity in service delivery to the public. This research examines the relationship between Bangladesh Cadre Service officer job satisfaction and exogenous (such as working conditions) and endogenous (such as internal rewards and recognition for outstanding performance and creative problem solving) organizational factors. As an administrator in the Bangladesh Civil Service, this study is not only fascinating but also pertinent to my own. Not only did this study draw on my personal experiences and insights, but also a variety of current theoretical frameworks and models to give you the most in-depth look at the topic possible. Methods: Both quantitative and qualitative strategies were used in this study's investigation. From these areas, 106 Bangladesh Cadre Service officers have randomly been selected. We examined the survey responses using SPSS-25 and SmartPLS-4. Results: The result of this study indicates that the Bangladesh Cadre Service officer, who is now working at the field level, is moderately satisfied. Analysis indicates

that transfer and posting, work and working environment and promotion and recognition are significant predictors of Job Satisfaction except for the other two variables-salary and training and career planning. This study also showed some other factors that have a strong significant relationship with the overall job satisfaction of Bangladeshi field-level civil servants. Conclusions: Policymakers may use this study's findings to enhance compensation strategies and strike a better balance between extrinsic and intrinsic incentives by better comprehending the effect of pay, promotion and recognition on work satisfaction.

Gap in Empirical Review

The few studies done were carried outside conflict management practices and performance of civil servants in Enugu state and did not focus to best of my knowledge on the avoidance strategy and output and compromise strategy and level of clientele satisfaction. Most of the studies reviewed analysed their data through Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression, Descriptive statistics Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) model, Probability sampling method by cluster, stratified and simple random techniques, Regression and Pearson product correlation (r), Purposeful random sampling technique, Random Descriptive Sampling techniques, Both quantitative and qualitative strategies, survey approach and Stratified Random Sampling respectively while the present study made use of Z test to test the hypotheses. Therefore, the study aimed at filling this research gap by evaluating conflict management practices and performance of civil servants in Enugu state.

Methodology

The area of the study comprised of civil servants working in Enugu State secretariat, Enugu state. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire. A total population of 1107 staff was used. The adequate sample size of 285, using Freund and William's statistic formula at 5 percent margin of error. 265 staff returned the questionnaire and accurately filled. That gave 93 percent response rate. The validity of the instrument was tested using content analysis and the result was good. The reliability was tested using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). It gave a reliability co-efficient of 0.75 which was also good. Data was presented and analyzed by mean score and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. The hypotheses were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient (r) statistics tool.

Data Presentation and Analyses

The Relationship Between Avoidance Strategy and Output of Civil Servants in Enugu state

Table 1: Responses on the relationship between avoidance strategy and output of civil servants in Enugu state

		5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
		SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	Avoiding conflict helps to disregard the direct issue at hand and this enhance productivity.	475 95 35.8	360 90 34.0	36 12 4.5	44 22 8.3	46 46 17.4	961 265 100%	3.63	1.472	Agree
2	The avoiding of conflict enables temporarily getting rid of an issue and promotes hard work.	575 115 43.4	328 82 30.9	42 14 5.3	26 13 4.9	41 41 15.5	1012 265 100%	3.82	1.432	Agree
3	Stress is reduced through avoidance strategy and effectiveness promoted.	500 100 37.7	404 101 38.1	24 8 3.0	48 24 9.1	32 32 12.1	1008 265 100%	3.80	1.351	Agree
4	Time is saved with avoidance strategy with services produced in a specific time.	610 122 46.0	304 76 28.7	21 7 2.6	68 34 12.8	26 26 9.8	1029 265 100%	3.88	1.370	Agree
5	Much risk are reduced and so increase the quantity of produced.	550 110 41.5	364 91 34.3	45 15 5.7	42 21 7.9	28 28 10.6	1029 265 100%	3.88	1.316	Agree

Total Grand mean and standard deviation	3.802	1.3882
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Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1, 185 respondents out of 265 representing 69.8 percent agreed that avoiding conflict helps to disregard the direct issue at hand and this enhance productivity with mean score 3.63 and standard deviation of 1.472. The avoiding of conflict enables temporarily getting rid of an issue and promotes hard work 187 respondents representing 74.3 percent agreed with mean score of 3.82 and standard deviation of 1.432. Stress is reduced through avoidance strategy and effectiveness promoted 201 respondents representing 75.8 percent agreed with mean score of 3.80 and standard deviation of 1.351. Time is saved with avoidance strategy with services produced in a specific time 198 respondents representing 74.7 percent agreed with mean score of 3.88 and 1.370. Much risk are reduced and so increase the quantity of produced 201 respondents representing 75.8 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.88 and standard deviation 1.316.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses One: Avoidance strategy has no significant relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state

Table 2: Shows Pearson correlations on avoidance strategy has no significant relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state

		Avoiding conflict helps to disregard the direct issue at hand and this enhance productivity.	The avoiding of conflict enables temporarily getting rid of an issue and promotes hard work.	Stress is reduced through avoidance strategy and effectiveness promoted .	Time is saved with avoidance strategy with services produced in a specific time.	Much risk are reduced and so increase the quantity of produced.
Avoiding conflict helps to disregard the direct issue at hand and this enhance productivity.	Pearson Correlation	1	.627**	.605**	.790**	.538**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
The avoiding of conflict enables temporarily getting rid of an issue and promotes hard work.	Pearson Correlation	.627**	1	.608**	.580**	.650**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
Stress is reduced through avoidance strategy and effectiveness promoted.	Pearson Correlation	.605**	.608**	1	.681**	.402**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
Time is saved with avoidance strategy with services produced in a specific time.	Pearson Correlation	.790**	.580**	.681**	1	.539**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
Much risk are reduced and so increase the quantity of produced.	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.650**	.402**	.539**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	265	265	265	265	265

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 showed the Pearson correlation matrix on avoidance strategy and output showing the correlation coefficients, significant values and the number of cases. The correlation coefficient shows $.402 < .790$. This value indicates that correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that avoidance strategy had significant positive relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state ($r = .402 < .790$). The computed correlations coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = .000$ with at alpha level for a two-tailed test ($r = .402 < .790, p < .05$).

Decision Rule

The decision rule is to accept the null hypothesis if the computed r is less than the tabulated r otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

Decision

Since the computed ($r = .402 < .790$) was greater than the table value of $.000$, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we concluded that avoidance strategy had significant positive relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .402 < .790, p < .05$).

Hypotheses Two: Compromise strategy has no significant relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state

Table 3: shows Pearson correlations on compromise strategy has no significant relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu State

Correlations						
		Compromising enables intermediate assertiveness and cooperativeness.	There is identification of a solution that is partially satisfactory to both parties.	The compromising strategy shows concern for others.	Both sides make concessions, so each party is somewhat satisfied but not entirely satisfied with the come.	Compromising conflict balance the needs of both by encouraging everyone.
Compromising enables intermediate assertiveness and cooperativeness.	Pearson Correlation	1	.608**	.496**	.355**	.482**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
There is identification of a solution that is partially satisfactory to both parties.	Pearson Correlation	.608**	1	.474**	.455**	.473**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
The compromising strategy shows concern for others.	Pearson Correlation	.496**	.474**	1	.641**	.976**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
Both sides make concessions, so each party is somewhat satisfied but not entirely satisfied with the come.	Pearson Correlation	.355**	.455**	.641**	1	.642**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	265	265	265	265	265
Compromising conflict balance the needs of both by encouraging everyone.	Pearson Correlation	.482**	.473**	.976**	.642**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	265	265	265	265	265

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 showed the Pearson correlation matrix on compromise strategy and level of clientele satisfaction showing the correlation coefficients, significant values and the number of cases. The correlation coefficient shows $.355 < .976$. This value indicates that correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state ($r = .355 < .976$). The computed correlations coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = .000$ with at alpha level for a two-tailed test ($r = .355 < .976, p < .05$).

Decision Rule

The decision rule is to accept the null hypothesis if the computed r is less than the tabulated r otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

Decision

Since the computed ($r = .355 < .976$) was greater than the table value of $.000$, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we concluded that compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .355 < .976, p < .05$).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of hypothesis one showed the computed ($r = .402 < .790$) was greater than the table value of $.000$, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we concluded that avoidance strategy had significant positive relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .402 < .790, p < .05$). In support of these hypotheses, Kagucia and Poipoi (2023) carried out a study on the effect of avoidance conflict Resolution Strategy on Employee Performance in the Kenyan Public Universities. The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of Avoidance Conflict Resolution Strategy on employee performance in Kenyan Public Universities. The study was conducted in seven public universities. Specific objectives were to establish the effect of avoidance strategy on employee performance in Kenyan Public Universities and to determine the effect of the organizational factors on the relationship between avoidance conflict resolution strategy and performance of employees in the public universities in Kenya. The results indicated that the strategy had a positive effect on employee performance. The findings of the study may help scholars as a source of research data, University Managements and the Government in resolving conflicts in Public Universities and Human Resource Practitioners in identifying and implementing conflict resolution policies in their institutions.

Hypotheses two showed the computed ($r = .355 < .976$) was greater than the table value of $.000$, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we concluded that compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .355 < .976, p < .05$). The study of Okoro, Eze & Ike (2021) on Linking Job Performance of Civil Servants to Psychological Contracts. indicated that jointly, psychological contracts (transactional, relational breach and/fulfillment) jointly predicted civil servants' poor job performance of $R^2 = .008, F(3, 3058) = 8.64, p = .001$ and independently as well. The result, also, showed that psychological contract breach prevailed over psychological contract fulfillment among civil servants in relation to their job performance ($M = 35.90; SD = 12.45$) and that psychological contract breach significantly and negatively correlated with job performance of civil servants ($r = -.04, p < .01$).

Summary of Findings

- i. Avoidance strategy had significant positive relationship with the output of civil servants in Enugu state ($r = .402 < .790, p < .05$).
- ii. Compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .355 < .976, p < .05$).

Conclusion

The study concluded that avoidance strategy and compromise strategy had significant positive relationship with the output and level of clientele satisfaction of civil servants in Enugu State. Conflict within an organization inspires all members to step up and demonstrate their leadership skills by offering meaningful solutions to the problem the group is facing. It is not easy to identify the factor that causes conflicts as diverse causes jointly combined result in dispute and disagreement. The basic causes of disputes can be identified through in-depth investigation, although character display most a times appear to be responsible for conflicts. The ability to successfully *resolve conflict* depends on the ability to manage stress quickly while remaining alert and calm.

Recommendations

The following Recommendation were made by the Study

- i. Organisations should enact laws and rules that will guide issues that may lead to conflict in the organisations and as well attach penalties.
- ii. Performance appraisal should be consistent in the civil service ass it will help individuals take their work serious.

Contribution to Knowledge

The few studies done were carried outside conflict management practices and performance of civil servants in Enugu state and did not focus to best of my knowledge on the avoidance strategy and output and compromise strategy and level of clientele satisfaction. Most of the studies reviewed analysed their data through Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression, Descriptive statistics Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) model, Probability sampling method by cluster, stratified and simple random techniques, Regression and Pearson product correlation (r), Purposeful random sampling technique, Random Descriptive Sampling techniques, Both quantitative and qualitative strategies, survey approach and Stratified Random Sampling respectively while the present study made use of Z test to test the hypotheses. Therefore, the study filled the research gap by evaluating conflict management practices and performance of civil servants in Enugu state.

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