



Conflict Resolution Strategies and Sustainable Employees' Morale

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of Conflict Resolution Strategies on Sustainable Employees' Morale in Beverage Companies in Agbara Industrial Estate, Ogun State, Nigeria. The objective of the study was to examine the impact of alternative conflict resolution strategies (competition, collaboration, accommodation, compromising strategies) on Sustainable Employees' Morale in selected Beverages Companies. Four beverage companies were selected and a descriptive survey research design was used to establish the association between conflict resolution strategies and sustainable employees' morale. The population for the study was 2,830, which comprised Managers, Senior Staff and Junior Staff of the four selected beverage companies in Agbara Industrial Estate, Ogun State, Nigeria. A sample size of 350 respondents was selected through Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula. Primary data was employed in collecting information from respondents through a well-structured questionnaire. Results of the study revealed that conflict resolution strategies had a significant impact on sustainable employees' morale in the Beverage Companies. Collaborating and competing strategies were found to have a positive relationship with employee morale, while accommodating strategy was found to have a negative relationship with employees' morale. Compromising strategy was found not to be associated with significant differences in employees' morale levels. The study therefore, recommends that companies should focus on implementing collaborating and competing strategies to improve employees' morale to ensure a more productive and positive work environment.

Keywords: Accommodation, Employees Morale, Collaboration, Competition, Compromising

JEL Classifications: J520, M120

1. INTRODUCTION

In almost every area of human life, you may find evidence of conflict, a social process or notion with many facets. Thomas's (2020) model suggests that conflict arises when one group's values are at odds with those of another. The world has become a global village due to industrialisation and continuous development in information and

communication technology as well and growth and expansion of businesses. The complex nature of the business world has made it possible for people with different identities including ethnicity, country, religion, philosophy, culture, values and educational varies to come together as colleagues in an organisation, thereby making conflict inevitable. Most organisations and firms face conflict daily, which Manufacturing firms in Nigeria, specifically

in Ogun State is not an exception, being an integral component of business, human nature, and the global economy (Ahmed, 2024). This has necessitated the need for deliberate and strategic effort to be made at examining the various conflict resolution strategies which is aimed at the sustainability of enhanced employees' morale. Yet, unless they threaten or otherwise hinder progress towards the organisation's stated goals and objectives, not all such differences need to escalate into conflict (Akanji et al., 2018).

Employees' morale and satisfaction can be negatively impacted by conflicts that arise between individuals, groups, and organisations for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: incompatible goals, dissimilar values and beliefs, ambiguity and role conflict, lack of communications, unclear rules, authority/power tussle, uneven evaluation and reward system, job stress, task ambiguity, etc. It has been shown that (Cai et al., 2017). Many human resource actions, such as postings, transfers, promotions, bonuses, incentives, increments, work conditions/designs, and associated perks and privileges, may lead to inequalities among an organisation's employees. It is also possible for conflict to arise as a result of a person's innate characteristics, such as greed, covetousness, selfishness, dissatisfaction, jealousy, arrogance, rudeness, impunity, etc. hence this study aims at examining effective resolution strategies and its impact on sustainable employees' morale.

According to the research of Bolman and Deal (2017); Chandolia and Anostasio (2020), conflicts develop when people feel their authority, responsibilities, and sense of self are threatened. They define power as the ability to accomplish one's goals regardless of one's level of expertise, knowledge, connections, resources, time, location, personnel, financial discretion, or reliance on others. Power may be a unifying force for good in a group setting, but mishandled, it can lead to strife instead. Organizational demands, on the other hand, represent what others anticipate from an employee in terms of how they carry out their duties.

Conflict arises when people's hopes and dreams collide with reality and they are left feeling disappointed, angry, or deceived. One's sense of self-worth is synonymous with one's sense of self-esteem or value. Every employee craves recognition for their contributions to the company. When employees' fundamental requirements are not met, they may experience a decline in their sense of self-worth, hence organisations should provide favourable working conditions of learning so that employees can display their skills while gaining new knowledge (Onifade et al., 2022) to enable them meaningfully contribute to their organisation. By so doing, organisations (manufacturing enterprises included) would achieve its overarching goals because its workforce would be fully engaged and conflict would be effectively minimised, as workplace conflict may pose a serious threat to the emotional and psychological well-being of employees (Dyer, 2021).

1.1. Research Objectives

Therefore, the broad objective of this study was to investigate conflict resolution strategy on workers' morale in Beverage companies in Agbara industrial Estate of Ogun State and the specific objectives were to:

- i. Examine the impact of collaboration strategy on sustainable employees' morale in Beverage companies;
- ii. Identify the influence of competition strategy on sustainable employees' morale in Beverage companies;
- iii. Determine the impact of accommodation strategy on sustainable employees' morale in Beverage companies; and
- iv. Determine the impact of compromising strategy on sustainable employees' morale in Beverage companies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Conceptual Clarification

Workplace conflicts may be defined as a situation when real ideologies, resources, ideas, and so on are at odds with one another, leading to misunderstandings or disagreements. In the absence of early detection and intervention, workplace problems can spread across a company. Hence, Ruhio and Ricardo (2017) have emphasised the need to keep an eye out for the signs that might foreshadow a conflict. When not addressed promptly, conflict may become the driving force behind a whole company. Companies whose top priority is getting things done are more likely to have disagreements, particularly if they pay less attention to things like employee satisfaction and teamwork. McKibben (2017) argues that dictatorship, animosity, contempt, poor morale, conflicting aims, and so forth are all hallmarks of war.

According to Sauermaun and Cohen (2018), stakeholders in a conflict should approach negotiations with an analytical attitude. The term "conflict resolution" refers to the procedures and strategies that help bring about an amicable resolution to a disagreement. Members of committed parties work to resolve group conflicts through collective negotiations and the active communication of information about members' competing ideologies (e.g., intentions, justifications for beliefs). In most cases, the method a conflict is resolved follows the same pattern as the dimensions of the conflict. Cognitive resolution is the way disputants perceive and see the conflict, using beliefs, perspectives, understandings, and attitudes. Conflicts can be resolved emotionally when the parties involved are able to talk about how they feel about the situation. Behavioral resolution is reflective of how the disputants act, their behaviour. Compromise, accommodation, collaboration, competition, negotiation, mediation, mediation-arbitration, diplomacy, and inventive peace-building are just some of the methods for dealing with conflict. When arbitration and litigation are centrally engaged, the terms conflict resolution and dispute resolution are often used interchangeably. Conflict resolution may be understood to include parties to a conflict using non-violent forms of resistance to hasten a peaceful resolution.

2.2. Conflict Resolution Strategies

The culture of an organisation is a major factor in determining its norms and practices. Organisational success is tied to the kind of setting in which its members may flourish (McKibben, 2017). These days, businesses use cutting-edge methods like competition, collaboration, accommodation, and compromise to settle workplace disputes.

2.2.1. *Competing strategy*

One side of the argument has pushed for its own interests at the expense of the others. It uses hostile language and shows little consideration for the future of the partnership. The dominating party in a competitive type situation will try to advance their own agenda at the cost of others around them. The competitive person is high on authority and emphasises his or her position, often making a hasty choice with little room for compromise. While this approach often yields positive results quickly, it seldom takes into account the needs or perspectives of those involved. When time-sensitive decisions must be made, when threats to safety are present, when authority must be contested, or when radical change is required, it may be essential to switch to an alternative strategy. As the target of the strategy likely already knows that taking their counsel won't go down well, he or she may be dissuaded from being loyal or forthcoming with useful information. Strategies that compete with one another include hegemony by power or authority, disregarding efforts at persuasion, and majority rule. It is typical for people to use contrasting strategies based on opposing forms of authority.

2.2.2. *Collaborating strategy*

In a collaborative strategy, the parties involved in a conflict work together to find a mutually beneficial resolution to the issue at hand. It may also be a method of settling disagreements peacefully within a group. With the collaborating conflict strategy, the parties involved work together to find a mutually agreeable resolution. That is when everyone has a chance to speak their mind in an open and frank conversation about the topics at hand. It also entails listening attentively, discussing alternate ideas, and fostering a nonthreatening climate so everyone feels comfortable bringing out their issues in the open. When establishing connections is prioritised, and an atmosphere of cooperation is sought after, a collaborative approach may be implemented. When people are treated with dignity and respect, it boosts morale and efficiency. It fosters a culture of responsibility and accountability. Time investment is an issue with collaborative approaches.

2.2.3. *Accommodating strategy*

Accommodation strategy is the ability to accept or appease the other party voluntarily during a conflict to maintain the connection and gain goodwill. According to Ngambi (2019), an accommodating stance is used when one side prioritises keeping peace above winning an argument. Obliging to decrease tension or being empathetic also helps to prevent conflict. Parties in a disagreement often aim for a mutually acceptable compromise. According to Ngambi (2019), the parties involved in the conflict were frank with one another about the problems they were having. Conflicting parties sometimes reach an agreement that works well for everyone involved. When the parties with competing interests work together, everyone can benefit. According to Overton and Lowry (2013), when workers feel more invested in their roles, they are more likely to get along with their coworkers and supervisors. Using the accommodating strategy expedites conflict resolution and preserves working relationships between the parties. The team and the organisation can return to a state of calm and cooperation. One of the disadvantages of accommodating strategy is that it creates power imbalance that can lead to resentment and anger. Complex problems are beyond the scope of this method.

2.2.4. *Compromising strategy*

In this scenario, both sides are looking for a compromise that would make them happy, but neither one is willing to fully give in. The disputant is prompted to make some tough personal choices. That is, by compromising, all needs can be met. The goal of a compromising strategy is to end a conflict via negotiation in which both sides give up some of their rights in exchange for a more favourable resolution. Paul (2019) believes that when disputing parties find sufficient reasoning or re-evaluate their judgements, they will agree to compromise to maintain equilibrium. This method of conflict resolution can help preserve relationships and save time, but it can also lead to one or both parties asking for too much or demanding too little.

2.3. **Importance of Conflict Resolution**

Practically speaking, an organisation can benefit from a well-managed conflict resolution procedure. Because conflict is inevitable, it must be effectively controlled. Pelled et al. (1999), proposed that understanding the causes and warning signs of conflict could help us avoid such situations in the future. Conflicts in organisations require creative problem-solving. Nonetheless, Pinkley (1990) argues that open communication, shared understanding between the people involved, and identifying the root cause of the conflict are crucial to the success of any conflict resolution approach. According to McKibben (2017), the goal of conflict resolution is to address the issue at hand rather than the people involved in it. He thinks that laying blame at the feet of people is not the answer to conflict resolution since it has a negative effect on morale in the workplace. The ability to resolve conflicts is also crucial, since aggressors and aggrieved parties may choose actions that exacerbate tensions (McKibben, 2017).

2.4. **Effective Conflict Resolution Practices in Organizations**

Workplace conflicts are a fact of life and can be exacerbated by the setting. Some ideal conflict situations include workers who work at different speeds than their supervisors, workers who expect pay versus supervisors who are focused on cost control, workers with opposing ideas or interests, etc. Thus, even if the individuals may be replaced, conflicts will persist. Therefore, businesses need both formal and informal procedures to resolve disputes. Clardy (2018) has differentiated these practises with that of employee voice in a sense that these practises are more active, clearer and in presence of both the conflicting parties. Each category comprises of several resolution practises which are regulated by human resource policies. A range of conflict resolution tactics are applied in enterprises that include quick feedback system, employee empowerment initiatives, team building activities, mentorship sessions etc.

Team building sessions are a form of conflict resolution described by Benelli and Low (2019) as an effort to improve internal communications and permeate the company culture with an atmosphere of trust and openness. Team building exercises, according to Ahmed (2024), facilitate less conflict by encouraging open dialogue about problems, which in turn helps members of the group better align their objectives and gain a shared understanding of their responsibilities. While majority of the research have found out that team building activities for resolving disputes have a

favourable consequence, Akanji et al. (2018) study produced contradicting findings. The authors argued that when workers are put in such a position, they are more likely to make concessions, which may have a negative impact on their motivation and productivity.

2.5. Concept of Employee Morale

According to Grunberg et al. (2000), morale is defined as people's sense of well-being at a certain moment and place. The morale of a company's staff refers to their perspective, happiness, and pleasure with their work. To raise output, promote work participation, employee engagement, retention, decrease absenteeism and turnover, and so on, a business must boost the morale of its personnel. From the standpoint of a company, employee morale has a significant effect on not just his performance but also on the performance of the organisation. Employee contentment, outlook, and general happiness are seen as indicators of morale from the human resource viewpoint held by Sauermann and Cohen (2018). Pride, faith, and confidence in the company are other indicators of employee morale. When it is time to think about people's mental health and productivity after being immersed in a fight, morale becomes a crucial factor to consider. Employees' mental health and happiness take a hit when conflicts spark unpleasant emotions like hostility, mistrust, resentment, and even terror. According to Judge et al. (2016), demoralised workers are more prone to engage into arguments with their co-workers, which take their attention away from their major responsibilities.

A worker's morale might be negatively impacted by any disruption or imbalance. For instance, when workers are afraid of losing their jobs, they tend to work harder. As a result, some workers are stifled in their ability to voice their opinions, which may have an adverse effect on morale. This claim is backed up by research (Grunberg et al., 2000) that suggests it may be costly for workers to express their negative feelings under the current conditions. As a result, it is crucial to consider the morale of personnel involved in internal disagreements. Six reasons why employees' morale matter in the workplace were outlined in a recent article by Sauermann and Cohen (2018) to be boosting output; enhancing performance and inventiveness; cutting down on absences; paying closer attention; ensuring a secure working environment; and enhancing the quality of work performed. Employees that have strong morale are more likely to complete tasks on time, collaborate effectively, and come up with novel ideas, while low turnover is a direct result of high worker morale.

2.6. Theoretical Review

The theoretical review for this study would be anchored on the theories of the Thomas-Kilman model instrument (TKI) approach and Interest Based Relation (IBR) approach which focused on two dimension of conflict resolution strategy which are assertiveness and empathy. Being able to express one is self-confidently and defend one's beliefs is one definition of assertiveness. Depending on context, it may have beneficial or bad effects. It is a manner of getting one's point through, and it could come off as aggressive to others. The second component of successful dispute resolution is empathy. What this entails in a conflict scenario is trying to put one is self in the other person's shoes. According to these

researchers, there are five conflict resolution strategies and these are competing, accommodating, collaborating, compromising, and avoiding. The TKI theory believes that each strategy adopted depend on the problem or the issue to be resolved.

2.7. Empirical Review

Conflicts have been shown to have both beneficial and bad outcomes. The most important thing is to figure out how to strengthen the good and eliminate the bad. According to the research of Kharbanda and Stallworthy (2019), a positive work environment is one in which management actively seeks out employee input during the development of organizational goals and uses constructive methods to resolve conflicts. He thinks that when workers are given challenging goals, they respond with more dedication and productivity. Keeping workers in the dark might breed suspicion. There is a misalignment of trust since employees are not aware of organizational plans while changes are being made. The workers may also have a feeling of job instability resulting into confrontations.

Paul (2019) advises that before making any changes, managers should weigh the benefits against the costs and put an emphasis on clear and consistent communication. Employees who have greater say over their work, or who have access to relevant information, report higher levels of job satisfaction, handle novelty and efficiency better than anything else. Most respondents in research by Adomi and Anie (2006) saw conflict in a good light and said that it might be encouraged by library directors. Interpersonal conflicts were also shown to be the most prevalent kind of conflict in Nigerian libraries, with the accommodation technique coming out on top as a means of avoiding them.

Ajike et al. (2015) conducted a study to determine the impact of conflict management on the productivity of businesses in Nigeria, namely Access Bank public limited company. A total of 81 participants were sampled for the research. Bank performance and conflict containment and resolution were analyzed using SPSS's descriptive and regression capabilities. A favourable and statistically significant correlation between conflict management practises like mediation and arbitration and business success was discovered. They suggested that the bank's leadership develop a variety of effective tactics for addressing issues as they arise and preventing them from escalating.

2.8. Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the premise that the way organizations manage conflict influences employees' morale and long-term workplace sustainability. The conceptual framework explains the relationship between conflict resolution strategies (independent variables) and sustainable employees' morale (dependent variable) in selected beverage companies in Agbara Industrial Estate, Ogun State, Nigeria. Specifically, conflict resolution strategies were operationalized into competition, collaboration, accommodation, and compromising strategies, while sustainable employees' morale reflects employees' motivation, commitment, satisfaction, and willingness to remain productive over time. This is shown in figure 1.

3. METHODOLOGY

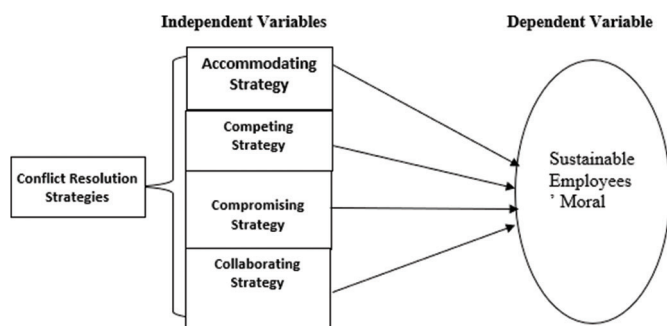
The area of study was selected food and beverage companies in Agbara Industrial Estate Ogun State, Nigeria. Four (4) food and beverage companies were used for the study. They include Nestle Nigeria Plc; Nigeria Distilleries Limited, Intercontinental Distilleries Limited and Nigeria Brewery (NB). The study adopted descriptive research design because all the variables would not be manipulated but described as they exist. The design established the association between the two variables. The research design provided the necessary information in addressing the research question and necessary information was made on Conflict resolution strategies and Employee morale.

The population of this study comprised of all the workers; Managers, Senior Staff, Junior Staff of the four selected beverage companies in Agbara Industrial Estate, Ogun State, Nigeria making a total of 2,830. Taro Yamane's (1967) method for determining sample size was used to choose a pool of 350 respondents for analysis. The validity of the research instrument was done through face and content Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the validity of the research instrument. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to examine the data. To evaluate the hypothesised significance threshold of 0.05, the data collected from the distributed questionnaire was coded and analysed using a frequency distribution table of percentages, tables, and the inferential statistical tools of regression and Pearson's correlation. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to help with the analysis (SPSS). The conceptual framework for this study is presented in Figure 1.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 displays the results of the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test for five variables: Accommodating strategy (AS), competing

Figure 1: Conceptual model



Source: Author (2023)

Table 1: Cronbach reliability results

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	N of items	Remarks
AS	0.967	6	Excellent
CS	0.972	7	Excellent
CSS	0.927	6	Excellent
CLS	0.979	7	Excellent
EM	0.988	10	Excellent

Source: Author's Computation (2023)

strategy (CS), compromising strategy (CMS), collaborating strategy (CLS), and employee morale (EM). According to the table, all five variables have high Cronbach's Alpha values, ranging from 0.927 to 0.988, with 0.9 and above considered as an excellent value for good reliability. This means that the items or questions within each variable are highly consistent and reliable in measuring the construct they are meant to represent. The high reliability results suggest that the scale used to measure these variables is trustworthy and can provide accurate and consistent results. These results are important for the validity and credibility of the research findings.

4.1. Analysis of Responses

From Table 2, the mean ratings for the questions on the accommodating strategy as a conflict resolution strategy in relation to employee morale. The overall mean rating from the responses in Table 3 is 1.7514. This score, in the context of employee morale indicates that on average, the participants believe that the accommodating strategy has a positive impact on employee morale. This suggests that the participants view the accommodating strategy to encourage and motivate employees by accommodating their needs and interests.

Table 2: Responses on accommodating strategy

Accommodating strategy questions	Scale measurement	Frequency	Percent	Mean
Cooperation helps protect more important interests while giving up on some less important ones hence improving performance	SA A N D SD Total	210 81 31 17 11 350	60.0 23.1 8.9 4.9 3.1 100.0	1.6800
Cooperation increases bonding and support therefore helping organizational performance.	SA A N D SD Total	63 190 65 26 6 350	18.0 54.3 18.6 7.4 1.7 100.0	2.2057
Agreeing to others enables reassessing the situation from a different angle thus understanding how it affects organizational performance	SA A N D SD Total	248 84 7 9 2 248	70.9 24.0 2.0 2.6 0.6 70.9	1.3800
Agreeing to others reduces conflicts thus improving performance	SA A N D SD Total	285 45 14 2 4 350	81.4 12.9 4.0 0.6 1.1 100.0	1.2714
Assertiveness helps check conflicts without negatively affecting performance	SA A N D SD Total	61 174 40 59 16 350	17.4 49.7 11.4 16.9 4.6 100.0	2.4143
Assertiveness ensures that conflicting parties feel respected and heard, hence improving productivity	SA A N D SD Total	243 61 12 26 8 350	69.4 17.4 3.4 7.4 2.3 100.0	1.5571

Mean score (X) = 1.7514. Source: Field survey, 2023

Table 3: Responses on competing strategy

Competing strategy questions	Scale measurement	Frequency	Percent	Mean
Concentration increases self-esteem when an aggression is met with firm resistance	SA	174	49.7	1.7057
	A	122	34.9	
	N	43	12.3	
	D	5	1.4	
	SD	6	1.7	
Competing strategy makes an employee to respect their supervisor, hence increase productivity.	SA	210	60.0	1.7600
	A	64	18.3	
	N	30	8.6	
	D	42	12.0	
	SD	4	1.1	
Competing strategy may not provide lasting solution to conflict in an organisation	SA	32	9.1	2.3771
	A	206	58.9	
	N	69	19.7	
	D	34	9.7	
	SD	9	2.6	
Coerciveness gives managers full control of the organization	SA	18	5.1	2.8286
	A	156	44.6	
	N	72	20.6	
	D	76	21.7	
	SD	28	8.0	
Competing strategy can motivate employee which will make them to put in more effort and have positive effects on the organizational performance	SA	137	39.1	1.8686
	A	149	42.6	
	N	43	12.3	
	D	15	4.3	
	SD	6	1.7	
Reduction of tension helps ensure better organizational results	SA	61	17.4	2.3657
	A	121	34.6	
	N	149	42.6	
	D	17	4.9	
	SD	2	0.6	
Shared responsibility makes it possible organizational efficiency to be achieved	SA	136	38.9	1.9429
	A	135	38.6	
	N	48	13.7	
	D	25	7.1	
	SD	6	1.7	
Total		350	100.0	

Mean score (X) = 2.1212. Source: Field Survey, 2023

From Table 3, the mean ratings for the questions on the competing strategy as a conflict resolution strategy in relation to employee motivation. The total mean values from the responses to the questions on the competing strategy as a conflict resolution strategy is 2.1212. In the context of employee morale, a score of 2.12 indicates that on average, the participants believe that the competing strategy has a positive impact on employee morale. This suggests that the participants view the competing strategy to encourage and motivate employees by promoting a shared sense of responsibility and reducing tension.

From Table 4, the mean ratings for the questions on the Compromising Style Strategy as a conflict resolution strategy in relation to employee motivation. In the context of employee morale, the total mean rating of 2.16 indicate that on average, the participants believed that the compromising strategy has a

Table 4: Responses on compromising strategy

Compromising strategy questions	Scale measurement	Frequency	Percent	Mean
Efficiency helps in cost saving.	SA	276	78.9	1.2543
	A	65	18.6	
	N	4	1.1	
	D	4	1.1	
	SD	1	0.3	
Compromising strategy helps an employee to focus on positive side of their job which in turn improve productivity	SA	137	39.1	1.6457
	A	207	59.1	
	N	2	0.6	
	D	1	0.3	
	SD	3	0.9	
Improved productivity helps the organisation to improve the firm's profitability.	SA	61	17.4	2.2600
	A	199	56.9	
	N	58	16.6	
	D	2	0.6	
	SD	30	8.6	
Compromising strategy enhances business growth.	SA	136	38.9	1.7686
	A	165	47.1	
	N	43	12.3	
	D	6	1.7	
	SD	350	100.0	
Compromising strategy enables effective management of workplace conflicts.	SA	46	13.1	2.9057
	A	67	19.1	
	N	114	32.6	
	D	120	34.3	
	SD	3	0.9	
Effectiveness helps improve employee productivity.	SA	51	14.6	3.1457
	A	65	18.6	
	N	48	13.7	
	D	154	44.0	
	SD	32	9.1	
Total		350	100.0	

Mean score (X) = 2.1633. Source: Field Survey, 2023

positive impact on employee morale by improving efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness, which in turn helps save costs, time, and enhances business growth. The participants tend to agree with the idea that this strategy enables the organization to effectively manage workplace conflicts and improves employee productivity.

From Table 5, the mean ratings for the questions on the Collaborating Strategy as a conflict resolution strategy in relation to employee morale. The mean score of 2.44 indicate that on average, the respondents believe that collaborating strategy as a conflict resolution strategy can positively impact employee morale and organizational performance, but the level of agreement varies for different statements.

From Table 6, the results of the survey on employee morale show that employees working at the selected beverage industries have mixed feelings about their job and their level of morale at work. The highest mean rating of 3.0457 was given to the statement “My job seems meaningless and I become less enthusiastic at work,” indicating that a portion of employees may slightly

Table 5: Responses on collaborating strategy

Collaborating strategy questions	Scale measurement	Frequency	Percent	Mean
Collaborating strategy can be easily solving organisational conflict, hence achievement of good organizational performance.	SA	63	18.0	2.9114
	A	93	26.6	
	N	17	4.9	
	D	166	47.4	
	SD	11	3.1	
Total	350	100.0		
Collaborating strategy improves group harmony, leading to higher productivity	SA	92	26.3	2.5000
	A	120	34.3	
	N	37	10.6	
	D	73	20.9	
	SD	28	8.0	
Total	350	100.0		
Collaborating strategy helps get a win-win solution thus long-term organization performance is not negatively affected	SA	215	61.4	1.6029
	A	70	20.0	
	N	54	15.4	
	D	11	3.1	
	SD	350	100.0	
Total	215	61.4		
Collaborating strategy ensures knowledge development by sharing of knowledge and experiences thus improving organizational performance	SA	70	20.0	2.2429
	A	181	51.7	
	N	49	14.0	
	D	44	12.6	
	SD	6	1.7	
Total	350	100.0		
Collaborating strategy reduce tension levels among employee of an organisation, hence helps improve organizational performance	SA	61	17.4	2.6429
	A	121	34.6	
	N	81	23.1	
	D	56	16.0	
	SD	31	8.9	
Total	350	100.0		
Collaborating strategy ensure better organizational results	SA	47	13.4	2.6857
	A	135	38.6	
	N	69	19.7	
	D	79	22.6	
	SD	20	5.7	
Total	350	100.0		
Shared responsibility makes it possible for organizational efficiency to be achieved	SA	79	22.6	2.5029
	A	113	32.3	
	N	83	23.7	
	D	53	15.1	
	SD	22	6.3	
Total	350	100.0		

Mean score (X) = 2.4412. Source: Field Survey, 2023

disagree that their job is meaningful and they are enthusiastic about it. This can be an indicator of low morale and decreased job satisfaction.

On the other hand, the lowest mean rating of 2.5657 was given to the statement “My job becomes boring that I can hardly meet up the usual pace because my supervisor is autocratic in nature,” indicating that the respondents somewhat agree about their job being boring and they are unable to keep up with the pace. This may suggest a lack of challenge and excitement in their job. The remaining statements received mean ratings between 2.6657 and 2.9686, suggesting that many employees have moderate levels of morale and have mixed feelings about their job. Some employees

Table 6: Responses on employee morale

Employee morale questions	Scale measurement	Frequency	Percent	Mean
My job becomes fascinating after I put in my best at work as a result of conflict resolution strategy adopted by my Company	SA	62	17.7	2.7057
	A	114	32.6	
	N	77	22.0	
	D	59	16.9	
	SD	38	10.9	
Total	350	100.0		
I feel a sense of satisfaction in my job that why I try to work harder because of cooperation that exist among our team members	SA	29	8.3	2.7171
	A	152	43.4	
	N	94	26.9	
	D	39	11.1	
	SD	36	10.3	
Total	350	100.0		
My job becomes boring that I can hardly meet up the usual pace because my supervisor is autocratic in nature	SA	56	16.0	2.5657
	A	125	35.7	
	N	94	26.9	
	D	65	18.6	
	SD	10	2.9	
Total	350	100.0		
I become so creative in my job that I improve on the Job	SA	49	14.0	2.6657
	A	116	33.1	
	N	102	29.1	
	D	69	19.7	
	SD	14	4.0	
Total	350	100.0		
My job seems meaningless and I become less enthusiastic at work due to kind of relationship I have with my colleagues.	SA	66	18.9	3.0457
	A	88	25.1	
	N	32	9.1	
	D	92	26.3	
	SD	72	20.6	
Total	66	18.9		
The job no longer challenges me and I hold back some of my potentials because I was not given the opportunity to make use of my initiative.	SA	29	8.3	2.7886
	A	136	38.9	
	N	101	28.9	
	D	48	13.7	
	SD	36	10.3	
Total	350	100.0		
The work place seems uncomfortable that I hardly wait to go home since there is no new thing in the office	SA	56	16.0	2.5971
	A	114	32.6	
	N	105	30.0	
	D	65	18.6	
	SD	10	2.9	
Total	350	100.0		
My job puts me on guard that I always improve on my past performance	SA	64	18.3	2.5686
	A	117	33.4	
	N	82	23.4	
	D	80	22.9	
	SD	7	2.0	
Total	350	100.0		
I become withdrawn from my usual duties that I am less bothered about cooperating with others at work.	SA	69	19.7	2.9600
	A	107	30.6	
	N	15	4.3	
	D	87	24.9	
	SD	72	20.6	
Total	350	100.0		
I derive a lot of respect from my job and I become more productive.	SA	20	5.7	2.7029
	A	167	47.7	
	N	88	25.1	
	D	47	13.4	
	SD	28	8.0	
Total	350	100.0		

Mean score (X) = 2.7317. Source: Field Survey, 2023

may slightly agree that their job is challenging, satisfying, or respectful, while others may slightly disagree.

4.2. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was necessary in the study of “Conflict Resolution Strategies and Employee Morale in Beverages Industry” because it allows for the examination of the relationship between two or more variables. In this case, the dependent variable is employee morale and the independent variable is the conflict resolution strategies measured by accommodating strategy (AS), competing strategy (CS), compromising style strategy (CSS) and collaborating strategy (CLS). By conducting a regression analysis, we were able to determine the extent to which the different conflict resolution strategies affect employee morale. The model summary of the regression analysis is shown in Table 7.

The Model Summary in Table 6 displays the results of a regression analysis conducted on the relationship between conflict resolution strategies (CLS, AS, CSS, CS) and employee morale (EM) in the Beverage industry. The R value of 0.985, a strong positive correlation, suggests that there is a strong relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. This high R value indicates that the independent variables (conflict resolution strategies) are good predictors of employee morale.

The R-square value of 0.970 suggests that 97% of the variance in employee morale can be explained by the conflict resolution strategies. This means that the regression model can account for 97% of the variation in employee morale based on the conflict resolution strategies. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.969

indicates that the regression model has a good fit, considering the number of independent variables used. The standard error of 0.19599 indicates the average deviation of the predictions from the actual values of the dependent variable. The F Change value of 2761.118 and the Sig. F Change of 0.000 indicate that the model is statistically significant and that adding the independent variables has improved the model's fit.

Finally, the Durbin-Watson value of 1.80 indicates that there is a little to no positive correlation between the residuals. This means that the model is free of autocorrelation problem as the residuals are not correlated with each other. In conclusion, the results of the regression analysis provide strong evidence of the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and employee morale in the Beverage industry and highlights the importance of effective conflict resolution strategies in maintaining high employee morale.

The ANOVA result in Table 8 provides information about the overall fit of the regression model between conflict resolution strategies (CLS, AS, CSS, CS) and employee morale (EM) in the Beverage industry. The ANOVA table supports the results from the Model Summary and provides evidence of a strong relationship between conflict resolution strategies and employee morale in the Beverage industry. The significant F value and low P-value indicate that the regression model is a good fit and that the independent variables have a significant impact on employee morale.

4.3. Test of Hypotheses

Each hypothesis stated in chapter one of the research will be tested using coefficient results from the regression analysis Table 9 to

Table 7: Model summary of regression analysis

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Model summary			
				Standard error	Change statistics		Durbin-Watson
					F change	Significance	
1	0.985 ^a	0.970	0.969	0.19599	2761.118	0.000	0.180

^aPredictors: (Constant), CLS, AS, CSS, CS. ^bDependent variable: EM. Source: Author's Computation (2023) using SPSS 26

Table 8: ANOVA results

Model	ANOVA				
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
1					
Regression	424.246	4	106.061	2761.118	0.000 ^b
Residual	13.252	345	0.038		
Total	437.498	349			

^aDependent variable: EM. ^bPredictors: (Constant), CLS, AS, CSS, CS. Source: Author's Computation (2023) using SPSS 26

Table 9: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	Remark
	B	Standard error	Beta			
1						
(Constant)	0.153	0.034		4.505	0.000	
AS	-0.237	0.041	-0.179	-5.720	0.000	Reject H ₀
CS	0.308	0.073	0.243	4.219	0.000	Reject H ₀
CS	0.032	0.049	0.022	0.655	0.513	Accept H ₀
CLS	0.930	0.046	0.889	20.265	0.000	Reject H ₀

^aDependent variable: EM. Source: Author's Computation (2023) using SPSS 26

determine if a significant relationship exist between the dependent variable and independent variables.

Decision rule: If $P < 5\%$ (0.05): Reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1).

4.3.1. Hypothesis 1

H_{01} : Collaborating strategy has no significant impact on staff morale in Beverage companies.

The regression analysis conducted on the relationship between collaborating strategy (CLS) and employee morale (EM) in beverage companies located in Ogun State produced a coefficient of $\beta = 0.930$ with a $P < 5\%$ ($0.000 < 0.05$). Based on these results, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and accept the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant positive relationship between Collaborating strategy and Employee Morale in these companies. In other words, the analysis suggests that a collaborating strategy implemented in beverage companies in Ogun State is associated with higher levels of employee morale.

4.3.2. Hypothesis 2

H_{02} : Competing strategy has no significant impact on staff morale in Beverage companies.

The analysis of the relationship between competing strategy (CS) and employee morale (EM) in beverage companies located in Ogun State through regression yielded a coefficient of $\beta = 0.308$ with a $P < 5\%$ ($0.000 < 0.05$). Based on these results, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{02}) and accept the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant positive relationship between Competing strategy and Employee Morale in these companies. In other words, the analysis suggests that a competing strategy implemented in beverage companies in Ogun State is associated with higher levels of employee morale.

4.3.3. Hypothesis 3

H_{03} : Accommodating strategy has no significant impact on staff morale in Beverage companies.

The regression analysis conducted on the relationship between accommodating strategy (AS) and employee morale (EM) in beverage companies located in Ogun State produced a coefficient of $\beta = -0.237$ with a $P < 5\%$ ($0.000 < 0.05$). Based on these results, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{03}) and accept the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant negative relationship between Accommodating strategy and Employee Morale in these companies. In other words, the analysis suggests that an accommodating strategy implemented in beverage companies in Ogun State is associated with lower levels of employee morale.

4.3.4. Hypothesis 4

H_{04} : Compromising strategy has no significant impact on staff morale in beverage company.

The regression analysis conducted on the relationship between compromising strategy (CSS) and employee morale (EM) in

beverage companies located in Ogun State produced a coefficient of $\beta = 0.032$ with a P-value more than 5% ($0.000 > 0.513$). Based on these results, we accept the null hypothesis (H_{04}) and reject the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant relationship between CSS and EM in these companies. In other words, the analysis suggests that a compromising strategy implemented in beverage companies in Ogun State is not associated with significant differences in employee morale levels.

4.4. Discussions and Findings

The results of the regression analysis indicate that conflict resolution strategies are significantly related to employee morale in beverage companies located in Ogun State. The high R-square value of 0.970 indicates that the regression model can account for 97% of the variation in employee morale based on the conflict resolution strategies. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.969 suggests that the model is a good fit, considering the number of independent variables used.

The findings reveal that a collaborating strategy and a competing strategy are associated with higher levels of employee morale. In contrast, an accommodating strategy is related to lower levels of employee morale. These results are consistent with previous research that suggests that a collaborating strategy and a competing strategy are effective conflict resolution strategies that can promote positive outcomes in organizations, including higher levels of job satisfaction and increased productivity (John-Eke and Akintokunbo, 2020; Omene, 2021). On the other hand, an accommodating strategy, while promoting peace in the short term, may lead to feelings of resentment and dissatisfaction among employees, which can negatively impact their morale.

Interestingly, the results also suggest that a compromising strategy implemented in Beverage Companies in Ogun State is not associated with significant differences in employee morale levels. This finding may be because compromising is often viewed as a neutral strategy that aims to find a middle ground between conflicting parties. While this approach may be effective in resolving conflicts, it may not have a significant impact on employee morale levels.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective conflict resolution strategies play a crucial role in promoting positive outcomes in organizations. Collaborating and competing strategies can lead to improved job satisfaction and increased productivity, which are essential for creating a positive work environment. Encouraging managers and supervisors to use these strategies can lead to better outcomes for both the employees and the company. On the other hand, an accommodating strategy may lead to short-term peace, but it can result in long-term negative impacts on employee morale. Managers and supervisors need to be aware of the potential negative effects of this strategy and seek to avoid using it as the primary method for conflict resolution. Instead, they can use it in specific situations where it is necessary.

The study also found that compromising strategies did not have a significant impact on employee morale. While this strategy can be effective in finding a middle ground, it may not be the best approach for every situation. Companies should aim to use a combination of different strategies to ensure that conflicts are resolved in a way that promotes positive outcomes.

In conclusion, implementing effective conflict resolution strategies is crucial for promoting employee morale in the beverage industry in Agbara Industrial Estate, Ogun State. Companies should encourage the use of collaborating and competing strategies but they should avoid relying solely on accommodating strategies, as they may have negative consequences for employee morale. They should also consider using a combination of different strategies based on the situation. Finally, compromising strategies should be used judiciously, as they may not have a significant impact on employee morale. Overall, implementing effective conflict resolution strategies can help improve employee morale, leading to a more productive and positive work environment.

Based on the study's findings, companies in the beverage industry in Agbara Industrial Estate should take specific steps to promote positive outcomes and foster a healthy work environment. These include:

- i. Managers should be encouraged to use collaborating and competing strategies for conflict resolution, which can enhance employee job satisfaction and productivity.
- ii. Educate managers and supervisors on the potential negative effects of accommodating strategies on employee morale.
- iii. Compromising strategy should only be adopted in a situation where finding a middle ground is necessary, while avoiding relying on this strategy for conflict resolution.
- iv. Regular employee morale surveys should be conducted to monitor the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies and making necessary adjustments.
- v. Regular training and development opportunity must be provided for managers and supervisors on conflict resolution strategy and effective communication, fostering a culture of openness and transparency to encourage employees to speak up about conflicts and recognizing and rewarding employees who demonstrate effective conflict resolution skills.
- vi. Conflict resolution policy that outlines the steps employees should take to report and address conflict should be developed, as well as the consequences for violating the policy.

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