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PRINCIPALS' COLLABORATING AND ACCOMMODATING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AS CORRELATES OF TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Ensuring a harmonious school climate helps to facilitate improved job performances of the teachers. This study examined principals' collaborating and accommodating conflict management strategies as correlates of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses tested at 0.05 significance level. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 8,103 teachers in the 267 public secondary schools in Anambra State. A random sampling procedure was used to select 10% of the population, totaling a sample size of 810 teachers representing the entire population. Principals' Conflict Management Strategies Questionnaire (PCMSQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ) were the instruments for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and the reliability to ascertain the consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha reliability technique which yielded aggregate coefficients of .74 and .77 respectively and were considered fit for the study. The administration of the instrument was done through the direct method approach with the help of five research assistants. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was utilized for data analysis. In a test for the null hypotheses, p-value was used to determine the relationship of the variables at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that principals' collaborating conflict management strategy has a high positive and significant relationship on teachers' job performance while accommodating conflict management strategy has a moderate positive and significant relationship on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study recommended amongst others that principals should be encouraged to consider the need to discuss, dialogue and adjust to more appropriate ideas of others to make the right choices and decisions for a peaceful school environment and improved job performances.

Keywords: Principals, Collaborating, Accommodating, Conflict Management, Strategies, Teachers and Job Performance

Introduction

Secondary education plays crucial roles in equipping students with the knowledge, skills and the right attitudes for life. It prepares the individual for further education, career, employment and responsible citizens. This is strengthened more in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014), which views education as an instrument par excellence for national development. Basically, the actualization of the goals and objectives of secondary education, which includes provision of trained manpower in applied sciences, technology, commerce, technical and entrepreneurship, to acquire skills for self-reliance largely depends on effective school administration and teachers' job performance. Principals and teachers become the key officers that are directly involved in the functional process of the secondary school system. Achieving the educational goals and objectives are the major focus of principals and teachers in secondary school (Omatade, 2025). Therefore, secondary school administration requires effective coordination by the principals and proper engagement of the teachers through efficient practices and strategies for enhanced job performance.

Principals are the head of secondary school administration. They are the schools' chief executive officers and the managements' team (Onuorah and Egbosi, 2020). Principals direct the operational activities in the secondary schools by coordinating the academic programs and process. Effective administration enables the principal to have an unambiguous vision on how their schools can promote high levels of achievement for all students, equitably delegate duties to teachers in order to allow them, have control over their job and ensure a sense of direction in the workplace so as to evade role conflict (Mokwe and Obi, 2023). Numerous factors contribute to a successful secondary educational system and sustainability. Principals ensure proper coordination of these factors to promote outcomes, especially teachers' job performance. This can be achieved through management practices and strategies. Among these factors, conflict management strategies are particularly significant.

Conflict management strategies can be referred to as the ways disagreements are handled to maintain a peaceful environment. It is a critical skill in both personal and professional settings. Omotade (2025), referred to conflict management strategies as methods, practices and policies which organizations implement to address and resolve disputes in a way that minimizes negative outcomes. Conflicts are inevitable in public organizations including secondary schools. This is due to clash of interests, differences in values, personalities even in respect of workload distribution. When conflict occurs and it is not handled effectively, there is a propensity for morale to suffer, absenteeism to rise and productivity to fall (Halaman, 2023). The way principals manage conflicts can either enhance or hinder teachers' job performance. Thus, it becomes important that principals of secondary schools understand conflicts and be involved on how to resolve them to ensure a

smooth school administrative process. According to Stiffler, Mckinney and Scalia (2024), unresolved issues can lead to reduced staff morale and communication breakdown resulting in lower job performance. In another opinion, Omotade (2025) pointed out that poor conflict management strategies can contribute to increased job stress, decreased teamwork and reduced turnover rate which affect job delivery and performances. This study adopts the five conflict management strategies commonly identified in organizational behavior literature; collaborating, accommodating, competing, compromising and avoiding (Thomas and Kilmann, 2020).

Collaborating conflict management strategy basically emphasized on cooperation to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Collaboration as a style of conflict management, parties work together to resolve a conflict by projecting their standpoints beyond self-interest and seek for new alternatives (Denis and Umoh, 2024). Thus, aimed at promoting trust and teamwork among workers. Atieno, Paul, and Yego (2016), noted that collaboration conflict management strategy provides the opportunity to understand each one's needs and work together for a new option, while considering the positions of the parties involved. Collaboration involves accepting alternative ways to satisfy all parties. Principals can explore collaborating strategies to foster cooperation and teamwork among the teachers to enhance job performance.

In another view, accommodating conflict management strategy focuses on maintaining harmony by yielding to others' concerns. According to Inyang, Ikon and Soludo (2025), accommodating conflicts management strategy can also be referred to as a smoothing method of conflict management which entails the settlement of conflict by considering the desires of others. An accommodating conflict management tends to be high in cooperation but low in assertiveness. This implied that the use of this strategy to resolve disagreement could lead to sacrificing one's own needs and desires for those of the other party. Accommodating management strategy, can set aside personal interests to find a middle ground with your team (Copeland, 2021), promoting relationships at the workplace but could reduce personal satisfaction when it's consistently applied. In addition, Ivan (2023), affirmed that accommodating conflict management strategy is characterized by prioritizing the other party's needs and desires over one's own. In Ivan's view this strategy can best be adopted when it appears prolonging the conflict is not worth the time or when considering that one might be wrong. Thus, principals of public secondary schools ought to adjust extensively in applying the collaborating and accommodating strategies to ensure a hinge-free administration process in engaging the teachers for increased job performances.

Performance may be described as an act of accomplishing or executing a given task. It could also be described as the ability to combine skillfully the right behavior towards the achievement of goals and objectives. Teacher job performance is considered as teacher observable behaviors related to outcomes which are relevant to educational goals (Obiekwe, Ogbo and

Igbokwe, 2020). Teachers' job performance is concerned with the overall ability of the teachers to exhibit the right attitude to work, being dedicated and committed to the teaching roles, and making deliberate efforts towards the attainment of educational goals and objectives (Igoni, 2020). Improving teachers' job performance remains a major concern for educational stakeholders. Effective teaching encompasses lots of teaching and learning processes through effective instructional delivery for increased performances. Onuoha and Odo (2020) opined that teachers are the pillars of any educational system and should have adequate investment, rewards and welfare for their job performance. Teachers are at the center of instructional delivery and their job performances also play a crucial role in achieving the educational goals and objectives. Teachers' job performance in secondary schools like in other levels of education largely depends on the administrative skills, practices, and strategies of the head. In schools, some teachers experience frequent misunderstandings due to difficulties in building strong corporate relationships and understanding of others' perspectives and feelings. Others experience lack of concern over clashes of interest and unfair treatment to their concerned personal opinions leading to conflicts, mixed feelings and resentments among the staff. These could be linked to the decline in teachers' job performance in Anambra State. Hence, collaborating and accommodating conflict management strategies are being considered as would be efficient tools in the hand of effective principals for improved teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study examined principals' collaborating and accommodating conflict management strategies as correlates of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The research questions below guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Methods

Correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 8,103 teachers in the 267 public secondary schools of the six Education Zones in Anambra State. The education zones in the state include; Aguata zone having 52 schools, Awka zone having 65 schools, Nnewi zone having 49 schools, Ogidi zone having 40 schools, Onitsha zone having 33 schools and Otuocha zone having 28 schools. A random sampling technique was used to draw a sample size of 810 respondents from the entire population of 8,103 teachers. This sample size was 10% of the teachers representing the population. Two sets of instruments were used for data collection. They are titled: Principals' Conflict Management Strategies Questionnaire (PCMSQ) and Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ). The questionnaires were structured with each item assigned a four-point scale of: Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD), and corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instruments were validated by experts in the field and considered fit for the study. The internal consistency of the items was obtained using Cronbach alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.74 for conflict management strategy and 0.77 for teachers' job performance. The researcher administered the copies of the instrument directly to the respondents involving four research assistants. Out of the 810 copies administered, 98% summing a total of 794 copies were properly completed, successfully retrieved and used for data analysis. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) was used to answer the research questions and hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The coefficient (r) between 0.0 - 0.40 yielded a low positive relationship, between 0.41 - 0.60 yielded a moderate positive relationship, between 0.61 - 0.80 yielded a high positive relationship and between 0.81 - 1.00 yielded a very high substantial positive relationship. In testing the hypotheses, the decision rules that when p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis were rejected, (there is a significant relationship). Otherwise, where the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was not rejected (there is no significant relationship). Data analysis was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 23 (SPSS, 2023).

Results

Research Question One. What is the relationship between principals' collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson (r) correlation on the relationship between principals' collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Collaborating Conflict Management Strategy	794	.801	High Positive Relationship
Teachers' Job Performance			

Results in Table 1 showed that Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of .801 was obtained. The coefficient is between 0.61 and 0.80 showing a high positive relationship. This means that there is a high positive relationship existing between principals' collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question Two. What is the relationship between principals' accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson (r) correlation on the relationship between principals' accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Source of Variation	N	r	Remark
Accommodating Conflict Management Strategy	794	.551	Moderate Positive Relationship
Teachers' Job Performance			

Results in Table 2 showed that Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of .551 was obtained. The coefficient is between 0.41 and 0.60 showing a moderate positive relationship. This means that there is a moderate positive relationship existing between principals' accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Null Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategies and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of significance of Pearson's correlation between collaborating conflict management strategies and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Collaborating Conflict Management Strategy	794	.801	0.00	Significant
Teachers' Job Performance				

Analysis in Table 3 shows that there is a significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (.801) has a P-value of 0.00 less than 0.05 level of significance level ($0.00 < 0.05$). The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance, is therefore rejected.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of significance of Pearson's correlation between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Source of Variation	N	r	p-value	Remark
Accommodating Conflict Management Strategy	794	.551	0.00	Significant
Teachers' Job Performance				

Analysis in Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (.551) has a P-value of 0.00 less than 0.05 level of significance level ($0.00 < 0.05$). The null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance, is therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of the study indicates that adopting a collaborating strategy in managing conflicts in school provides the opportunity to understand each one's needs and work together for a new option. It can also help to consider the positions of the teachers involved for fair resolutions. The study of Adeyemo and Isola (2023), concurred with the finding of this study and reported a positive relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance. The study revealed that principal collaborating conflict management skills and strategies enhances the tone of discipline and closes the gap of communication in secondary schools. Moreso, the study of Ele, Ekpenyong, Okongo, Eneh and Arikpo (2024), supported the finding of this study and reported a positive relationship between conflict collaboration strategy and teachers' job performance. Their study recommended that principals should monitor and intervene on issues that could lead to conflicts to maintain orderliness in the school. The study also stated that conflicting situations should be handled as urgently as possible to avoid factors that can hinder teachers' motivation, commitment and job performance. Thus, fair resolutions can help to consider the positions of the persons involved in conflict to ensure equity, satisfaction and motivate performances.

Further findings of the study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding implies that when principals explore collaborating strategies in management of conflict, resolutions are expected to be peaceful and can foster cooperation and teamwork among the teachers to enhance job performance. The result of this study is in line with Halaman (2023), who reported a significant relationship of collaborating conflict management strategy with teachers' job performance. The study also concluded the collaborating conflict management strategy as the most used conflict management style to improve job performance. Similarly, Pollack (2025), affirmed that applying a collaborative conflict resolution strategy is significant to teachers' job performance and also leads to higher job satisfaction. These findings imply that collaborating management can be applied by secondary school principals to avoid unresolved or poorly managed conflict which could lead to strained relationships and low teachers' job performance.

The results in the second finding of the study showed that adopting an accommodating conflict management strategy to resolve issues helps in maintaining harmonious school relationships and environment while yielding to the concerns or demands of others. This finding indicates that accommodating conflict approaches allow the other side to win while accepting a personal loss to let peace reign. This finding is in line with the study of Ele, Ekpenyong, Okongo, Eneh and Arikpo (2024), which reported a significant relationship between conflict

accommodation strategy and personnel's motivation and job performance. In the same vein, the study Inyang, Ikon and Soludo (2025), also recorded a positive relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and job performance and recommended the need to maintain relationships through accommodating others' views and opinions. The finding of this study has shown a high cooperativeness and low assertiveness to maintain peace.

Further findings of the study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding implies that this strategy could be helpful when intended to avoid prolonging the conflict, especially when it is not worth the time or when considering that one might be wrong. This clearly indicates that accommodating conflict management strategies could lead to sacrificing one's own needs and desires; for those of the other party. The finding of this study agreed with Kitusa, Kimiti and Nkoroi (2025), who also found a significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and job performance. Thus, it recommended that educational administrators and policymakers can utilize accommodating strategies to consider others' opinions. Moreso, this finding concurred with the study of Randi, Baiyun, Eleanor and Seymour (2025), which also reported a significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and workplace job performance. However, teachers who consistently suppress their concerns or opinions may experience frustration, stress, reduced professional autonomy, satisfaction and diminished job performance. Thoughtfully, it is expected that principals need to discuss, dialogue and adjust to a more appropriate idea of others to make the right choices and decisions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that collaborating conflict management strategy has a high positive and significant relationship on teachers' job performance. While accommodating conflict management strategy has moderate positive and significant relationship on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should be encouraged to adopt collaborating strategies in managing conflicts in schools to have the opportunity of understanding each other's needs and working together for new options to improve performances.

2. Principals should also be encouraged to consider the need to discuss, dialogue and adjust to a more appropriate idea of others to make the right choices and decisions during conflict management.

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