

Conflict Management Strategies and Organizational Productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The thrust of this study was to examine conflict management strategies and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc. Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the objectives of this study, five research questions were raised and subsequently transformed into research hypotheses. Literature review was done according to the variables explored in the study, while the survey research design was deemed appropriate for the research. The population of the study was 108 respondents from Ecobank Plc. Cross River State, where a sample of 85 respondents were randomly selected through the Taro Yamane formula. A semi-structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was deployed as an instrument for data collection. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was the statistical technique deployed for the analysis of data with the aid of the statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 28). Findings of the study revealed that “arbitration strategy, mediation strategy, avoidance strategy, open communication strategy and compromise strategy significantly relate organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc.” Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that the management of organizations or institutions should monitor, intervene and employ the different strategies on conflicts’ matters in order to enhance organizational productivity.

Keywords: conflict management strategies, organizational productivity, arbitration strategy, mediation strategy, avoidance strategy, open communication strategy, compromise strategy

1. Introduction

Conflict management strategy is conceptualized as the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of disputes and retribution in an organization. Conflict management strategies are mechanisms or measures employed in resolving disagreement between individuals, groups and organizations (Ele et al., 2024). The contributions of conflict management strategies cannot be over emphasized in the resolution of disputes among workers in an organization. Conflict is an inevitable feature of organizational life. Conflict is a situation of disagreement between two parties. A conflict situation is therefore one that is characterized by the inability of those concerned to iron out their differences (Omene, 2021). The aim of conflict management is to enhance learning and group outcomes, that is, effectiveness of productivity and performance in organizational setting. It is not concerned with eliminating all conflicts or avoiding conflict completely but to employ good conflict strategies in maintaining peace and harmony among members of the organization.

Conflict management strategies imply integration of all factors which can contribute to conflict resolution or its prevention. Those factors are improvement of communication and practicing discipline in the organization, as well as having in mind the life phases of parties involved. Conflict management strategy is a catalyst for change and can have a positive impact on employee satisfaction and performance of any given organization (Omene, 2021). He further asserted that effective management strategies in conflict resolution will boost good communication, time management, cooperation and organizational productivity. Good conflict management

practices or methods will significantly improve decision outcomes and high profile of productivity. Conflict management strategy assists in reducing negativity and increases positivity in the workplace. Since a good conflict improves decision outcomes and ensures group productivity when properly managed, it also creates additional channels of communication with employees as means of obtaining prompt feedback on organizational policies, so that conflicting interest will not arise again in the organization. (Wonah et al, 2020; Ele & Anono, 2020).

Awan and Ibrahim (2015) in Omene (2021) contend that if the individuals do not have the communication or interpersonal skills to resolve their disputes, the conflict can grow and spread to others, eventually affecting their job productivity, performance, which, in turn, affects the job satisfaction of others, as well in addition to the workers not having the communication skills to address their disputes, and their managers often lack the necessary skills to be effective in conflict resolution. Disputes are primarily an inevitable and systemic part of human existence that cannot be ignored or avoided in the Nigeria work organizations (Okafor et al, 2020). Over the years or decades, litigation has been the traditional technique of settling disputes that have not given head way in the work organizations (Omisore & Abiodun, 2014). This is because the increasing growth of slow and costly court proceedings have deterred many organizations as well as employers and investors from choosing litigation to resolve their disputes.

Organizational productivity is the effective key to success for businesses, especially manufacturing firms. Gigantic or large manufacturers, have the ability to attain better as well as superior economies of large scale because of the availability of resources. Productivity can also be hindered if the systems in place do not allow employees to flourish (Davies, 2020). This is because modern total quality management practices or techniques stare at all aspects of a business, from the sourcing of raw materials and components, to production line technology, staff skills, planning, back office roles, sales, marketing and customer relationship management. The objective is to ensure that all the departments are working at optimal level and together in harmony in order to provide the end customers or users with a better-quality product.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the Structural-Functionalism Theory propounded by Persons (1960) in Omene (2022). The theory postulates that individuals normally adjust to a given structure in an organization but any change in the structure of the organization causes conflict and destabilizes the organization. Conflict need to be minimized by minimizing structural changes in order to maintain stability with both the individuals as well as the institutions. Another theory that lends credence to this study is conflict management model. This theory was propounded by Blake and Mouton in 1964. The theory explained styles for handling interpersonal conflicts into five types: forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and problem solving. In the 1970's and 1980's, researchers began using the intentions of the parties involved to classify the styles of conflict management that they would include in their models. The model based on the concerns of the parties involved in the conflict. The combination of the parties concerned for their own interests (that is, assertiveness) and their concern for the interests of those across the table (that is, cooperativeness) would yield a particular conflict management style. Pruitt called these styles yielding (low assertiveness/high cooperativeness), problem solving (high assertiveness / high cooperativeness), inaction (low assertiveness / low cooperativeness), and contending (high assertiveness / low cooperativeness). Pruitt argues that problem-solving is the preferred method when seeking mutually beneficial options. The relevance of the theory to the study is that it stresses on ways of handling conflicts in an organization

2.2 Conflict Management Strategies

Conflict management strategies are those mechanisms, measures and methods used by managers, supervisors, lawyers (practitioners) and management to resolve disputes or disagreements between employees and managers, among groups and organizations (Ele et al., 2024). These strategies can be arbitration, mediation, collaboration, good governance, communication, negotiation, compromise, avoidance, accommodation, alternative dispute resolution, conciliation, facilitation, mini-trial, expert determination, etc. Conflict management strategies implies integration of all factors which can contribute to conflict resolution or its prevention (Qmene, 2021). These factors are improvement of communication and practicing discipline in the organization, as well as having in mind the life phases of parties involved.

Conflict management strategies are very important in every organization or institution in order to generate creative thinking and how to develop problem solving methods and attitudes between the confronting parties (Sanda, 2018). Most scholars such as Knippen et al. (2019), Hellriegel (2017), and Ajike (2015) identified effective conflict management strategies to include conflict competing, accommodation, avoidance, confrontation collaboration and mediation. They further posited that the application of a particular conflict

management strategy depends on the nature of conflicting situations between the parties involved. Conflict management strategies are techniques and dimensions or measures that can be used by organizations or institutions to identify, manage and resolve conflicts sensibly, fairly and efficiently in order to reduce negative consequences of it (Ekpu, 2018).

2.3 Organizational Productivity

Productivity is a tool of measurement that determines the efficiency of an organization in relations to the ratio of outputs produced with respect to inputs used (Okolie et al, 2018). They further elucidated that productivity and quality of products and services are integral components of organizations' operational strategies or techniques. Productivity plays an important role at both macro and micro levels of every manufacturing firm. Productivity describes various measures of the efficiency of production. A productivity measure is expressed as the ratio of output to input used in a production process, i.e. output per unit of input. Productivity specifies the ability of all related activities to produce goods and services. As an alternative in focusing on the input and output sides only, productivity characterized or embodied a major philosophical shift in how a work system such as workstation, an assembly line, a process, and plant will be analyzed for continuous improvement of quality products and services. When dividing the outputs by the inputs, the implications show how well the inputs that can be described as the resources are utilized in order to generate the outputs (Okolie et al, 2018). Good conflict management techniques greatly improve decision outcomes and high profile of productivity. Effective management strategies in conflict resolution will boost good communication, time management, cooperation and organizational productivity on a continuous basis (Omene, 2021).

2.4 Arbitration Strategy and Organizational Productivity

Arbitration is one of the oldest methods for the resolution of disputes between parties in an organization (Okafor et al, 2020). This is a process similar to an informal trial where an impartial third party hears each side of a dispute and issues a decision; the parties may agree to have the decision be binding or non-binding. It is a simplified version of a trial involving limited discovery and simplified rules of evidence (Cornell Law School, 2019). The arbitration is led and decided by an arbitral panel. To make this panel, both parties must agree and select one arbitrator from each side, and the two arbitrators will select the third party. Arbitration hearings normally stays between a few days to a week, and the panel only meets for a few hours per day. The panel then deliberates and issues a written decision, or arbitral award. This method has long been used in labour relations, construction and securities regulation, but is now gaining popularity in other business disputes. For the first time in history of Nigeria that arbitration and other forms of ADR is given constitutional right and backing as a method of resolving disputes in the work organizations (Okafor et al, 2020).

Arbitration means a way of settling conflict by involving a third, unbiased individual, referred to as an arbitrator, after the evidence has been assessed, and consideration has been given to the arguments of both experts and the experts choose to settle the situation (Mboya, Kiplagat & Ernest, 2017; Aigbavboa, 2022). Gulghane and Khandve (2015) describe arbitration as a method of settling conflict that requires that the experts should agree to refer their situation to an arbitrator. Such an agreement is termed an arbitration agreement. Arbitrating as a way of settling conflict using a third, unbiased individual, known as a mediator, after the evidence has been assessed and consideration has been given to the arguments from both experts and a choice has been made to deal with the situation (Maureen, Maore & Were, 2021).

2.5 Mediation Strategy and Organizational Productivity

Mediation is one of the forms of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms (Ampoma et al, 2022). Mediation is the use of a neutral third-party to help the disputing parties resolve the dispute on their own. A mediator will not resolve the dispute but will help facilitate discussion between parties in conflict with an aim of finding a solution (Ampoma et al, 2022). Mediation is a voluntary process in which an impartial person (the mediator) helps with communication between the parties which will allow them to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Mediation often is the next step if negotiation proves unsuccessful. Mediation can be used to solve conflict arising from personality differences. Interpersonal conflict in organizations can get too destructive resulting into third party to solve the dispute. Mediation strategy is a method by which professionals can resolve conflict. Mediation concerns a personal process in which an impartial third party assists other individuals to examine a difficult condition and come to an agreement between them (Gulghane & Khandve, 2015). Tshuma, Ndlovu and Bhebhe (2016) counted mediation as among the main approaches of conflict resolution. According to Ojo and Folayan (2017), mediation is based on the involvement of a third, unbiased individual that helps individuals to arrive at an agreeable settlement. While Heather specified that mediation has emerged as an efficient method of conflict resolution which is initiated by relationship-based conflict.

Mediation is an informal alternative to litigation. This is a collaborative process where a mediator works with the parties to come to a mutually agreeable solution (Findlaw, 2019). Mediation is usually nonbinding. It is a

significant method for resolving disputes between managers and workers in the work organizations. Mediation involves the use of a neutral third party (i.e., the mediator) to act as a facilitator of settlement discussions (Oni-Ojo, Iyiola & Osibanjo, 2014; Okafor et al., 2020; Osabiya, 2015; Lipsky, Avgar & Lamare, 2017).

2.6 Avoidance Strategy and Organizational Productivity

Avoidance is reacting to incompetence or inadequate understanding of an unpleasant difficulty by being ambiguous. Zhang et al. (2015) emphasized that avoiding can also be identified as a disregarding approach. The scholars asserted that avoidance involves delaying circumstances and retreating from contradictory problems (Aigbayboa, 2022). According to Omene (2021), the avoidance strategy seeks to put off conflict indefinitely. By delaying or ignoring the conflict, the avoider hopes the problem resolves itself without a confrontation. Those who actively avoid conflict frequently have low esteem or hold a position of low power. In some circumstances, avoidance strategy can serve as a profitable conflict management strategy, such as after the dismissal of a popular but unproductive employee. The hiring of a more productive replacement for the position soothes much of the conflict.

2.7 Open Communication and Organizational Productivity

Open communication involves the process of sharing and exchanging information between individuals, groups and potential parties in settling a dispute situation (Ele & Anono, 2020). It also involves the process of interacting and relating with others, meaning that parties to a dispute situation still talk. This exchange and sharing of information can help to remove doubt, suspicion and contribute to the process of confidence building in peace keeping among workers and management in an organization. Communication is an essential elements of peace building and peace education. It relates to the presence and sharing of accurate information about a dispute or conflict situation, being able to discuss about feelings and concerns of parties, talking about what disputants would like to exchange and discussing the nature and type of dispute, touching on the positions, interests, needs and fears of parties involved. Here, communication assumed increased significance following the ASUU strike action of 5th November, 2018, that lasted for 4 months (Natukunda-Togbga, 2017). Wilson (2019) revealed that poor communication between individuals and groups, personality clashes, poor management policies, scarcity resources, and non-implementation of service circulars, are the major causes of the conflicts in public hospitals of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Awan and Anjum (2015) say that properly managed conflict promotes open communication, collaborative decision making, regular feedback, and timely resolution of conflict. Open communication and collaboration enhance the flow of new ideas and strengthen work relationships, which can have a positive effect on employee morale. Regular feedback and timely resolution of conflict have the potential of improving employee satisfaction and job performance (Awan & Saeed, 2015). Conflict has both positive and negative impacts on the performance of any organization, but for any organization to develop, it must be able to manage and resolve any conflict that occurs within and outside the organization without much delay (Oladimeji, Adeoti & Babatunde, 2020). Conflict situations or problems denoted incompatibility of goals and opposing behaviors within an organization.

2.8 Compromise Strategy and Organizational Productivity

Compromise is an attempt to manage conflict by expecting each person to give up something (Okafor et al, 2020). This is the mini-win/mini-lost strategy based on a solution that partially satisfies the interests of the parties involved. This approach results in the parties' attempting to win as much as possible while preserving the interpersonal or inter-group relationships as much as possible. The compromise approach to conflict is to assume that a win/win solution is not possible and adopt a negotiating stance that involves a little bit of winning and a little bit of losing, with respect to both the interests and the relationships of the involved parties. Persuasion and manipulation dominate the style. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies the interests of the parties involved. Through compromise, managers try to resolve disputes by convincing each party in the conflict to sacrifice some valuable objectives in order to gain others. Decisions reached by compromise are not like to leave conflicting parties feeling frustrated or hostile (Anele, 2014; Okafor et al, 2020).

According to Omene (2021), the compromising strategy typically calls for both sides of a conflict to give up elements of their position in order to establish an acceptable, if not agreeable, solution. This strategy prevails most often in conflicts where the parties hold approximately equivalent power. Business owners frequently employ compromise during contract negotiations with other businesses when each party stands to lose something valuable, such as a customer or necessary service.

3. Empirical Review

Empirical studies in both public and private sectors have consistently demonstrated that conflict management strategies grounded in collaboration, negotiation, and arbitration tend to result in higher organizational performance. For instance, a study by Olukayode (2015) on a Nigerian manufacturing firm found that conflict

resolution strategies such as collective bargaining, negotiation, and compromise were significantly associated with improved employee productivity and organizational efficiency. This correlation suggests that arbitration, when implemented as part of a broader cooperative conflict management system, has tangible benefits for organizational output.

Similarly, Longe (2015) emphasized the importance of collaborative dispute resolution in the Nigerian civil service, where arbitration and collective bargaining were positively correlated with employee performance ($r = 0.91$ and $r = 0.86$ respectively, $p < .001$). These findings reinforce the idea that arbitration contributes not only to resolving disputes but also to enhancing trust, morale, and clarity of communication within organizations. In the oil and gas sector of Nigeria's Niger Delta region, Researcher (2025) found that arbitration, alongside collaboration and CSR-based conflict strategies, had a statistically significant effect on corporate productivity ($p < .05$). The study concluded that organizations that institutionalize fair, transparent, and third-party mediated arbitration procedures tend to experience fewer work stoppages, improved labor relations, and enhanced operational performance.

Gren (2019) reported that unresolved interpersonal conflicts negatively affected perceived team productivity. However, introducing structured conflict management techniques—such as arbitration and facilitated negotiation—helped mitigate these effects, thereby enabling teams to maintain productivity even under high-stress, iterative work conditions (Preprints.org, 2025). A 2022 review by Martínez-Pecino et al. found that mediation is most effective when strategies are matched to the specific nature and stage of the conflict. The study emphasized a “contingency approach,” here different mediator behaviors—such as trust-building, problem-solving, and agenda-setting—are applied depending on whether the conflict is interest-based or rights-based. Notably, contextual and substantive strategies were found to be the most effective in achieving positive outcomes, whereas reflexive strategies could be counterproductive, particularly in legalistic or rights-based disputes (Martínez-Pecino et al., 2022; Ongori & Bosire, 2021). Similarly, in Nigeria, a study conducted by Ushie and Ekpenyong (2020) demonstrated a statistically significant positive relationship between mediation strategies and employee productivity. The researchers concluded that when conflicts are resolved amicably through dialogue and mutual understanding, employees are more likely to remain engaged and motivated in their roles.

Additional research from Uasin Gishu County in Kenya examined mediation in the context of secondary school teachers. It revealed that mediation strategies effectively reduced disruptive conflicts, which in turn led to increased teacher productivity and better educational outcomes (Koech & Njuguna, 2024). In the private sector, Ajike et al. (2023) examined conflict management at Mobile Nigeria Plc in Port Harcourt. Their findings highlighted that continuous dialogue—a key component of mediation—had a strong, positive impact on productivity, reinforcing the value of open communication in resolving organizational tensions.

Beyond immediate conflict resolution, mediation has also been shown to have broader organizational benefits. For instance, a study published in *Emerald Insight* examined virtual teams and found that mediation partially mediated the relationship between perceived team value and productivity. Although the indirect effect was modest ($\beta = -0.090$), the findings suggest that mediation can enhance team cohesion and effectiveness, particularly in remote or hybrid work environments (Zhang et al., 2022).

Lazarus (2014) examined conflict management strategies within the Nigerian civil service and found a significant negative correlation between avoidance and employee productivity. The study compared avoidance with other strategies such as negotiation and collective bargaining, and concluded that avoidance was not only less effective but often detrimental. Employees who frequently avoided conflict tended to have unresolved issues, leading to inefficiencies and communication breakdowns.

Similarly, Olanrewaju and Ibrahim (2020) conducted a survey among public sector employees and found that avoidance and imposing strategies had a weak and statistically insignificant relationship with productivity. In contrast, collaborative and problem-solving strategies showed a stronger positive relationship. The authors concluded that organizations relying on avoidance as a default approach were more likely to experience persistent interpersonal tensions and stagnation in team performance.

A more recent study by Okwuise (2023) focused on organizations in Nigeria's Niger Delta region. The research examined how conflict avoidance strategies affected workplace picketing and employee engagement. Using regression analysis, the study found that avoidance had no statistically significant effect on preventing labor unrest or improving productivity ($F = 1.532$, $p = .143$). The findings highlighted that while avoidance might reduce immediate confrontation, it does not resolve the root causes of dissatisfaction among workers. In the educational sector, research conducted in Kenyan public universities also addressed the role of avoidance in conflict resolution. While some respondents acknowledged that avoidance might be useful in situations where emotions run high or when more time is needed to gather facts, the study ultimately concluded that it negatively impacted long-term organizational performance. Staff who consistently avoided conflict contributed to a culture

of silence and unresolved tensions, which in turn hindered collaboration and innovation (Ongori & Bosire, 2021; Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). While it may be appropriate in minor disputes or emotionally volatile situations, over-reliance on avoidance can lead to resentment, poor morale, and reduced trust among team members.

Park et al. (2022) investigated the role of open communication in multidisciplinary teams. Their findings revealed that teams that actively engaged in transparent conflict dialogue reported higher cohesion and productivity. The study used survey data and structural equation modeling, showing that open communication mediates the relationship between conflict and team effectiveness, with a standardized indirect effect of 0.32 ($p < .001$). This mediation suggests that open communication helps transform potential negative conflict into a performance-enhancing process. Njuguna and Wanjiku (2024) explored how open communication among school staff impacted conflict resolution and teacher productivity in Kenyan secondary schools. The qualitative data indicated that when teachers and administrators maintained open channels for airing grievances and feedback, conflicts were resolved more quickly and with less resentment. This resulted in improved collaboration and better teaching outcomes, supporting the assertion that open communication contributes to sustained organizational productivity.

Liu, Wang, and Zhang (2023) synthesized findings from 25 empirical studies across various industries, confirming that open communication is among the most effective conflict management strategies to enhance organizational performance. Their analysis indicated a moderate to strong average effect size ($d = 0.54$) linking open communication to key productivity indicators such as innovation rates, employee satisfaction, and turnover reduction. The theoretical foundation for these findings aligns with the integrative conflict management model, which posits that open communication facilitates understanding, trust, and joint problem-solving, converting conflict into opportunities for growth (Rahim, 2017). Open communication reduces ambiguity and suspicion, enabling employees to focus on task completion and collective goals rather than interpersonal disagreements (Okoye & Nwankwo, 2023).

Similarly, research conducted by Mwangi and Wanjiru (2022) in Kenyan educational institutions indicated that compromise was effective in resolving conflicts among teaching staff and administration, leading to increased teacher satisfaction and productivity. Their mixed-method study showed that compromise facilitated quicker conflict resolution compared to avoidance or competing strategies, which often escalated tensions or delayed outcomes. Patel et al. (2023) explored the role of compromise within multidisciplinary teams. Using structural equation modeling, the authors found that compromise not only directly improved team productivity but also positively influenced psychological safety, which in turn fostered better collaboration and innovation. Their findings highlight that compromise helps balance competing interests, reducing interpersonal friction and improving overall team function.

Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Singh, Kumar, and Verma (2024), synthesizing over 30 empirical studies, found a moderate average effect size ($d = 0.48$) linking the use of compromise strategies to improved organizational performance metrics, including productivity, employee engagement, and reduced turnover. They concluded that while compromise may not fully satisfy all parties, its ability to quickly restore equilibrium makes it a valuable tool in dynamic workplace environments. The theoretical rationale behind these findings can be traced to integrative conflict management models that position compromise as a middle ground strategy—offering partial satisfaction for all while preventing escalation and preserving relationships (Rahim, 2017). By encouraging flexibility and shared concession, compromise can reduce the disruptive effects of conflict on productivity and morale.

4. Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study was 108 respondents from Ecobank Plc. Cross River State. Taro Yamane was used to determine the sample size of 85 staff. Appropriate information for this study was gathered from two main sources: the primary and secondary sources. The study adopted structured questionnaire using 5-points Likert scale of strongly agreed = 5, agreed = 4, undecided = 3, strongly disagreed = 2 and disagreed = 1. In this study, the researcher used inferential and descriptive statistics in analyzing data and summarized numerically with the use of simple percentage for analyzing Bio-Data. Hypotheses were tested using Pearson-Product-Moment Correlation and was done with the use of SPSS version 23.

5. Results and Findings

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses for the study were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

Hypothesis one

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between arbitration strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank

Plc. Cross River State.

Ha1: There is a significant relationship between arbitration strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc. Cross River State.

Table 1. Correlation showing the relationship between arbitration strategy and organizational productivity in Ecobank Plc.

		Arbitration (A)	Organizational Productivity (OP)
Arbitration (A)	Pearson Correlation	1	.431**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Organizational Productivity (OP)	Pearson Correlation	.431**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

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

The result of correlation portrayed the relationship between arbitration strategy and organizational productivity. The analysis was carried out to ensure that assumptions were void of violation of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. Therefore, the “sig” level in the table shows that P value (.000) is less than 0.01 which reveals that the independent variable is statistically significant. ($r = .431$, $n = 80$, $p < .000$). The result shows that there is a significant relationship between arbitration strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Hypothesis two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between mediation strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between mediation strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Table 2. Correlation showing the relationship between mediation strategy and organizational productivity in Ecobank Plc.

		Mediation Strategy (MS)	Organizational Productivity (OP)
Mediation Strategy (MS)	Pearson Correlation	1	.705**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Organizational Productivity (OP)	Pearson Correlation	.705**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

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

The result of correlation portrayed in the above table points out the relationship between mediation strategy and organizational productivity. The analysis was carried out to ensure that assumptions were void of violation of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. Therefore, the “sig” level in the table shows that “P” value (.000) is less than 0.01 which reveals that the independent variable is statistically significant ($r = .705$, $n = 80$, $p < .000$). The result shows that there is a significant relationship between mediation strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Hypothesis three

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between avoidance strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

H_{a3}: There is a significant relationship between avoidance strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Table 3. Correlations result showing the relationship between avoidance strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc.

		Avoidance Strategy (AS)	Organizational Productivity (OP)
Avoidance Strategy (AS)	Pearson Correlation	1	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Organizational Productivity (OP)	Pearson Correlation	.528**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

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

The result of correlation portrayed a relationship between avoidance strategy and organizational productivity. The analysis was carried out to ensure that assumptions were void of violation of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. Therefore, the “sig” level in the table shows that “P” value (.000) is less than 0.01 which revealed that the independent variable is statistically significant ($r = .528$, $n = 80$, $p < .000$). The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between avoidance strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Hypothesis four

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between open communication strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

H_{a4}: There is a significant relationship between open communication strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Table 4. Correlations results showing the relationship between open communication strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc.

		Open Communication (OC)	Organizational Productivity (OP)
Open Communication (AS)	Pearson Correlation	1	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Organizational Productivity (OP)	Pearson Correlation	.627**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

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

The results of the correlation portrayed a relationship between open communication strategy and organizational productivity. Preliminary analysis was carried out to ensure that assumptions were void of violation of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. Therefore, the “sig” level in the table shows that “P” value (.000) is less than 0.01 which revealed that the independent variable is statistically significant ($r = .627$, $n = 80$, $p < .000$). The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between open communication strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Hypothesis five

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between compromise strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Ha5: There is a significant relationship between compromise strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

Table 5. Correlations result showing the relationship between compromise strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc.

		Compromise Strategy (CS)	Organizational Productivity (OP)
Compromise Strategy (CS)	Pearson Correlation	1	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
Organizational Productivity (OP)	Pearson Correlation	.634**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

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

The results of correlation portrayed a relationship between compromise strategy and organizational productivity. The analysis was carried out to ensure that assumptions were void of violation of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. Therefore, the “sig” level in the table shows that “P” value (.000) is less than 0.01 which revealed that the independent variable is statistically significant ($r = .634$, $n = 80$, $p < .000$). The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between compromise strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

6. Summary of Findings

From the hypotheses tested, the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between arbitration strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State. The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between mediation strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State. The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between avoidance strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State. The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between open communication strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State. The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between compromise strategy and organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc, Cross River State.

7. Conclusion

The contributions of conflict management strategies cannot be over emphasized in the resolution of disputes among workers in an organization. Conflict management strategies are methods or mechanisms employed in resolving disagreement between individuals, groups and organizations. Conflict arbitration, mediation, avoidance, open communication and compromise strategies had a significant relationship with organizational productivity of Ecobank Plc. In the same vain, all these conflict management strategies have positive effect on employees’ performance of the organization. Conflict among workers in an organization is inevitable. If conflicts or disputes are managed properly, it brings a catalyst for change and can have a positive relationships and effect on employees’ satisfaction, productivity and performance of the organization. Conversely, unmanaged conflicts negatively affect employee satisfaction and organizational productivity of the organization.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Management of organizations or institutions should monitor, intervene and employ arbitration strategy on conflicts’ matters in order to enhance organizational productivity.
- 2) Management of organizations should invite mediator or a third party (neutral mediator) to assist in conflict resolution in order to enhance organizational productivity as well as employees’ motivation.
- 3) Management should employ avoidance strategy or approach of win-win method of conflict resolution in

order to enhance organizational productivity and employees' commitment in the organization.

- 4) Management of the organization should also attend to conflicting situation as urgent matter with open communication system as fast as possible in order to avoid those factors that can hinder employees' motivation and commitment to goal achievement.
- 5) The management of the organization should also employ compromise strategy in resolving of disputes or conflicts to enhance employees' performance as well as organizational productivity.

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