

## Conflict Management Styles and Employees Job Performance in Selected Universities in Ogun State

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### Abstract

The study examined the effect of conflict management styles on employees' job performance in selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional research design was employed in the study. Academic and non-academic staff of three selected universities in Ogun State constituted the population frame of the study. The sample for the study was selected using convenient sampling technique. Data for the study was collected using questionnaire as the research instrument. The results from the analysis revealed that integrating conflict management style has significant effect on employee performance (Beta=0.602, t-value= 5.174 and  $p<0.05$ ); obliging conflict management style also has significant effect on employee performance (Beta=0.817, t-value= 8.668 and  $p<0.05$ ); compromising conflict management styles has significant effect on employee performance (Beta= 0.794, t-value= 6.133 and  $p<0.05$ ). However, dominating conflict management style has no significant effect on employee performance (beta= -0.126, t-value= - 0.416 and  $p>0.05$ ) and avoiding conflict management style has no significant effect on employee performance (beta= -0.332, t-value=-1.433 and  $p>0.05$ ). Based on the findings, it was recommended that the universities management should provide adequate information concerning vital decisions that concerns them so that they would not be kept in mental darkness; the universities management should provide the necessary tools and facilities needed by staff to enhance their performance; the universities management should ensure that conflicts solving styles are devoid of bias at all times; and that the universities management should ensure good staff union-management relationship to sustain employee job performance.

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**Keywords:** Conflict, Conflict Management, Employee Performance, Universities, Management.

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### INTRODUCTION

Workplace conflicts can arise from many sources. Moreover for conflict to occur, certain conditions must exist. At its basic, conflict is perception, so it begins when someone believes that another might obstruct his or her efforts. Conflict could also arise because of the employer's quest to maximise profit while the workers representatives are out to ensure continuous improved condition of living for their member's. Conflict could also arise as a result of failure to honour agreed items on collective bargaining. Other causes of organisational conflict are competition for scarce resources, status incongruity, win-lose situations, the need for change, ambiguous rules and communication problems among others (Ojo & Abolade, 2014).

Employee job performance is defined as how appropriately an employee accomplishes assignments and the attitude with which the employee achieves the duties assigned effectively and efficiently (Sila, 2014). Employee job performance is defined as how appropriately an employee accomplishes assignments and the attitude with which the employee achieves the duties assigned effectively and efficiently (Sila, 2014).

Job performance is the result of an individual's method, outcome, applicability, and accomplishments (Gridwichei, Kulwanich, Piromkam, Kwanmuangvanich, 2020; Alnawfleh, 2020). Job performance can be affected by infraction in the agreement between employees, unions, and management resulting in conflict in an organisation (Nuel-Okoli, Mbah, & Okeke, 2018). There is no organization that can effectively carry out its day to day activities/ interaction without encountering some form of conflict (Nuel-Okoli et al., 2018). Therefore, conflict is the commonest, general and wide-spread phenomenon that is synonymous with group activity and interaction (Uwa, 2014).

Workplace conflict is described as the presence of discord that occurs when goals, interests or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible and frustrate each other's attempt to achieve objectives in an organization (Kazimoto, 2013). Conflict can have both positive and negative effects on an organisation (John-Eke & Akintokunbo, 2020). It is positive when it produces or presents an opportunity for modification and settlement between the aggrieved parties for the

wellbeing of both the employees and the organization (Osad & Osas, 2013). On the contrary, conflict can be negative when it creates resistance to change, establishes uproar, interpersonal relations distrust, low productivity, organizational ineffectiveness (Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul-Azeez, & Ajemunigbohun, 2010).

### Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian public and private organisations have over the years witnessed scores of workplace conflicts which negatively affected employees' job performance. Workplace conflicts in Nigeria manifested itself in the form of strikes, protests, or other misunderstandings and efforts towards curtailing such menaces are observed to exist in many occasions, but remained unabated and continue posing negative challenges to employee job performance (Abdullahi, 2017). The university education system in Nigeria is not immune to conflict as it plagued with series of internal and external conflicts which renders the goals and objectives of the institutions counterproductive (Igbinoba, Osibanjo, & Salau, 2016).

The negative effect of incessant conflicts is attributed to the poor performance of the institutions in global rankings as non-Nigerian universities have featured in the best one thousand universities in the world (Igbinoba, Salau, Falola, Olokundun, & Ogueyungbo, 2019). Nuel-Okoli et al. (2018) posited that conflicts in the Nigeria universities arise from the inability of the management to fulfil its collective agreement as stipulated in its terms of employment with its employees resulting in employees embarking on industrial action, which often last for several months. Employees' industrial action usually results in loss of man-hours, skilled personnel, employees' morale and job performance, among others (Agwu, 2013).

A careful examination of related literatures revealed that a lot of research (Ajike, Akinlabi, Magaji, & Sonubi, 2015; Igbinoba et al., 2019; John-Eke et al., 2020; Nuel-Okoli et al., 2018; Okwuise, Kifordu, & Oghoghomeh, 2020) have been carried out on conflict-job performance relationship in Nigeria. The shortcomings of these studies were that the authors violated the assumptions of correlation and regression analysis used in their studies which stated that all the variables should be measured on interval or ratio level (i.e. they are continuous) and normally distributed. Based on this, it can be argued that their results were not reliable for predictive purpose.

Based on these identified gaps, the study therefore examined the effect of conflict management style on employee job performance while ensuring that the assumptions (normality of data measured on interval or ratio level) of correlation and regression analyses are met.

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- H<sub>01</sub>: Integrating conflict management style has no significant positive effect on employee job performance.
- H<sub>02</sub>: Obliging conflict management style has no significant positive effect on employee job performance.
- H<sub>03</sub>: Dominating conflict management style has no significant positive effect on employee job performance.
- H<sub>04</sub>: Avoiding conflict management style has no significant positive effect on employee job performance.
- H<sub>05</sub>: Compromising conflict management style has no significant positive effect on employee job performance.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### An Overview of the Concept and Nature of Conflict

Almost every academic discipline has its theoretical approach of understanding conflicts – economists are focused on game-theory and decision-making, psychologist explore interpersonal conflicts, sociologists take status and class conflicts as the focal point, while political science is centred on intra-national and international conflicts. Therefore to review the conflict literature as a whole is an almost impossible task. Traditionally, conflict is thought to arise from opposing interests involving scarce resources and goal divergence and frustration (Schmidt & Kochan, 1972). Conflict has often been proposed to occur in mixed motive relationships where persons have both competitive and cooperative interests. The competitive elements produce the conflict; the cooperative elements create the incentives to bargain to reach an agreement (Deutsch & Krauss, 1962).

Rubin (2014) argued that conflict had become too broadly defined and used it to mean a perceived divergence of interest, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously. Lewicki (2017) argued that there are many ways to define conflict and suggested a similar definition as the interaction of interdependent people who perceived incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals. Barki and Hartwick (2004) elaborated upon these efforts by defining conflict as a dynamic process that occurs between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions to perceived disagreements and interference with the attainment of their goals. Researchers have tended to define conflict in broad terms. For example, Jehn and Bendersky (2003) defined conflict as perceived incompatibilities or discrepant views among the parties involved. De Dreu (1999) argued that conflict involves the tension an individual or group experiences because

of perceived differences between him or herself and another individual or group.

**Conflict Management Styles in Organizations**

The conflict management strategies are stated differently in the literature despite some common terms. For example, Certo (1997) categorize these strategies as Comprise, Avoiding and Smoothing, Forcing a Solution and Confrontation or Problem Solving; while Robbins and DeCanzo (2007) stated Avoidance, Accommodation, Forcing, Compromise and Collaboration. Rahim (2002) mentions five conflict management strategies or styles: Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding and Compromising. According to conflict management classification of Follet (1940) which consists of domination, compromise, integration, avoidance and suppression, the first three ones are main strategies and the other two ones are secondary strategies. However, Blake and Moutan (1964) classify the conflict management strategies according to concern for production and concern for people. Their strategies are forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising and problem solving. There are five types of conflict management styles such as integrating, obliging, compromising, dominating and avoiding styles (Rahim & Magner, 1995). Rahim and Bonoma (1979) differentiated the styles of managing conflict on two basic dimensions specifically concern for self and concern for others. The first dimension (concern for self) elaborates the degree (high or low) to which a person attempts to satisfy his or her own concern while the second dimension (concern for others) explains the degree (high or low) to which a person attempts to satisfy the concern of others. Combination of these two dimensions results in five specific styles of handling conflict, as shown in Figure 1 (Rahim & Bonoma, 1979).

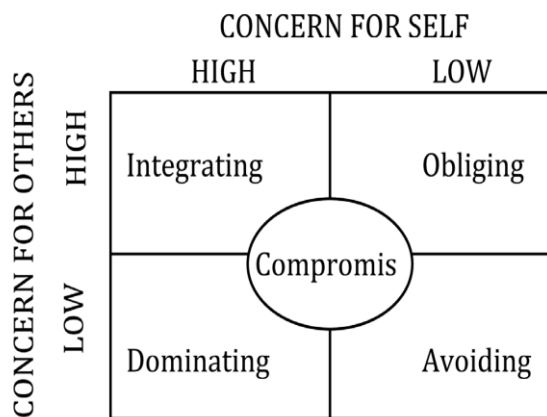


Figure 1: The Dual Concern Model of the Styles of Handling Conflict

Source: Rahim (1983, p. 369).

**Integrating:** Robbins and DeCenzo (2007) define integrating with some phrases which are open

and honest discussion, intensive listening, to understand differences and mutual agreement. Moreover, it can be defined as an effective problem solving strategy (Rahim, 2002). This strategy is also mentioned as collaboration whose primary aim is to meet the needs of two parts, thus satisfaction of both sides can be provided (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007). Integrating is suitable when there is a complex problem or one part cannot solve this problem on its own and two opposing parts try to achieve a common solution by exchanging ideas, knowledge, suggestion choices (Rahim, 2002). Moreover, when making a decision is emergent and agreement and solution is valuable for both parts, it is appropriate (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

**Obliging:** In this strategy, opposing topics are neglected and common points are emphasized. One part gives up its own desires to meet needs of other part. This strategy is appropriate when one part has not enough information about the topic and the relationship, between both parts, is wanted to maintain (Rahim, 2002). Robbins (1991) stated that relationship sometimes is more important for one part, so this part can be eager to sacrifice itself as well as to prefer the satisfaction of the other part. This strategy should be used when the topic is not important for one part and this part wants to gain credits for next issues (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

**Dominating:** One part neglects the needs and satisfaction of other part and gives importance to only its own goals to win position in this strategy (Rahim, 2002). Generally this situation occurs when one part has more power or formal authority (Robbins, 1991) and the effect of the conflict is not thought but achievement of aims and gaining more advantages are taken into consideration (Robbins, 1991). This strategy is not suitable when the issue involved in conflict is complex and there is not enough time to make a good decision; both parts have equal power; being used by one or both parts may lead to stalemate; issues are not important to the part (Rahim, 2002).

**Avoiding:** One part sometimes thinks that conflict is bad, unnecessary or harmful for its own, so this part avoids coming into conflict (Certo, 1997). The reaction of the one part may be to withdraw when it realizes the conflict. This part shows indifference or behaves as if the conflict isn't important and it hides its idea (Robbins, 1991). Avoiding is appropriate when conflict is not important for one part which does have to make a decision (Certo, 1997; Rahim, 2002). In addition, the issue does not affect this part very much. Moreover, cooling period is necessary before they have to challenge for more serious problems (Rahim, 2002). However, this strategy is inappropriate when one part which has to decide about this issue, avoids discussion and conflict is not important for one part. Besides these, one or neither parts want to wait and encouragement is necessary (Certo, 1997).

**Compromising:** As a result of this management strategy, there is no winning or losing part. Both sides gain some advantages but not all of them and they have to give up something. They share the conflict objectives (Robbins, 1991). Compromising means that the parties to the conflict settle on a solution that gives both of them part of what they wanted. No party gets exactly what it wanted, but neither loses entirely either (Certo, 1997). Compromising should not be used when there is a complicated issue which requires problem solving technique and one part which thinks that making decision is its responsibility, has much more power (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The two theories that formed the basis of this study are human relations theory and contingency theory.

### **Human Relation Theory**

Human relations theory is attributed to Mayo who is hailed for its development in 1933. Mayo examined the impact of motivation, social relations and satisfaction levels of workers on the productivity of the employees. Mayo stressed on the power that is in natural teams where he explained that social relations are always more important than the structure of the organisations.

According to him, communication which is a two-way process between the employee and the manager and vice versa is important. Additionally, leaders should effectively communicate to the employees their work objectives to allow them to make the right decisions (Currie, 2017). Firms also expect their members of staff to efficiently communicate information to others, to openly express their feelings, to deduce the feelings of others and to amicably resolve disputes and come to an understanding as this theory does not recognize conflict as a creative force (Prause & Mujtaba, 2015). When executives are able to have such competencies, they can maintain good relationships with their customers (Mughal & Khan, 2013). The theory emphasizes conflict resolution and its effect on employee performance making it relevant to the current research study.

### **Contingency Theory**

Contingency theory is a behaviourist theory formulated in 1958 by Woodward. The theory argues that there are many ways of managing a firm. The best course of management is contingent or depends on internal and external forces. Firms should come up with the best managerial system for that time after considering the conditions and situation the firm is in (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Thompson points out a big challenge for firms in his 1967 classic organisation in action model as the achievement of originality in a world faced by uncertainties.

According to him, firms seek to meet certain results. However, they are in a dynamic environment that is surrounded by uncertainties which makes it difficult for them to come up with the right plan that can be fully employed to give the desired results. According to Thompson, although firms are open systems the environment in which they are uncertain and the firms have little control over it (Cole & Kelly, 2011).

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

### **Effect of Conflict Management on Employee Performance**

In an empirical study conducted among Icelandic organizations on conflict management methods, intergroup and interpersonal forms of workplace conflicts were found to be common. The study observed that diverse conflict resolution approaches had a positive impact on organizational effectiveness and led to a rise in employee productivity (Violetta, 2012). Similarly, Zhu (2013) in a study conducted in China, agreed with the view that negotiation as a method of conflict management was an antecedent to employees in the organization to have constructive dialogues and increased their willingness to stay with the organization. In an empirical investigation carried out in Nigeria, Ajike (2015) examined how conflict management influences organizational performance of Nigerian Access Bank Plc. This was a case study member of staff as the sample that was from three Lagos branches of the bank. They were administered with questionnaires to respond to. Descriptive and regression analysis with the help of SPSS helped determine the association between conflict management and the bank's organizational performance. The results indicated a favourable association between the two variables under study.

Mwikali (2016) investigated the impact of the use of methods of managing conflict on the performance of staff of Kenya Power Limited. The results of the study showed that many of the participants were in agreement to a great extent that mediation as a conflict resolution mechanism influenced employees' performance and that involvement of impartial third parties to mediate parties in conflict had a high chance of achieving a positive outcome in relation to resolving of organizational conflicts.

Okpalibekwe, Onyekwelu and Dike (2015) studied collective bargaining and organizational performance using Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees of Idemili North Local Government Council, Anambra State. The findings from the study showed that the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees has helped to ensure industrial peace, employee commitment to optimum job productivity as well as effectively using collective bargaining to enhance

organizational performance. The researcher concludes that the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees of Idemili North is a veritable instrument for improved employee productivity as well as organizational performance.

Okpu and Jaja (2014) examined joint consultation and workers commitment in Nigerian Banking industry. Using Cross Sectional Survey design, a sample size of 357 workers from the banks in the South-South zone of Nigeria was used as respondents. The results drawn from the use of Spearman Rank Order Correlation showed that Joint Consultation had a significant positive association with workers affective commitment, but no significant association with workers continuance and normative commitment. The study found that with the use of Joint Consultation, workers are emotionally attached to their organizations and exhibits little continuance and normative commitment.

Uwa (2014) examined conflict management strategies and employees' productivity in a Nigerian State 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. 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.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional design to assess the effect of conflict management on employee job performance. The population of the study comprised 7,262 staff, male and female, who are between the ages of 30- and above 60-years old working on a part- or full-time basis in every department from one federal university (Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta with 5,339 staff), one state university (Olabisi Onabanjo University with 1,723 staff) and one private university (Crescent University Abeokuta with 200 staff) in Ogun State. The sample for this study was obtained by applying the Cohen's power tables for multiple regression analysis by considering effect size, statistical power, and significant level (Cohen, 1988). In this study, the construct for integrating has the highest number of indicating variables, which were seven items. Therefore, Cohen's power tables proposed minimum sample size of 102 participants assuming a medium effect size ( $f^2 =$

0.15), the statistical power of 0.8, and the significance level of 0.05. Also, we considered the minimum sample size requirement for partial least squares structural equation modelling proposed by Kock and Hadaya (2016) by using the gamma-exponential method, which suggested a sample size of 146 before data collection. Considering the outcomes of the power analyses and the gamma-exponential method, a sample size of 180 appeared adequate to detect the effects of conflict management style and also met the gamma-exponential method requirement. Hence, convenient sampling technique was used to select 60 academic staff from each of the three universities.

## DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

This study used questionnaire for collection of data. The questionnaire consisted of demographics including the gender, age and two scales with established validity and reliability as follows: The Rahim Organisational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) (Rahim, 1983). Respondents were asked to indicate how they handled disagreement with the management. The inventory has 28 items to measure the five independent types of conflict management styles which are integrating, avoiding, dominating, obliging and compromising. Integrating style consisted of seven items, e.g. "I try to investigate an issue with my employer to find a solution acceptable to us." Avoiding style consists of six items, e.g. "I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with my employer." Dominating style consists of five items, e.g. "I use my influence to get my ideas accepted." Obliging style consists of six items, e.g. "I generally try to satisfy the needs of my employers." Compromising style consists of four items, e.g. "I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse." The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. Employee job performance (Kock, 2017). Respondents were asked to rate themselves on a self-report measurement survey scale. The inventory has six items, e.g. "My performance in my current job is excellent." The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree.

## METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 26.0 for Windows was used to analyze the data. A significance level ( $p$ -value) of  $<0.05$  was considered as a statistically significant result and two-tailed tests were used in all statistical analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics were computed to describe the study sample and the variables associated with respondents' demographic

characteristics. The software SmartPLS 3.2.8 for Windows (Ringle, Wende & Becker, 2015) was used to estimate the relationship between conflict management (independent variable) and employee job performance (dependent variable) using the partial leastsquare structural equation modeling

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Data Screening**

Before data analysis was done, data screening, which is the procedure of checking the data for errors (to fix or remove these errors), was conducted. It was done to

ensure that the data collected are usable, reliable, and valid for testing causal relationships. Hence, during the data screening process, 18 respondents were dropped for having missing responses. Three respondents were dropped as they were suspected of following a repetitive response pattern, which was noted when a respondent filled the same option for 20 consecutive survey items. There was no evidence of missing data. After the data screening process, 159 respondents (which represented approximately 94% response rate) were retained for further analysis.

**Reflective Measurement Models**

**Table 1. Reflective Measurement Model Assessment**

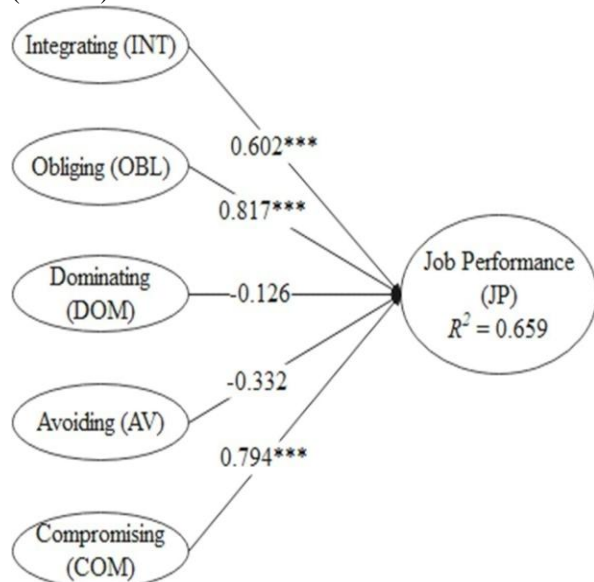
Construct	Survey items	SFL	t-value (two-sided test)	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Test Criterion		≥ .707	2.583 (1% level)	≥ .7 &lt; .95	≥ .7 &lt; .95	≥ .5
Integrating (INT)	INT1	.759	25.140	0.891	0.905	0.613
	INT2	0.721	21.347			
	INT3	0.775	32.227			
	INT4	0.802	20.215			
	INT5	0.712	14.003			
	INT6	0.824	19.222			
	INT7	0.811	23.101			
Avoiding (AV)	AV1		26.556	0.911	0.920	0.656
	AV2	0.758	38.889			
	AV3	0.847	20.235			
	AV4	0.771	33.012			
	AV5	0.856	34.125			
	AV6	0.801	44.210			
Dominating (DOM)	DOM1	0.869	21.622	0.912	0.923	0.666
	DOM2	0.845	29.901			
	DOM3	0.773	32.002			
	DOM4	0.800	21.025			
	DOM5	0.807	18.020			
Obliging (OBL)	OBL1	0.842	24.365	0.897	0.903	0.652
	OBL2	0.717	30.003			
	OBL3	0.847	21.236			
	OBL4	0.777	29.002			
	OBL5	0.845	25.230			
	OBL6	0.799	14.256			
Compromising (COM)	COM1	0.920	30.648	0.887	0.892	0.735
	COM2	0.755	19.003			
	COM3	0.833	28.255			
	COM4	0.888	22.232			
Job Performance (JP)	JP1	0.759	20.651	0.917	0.921	0.625
	JP2	0.723	31.007			
	JP3	0.856	21.023			
	JP4	0.711	23.112			
	JP5	0.897	20.256			
	JP6	0.735	23.444			

Note: SFL = Standardised Factor Loadings  
Source: Author's Computation (2021)

**Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT)**

Construct	INT	AV	DOM	OBL	COM	JP
INT	0.607					
AV	0.512	0.446				
DOM	0.285	0.301	0.589			
OBL	0.231	0.315	0.365	0.505		
COM	0.233	0.241	0.333	0.223	0.396	
JP	0.214	0.111	0.101	0.444	0.521	0.609

Indicator reliability, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) were assessed to determine the reliability of the reflective measurement models (Hair et al. 2017). All indicators of the reflective measurement models demonstrated very good loadings, above the threshold value of 0.70 (Table 2). The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were adequate; values surpassed the threshold of 0.70, and also the AVE for each model was sufficient (Table 1). Finally, discriminant validity was established based on the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT), a procedure better than the frequently considered Fornell-Larker criterion and assessments of cross-loadings (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt 2015). The results showed that all HTMT values of the latent variables were below the critical and conservative value of 0.85 (Table 2).



Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Figure 2: Structural model of the relationship between conflict management and employee job performance

Figure 2 revealed that the explanatory power ( $R^2$ ) of the structural model for employee performance was 0.659. This indicated that job performance was about 66% of the variance in conflict management style (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising). According to Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt (2013), an  $R^2$  value of 0.75 is considered substantial, an  $R^2$  value of 0.50 is regarded as moderate, and an  $R^2$  value of 0.26 is considered as weak. Therefore, the  $R^2$  value in this study was considered relatively substantial for employee job performance construct.

**Estimation of Path Coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and  $t$ -statistics**  
**Table 3: Structural Model Estimates (Test of Hypotheses)**

Path (Hypotheses)	$\beta$	$t$ -value	$p$ -value	Remark
INT ->JP	0.602	5.714	0.001	Rejected
OBL ->JP	0.817	8.668	0.001	Rejected
DOM ->JP	-	-	0.641	Accepted
AV ->JP	0.126	0.416	-	Accepted
COM ->JP	-	-	0.257	Accepted
	0.332	1.433	-	
	0.794	6.133	0.001	Rejected

To test whether path coefficients differ significantly from zero or not,  $t$  values were calculated using bootstrapping with 159 cases and 5,000 sub samples. The results in Table 3 revealed that integrating, obliging and compromising conflict management style had a significant effect on employee job performance. Therefore,  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ , and  $H_{05}$  were rejected. On the contrary, dominating and avoiding conflict management styles each had a non-significant effect on employee job performance. Therefore,  $H_{03}$  and  $H_{04}$  were accepted.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research examined the effect of conflict management style on employee job performance among university staff in Ogun State. It effectively provided evidence both in support and otherwise for the hypotheses based on the PLS-SEM analysis results. First, the finding revealed that the integrating conflict management style had a significant effect on employee job performance ( $p = 0.001$ ). This finding indicated that the management of the universities should work with their staff to find a solution that fully satisfies their concerns when conflict arises. The result was consistent with previous studies of Igbino et al. (2018), Nuel-Okoli et al. (2018). They found that integrating had a significant effect on employee job performance. Second, further findings revealed that obliging had a significant effect on employee job performance. This finding indicated that the management of the universities were used to neglecting their own concern to satisfy that of their staff, which in turn, led to staff high job performance. The result is in line with the finding of Igbino et al. (2018), Nuel-Okoli et al. (2018), and Osabiya (2015). They found that obliging has a significant positive effect on employee job performance.

Third, compromising had a significant positive effect on employee job performance. The finding implied that the management of the universities shifted their grounds on some certain issues to make a mutually acceptable decision with their staff when conflict arises. The finding is in line with past studies such as Ajike, et al. (2015), Igbino et al. (2018), Nuel-Okoli et al. (2018), and Osabiya (2015). They found in their studies

that compromising had a significant effect on patients' satisfaction. Fourth, the result revealed that dominating had a non-significant negative effect on employee job performance. This finding indicated that the management of the universities always stucked to their arguments and tried to win the staff when conflict arose. This action, in turn, led to employee low job performance. The discovery is in line with the result of previous studies like Ajike et al. (2015), and MohdKassim and Ibrahim (2014). They found out in their studies that dominating had a non-significant effect employee job performance. Fifth, the result revealed that avoiding had a non-significant effect on employee's job performance. The finding indicated that the management of the university were used to withdrawing themselves from the staff when conflicts arose, which, in turn, led to their low performance. The discovery is in line with previous studies like Ajike et al. (2015) and Osabiya (2015). They found out in their studies that avoiding had a non-significant effect employee job performance.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After analysing the data collected using PLS-SEM, the study concluded that integrating, obliging, and compromising conflict management style influenced employee job performance. On the contrary, dominating and avoiding did not influence employee job performance. Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are suggested: it was recommended that the universities management should provide adequate information concerning vital decisions that concerns them so that they would not be kept in mental darkness. The universities management should provide the necessary tools and facilities needed by the staff to enhance their performance. The universities management should ensure that conflicts solving styles are devoid of bias at all times. The universities management should ensure good staff union-management relationship to sustain employee job performance.

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