

## PREVALENT CONFLICTS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE SELECTED MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between diverse prevalent conflicts and employee engagement in selected manufacturing companies. The study made use of the survey research design. The sample of the study comprises of 3,137 employees from three manufacturing companies in Lagos, Nigeria, which include Coleman wire & cables with 121 employees, May & Baker Nig. Plc. Convenience Sampling Technique was adopted as a sampling technique with sample size determined with Taro Yamane's formula. Questionnaire was administered on 355 respondents across the 3 manufacturing companies. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used after the data gathered are coded and managed as well as descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. The descriptive statistics such as simple percentages, frequencies were adopted used for demographic variables while hypothesis was tested multiple regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the values of employee engagement were regressed on the values of types of conflict prevalent in the selected manufacturing companies. The study concluded that to mitigate conflict, role overload should be reduced to the barest minimum to enable an employee conveniently perform organisational functions effectively. Consequent upon this study, it was recommended among others management should develop diverse but appropriate means of resolving and managing conflict at the felt stage before it escalates hence, making the aftermath result to a riotous degree.

**Keywords:** Employee engagement, Manufacturing companies, Organisational functions, prevalent conflicts

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement (EE) is the level of commitment associated with the involvement a worker has towards their organisation and its values. An engaged worker is alert to business context and works with colleagues to boost performance at intervals they work for the advantage of the organisation. It's a positive angle control by the workers towards the organisation and its goals, once a worker engages himself physically and cognitively and shows emotion throughout role performance. The organisation should develop and nurture engagement to create a productive environment and optimum utilization of its resources.

Employee engagement is the outcome of the satisfaction that employees keep on the job and all associated factors. Also, the change in the marketplace brings more challenges to the organisation to revise policies and plans related to employee engagement. The happier the employees are with the organisational policies the more it will be reflected in the outcome and productivity (Thangarajul, Venkatesh, Vaganthi & Haribala, 2021). Employee engagement is a fundamental concept in the effort to understand and describe the nature of the relationship between an organisation and its employees. An engaged employee is defined as one who is fully absorbed and enthusiastic about their work and so takes positive action to further improve the organisation's reputation and interests. An engaged employee has a positive attitude towards the organisation and its values, an organisation with high employee engagement expectations outperforms other organisations with low employee engagement, and in contrast, a disengaged employee may range from someone doing the bare minimum at work, up to an employee who is actively damaging the company's work output and reputation (Mounika, Pavani & Reddy, 2020).

Employee engagement is integral in driving organisational success as engaged employees are motivated and strive to achieve organisational goals and objectives. For an organisation to remain competitive in the market, the organisation must encourage positive employee engagement as a strategic tool to attain competitive advantage. Organisations need their employees to be active, dedicated and fully engaged in their works to help improve organisational performance (Reissova & Papay, 2021). Employee engagement is important for an organisation, as engaged employees that have gained experience and satisfaction, completely committed, and perceives their work as more than just salaries and bonuses, it is seen as dedication towards the employer and the role that makes an employee passionate about their work, which is often reflected in business success and productivity. Employee engagement is important and to improve it, the concept of employee communication cannot be under-emphasised, communication is the most essential tool to develop a strong working relationship among employees and achieve high productivity. However, companies miss the core issues related to employee engagement, as they assume that an engaged workforce is doing his task only for salary and compensation. Employees who are engaged at work are more likely to be productive consistently, which leads to high performing workforce making the company more profitable. The engagement to work of an employee has been described as a fulfilling, positive work-related experience, and state of mind, and is related to good health and positive work affect. These positive experiences and emotions are likely to result in positive work outcomes. An individual's expressed intention to leave their organisation is generally regarded as an important measure of how they feel about their work. Engaged employees are likely to have a greater attachment to their organisation and a lower tendency to quit that is, engaged employees are less likely to leave their employer. Studies have found that employee engagement is on the decline and there is a deepening disengagement among employees today (Budriene & Diskiene, 2020).

As much as there is employee engagement, likewise employee disengagement prevails despite all best efforts by an organisation's management team, due to lack of purpose or having a purposeful meaning in the work because sometimes, an organisation's vision does not resonate with employees or it can occur where the organisation fail to give its employees purposeful, meaningful work to perform, even though, a company may have a worthy mission, however lack of effective communication to the employees about the mission may culminate into

employees feeling unfulfilled and hence decide to disengage from their work. Making an employee become redundant or languish in the same jobs doing the same task makes them feel unfulfilled and they become less engrossed in their work. Ineffective management can quickly discourage the employee from putting positive effort into his work, this feeling of disengagement arises in situations where managers practice nepotism and favouritism, articulate expectations poorly and give minimal constructive feedback. Decentralisation of an organisation creates a divide between employees and the Chief employer since they have to get information across the employer through the manager, therefore, sycophancy and hypocrisy may result from the divide. This inequality in motivation of employees brings about the concept of conflict and organisational justice. An employee's engagement and contribution to a company's productivity is an important factor in the success and survival of a company to achieve its goals of not only maximizing profits but also carrying out the work on behalf of a company which possess both the juristic and non-juristic personality. High employee engagement is crucial for the success of any company and to achieve high levels of employee engagement, equal attention to what is beneficial for the company and for the employees must be given adequate importance.

For a company to achieve high level of employee engagement, the concerns of the employee for a conducive, job stability, promotion, security, equity and justice must be put into perspective. As such, a company will consist of people with diverse culture and values, possessing different perceptions to things and situations, in this case, there tend to be information and communication barriers between employees or between managers and employees, for instance, a constructive criticism made to an emotionally fragile employee, may be perceived as a personal attack, physical conditions of a workplace like intense noise, that makes it hard to focus for long on one particular voice is a physical barrier to effective communication (Raewf & Mahmood, 2021). The level of employee engagement can be inhibited in numerous ways by the emotional, psychological and physical perception of an employee if there are no company measures or policies put in place by the human resource or management team of a company to curb any workplace conflict that might result from the mentioned barriers, discrimination of persons and gender inequality is also primarily responsible for the dampen the life force of employees (Morris, 2023). For a company to maintain a high level of employee engagement, conflicts must be mitigated through adoption of the principle of organisational justice, and the re-adoption and implementation of traditional conflict resolution techniques to address the individual or team-based issue of conflict.

Employee engagement gives rise to a team-based work which gives room for many opportunities in solving conflicts between employees, and also, that the government place a strict regulation on companies, to curb the high risk of litigation for unlawful dismissals and other perceived injustices (Ozigbo & Idegbesor, 2020). Conflict is an internal perceived threat to someone's self-worth or to what is important to them. This type of conflict is one of the most common in the workplace. It is manifested due to individual own internal filters determine how a person perceive something to be what it ought to be or how it is expected for another person to react, respond and behave. It is above all important that all parties involved in conflicts are allowed their fundamental human rights to fair hearing during conflict resolution proceedings. Since it is an adaptive nature of people to have different ideas and views to matters surrounding them, therefore, conflict is a necessary and useful part of an organisation's life, it is unavoidable and a fundamental part of the process of change.

Indeed, it is a benefit to cooperation within a company and not an impediment. There are two sides of a coin to conflict, one is negative and unwholesome and the other has a problem-solving base where those involved are willing to redirect personality differences, listen to others' views and be open and sincere to each other, supportive and helpful whereas the former defeats cooperation. Managed conflict induces positive employee engagement while poorly managed conflict heats the environment to bring about disarticulation and schism of the entire group, reduce engagement of employees in work done, psychological and physical injury, emotional distress and inability to sleep, interference with problem activities, escalation of differences into hostile point and malice and increased antagonism. The issue of conflict has either made or marred many companies in recent times, due to the globalization of commerce which has resulted in brain drain, the japa syndrome and expansion of skilled working-class persons from their home countries to other countries to work and earn a living (Solaja, 2019). This has assured that today's workforce base is diversified and multicultural around the world, which give rise to employees sometimes, if not at all misunderstanding each other due to values and cultural differences (Cherian, Vilas & Raj, 2020).

To some managers, conflict is seen as a bad occurrence that must not be entertained in the workplace or social settings while others conceive conflict as a weapon to deal with differences and to promote unity among those concerned for attaining a goal. As a result of this, conflict resolution has become a human resource management problem solver and has gained significance and worth to organisational sustainability (Raveenther, 2020). Conflict being inevitable in human interactions cannot be underemphasized as a topic for discussion, the multi-ethnicity of Nigeria as a cosmopolitan country with over 371 tribes, has born a large population of people that are diverse in terms of backgrounds, beliefs, value systems, culture and motivations (Khawaja, 2020). These frequently lead to cultural confrontations among employees, particularly when there is miscommunication as a result of the sender not clearly articulating his goal or the recipient not correctly reading the message. As a result, organisations, particularly multinational corporations in Nigeria, are beginning to recognise the importance of conflict resolution (Olabiyi, 2022). This study therefore is set investigate the diverse conflicts prevalent and employee engagement in the selected manufacturing companies.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Employee Engagement

Manufacturing managers work in highly competitive and complex environments that may affect organisational outcomes (Santhanam & Srinivas, 2020). Therefore, employee engagement is critical for any organisation to retain its highly valued and experienced employees (Chanana & Sangeeta, 2021). As employee engagement is a competitive advantage in any organisation that fosters wellbeing, employee commitment, educational learning and business sustainability (Kim & Kim, 2020). Hence, business leaders have a critical role to play and they are in the best position to remove all obstacles to employee engagement (Ibiwoye, Mojekwu & Dansi, 2020).

In the manufacturing companies, employee engagement is important because of the nature of the work. Manufacturing jobs is often monotonous, which can lead to boredom and

disengagement. Therefore, the influencing factors that drives the employees to be committed to work is a positive motivating leadership, a reasonable organisational culture and having a sense of belongingness, including energy and involvement that create a positive work environment so that all the employees feel highly engaged with their goals (M'ndzeshang, Jean-Francois, Wamba & Kamgang, 2023). The mental state differs from person to person which can affect the attitude an employee exhibits towards executing the assignment (Thangaraju, Venkatesh, Vasanthi & Haribalakrisnan, 2021). Employee Engagement (EE) can be defined as the means of harnessing the members of an organisation to excel in their work roles, to feel fully engaged, to have the opportunity to express their knowledge, skills and abilities and using their initiatives to get the work done in a more effective way (Albrecht, Furlong & Leiter, 2023).

## 2.2 Conflict and Levels of Analysis in Conflict

Conflict as acquired numerous meanings, producing an all-encompassing ambiguity and leaving many intellectuals and administrators quite unclear about its actual meaning, relevance, how best to cope with it and how best to curtail its impact on the organisational goal as well as the impact on the employee engagement. However, conflict could be described as a process in which one party, individual, group or organisation disagree with the opinions, interests of another or propose that its interests, welfare or benefits or privacy have been trampled upon or opposed by another, such that unhealthy rivalry emerges thereby obstructing the free flow of job performance and hinders the attainment of the organisational goals or objectives (Rahim, 2023). Conflict between or within individuals, groups or organisations materialise for numerous reasons, some of which comprises: incompatible goals, dissimilar values and beliefs, ambiguity and role conflict; problems of communications, unclear rules, authority/power tussle, uneven evaluation and reward system, job stress, task ambiguity, lack of insufficiency of information system etc, which in turn can affect the managers and workers' morale, satisfaction and engagement (Omisore & Ashimi, 2014). Inequalities among workers in an organisation can arise in the cause of several human resource activities such as: postings, transfers, promotions, bonuses, rewards, increment, work condition and other related benefits and privileges, similarly, conflict may also erupt when an individual expresses some intrinsic attributes like; greed, covetousness, self-centeredness, discontent, envy, arrogance, rudeness, impunity etc., which are capable of creating a breakdown of human relationships (Chika-Anyanwu & Oparanma, 2020).

It has been specified that most manufacturing companies located in Lagos State, like Coleman wire and cables alongside other local content manufacturing companies such as May & Baker Pharmaceuticals and Nigerian Breweries Plc are continually been affected and decision equally interfered with by conflict based consequences. Sometimes, the production sections are continually at a disagreement with the marketing sections. The reason is that the marketers are demanding for improved quality of their products as an outcome of criticism from customers requesting that a specific brand be further improved. The production section might not agree, asserting their expertise and superiority in quality judgement. This disagreement could result to conflict and this indeed, appears to be the nature of the Nigerian based manufacturing companies influenced by the Nigerian socio-economic system added to high unpredictable politically oriented workplace relations (Amele, 2019). An organisation which includes manufacturing companies is made up of a harmonious and coordinated social unit formed to



operate uninterrupted in order to attain its universal objectives (Lambert, Elechi, & Baker, 2022). Conflict in the workplace becomes a menace, an emotional and psychological attack to the morale of the workers if not timely and properly managed. The level of menace spills over to the entire society, organisation and individual levels. In terms of the organisation, the individual or group workers get negatively affected in the sense that it might result to high turnover rate, loss of income and profit, loss of enthusiasm on the part of the workers in terms of executing their duties, low profit margin and loss of employee engagement to duties. Hence, conflict in organisations may be classified as intra-organisational i.e., conflict within an organisation or inter-organisational i.e., conflict between two or more organisations: Intra-organisational conflict may also be classified on the basis of levels (individual, group, etc.) at which it occurs. Organisational conflict was classified as intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup on the basis of levels. The nature, dynamics, causes, and management of intrapersonal conflict are all described by this classification:

Conflict at the intrapersonal level has been extensively researched by psychologists. Conflict, according to their definition, is a circumstance where someone feels driven to engage in two or more activities that are mutually exclusive; this conflict occurs when there is incompatibility or inconsistency among an individual's cognitive elements which implies that a new cognitive element is at variance with a prior explanation or expectation (Cham, Andrei & Griffin, 2021). Thus, intrapersonal conflict reflects a challenge to a person's basis for prediction and control resulting in greater uncertainty. An individual is in an intrapersonal conflict if he or she has difficulty making a decision because of uncertainty or if he or she is pushed or pulled in opposite directions; that is, the alternatives are either attractive or unattractive. Each organisational member is required to face the challenge of coping with this type of conflict almost every day. On this basis intra-organisational conflict may be classified as intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup as summarised (Padma & Koti, 2019).

### 2.3 Intrapersonal Conflict

Conflict of this kind is also referred to as intra-psychoic or intra-individual conflict. It happens when a person of an organisation is forced to take on responsibilities and activities that are outside of his or her area of competence, interests, objectives, and values. The following list of sorts of intrapersonal or role conflict is discussed: Intrapersonal conflict takes one of several forms of the three types: Approach–Approach Conflict, this occurs when there is conflict within a person, where the person needs to decide between two appealing goals (Wei-Gang & Vandenberg, 2021). The conflict is typically resolved when there is movement towards one of the goals which makes it easy to make a decision. A manager is confronted with an approach–approach conflict if he or she has to recommend one of two subordinates for promotion who are equally competent for the position. Approach–Avoidance Conflict, this occurs when a person has to deal with a situation that possesses both positive as well as negative aspects, that is, when a person feels similar degrees of attraction and repulsion toward a goal or competing goals. The conflict may lead to stress and indecision. A manufacturing manager may be in this type of conflict if he is left with the choice of which unit or team in the company should be giving adequate and sufficient attention (Garcia-Guerrero & O'Hara, 2022). Avoidance–Avoidance Conflict, this conflict arises when both opposing alternatives are equally unappealing and each has negative repercussions. If management has to choose between taking a pay cut or leaving their position, there will be conflict of this nature. In an

effort to choose the smaller of the two problems, the person may be upset. Perceived incompatibilities or incongruences frequently occur when an organisational participant is required to perform a task that does not match her or his expertise, interests, goals, and values (Onoh, 2020). A similar issue arises when there is a large discrepancy between the function that an individual intends to play and the role that the organisation requires of them. This has been classified as role conflict which is a part of intrapersonal conflict.

## 2.4 Role and Role Conflict

Employees ought to be given the tools to completely understand their role, not only individually but in how their role fits into the whole structure of the manufacturing business and strategy (Radu, 2021). People have roles in life; a role is a set of expectations assumed or part played in a given situation (Brown, 2023). The idea that an individual behaves about the expectations that others have about how he or she should behave is shared by the majority of definitions of role. This phrase is typically used to refer to the conduct and attitudes expected of someone in a particular position or level. At least three uses of the term Role were suggested. First, the term "role" refers to a normative status that encompasses the actions, viewpoints, and principles that society associates with someone holding a particular position. Second, the term "role" refers to how a person conceptualizes their circumstance in relation to their own and others' social positions. Third, the term "role" is used to describe how someone acting in a certain social position behaves. Therefore, Role Conflict occurs when a role holder is compelled to carry out two or more duties that call for inconsistent, opposing, or even mutually exclusive actions, a conflict of this nature arises (Bandiyono & Al Ashri, 2022). Role conflict is said to be a simultaneous condition of two or more forms of pressure on the workplace, where fulfilment of one role makes fulfilling other roles more difficult. This conflict tends to develop more when the demands of work and the demand of social roles are responsibilities that must be carried out (Raditya, 2018). Role conflict is described as a state of mind, experience, or perception of the role obligatory arising out of the immediate occurrence of two or more role expectations such that compliance with one would make compliance with the other(s) more difficult or even impossible. Role conflict was first described as the simultaneous existence of two or more sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make compliance with the other more difficult and four different types of role conflict were subsequently identified:

**Intra-sender Role Conflict:** Conflict of this kind arises when a role sender expects a role receiver, or the focal person, to carry out opposing or inconsistent roles. As an illustration, a role sender might try to enforce a rule by asking the role receiver to perform something that can only be done violating a rule. **Inter-sender Role Conflict:** a role receiver experiences this type of conflict if the role behaviour demanded by one role sender is incongruent with the role behaviour demanded by another role sender. A person who often experiences role conflict for example, is a foreman who receives instruction from a general foreman that may be inconsistent with the needs and expectations of the workers under the foreman. **Inter-role Conflict:** Conflict of this nature arises when a person plays two or more roles with divergent expectations. It is expected of a corporation president to participate in social events to enhance the company's reputation. This could be at odds with his or her responsibilities as a parent, where it is anticipated that they spend more time with their kids in order to be the best possible parents. **Intra-role (Person-Role) Conflict:** When the demands of the role are at odds with the focus person's attitudes, values, and professional conduct, a role conflict of this kind results. When a

member of an organization is forced to participate in price-fixing schemes inconsistent with his or her ethical standards, it results in intra-role conflict.

## 2.5 Role Overload and Under Load

Role overload is a complex form of conflict that can result from these four different types of role conflict. It "involves a sort of person-role conflict and is perhaps best viewed as a complex, emergent category incorporating elements of inter sender and person-role conflicts. This happens when an employee is expected to carry out several suitable roles given by various role senders, which, when combined, are too many for a worker to handle (Ahmad, Zahid, Wazali & Alli, 2021). There are quantitative and qualitative categories for role overload. It has been observed that in some firms, workers are overworked to the disadvantage of their ability to produce high-quality work; as a result, they become stressed and leave the organisation. In terms of quality, it is known as role self-distance and is defined as the discrepancy between the requirements of the work and a person's requisite knowledge, skills, and aptitude. This refers to circumstances where role occupants feel they lack the abilities or competence required to complete a task.

The conflict between the amount of work required of employees and the amount of time available to meet those demands is known as role overload, and it can lead to role conflicts at work when people in those roles are expected to complete more work than they can in a given amount of time (Kittisak & Siridech, 2021). Role overload is quite prevalent in organisations. Managers particularly experience quantitative overload because they work under continuous time pressure. Because of this, they may set up priorities and perform the roles that they consider more important than others. A large number of managers deal with this problem by working overtime. While role overload is a significant problem in contemporary organisations, role underload is also another problem that organisations have to deal with. Two types of role underload are quantitative and qualitative. A scenario known as quantitative underload occurs when employees have little work to accomplish and, as a result, spend some of their time working relatively little. Qualitative underload refers to "lack of mental stimulation that accompanies many routine repetitive jobs. Role Ambiguity: Role ambiguity is a concept that has a lot in common with role conflict. It alludes to a lack of clarity on the expectations or guidelines that apply to a particular role. A member of an organization needs to know what is expected of him or her in terms of the role, how to fulfil the role, and the results of fulfilling the job. Adeyemi (2022) opined that role ambiguity happens when the information is either missing or not articulated clearly when it is present.

## 3.0 THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study is anchored on Conflict Theory. Conflict theory is the idea that society consists of different classes competing over finite power and resources, it is a sociological perspective that views society as a system characterised by power dynamics and the inevitable presence of conflict. The theory emphasises the role of social inequality, competition for resources, and class struggle in shaping the social order. Conflict theory was first proposed by Karl Marx and in his view of capitalist societies, the minority ruling class (the bourgeoisie) owned the means of production, such as raw materials and factories, while the majority lower class (the proletariat) provides the labor. Marx's conflict theory explained that the economic relationship



between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was at the core of all class struggles. Therefore, for social change to occur, the economic relationship between the owners and the labour had to change first (Calhoun & Gertis, 2022). The main ideas of conflict theory are rooted in historical materialism, the idea that a society's social structure and development is shaped by its economic production. Marx reasoned that the distribution of wealth created a class divide and that social inequality and subsequent revolutions stemmed from these divides. It is believed that in a capitalist society, economic production was made up of two categories; the means of production, such as raw materials. Factories are privately owned by the producers rather than collective ownership of the labour, which are made up of the masses and wages as the reward of work or services rendered. Marx believed that the continued exploitation of a working class would eventually lead to an uprising against the ruling class.

Many social theorists have built on Marx's conflict theory to sustain it, grow it and improve on it over the ages. Wright Mills, known as the founder of modern conflict theory. In his work, he reiterated that social structures are created as a result of conflict between differing interests. He theorised that the policy of the powerful elite is opposed to those of the people and would result in increased escalation of conflict (Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2018). Conflict theory is essential in analysing employee relations conflict by providing a framework to identify the underlying causes, interests, and goals of employees involved, and how they use or resist power to pursue them. Conflict theory aid in recognition of types, levels and stages of employee relations, the influence of social, economic and political perspectives to assess the potential consequences and impacts of employee relations conflict both positively and negatively for the individual employee, and organisation involved.

Criticism of the conflict theory is that it looks at political and social problems through the senses of anti- capitalism. The theory espoused originally by Karl Marx, suggests that a sizeable chunk of society's problems come from conflict over society's limited resources. In a capitalist free market system, the powerful and rich control the resources and means of production and this causes social and economic unrest and conflict. The common problem with the conflict theory is that it is based on criticism and does not suggest a way to cure the conflict other than to eliminate capitalism. Conflict theory solely aims at describing a social instability without promoting social stabilization (Samwel, 2018). Furthermore, conflict theory fails to view the conflict that comes in a free society as a way towards progress; rather it views the conflict present as merely a damaging element. Proponents of capitalism assert that it is humans striving to be better and to compete with others that produce a high level of excellence and economic wealth that benefits the society as a whole. It was further criticised to have failed in capturing the way in which economic interactions can be mutually beneficial to the different classes involved. An example is, in work environment, conflict theory describes relationship between employers and employees as one conflict, in which the employers wish to pay as little as possible for the employees' labour, while the employees wish to maximize their wages. Wolor (2019) argued that conflict is inevitable, rational, functional and a normal situation in organisation, which is resolved through compromise and agreement.

## 4.0 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Salvation (2019) assessed communication and conflict resolution in the workplace: overcoming barriers in Matrix Coating. The study laid emphasis on good communication is

required to build and maintain mutual relationship in project teams. However, after all, the important role played by effective communication in a productive work environment of Matrix Coating, it was detected that more often than not, communication issues is an experience among the workforce resulting into workplace conflict and employee relationship issues. A sample of 50 respondents was chosen from within the workforce using both interview and questionnaires as tools of data gathering. The finding was that the staff of Matrix often experience communication issues and this led to disagreement and understanding among the workforce. The management proposed that people with solid communication skills should be employed in other for them to work cohesively and professionally, address the issue through training and character modelling.

Adeolu-Akande, Sanya, and Oyedokun (2020) evaluated the impact of conflict management on organizational performance in public sector institutions. The relevant empirical and theoretical literatures were evaluated, and the study is based on conflict theory. A descriptive survey research design of the ex post facto kind was used. The Taro Yamane model yielded a sample size of 342. It was chosen via stratified random sampling from 2345 employees of the six purposefully selected ministries in the Oyo state civil service, which served as the study population. Data was gathered via questionnaires. Only 318 surveys were deemed viable, resulting in a 93.00% response rate. To investigate the association between conflict management and organizational performance, a descriptive and regression analysis was conducted using SPSS. The results showed that there is a strong association between conflict management and organizational performance ( $r = 0.672$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Findings further revealed that causative factors of conflict do not have a significant relationship with organisational performance ( $p$ -value  $(0.51 > 0.05)$ ). However, there is a significant relationship between conflict management styles and organisational performance ( $p$ -value  $= 0.000 < 0.05$ ). This study concludes that effective conflict management contributes to enhanced employees' productivity and eventually improves organisational performance. The study recommended that management should effectively manage conflicts before they escalate to an unmanageable level, by using appropriate strategies.

Suprpto and Wigido (2021) examined conflict resolution strategies and how they affect organisational performance. The study made use of explanatory design, which is based specially on insights drawn from the investigation of the existing literature of different studies, periodicals and books related to the topic of their study. The researcher's findings revealed that a good management-labour conflict strategy improves decision outcomes and groups productivity, it equally revealed that effective conflict resolution strategy ensures good communication, time management, good cooperation and organisational performance, it also help to foster good human relations between management and staff and reduces late coming, absenteeism and poor attitude towards work.

Olonode, Omotoye and Boyede (2021) discoursed the influence of conflict management strategies on organisational involvement among employees of the Transmission Company Nigeria (TCN), Osogbo. It establishes how involvement can be enriched with a good conflict management strategy that is embraced in the workplace. The descriptive survey research design was utilized. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 174 respondents from TCN, Osogbo region 71, making up 50.7% of the respondents were male, while 69 (49.3%) were female. The test reliability of the administered instrument within a two-week interval

yielded a result of 0.78. Data collected was analysed using Regression Analysis. It was established from the findings that there is a significant relationship between conflict management strategies comprising of (competition, cooperation, compromise, ADR and collective bargaining) and organisational involvement. It was concluded from the study that a positive and significant relationship between conflict management strategies and employee involvement is realised with 53 ADR strategies were accepted among workers for harmonious coexistence. In this study, it was recommended that management and employees work amicably together by formulating strong strategies and sustaining the accepted policies as an effective mechanism for managing conflict constantly through ADR in organisations. Channels of communication and open discussion of conflict in work relations must be encouraged to avoid confrontation, competition, and domination.

Moruku and Oluwafemi (2023) investigated the effect of conflict resolution strategies on workers' retention in the public sector. The sample frame for this study was 211 workers drawn from 5 government parastatals in Ebonyi state, Nigeria. The questionnaire was used as data collection instrument, the research hypotheses was analysed using the linear regression analysis method. As a result, the study shows that conflict resolution strategies have significant effect on workers' retention<sup>177</sup>. Another study was conducted to examine the effect of employee engagement practices on organisational conflict management. The study established on the stakeholders' theory and adopted the survey research design and structured questionnaires were used to collect data from primary sources. Population data of the study consist of employees in hospitality firms in Delta State, Nigeria. Findings of the study reflect that internal mediation, collective bargaining and Alternative dispute resolution strategies have significant and positive effect on organisational conflict management. The study recommended amongst others that collective bargaining and ADR strategies should be adopted for effectiveness in managing conflict in organisations.

## 5.0 METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was employed for this study. The total population from this study consist of 3,137 employees from three manufacturing companies located in Lagos, Nigeria, which the results are from Coleman wire & cables of 121 employees, May & Baker Nig. Plc of 331 employees and Nigerian Breweries Plc of 2,685. These manufacturing companies were purposively selected from three sectors of the manufacturing industry in Nigeria. Convenience Sampling Technique was adopted as a sampling technique. The researcher made use of the 3,137 population from the 3 companies and Taro Yamane's Formula was used to determine the sample size

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+Ne^2)}$$

where:

n = signifies Sample Size

N = signifies total population under study

e = signifies the Margin error (0.05)

e = 0.05

e<sup>2</sup> = 0.0025

N = 3,137

For this research of a population of 3137, 0.05 level of significance is used

$$1 + Ne^2 = 8.84$$

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+Ne^2)} = \frac{3,137}{1+3,137(0.0025)} = 355$$

Questionnaire was administered on 355 respondents across the 3 manufacturing companies. However, 30% of the sample size is added for non-response and wrongly filled questionnaire. Therefore it is,  $355 + 107 = 462$  (to include 30% of calculated sample size for non-response and wrongly filled questionnaire). 462 questionnaires were distributed to 462 staffers. 405 questionnaires were retrieved this number represented 87.6% response rate. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used after the data gathered are coded and managed as well as descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as simple percentages and frequencies were adopted used for demographic variables while hypothesis was tested multiple regression analysis.

## 5.1 Results and Presentation of Data

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristic of Respondents**

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	20-30 years	116	28.6%
	31-40 years	231	57%
	Above 40 years	58	14.3%
Gender	Female	175	43.2%
	Male	230	56.8%

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey 2024

Table 1 above shows the classification of respondents according to age and gender. A total number of 116 (28.6%) respondents were within the age range of 20 – 30 years. 231 (57%) respondents were within the age range of 31 -40 years, 58 (14.3%) respondents were within the age range of 40 years and above. This report show that majority of the respondents were within the age range of 31 -40 years, it is therefore, inferred that employees in the selected manufacturing companies comprise of active and energetic people in their prime age. It shows distinction between male and female. 175 (43.2%) of the respondents are female while 230 (56.8%) % are male respondents. Thus, majority of the respondents were males.

## 5.2 Analysis of Research Questions

**Research Question: Which types of conflict are prevalent in selected manufacturing companies?**

Diverse Conflicts	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
Exploring conflict issues with other employees to proffer solutions that meet everyone's needs	115 28.4%	290 71.6%	0	0	0	1.72	.451
Compromising on conflict issues to problems between employers and employees or among employees	232 57.3%	173 42.7%	0	0	0	1.43	.495
Avoiding the resolution of conflict is not a growth factor for a company's success	290 71.6%	115 28.4%	0	0	0	1.28	.451
In a matter of disagreement, lines of communication should be open to observe and gather information to resolve conflict	347 85.7%	58 14.3%	0	0	0	1.14	.351
Conflicts should not be ignored but promptly resolved to prevent a negative aftermath of probable war.	115 28.4%	232 57.3%	58 14.3%	0	0	1.86	.639
Employers should be familiar with the procedures to adopt for conflict resolution	231 57%	116 28.6%	58 14.3%	0	0	1.72	1.032
Employees should be well informed on the company's changes in policies to avoid conflict	172 42.5%	175 43.2%	58 14.3%	0	0	1.86	.990
Conflict in the workplace is somehow an advantage to the company in achieving functional and positive results	172 42.5%	175 43.2%	58 14.3%	0	0	1.86	.990
The parties in conflict should have an input to decisions arrived at.	57 14.1%	348 85.9%	0	0	0	1.86	.348
A company becomes dysfunctional when conflict is left to escalate into negativity	347 85.7%	58 14.3%	0	0	0	1.29	.701

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey 2024



According to results in Table 2, 28.4% and 71.6% of respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that Exploring conflict issues with other employees helps to proffer solutions that meet everyone's needs, the respondent's response has a mean of 1.72. Results also indicated Compromising on conflict issues to problems between employers and employees or among employees was strongly agreed on by 57.3% and agreed on by 42.7%, on average the number of respondents had a mean of 1.43. Results also indicated that 71.6% and 28.4% of respondents strongly agree and agree respectively when asked whether avoiding the resolution of conflict is a growth factor for a company's success. On average, the response had a mean of 1.28. Results gotten from respondents when it comes to lines of communication during matters of disagreement was that 85.7% strongly agree. Also results gotten on whether Conflicts should not be ignored but promptly resolved to prevent a negative aftermath of probable war was 28.4% and 57.3% strongly agree and agree respectively while 14.3% remained undecided, on average the response got 1.86 mean.

According to results in Table 2, 57% of respondents strongly agree and 28.6% agree on Employers being familiar with the procedures to adopt for conflict resolution while 14.3% were undecided. It was also gathered that 42.5% and 43.2% strongly agree and agreed respectively that Employees should be well informed on the company's changes in policies to avoid conflict while 14.3% were undecided; the mean for the response was 1.86. Results on whether Conflict in the workplace is an advantage to the company indicated that 42.5% of respondents strongly agree and 43.2% agree while 14.3% were undecided, on average the response had a mean of 1.86. Response to whether parties in conflict should have an input to decisions showed that 85.9% of respondents agree. On average, the respondents had a mean of 1.86 Results also indicated that 85.7% of the respondents strongly agree, on average, the response had a mean of 1.29.

## 5.3 Presentation of Data

### Hypothesis Testing

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between types of conflict prevalent and employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria.

In order to test the hypothesis, linear multiple regression analysis was used. In the analysis, the values of Employee Engagement were regressed on the values of types of conflict prevalent. The data for types of conflict prevalent was generated by summing responses of all items used to measure the variable while that of Employee Engagement was generated by adding responses of all items used to measure the variable. The regression test results are presented in Tables 3.

**Table 3: Summary of multiple regression analysis for the effect of types of conflict prevalent and employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria.**

Model	Beta	T	Sig.	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	Anova Sig.	F(df)
(Constant)	.666	14.094	.000					

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DC	.860	30.527	.000	.836 <sup>a</sup>	.698	.697	0.000	931.919
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Dependent Variable: employee engagement

Predictors: (Constant), DC,

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 presents the results of multiple regression analysis for the effect of types of conflict prevalent and employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria. Table 3 presents a model summary which establishes how the model equation fits into the data. The Adj R2 was used to establish the predictive power of the study's model. From the results, types of conflict prevalent have strong positive and statistically significant relationship with employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria. ( $R = 697$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

The Adjusted coefficient of determination [(Adj R2) of 0.697 shows that types of conflict prevalent explained 69.7% of the variation in employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria while the remaining 30.3% variation in employee engagement is explained by other exogenous variable different from types of conflict prevalent considered in this study. This result suggests that types of conflict prevalent influence 69.7% of employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria.

Table 3 presents the results of ANOVA (overall model significance) of regression test which revealed that types of conflict prevalent has a significant effect on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria. This can be explained by the F-value (931.919) and low p-value (0.000) which is statistically significant at 95% confidence interval. Hence, the result posited that types of conflict prevalent adopted by the manufacturing firms in southwest Nigeria influenced employee engagement.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the diverse conflicts prevalent and employee engagement in the selected manufacturing companies. The result showed that the values of employee engagement were regressed on the values of types of conflict prevalent in the selected manufacturing companies. Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents accepts that the types of conflict (Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, intergroup and intragroup) exist and are prevalent in the manufacturing companies. 28.4% and 71.6% of respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that exploring conflict issues with other employees helps to proffer solutions that meet everyone needs, the respondent's response has a mean of 1.72. Results also indicated compromising on conflict issues to problems between employers and employees or among employees was strongly agreed on by 57.3% and agreed on by 42.7%, on average the number of respondents had a mean of 1.43. Furthermore, the results of this study were compared with a research by Bob-Fubara, Amah and Okocha (2022) with title 'compromising conflict strategy and workplace harmony in oil servicing companies in Rivers State'. Overall, this result implies that compromising type of conflict is prevalent and has effect on the employee engagement in the oil servicing companies in Rivers State (Bob-Fubara, Amah & Okocha, 2022). The findings from this study are that dispute management through the use of compromise strategy significantly impacts workplace harmony in relation to teamwork and communication.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is imperative that stakeholders of the organisation can identify the nature and significance of conflict with the level and type and to know what traditional conflict resolution techniques to utilise. Where organisations create a system of justice and implement a policy of fairness and equity, whereby open communication, good leadership, empowerment, conducive environment exists to improve employee engagement, hence, employers and top management of the organisation must strive to ensure the contentment and wellbeing of employees. Involving employees in the process of organisational changes will encourage and motivate to be loyally engaged in discharge to duties towards the organisation growth and success. The mission of most organisations is focused on customer satisfaction through the expectation of effective service delivery, in view of this; the effectual conflict resolution becomes the essential duty of a manager to encourage employee engagement in order to maintain the competitive advantage.

In summary, conflict should not be seen as a dysfunctional outcome that emanates from poor communication, lack of openness and trust between people and managers should be responsive to the needs and aspirations of employees, rather, conflict should be effectively managed to promote the spirit of team work and cooperation to enhance employee engagement. To mitigate conflict, role overload should be reduced to a barest minimum to enable an employee conveniently perform organisational functions effectively.

Based on the findings, the study therefore recommended that Therefore, management should develop diverse but appropriate means of resolving and managing conflict at the felt stage before it escalates hence, making the aftermath result to a riotous degree. Flexible and dynamic conflict handling styles should be adopted rather, than stoic adaptation to only a conflict handling style, as the circumstances of organisations and the subsisting relationship between parties must be used to determine the choice of handling style to adopt. Nevertheless, the notion to accommodate conflicting views is necessary for an effective conflict resolution. Management of organisations should make regular and constants efforts to retain employees by implementing training programmes where employees can reskill and acquire skill through workshops, seminars, conferences (local and International) on effective conflict resolution strategies.

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