Compromise Conflict Management Style and its Impact on Organizational Health of Federal Agencies in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the use of compromise conflict management style and its impact on organizational health of some selected Federal Agencies in Rivers, namely Niger Delta Development Commission, Niger Delta Basin Authority, Ministry of Niger Delta and National Emergency Management Authority. The research design used to carry out the study was the cross sectional survey. The sample size of 201employees was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan table. Also, the sampling technique used was the simple random sampling technique. Questionnaires were constructed to measure all the indicators of the conflict management style, and organizational health and these were administered to the respondents in order to extract data for analysis. Multiple regression statistics was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that there is a positive and significant association between compromise conflict management style and cohesiveness; also it was revealed from the findings that there is a positive and significant association between compromise conflict management style and problem solving. It is then concluded that because the employees of these Federal agencies exhibited the attributes of compromise conflict management style, the health of the organization was strengthened. Sequel to the above findings and conclusion, recommendations were made that there should be an encouragement of the use of compromise conflict management style by the top level management as a policy to manage conflicting parties so that the organizational health is strengthened to achieve organizational objectives. Also, Employees should be encouraged to make sacrifices when and where necessary as this is an indicator of compromise and this will help in settling conflicting situations real quickly before it gets out of hand and begins to affect their problem solving abilities as a team and generally affect the health of the organization.

Keywords: Conflict, Management, Styles, Organizations, Health.

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts in organizations have destabilizing consequence on the overall performance of the organization. It leads to under performance since valuable time, human and material resources are used in managing and controlling conflicts rather than to improve output and productivity. Conflicts also lead to interpersonal misunderstanding among staff in an organization which makes accomplishment of organizational set goals difficult. Attaining organizational goals is possible if efforts are always made to trim down the overall level of conflict within the organization. Consequently, it is very important that efforts should be made towards finding ways of managing conflicts among staff so as to achieve organizational objectives. The problem of poor conflict management styles in

organizations with particular emphasis on Federal agencies is the focus of this study. Federal agencies are establishments or organizations owned or partly controlled by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Examples of such agencies in Rivers state include; the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Niger Delta Basin Authority, Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs. All these agencies are created through an act of legislation with their corresponding mandate geared towards the functionality of the establishment. These Federal agencies are responsible for delivering various types of Government services. Each of these agencies is headed by personnel who could be a chairman or a director. Like other privately owned co-operations or establishment, Federal agencies have had their own fair share of challenges. These agencies like other establishments that have their own organizational structure may not be different from other organizations in terms of administrative formation and other operational performance. As it is well noted, these formations comprise of staff working at different levels and capacity due to difference in background and other demographic characteristics, sometime there must be differentiated character of contemporary work-organizations. These differentiated characters of contemporary work-organizations are some of the causes of conflict within an organization.

Similarly, Obasi (2005) observed that there are intra-management conflicts which occur between and among groups of workers within the organization as well as between individuals. Ahemefula (2014) also confirmed that conflicts are integral parts of the origin of every organization, especially a situation where men and women that constitute the staff of these organizations have different cultural, religious, status, lifestyle and political background. In another development, Longe (2015) pointed out that workplace conflict is thus endemic despite the best of management practices in organizations. He further opined that this manifest in various forms as an intrinsic and unavoidable feature of employment relationship. It is by nature an ever present process and more often to occur in hierarchical organizations where people with different views, opinion and background interact. It is against this background we examine the impact of compromise conflict management style on organizational health using a survey of Federal agencies in Rivers State. The study examined compromise conflict management style and organizational health in Federal Interventionists agencies in Rivers State Nigeria as against other studies that have considered other co-operate and public organizations
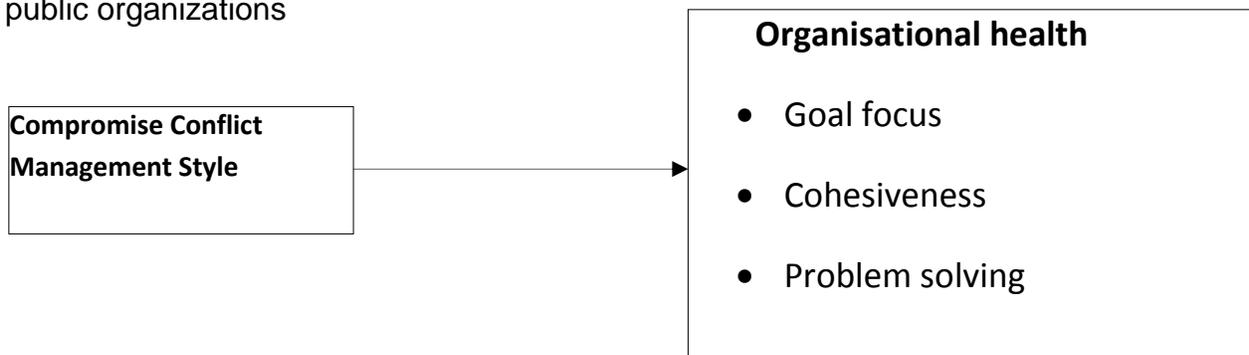

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of compromise conflict resolution style and organizational health.
Source: Researchers (2019)

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of compromise conflict management style on organizational health of selected Federal Agencies in Rivers State, Nigeria. The objectives were:

10. To examine the association between compromise conflict management style and goal focus in Federal agencies in Rivers State.
11. Critically analyze the association between compromise conflict management style and cohesiveness in Federal agencies in Rivers State.
12. To study the association between compromise conflict management style and problem solving in Federal agencies in Rivers State

Research Questions

(i) To what extent does compromise conflict management style associate with goal focus in Federal agencies in Rivers State?
(ii) What is the level of association between compromise conflict management style and cohesiveness in Federal agencies in Rivers State?
(iii) How does compromise conflict management style associate with problem solving in Federal agencies in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were stated to be tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ho$_1$: Compromise style is not associated with goal focus in Federal Agencies in Rivers State.

Ho$_2$: Compromise style is not associated with cohesiveness in Federal Agencies in Rivers State.

Ho$_3$: Compromise style is not associated with Problems solving in Federal Agencies in Rivers State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Compromise Style

According to Lim and Rashad (2012), this is a clear case of give-and-take situation in which both parties involved in the conflict willingly wish to give up something after negotiation in order to reach an agreement. Yuan, (2010) observed that this compromising style will create I-win and I-lose section to create compromise. Lussier, (2010); Reich, Wagner-Westbrook, and Kressel (2007) and Friedman, *et al,* (2000) also on the issue of compromising style agree that those engaged in conflict usually change their own opinion either because they found sufficient reasons to do so or simply to avoid continued confrontation. According to Lim and Rashad (2012), one benefit of this style is that conflicts are resolved in short time while the relationships are still maintained. One of the disadvantage of this style is that compromising styles often starts and it consequences will result in (Suboptimum decisions) to another. Lim and Rashad (2012) observed that when management in an organization overuse this style, it may cause some form of greed on the part of the users.

Organizational Health

The concept of organizational health could be likened to a metaphor which assesses overall performance of an organization and offers new approaches by putting the

employee health and welfare in the forefront of the organization. In the context of this study, the literature on organization health can be suggested to have developed with three different approaches focused on enterprise performance, on employee health, and on both enterprise performance and employee heath.

Goal Focus

McKinsey (1999) in his organizational health index (OHI) posits that goal focus is the ability of persons, groups, or organizations to have clarity, acceptance, support, and advocacy of organizational wide goals and objectives. In the present study we distinguish accordingly between two kinds of goal focus. If the relevant goal is for each individual participant to perform as well as possible, goal interdependence will be negative, constituting an individual goal focus. If in contrast the relevant goal is that the group as a whole performs as well as possible, goal interdependence will be positive, constituting a group goal focus. With a group goal focus, each participant is accountable not only for her or his individual success, but also for the performance of the other participants as well.

Cohesiveness

Group cohesiveness has consistently remained one of the most interesting and most elusive constructs in the study of small group behavior, stimulating active research interests in social psychology, group dynamics, organizational behavior, and sport psychology. Festinger, Schachter and Back (1950) described group cohesiveness as "the resultant forces which are acting on the members to stay in a group," and most subsequent research on group cohesiveness has tended to accept this description. Mudrak (1989) describes a cohesive group as one which "sticks together, one which its members are "bonded" to one another and the group as a whole, he further posits that cohesiveness would probably be accompanied by feelings of "commitment", "harmony" and "solidarity" on the part of the group members.

Problem Solving

This has to do with an organization's ability to perceive problems and to solve them with negligible energy. Problems get solved, stay solved and the problem solving procedures are strengthened.

Relationship between compromise style and the health of organizations

Very few people go looking for conflict, more often than not conflict results because of miscommunication between people with regards to their needs, ideas, beliefs, goals, or values (Salami, 2009). According to Oparanma, Hamilton and Ohaka (2009) conflicts in organizations are disastrous and lead to economic loss not just to the organization but also the society. Healthy organizations manage disruptive outside forces while keeping true to their missions and values. Hoy and Miskel (2008) identified healthy schools as schools that cope successfully with their environments and use their resources to accomplish their goals. Chandan (2005) agrees with Hoy and Miskel that healthy schools successfully adapt to their environments, achieve their goals, and share common values.

it takes zero conflict environment to be focused on the goal of the organization as we have seen the importance of goal interdependence in a team based work which organizations are frequently turning to in order to achieve their goals and since in teams, goal interdependence cannot be over emphasized in that individuals depend on

others to achieve the collective goal, conflict should be properly managed in these teams hence the use of different conflict management strategies. For example, when group members disagree about whose responsibility it is to complete a specific duty, they are experiencing process conflict and at that point the focus should be on the goal of the organization and if they are goal focused, they will make compromising decisions to achieve the goal of the company hence the need for a conflict resolution strategy to achieve the goal focus of the team.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted cross sectional survey design. The method was considered appropriate because the data were collected directly from the target population of 420 officers who make up the top, middle and lower management of the Federal agencies in view as the study is a macro study with the unit of analysis at the organizational level. The sample size for the study is made up of 201 staff determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. In testing the reliability of the instruments, the researcher adopted the test-retest method using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis which yields a reliability co-efficient which will be considered as an acceptable reliability co-efficient for the study. The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while spearman rank order correlation coefficient was used in analyzing the research Hypotheses. This was tested at the 0.05 level of significance in order to arrive at an appropriate decision.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The secondary data analysis was carried out using the spearman rank order correlation tool. In testing the hypotheses for this study, the following decision rules were maintained in rejecting or accepting the study alternate hypotheses and they include: all the correlation coefficients r values that indicate the level of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS, * mean (0.01) and (**)mean (0.05), and the hypotheses will be accepted or rejected on the basis of this condition. When no significance is indicated in the coefficient (r) values, we reject alternate hypothesis. However, the study confident interval was set at the 0.05 (one tailed) level of significance of the test of statistical significance of the data used in the study.

Table 1 contains the detailed results of correlation matrix obtained for compromise and organizational health. Also, displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes the study able to answer the research question and generalize its findings related to the study population.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix for the Association between Compromise and Organizational Health

			Compromise	Goal Focus	Cohesiveness	Problem Solving
Spearman's rho	Compromise	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.900**	.976**	.870**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	191	191	191	191
Goal Focus	Correlation Coefficient	.900[**]	1.000	.971[**]	.975[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	191	191	191	191
Cohesiveness	Correlation Coefficient	.976[**]	.971[**]	1.000	.941[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	191	191	191	191
Problem Solving	Correlation Coefficient	.870[**]	.975[**]	.941[**]	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	191	191	191	191

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Source: Research Data

The results in table 1 indicate that there is a significant and positive association between compromise conflict management style and goal focus, compromise and cohesiveness, compromise and problem solving. Compromise conflict management style is significantly and positively correlated to goal focus (r = 0.900, p = 0.000 < 0.01). Also, compromise is significantly and positively correlate to cohesiveness (r = 0.976, p = 0.000 <0.01); and Compromise is also significantly and positively associated to problem solving (r = 0.87, p = 0.00< 0.01). The association between compromise conflict management style and the measures of organizational health are found to be positively significant at the level of 0.01 significance. Sequel to the above results, the hypotheses test indicates the existence of a significant and positive association between compromise and Organizational Health.

Discussion of Findings
Under this section, the findings are discussed.

We found from the study that there exists positive and significant association between compromise and goal focus. This simply mean that employees of Federal agencies in Rivers State exhibit the behavior of giving up some of their demands after much disagreement with other members of staff in order to reach an agreement on how to remain goal focused in achieving the agencies target. This result obtained corroborated Lim and Rashad (2012) findings when they opined that compromising styles was a clear case of give and take situation and so at the end of the dispute both parties in conflict usually give up something in order to remain goal focused in achieving the organization's set target.

Similarly, compromise conflict resolution style is positively and significantly associated with cohesiveness. This simply suggests that the attitude of compromise on

the part of employees causes them to form a united team work which in way enhances maximum productivity in the organization. This result was synonymous to Lim and Rashad (2012) findings on conflict management in corporate organizations. No wonder, Mudrack (1989) suggested that cohesiveness alongside with compromise makes groups in an organization to stick together such that members are bounded" to one another to achieve the organizational goal. These are in agreement with the view that there is positive and significant association between compromise and problem solving. This simply means that employees act of giving up some of their demands after disagreement with each other in order to reach an agreement to solve problems in Federal interventionist agencies in, Rivers State enhances the organizational health. Also, the act of looking for ways of dealing with the problems within these Federal agencies by employees are some of the reasons why they compromise their decision on some certain issues that occur in the organization.

Conclusion

Sequel to the facts, the results of this study have established empirical relationship between compromise conflict resolution style and organizational health, the theoretical implication has also been reported; such theoretical implications have further educated on the real values of compromise conflict resolution style as predictor of several organizational health indexes. Therefore, management practitioners, managers, consultants, Researchers, and students alike need to understand the place of compromise conflict resolution style in the survival and success of every establishment. Therefore, managers and leaders of all the Federal agencies under investigation need to henceforth identify the appropriate conflict resolution strategies to apply and go beyond their in-role at work once there is conflict situation. Management practitioners in Federal agencies in Rivers State and those of other interventionist agencies now have substantial evidence on why there is the need to apply the compromise conflict resolution style in conflict situation within their organizations.

Recommendations

1. There should be an encouragement of the use of compromise conflict management style by the top level management as a policy to manage conflicting parties so that the organizational health is strengthened to achieve organizational objectives.
2. Employees should be encouraged to make sacrifices when and where necessary as this is an indicator of compromise and this will help in settling conflicting situations real quickly before it gets out of hand and begins to affect their problem solving abilities as a team and generally affect the health of the organization

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