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ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICT AND EMPLOYEES PRODUCTIVITY: STUDY OF SELECTED MANUFACTURING COMPANY IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

The concept of conflict, because of its ubiquity and pervasive nature, has acquired a multitude of meanings. Conflict is an inseparable part of people's life. It is a perpetual gift of life varying with varying views. These organizational changes may cause turbulence and uncertainties that in turn, create conflict, the hidden costs of unresolved conflict in organizations are enormous and finding effective ways to manage and resolve organizational conflicts can have a significant effect on productivity, therefore the study examined the effect of organizational conflict on employees' productivity. The study made use of survey research design; the population was 232 out of which a sample size of 147 employees was selected as respondents for the study through the use of Taro Yamane. Multiple regression analysis was used to get the findings. The study concluded that organizational conflict had a significant effect on employees' productivity. The study recommended that Supervisors should not enforce task upon employees but should be obliged to partake in such task, incompatible goals and higher expectations to accomplish such task should not be allowed.

Keywords: Conflict, Employee, Manufacturing, Productivity, Ilorin

Introduction

Organization is an identifiable social entity whose members pursue multiple goals collectively. The pursuance of these goals is done side by side with their

personal goals and aspirations through their coordinated activities and relationships. Hence, organization has people, materials and goals that are achieved through coordination.

An organization exists to provide goods and services that people desire. These goods and services are produced by the workers who occupy different level of the organizational structure. These people have different cultures, skills and educational background as well as different perceptions, roles, expectations and values. Conflict in an organization will depend on the degree with which the manpower is met with opposition in protecting their interests, values and goals.

However, the establishment and continuous existence of organization through the realization of set goals and objectives requires the continuous and effective functioning of its material input with the human element being indispensable. The human elements required to facilitate goals attainment often engage in disagreement and variance over factors such as; interest, views, style of management among others. The reactionary effect due to the perceived incompatibilities resulting typically from some form of interference or opposition is known as conflict. Adomi & Ozioma (2006) observed that conflict involves the total range of behaviours and attitudes that is in opposition between owners/managers on the one hand and working people on the other. It is a state of disagreement over issues of substance or emotional antagonism and may arise due to anger, mistrust or personality clashes.

Statement of the Problem

Organizations have a shorter life cycle today because of various changes in the operation of organizations. These organizational changes may cause turbulence and uncertainties that in turn, create conflict. Conflict in any organization may not enable the organization to achieve its set objectives if not properly managed. Afzail (2000) asserted that, successful organization in the future must create the capability to absorb conflict during the organization's life cycle. The capability here refers to conflict management mechanism in order to minimize the rate of conflict and improve performance. Relationship conflict is another main form of conflict the hampers employee productivity which this study examined as well. The effective management of these conflicts will go a long way to enhance the productivity of the employees and affect the overall performance of the organization in meeting its mandate. It is in the light of the above problem

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that this study aims to examine the effect of organization conflict on employee performance.

Research Question

In light of the above problems, this study examined the following questions;

i. How does role conflict affect employees' engagement in the selected manufacturing company?

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of organizational conflict on employees' productivity. To achieve this, the following specific objective was examined to;

i. examine how role conflict affect employees engagement in in then selected manufacturing company.

Research Hypotheses

Ho: Role conflict has no significant impact on employees' engagement in Dangote flour mill.

Significance of the Study

This study is of relevant to the Employees in manufacturing industries in Nigeria as it provides them insight and basis for approaching and managing conflicts. The society is also expected to benefit from the result of this study since it will serve as an information base which add up to the existing body of knowledge and data on organizational conflict in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarification

The Concept of Conflict

Robbins, Judge and Sanghi (2009) defined conflict as " a process that begins where one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect something that the first party cares about". This is

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a very apt definition, emphasizing that conflict is about perceptions, not necessarily real hard facts. It points to the emotional nature of conflict, by referring to a word like "care", it states that more than one party is involved and that there may be a future component attached to it.

Hotepo , Mutjabah and Ajemunigbohun (2010) in relation to the above states that, conflict is a process of social interaction. It involves a struggle over claims to resources, power, status, beliefs, preferences and desires. De Villier and Kotze (2003) linked this idea to the organization by stating that, even when conflict is a natural phenomenon in social relations (as natural as harmony), it can nevertheless be managed within organizations. They add that conflict may have both positive as well as negative consequences within the organization, the submission above blend with the fact that, conflict can never be totally eliminated within organizations but can be efficiently managed in order to move organizations to greater height and performance level.

Conflicts are inevitable part of an organizational life since the goals of different stakeholders such as managers and staff are often incompatible (Bhatti & Qureshi, 2007). 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 (Kazimoto, 2013). This results into a situation whereby they frustrate each other in an attempt to achieve their objectives.

Types of Conflict

This study examined two types of conflict which are; Functional conflict and Dysfunctional conflict. These types of conflict are critically examined bellow:

1. Functional Conflict

Conflict that supports the goals for the group and improves the group's performance can be classified as functional conflict (Darling and De Villier & Kotze, 2003). This type of conflict is constructive in nature and the base assumption is that, it will have a positive effect on the organisation's performance. For example, this type of conflict can cause ideas, beliefs and assumptions to be challenged (Bodlah, 2013).

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2. Dysfunctional Conflict

On the other hand, according to Obi (2008), conflict is dysfunctional when it absorbs organisational efforts and resources without producing anything, when it deflects attention from basic purposes, and perhaps, when it leads to actions which consciously or unconsciously sabotage and subvert primary organisational goals. Dysfunctional or destructive conflict breaks an organisation down. Interdepartmental conflicts can for instance disturb resourcefulness in other department (McShane, Glino & Ann, 2000).

Causes of Conflict

Harmon (2003) indicated that causes of conflict at the level of organisation could also include resource availability; affirmative action programmes, the scope and content of workload, the introduction of new management techniques; and differences of a cultural and racial nature. Robbins , Judge and Sanghi (2008) identified some sources and causes of conflict in organisation to include: scarce resources, task dependency, communication breakdown, personality clashes and role ambiguities.

Common causes of conflict therefore are:

1. **Specialization:** Employees tend to become specialists in a particular job or get a general knowledge of many tasks. If most employees in an organization are specialist, it leads to conflict because they have little knowledge of each other's job responsibilities.
2. **Common Resources:** In many work situation, we have to share resources. The scarcer the resources in the organization, the greater the chances for conflict situation. Resource scarcity leads to a conflict because each person that need the same resources necessarily undermines other who pursue their own goals. Limited resources may include, Money, supplies, people or information.

Levels of Conflict

Raza (2012) identified six different levels of conflict: interpersonal, intra-group, intergroup, intrapersonal, intra-organisational and inter-organisational levels.

1. **Interpersonal Conflict:** Interpersonal conflict refers to conflict between two or mo0re individuals (not representing the group they are part

of) of the same or different group at the same or different level, if in an organisation.

2. **Intra-group Conflict**: Intra-group conflict focuses on conflict within the group as a whole as well as the individual members. Intra-group conflict falls into two distinct categories: substantive and affective conflicts. Substantive conflict refers to conflict based on the nature of the task or on the "content" issues. It is associated with intellectual disagreements among the group members. Affective conflict derives primarily from the group's interpersonal relations. It is associated with emotional responses aroused during interpersonal clashes (Raza, 2012).
3. **Intergroup Conflict**: Intergroup conflict focuses on conflict between two or more groups. Intergroup conflict can have negative side-effects, which can persist long after the competition is over. Therefore, managers must minimise any intergroup conflict if possible, and handle any conflict present with great care.
4. **Intra-personal Conflict**: Intra-personal conflict occurs when an individual, often involves some form of goals conflict or cognitive conflict. For instance, goal conflict occurs for individual when their behaviour results in outcomes that are mutually exclusive or have incompatible elements.
5. **Intra-organisational Conflict:** This is a type of conflict situation within organisation.

Components of organizational conflict

Although, research literatures have shown that there are diverse components which leads to conflict. Some literature makes use of the causes of conflict as the components of conflict. This study adopted three components of conflict which are; task conflict, role conflict and relationship conflict. These components will be extensively be discussed bellow

1. Task Conflict

Kim (2004) found that there is a positive relationship of task conflict and employees performance. For every black there is a white, although employee's performance is improved by task conflict but relationship and role conflict impact negatively. Relationship conflicts have a very positive relation with satisfaction, emotions and team effectiveness (Dhar, 2011).

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2. Role Conflict

It negatively affects the performance of employees. Role conflict is said to exist when there are some important differences among the ratings given for expectations. Most of the institutes now a day are facing the issue of conflict in their organizations. They spend a lot of time to manage conflict and also spend a lot of efforts to remove this severe issue. After seeing this problem the study is design to link theoretical model with qualitative research that how a model be build up to manage this issue of conflict at every level of the organization.

3. Relationship Conflict

Relationship conflict Most of the researchers classify the conflict into task and relationship conflicts. Relationship conflict occurs when there are some misunderstandings among your feelings or attitude that create tension (Gungor, 2011). Conflict is produced due to some interpersonal issues, political norms, values and personal taste (Adomi, 2006; Dhar, 2011& Gungor, 2011).

Employee Productivity

According to Eze (2011), employee productivity is basically related to performance in terms of individual goals. Again, performance measurement is one of the most difficult topics for managers. Measuring performance is similar to performance appraisal. Performance appraisal provides an assessment of how an individual employee is performing and gives an insight into what such an employee would have to do to raise their effectiveness. Some employers peg employee remuneration on the basis of their scores in performance measures. There many aspects that are looked into during such exercises. The most prominent is arguably the rate of completion of assigned tasks, the accuracy and deliverability of such tasks.

According to Ferris, (2012) such measures are difficult at best and re often inaccurate. In such circumstances, relying on them for anything could be prejudicial to the employee. They believe that productivity is an individual phenomenon. However, certain environmental factors will have a significant bearing on performance.

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1. Employees Commitment

According to Miller, Rutherford and Kolodinsky (2008), employee commitment is the ability of employees to be loyal and identify with the organization in relation to the duties and responsibilities. According to Agwu (2011), individuals with strong attachment to the organization will feel cohesive with it and get pleasure from being a member of organization.

2. Employees' Engagement

Employee work engagement is one of the main business priorities for organizational executives.
According to Cardy and Leonard (2014), engagement depends on employees' perceptions and evaluations of their working experience, including their employer, organizational leaders, the job itself, and work environment. Employee engagement, managers should pay attention to the skills, knowledge and talents of their staff.

3. Employees' Motivation

Aguinis (2006) defines motivation as the psychological process that arouses and directs people's goal-oriented behaviour. They ask why people do the things they do and they answer that they are mainly motivated to fulfill their wants and their needs. They continue to suggest that motivation can result from two types of rewards. First is extrinsic reward which is the pay off, such as money a person receives from others for performing a given job. The second is intrinsic reward which is the satisfaction in performing the task itself and a feeling of accomplishment.

Theoretical Review

Conflict Theory

Founder of modern conflict theory (Knapp, 1994). In Mill's view, social structures are created through conflict between people with differing interests and resources. Individuals and resources, in turn, are influenced by these structures and by the "unequal distribution of power and resources in the society". (Kaplan, 1993). The power elites of the American society, (i.e. the military industrial complex) "emerged from the fusion of the cooperate elite, the pentagon and the executive branch of government". Mills argues that the interests of these elites were opposed to those of the people. He

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theorized that the policies of the power elites would result in "increased escalation of conflict of weapons of mass destruction, and possibly the annihilation of human race" (Kaplan, 1993).

Empirical Evidence

Moily, (2008) investigate the effect of organizational conflict on organizational performance. The study employs descriptive research design and uses questionnaire to collect data from 96 managers in some selected Airlines, Road Transport and Insurance companies in Lagos Metropolis. The research revealed that limited resources is the major cause of conflict and that conflicts have both negative and positive effects on organization, but when managed properly, the positive effects can be used to encourage organizational innovativeness and build cooperation among the employees. Observing these study and others, it was observed that studies are conducted in Lagos State, Cross River State, Kisii town and so on. This shows that there is no or little research study conducted in the study area of research study that is Kwara state.

Methodology

The research design used for the purpose of this study is a survey research design

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of 232 of employees of registered manufacturing companies in kwara state and the study sample size was determined using Taro Yamane, (1963) sampling technique;

$$S = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2}$$

Where, S is the sample size, N is the population size and e is the desired level of significant value.
Based on the formula above, with the population of 232 and d = 0.05. The sample size for this study is therefore computed below:

$$S = \frac{(232)}{1+200(0.05)^2}$$

$$S = \frac{(232)}{(1.58)}$$

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S= 146.835
S ~ 147 employees

This sample size is used to avoid the problem associated with the use of the whole population which are; money, limited personnel, time and resources and so on. The sampling technique used for the purpose of this study is simple random sampling. The study used questionnaire for collections and gathering of primary data as the research instrument for data collection. The study use both the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis to analyze data collected in the course of this research. All computations on the study will be done through Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 2.0.

Test of Hypothesis and discussion of findings

Ho: Role conflict has no significant impact on employees' engagement in selected manufacturing companies.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.745[a]	.554	.542	.539

a. Predictors: (Constant), Incompatible Goals, Incompatible Expectations, Role Ambiguity, Unclear Expectations

Source: SPSS printout, 2021

The model summary shows that R=0.745 is an indication of the relationship between the dependent and independent variable, while the R^2 which is an indication of the coefficients of determination. The R^2 (0.554) gives approximately 55%, which means that 55% (dependent variable) employees' engagement can be explained by Role conflict (Incompatible Goals, Incompatible Expectations, Role Ambiguity, Unclear Expectations) in the organization (independent variable) while the remaining 45% of the employees' engagement can be determined by other variables.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.370	4	12.842	44.159	.000[b]
	Residual	41.297	142	.291		
	Total	92.667	146			

a. Dependent Variable: employees' engagement

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b. Predictors: (Constant), Incompatible Goals, Incompatible Expectations, Role Ambiguity, Unclear Expectations

Source: SPSS printout, 2021

The ANOVA table is analyzed to see if any of the variables is significant, if the p-value is greater than 0.05 then the researcher rejects the null hypothesis from the ANOVA table, the p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, the F statistics of 26.041 also implies that the model is fit. Therefore the researcher rejects the null hypothesis which states that Role conflict has no significant impact on employees' engagement in selected manufacturing company and alternative hypothesis is accepted which says that Role conflict has a significant impact on employees' engagement in the selected company.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-4.421	.823		-5.371	.000
	Incompatible Expectations	1.837	.194	.700	9.477	.000
	Unclear Expectations	-.799	.139	-.807	-5.745	.000
	Role Ambiguity	.759	.114	.845	6.689	.000
	Incompatible Goals	.094	.069	.080	1.371	.173

a. Dependent Variable: employees' engagement

Source: SPSS printout, 2021

The coefficients of the individual independent variable indicated that Incompatible Expectations (0.000), Unclear Expectations (0.000), Role Ambiguity (0.000) has a significant impact on employee engagement while Incompatible Goals (0.950) does not have any significant impact on employee engagement. The t-statistics value of (9.477) for Incompatible Expectations, (-5.745) Unclear Expectations, (6.689)for Role Ambiguity, (1.371)for Incompatible Goals and Beta standard coefficients (0.700) for Incompatible Expectations, (-0.807) Unclear Expectations, (0.845)for Role Ambiguity, (0.080)for Incompatible Goals further suggest that there is a

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significant relationship between Role conflict and employee engagement. Since alpha level of 0.05 is greater than the p-value of 0.000. The conclusion therefore is that the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, Role conflict has a significant impact on employees' engagement in selected manufacturing company.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that there is a significant relationship Role conflict and employees' engagement. Employees undertaking two or more roles in the organization are detriment to accomplishing organizational goals and also health of the employee as this will lead to stress and burnout. Roles to perform should be compatible with the role of the employee and expectations should not exceed the standard set for employee to perform. The following recommendations were made on the basis of the findings of the study:

i. Management should formulate policies through its human resource department that will ensure that conflicts that may occur within the organization are quickly resolved.
ii. Job analysis of employees should be followed to the latter; the job specification of employees that includes their roles and responsibilities to perform should not be exceeded but instead should be duly followed on duties to perform.
iii. The organization should embark in on training and retraining of its employees in area of conflict management so as to create a conducive working environment for the employees.
vi. Employee should be taken care of as they are important asset to the organization, therefore they should not be saddled with too much task to perform.

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