



Conflict Management Techniques and Performance of Healthcare Workers in Anambra State General Hospitals (2014-2023)

Vincent Orji Epuechi ¹, Rosemary O. Anazodo (PhD) ²

^{1,2} Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State, Nigeria

Abstract:

This study investigates the effect of different conflict management techniques—namely integration, avoidance, accommodation, and mediation—on the performance of healthcare workers in general hospitals in Anambra State. It aims to assess how these techniques influence key performance indicators such as quality of patient care, work efficiency, teamwork, and job satisfaction. The study employed a quantitative research design using a survey method to collect data from healthcare workers across selected general hospitals in Anambra State. A structured questionnaire was administered to 383 respondents to measure their perceptions of conflict management techniques and their effects on performance metrics. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficients and regression analysis to test the hypotheses. The findings highlight the varying impacts of conflict management techniques on different aspects of healthcare worker performance. Integration and mediation techniques are beneficial in enhancing patient care quality and job satisfaction, respectively. However, avoidance techniques may hinder work efficiency, while accommodation positively influences teamwork. The study recommends that healthcare managers prioritize training in integration and mediation techniques to improve overall performance and job satisfaction. Additionally, strategies need to be developed to address the inefficiencies caused by avoidance and to reinforce the positive effects of accommodation on teamwork.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Performance, Healthcare, Hospitals.

Citation: Epuechi, V. O. ., & Anazodo (PhD), R. O. . (2024). Conflict Management Techniques and Performance of Healthcare Workers in Anambra State General Hospitals (2014-2023). American Journal of Social and Humanitarian Research, 5(11), 410–422. Retrieved from <https://globalresearchnetwork.us/index.php/ajshr/article/view/3061>

Received: 12 Sep 2024

Revised: 28 Sep 2024

Accepted: 20 Oct 2024

Published: 18 Nov 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution- 4.0 International License (CC - BY 4.0)

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is an inherent and ubiquitous element of human societies, often arising from competition among individuals, groups, or organizations as they strive for success. This competition can impede progress and hinder organizational processes (Agwu, 2019). Scholars and researchers consistently analyze how conflict management operates within organizations, recognizing its diverse sources and consequences (Tetteh & Obuobisa-darko, 2016). It is widely acknowledged that the type of conflicts an organization faces significantly influences its success or failure, emphasizing the importance of conflict resolution (Tjosvold & Sun, 2019).

Conflict management encompasses various elements such as styles, processes, and skills aimed at mitigating and resolving conflicts within the workplace (Mukhtar, 2019). The choice of conflict management style depends on the organization, with each style offering potential long-term benefits. Conflict management styles include dominating, compromising, integrating, avoidance, and accommodation (Rahim, 2018), each suitable for different types of conflicts and relationships (Montes, Rodriguez, & Serrano, 2021).

Conflicts are prevalent in the healthcare sector, particularly in hospitals, where they can significantly affect performance due to the complex nature of human interactions (Corn, 2019). These conflicts often stem from disagreements over stakeholders' interests, values, and goals. Conflict is viewed as a process where one party perceives negative attitudes from another (Kaimenyi, 2019), or as a struggle for resources and power (Simpao, 2019). Given the complexity of healthcare organizations, conflicts are inevitable.

Conflicts impact organizational performance, particularly in healthcare institutions, affecting employee creativity, innovation, efficiency, and effectiveness (Iravo, 2020). They can be constructive, fostering innovation, or destructive, leading to negative consequences (Odembo, 2019). The root causes of conflicts include differences in knowledge, beliefs, values, power, and perceptions (Ebrahim, El, & Keshk, 2019), necessitating the use of various conflict management styles by administrators and managers (Kinnander, 2020).

Employee performance is crucial for organizational success, measured by their contributions and effectiveness in fulfilling their duties (Thao & Hwang, 2019). Effective performance management involves motivation, rewards, and positive industrial relations (Saeed et al., 2019). Evaluation of employee performance identifies areas for improvement, determines compensation, and enhances productivity (Armstrong, 2019). Conflicts in organizations arise from differences in personality, beliefs, and interests, affecting employee performance (Mwangi & Ragui, 2019). Conflict management strategies aim to mitigate and resolve conflicts, addressing issues such as poor communication and wage disputes (Corn, 2019). Public hospitals, with their hierarchical structures and demanding work environments, require effective conflict management (Simpao, 2019).

In Nigeria, conflicts within the healthcare sector frequently led to strikes and disruptions in service delivery, involving not only healthcare workers but all categories of healthcare workers. These conflicts, often rooted in economic and political factors, highlight the need for effective conflict management (Ogbette et al., 2017). Strikes and other forms of industrial action have been a recurring issue, affecting access to healthcare services (Oluyemi, 2020). Industrial conflicts in the healthcare sector have detrimental effects on public healthcare delivery, necessitating effective conflict management strategies. This study therefore focuses on conflict management techniques and performance of healthcare workers, with a specific emphasis on General Hospitals in Anambra State.

In the three selected General Hospitals in Anambra State (General Hospital Umueri, General Hospital Enugwu-ukwu and General Hospital Ekwulobia), this study looked at how integration as a conflict management technique affects the quality of patients care; how avoidance conflict management technique affects work efficiency; how accommodation conflict management techniques impacts on team work in these general hospitals; and how mediation conflict management techniques relates with job satisfaction in these three chosen general hospitals.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Healthcare workers operate in environments that are often characterized by high levels of stress, pressure, and the need for quick decision-making, especially in public hospitals. In Anambra State, General Hospitals face significant challenges, including inadequate resources, heavy patient loads, and complex interpersonal dynamics among healthcare professionals. These issues create fertile grounds for conflicts to arise. Sources of conflict can range from miscommunication, role ambiguity, power struggles, and

competition over limited resources to personality clashes and professional disagreements. If not effectively managed, these conflicts can lead to a decrease in job performance, lower job satisfaction, and compromised patient care.

Research indicates that conflict in healthcare settings has profound negative effects on organizational outcomes, such as reducing work efficiency, weakening teamwork, lowering morale, and increasing employee turnover. Specifically, in healthcare, unresolved conflicts can disrupt the smooth operation of teams, increase medical errors, delay treatment, and negatively affect the overall quality of care provided to patients. As healthcare workers are at the frontline of patient interaction and care delivery, their performance directly impacts patient outcomes and hospital efficiency.

Despite the critical need for effective conflict resolution, many general hospitals in Anambra State continue to experience significant challenges in managing conflicts. There is a lack of structured conflict management strategies in many of these hospitals, which exacerbates tensions and worsens the outcomes for both workers and patients. While some hospitals may attempt to use conflict management techniques like integration, avoidance, accommodation, or mediation, there is little empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these techniques in improving the performance of healthcare workers in the state.

Moreover, the specific impact of these conflict management strategies on key performance indicators such as the quality of patient care, work efficiency, teamwork, and job satisfaction remain largely underexplored. Without an in-depth understanding of how conflict resolution methods influence healthcare workers' performance, hospital administrators may continue to struggle with poor outcomes, declining employee motivation, and reduced quality of service delivery. Against the above backdrop, this study seeks to explore the relationship between conflict management techniques and the performance of healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objectives of the study are to determine the general impact of conflict management techniques on performance of health care workers in Anambra state general hospitals. The specific objectives are viz:

1. To examine the effect of integration on the quality of patient care provided by healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.
2. To analyze the role of mediation in enhancing job satisfaction among healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed to guide this study;

1. How does the integration conflict management technique impact the quality of patient care provided by healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals?
2. How does the mediation conflict management technique contribute to enhancing job satisfaction among healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals?

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses will guide the study

1. The integration conflict management technique does not have a significant effect on the quality of patient care provided by healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.
2. The mediation conflict management technique does not significantly contribute to enhancing job satisfaction among healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

CONFLICT: Conflict is a prevalent feature of modern society, with significant relevance in healthcare settings due to the complex and high-stake nature of patient care. Mullions (2019) characterize conflict in the context of hospital management and organizational behavior as a hindrance to achieving another person's goals, stemming from opposing behaviors. Conflict manifests at various levels, including individual, group, and organizational. It is important to distinguish conflict from competition, although they share some commonalities. Both conflict and competition involve opposing behaviors and the belief that one party is attempting to deprive others of something they value. In conflict situations, there is an incompatibility of goals and opposing behaviors, leading to discord (Mullions, 2019).

Conflict situations signify incompatibility of goals and opposing behavior. According to Tossi, Rizzo, and Carall (2019), conflict refers to the presence of tension or difficulty among groups or individuals. Conflict may emerge when the goal-directed actions of one organizational group obstruct those of another. Certain factors inherent in the way organizations operate can give rise to conflicts among functions, divisions, and individuals (Hills and Jones, 2019). These factors may be related to job factors such as funding and organizational politics or task relationships, including overlapping authority and incompatible evaluation systems that allocate limited resources in ways perceived as inequitable and unfair.

Morreale, Spitzberg, and Barge (2020) define conflict as "an interaction among interdependent people who perceive others as opposing their goals, aims, or values and have the potential to frustrate them in achieving these goals, aims, and values." Closely related to conflict is a dispute, described as "the tangible expression of conflict" (UMNOTHO Development, 2019:11). Disputes arise when one party's actions to protect or advance its interests are viewed as antagonistic by one or more other parties. Conflict and dispute have become pivotal, constructive, or destructive elements in various fields of human endeavors. These definitions offer valuable insights that suggest conflict is innate and instinctual, implying that it is a fundamental human (and possibly non-human) instinct, which can be harnessed to address individual and collective challenges.

Conflict, as defined by Unoh (2015), represents "situations of discord, disharmony, discontent, disillusionment, and/or dissatisfaction resulting from communication interactions." Wall and Callister (2015) define conflict as a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party. Hellriegel, Slocum, and Woodman (2019) describe conflict as any situation involving incompatible goals, cognitions, or emotions within or between individuals or groups that lead to opposition. Galadima (2021) suggests that conflicts generally arise from exchanges and interactions among people from diverse backgrounds who must interact to coexist, and these conflicts can be triggered by human or natural resources, psychological needs, or social values.

Conflict occurs when people, institutions, groups, communities, or nations disagree on issues that affect their interests, particularly when they believe they are receiving less than their fair share or that equity has not been upheld (Arnold, 2008). Conflict can arise when rival claims are made for scarce resources, prestige, or positions of power (Kareen, 2019). The common thread in these definitions is that conflict is a matter of perception, meaning it can occur whenever one believes or feels that another person or group is obstructing their goals.

The concept of conflict has also been viewed from other perspectives. According to Adenokun (2017), conflict signifies opposition between individuals or forces resulting in tension, disagreements, or opposition between groups, individuals, or within institutions. Adelue and Kamolafe (2019) define conflict as a dispute or struggle characterized by overt expressions of hostility or the interference of one party's goals by

the actions of another person or group. Omenyi in Obi (2019) defines conflict as a violent clash, a struggle or confrontation, or a mental struggle that can be destructive within an organization. Akinwonmi (2017) characterizes conflict as a situation in which actions are incompatible, obstructive, or interfering, making actions less effective or likely to succeed. Incompatible actions may originate from a single individual (intrapersonal), a single group (intragroup), two or more individuals (interpersonal), or two or more groups (intergroup). Conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction.

Conflict arises in all forms of human relationships and in various social settings due to the wide range of potential differences among people. The absence of conflict typically indicates the absence of meaningful interaction. However, the manner in which conflict is managed determines whether it becomes a constructive or destructive force. Conflict situations can take the form of mild disagreements between spouses, friends, family members, or colleagues regarding decision-making on a particular issue. They can also escalate into intense disputes between organizations, institutions, ethnic groups, states, or nations over principles and ideologies, potentially leading to full-scale wars. Conflict doesn't simply occur on its own; specific conditions give rise to it. These conditions may include differences in perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, culture, backgrounds, goals, interdependence, and communication gaps.

Conflict can manifest as subtle non-verbal behaviors, verbal disputes, or even aggressive confrontations. Conflict is a two-sided coin, with both positive and negative aspects. From a positive perspective, conflict can lead to change and innovation, pushing people to seek more constructive ways to address challenges. It can be beneficial when intentionally introduced into the decision-making process, as it encourages parties to consider alternative solutions. Job-related conflicts, particularly those related to competition, can yield positive outcomes, motivating individuals to provide new insights and perspectives on matters that are subsequently debated (Eischardt, Kahwaju, and Bourgeois, 2017).

However, conflict can also be a negative force that hampers the overall well-being of the parties involved. It can divert efforts away from goal attainment, deplete resources like time and money, and cause psychological distress, including feelings of resentment, tension, and anxiety. Conflict increases stress and, within an organization, it can lead to job dissatisfaction, high turnover rates, or extended periods of absenteeism. Conflict may hinder the establishment of supportive and trusting relationships, making it difficult to prioritize consensus over quality decisions to resolve conflicts. Effective conflict management plays a pivotal role in an organizational context because conflict is seen as an integral component of the change process. When managed intelligently, conflict can become a positive force rather than a negative one in the life of an organization or institution.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: Conflict management, as defined by Greenhaigh (2019), refers to the complex process of identifying, addressing, and resolving disagreements and disputes within a hospital or any healthcare institution. It involves the systematic removal of barriers that obstruct agreement and collaboration among healthcare professionals with differing interests and perspectives. Conflict management within a hospital framework is a multifaceted endeavor that demands a comprehensive approach.

Understanding healthcare workers and their diverse needs, opinions, and expectations is a fundamental aspect of effective conflict management in hospitals. It entails recognizing that conflict is a natural byproduct of differences in values, priorities, and approaches to patient care. However, the ultimate goal of conflict management in hospitals is not merely to mitigate or suppress conflicts but to harness their potential for positive change and constructive outcomes. This includes cooperative efforts to ensure that industrial democracy thrives within the healthcare institution. Industrial democracy, in the context of hospitals, refers to the recognition of the rights of healthcare workers and their unions

to participate in the decision-making processes that influence patient care, working conditions, and the overall well-being of healthcare employees.

Leung and Tjosvold (2008) assert that conflict management is a powerful tool, one that can extend far beyond merely resolving immediate disputes. This perspective contrasts with Western views that tend to emphasize short-term conflict resolution. In essence, conflict management in hospitals acknowledges that conflict is an inherent part of healthcare delivery, often stemming from existing healthcare practices, historical relationships, and power imbalances among various stakeholders.

Practically, conflict management strategies in hospitals encompass a range of approaches that address conflicts at different stages of their evolution. These strategies aim to avoid or minimize the negative consequences of conflicts and can take various forms depending on the nature and severity of the conflict (Evans and Newham, 2018). Four primary approaches are typically recognized: conflict prevention, conflict avoidance, conflict settlement, and conflict resolution.

Conflict prevention in hospitals focuses on measures that can proactively reduce the likelihood of conflicts arising when differences in patient care goals and approaches become evident. It is about taking actions to thwart conflicts before they fully materialize. An effective conflict prevention strategy in hospitals may involve ensuring that healthcare administrators and professionals foster healthy relationships while addressing issues that affect patient care. Conflict avoidance strategies in hospitals aim to prevent contentious issues and incompatibilities in patient care goals from escalating into open disputes. By creating mechanisms and cultivating a culture of dialogue and cooperation among healthcare professionals, conflict avoidance can help maintain a harmonious patient care environment.

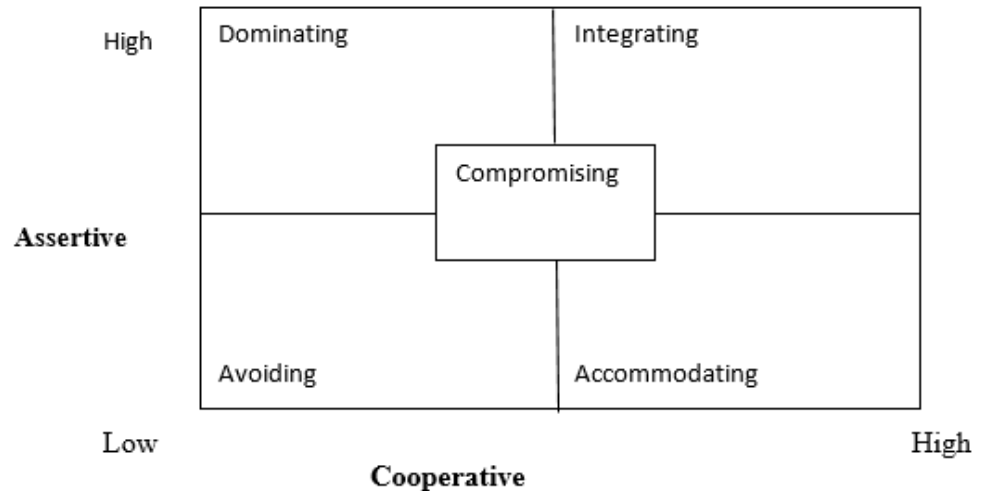
Conflict settlement in hospitals refers to the methods used to bring an end to conflicts once they have emerged. This approach often relies on third-party intervention or negotiation to arrive at a compromise or agreement that all parties involved can accept. Conflict resolution, the ultimate goal of conflict management in hospitals, involves successfully addressing the root causes of conflicts and achieving a state of mutual agreement and reconciliation among healthcare professionals. Effective conflict resolution in hospitals turns conflicts into opportunities for positive change, fostering stronger patient care and collaboration.

In sum, conflict management plays a pivotal role in the functioning of any hospital or healthcare institution. When handled effectively, conflict can be transformed into a creative force for positive change in healthcare delivery. Conflict management in hospitals strives to unlock the full potential of conflicts, ensuring that they lead to resolution, rather than prolonged disruption and discord within the healthcare setting.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, we delve into the theoretical underpinnings that form the foundation of this study. The theoretical framework explored is the Thomas Kilmann Mode Instrument on conflict management styles. The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, developed by Thomas and Kilmann in 1976, provides a structured approach to understanding individual behaviors within the context of conflicts. This model focuses on two fundamental perspectives: assertiveness, which is the degree to which individuals seek to satisfy their own needs, and cooperativeness, which pertains to individuals' willingness to cooperate with others.

The instrument outlines five basic styles of conflict management: integrating, dominating, accommodating, compromising, and avoiding. Each of these styles is characterized by varying degrees of assertiveness and cooperativeness (Tjosvold et al., 2019). As shown in Figure 1, the model illustrates the interplay between these two dimensions in different situations of conflict.



Source: Thomas Kilmann (1974)

In this model, dominating style is assertive but uncooperative, accommodating style is unassertive but cooperative, avoiding style is both unassertive and uncooperative, compromising style strikes a balance between assertiveness and cooperativeness, and integrating style combines both assertiveness and cooperativeness (Thomas and Kilmann, 1976). Essentially, the model offers insights into how individuals behave when confronted with conflicts, depending on their levels of assertiveness and cooperativeness.

The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument holds relevance in this study, particularly concerning the conflict management styles used by managers. It empowers managers to identify their predominant conflict management styles (Corn, 2019), thereby enabling them to select an approach that aligns with the organization's goals and the behavior of the parties involved. Additionally, the model allows managers to choose from a variety of conflict management styles based on their suitability for the organization and their potential impact on employee performance. It also promotes understanding of how employees deal with conflicts (Graham, Mentor, & Hughes, 2019) and facilitates education on different styles for mitigating conflicts.

Creating a work environment founded on trust, respect, and devoid of conflicts is essential, as it fosters employee commitment and motivation, ultimately leading to enhanced performance (Iravo, 2020). The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument can assist in identifying and addressing conflicts effectively, ensuring that the organization promotes cooperation, communication, and constructive conflict resolution, all of which positively impact employee performance.

Relevance of the Theory to the Study:

The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) is highly relevant to the study on conflict management in Anambra State general hospitals due to the following reasons:

1. The TKI provides a comprehensive framework to understand how individuals react to conflicts based on their levels of assertiveness and cooperativeness. This is crucial for identifying the predominant conflict management styles among healthcare workers and managers in Anambra State general hospitals. By recognizing these styles, the study can better understand the root causes of conflicts and how they affect health workers.
2. The study aims to analyze existing conflict resolution techniques in Anambra State general hospitals. The TKI model's five conflict management styles—integrating, dominating, accommodating, compromising, and avoiding—offer a structured approach to assess these techniques. This assessment can reveal which styles are most commonly used and their effectiveness in resolving conflicts and enhancing service delivery.

3. One of the study's objectives is to propose improved conflict management strategies. The TKI model helps in identifying the most effective styles for different conflict scenarios within the healthcare setting. By understanding the advantages and limitations of each style, the study can recommend strategies that align with the goals of the healthcare organization and improve the performance of healthcare workers.

4. The TKI model emphasizes creating a work environment built on trust and respect, free from persistent conflicts. This aligns with the study's goal of improving employee performance and the overall quality of care provided. By using the TKI model to address and manage conflicts effectively, the study can contribute to fostering a more cooperative and communicative work environment, leading to higher employee commitment and motivation.

5. The TKI can serve as an educational tool for managers and employees in the healthcare sector. Understanding the different conflict management styles can help managers choose the most appropriate approach for various situations, thereby reducing conflicts and enhancing team cohesion. This education can also empower employees to handle conflicts constructively, improving their interactions and collaborations.

In summary, the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument is relevant to this study as it provides a robust framework for analyzing, understanding, and improving conflict management practices within Anambra State general hospitals. By leveraging the insights from this model, the study can develop targeted strategies to enhance the performance and well-being of healthcare workers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Survey research design.

Population of Study: Three hundred and eighty-three (383) respondents, which is made up of all the staff of three selected General hospital (General hospital Umueri, General hospital Enugwu-ukwu and General hospital Ekwulobia) in Anambra state, southeast geopolitical zone (Personnel Office, 2022).

Method of Data Analysis: The data collected from the respondents was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The researcher employed the weights attached to the five-point scale to compute the mean scores for the items of the questionnaire. The decision rule for clusters A-C based on the mid-point of the scale which is 2.50. Therefore, a criterion means of 2.50 and above will be accepted, as indicators of Agree, while mean scores below the criterion mean were indicators of Disagree. For Clusters D-I, the decision on the extent of adherence will be based on the real limit of the number corresponding with the obtained mean score. In this case, a mean score of 3.50-4.00 will be accepted as very high extent; a mean score of 2.50-3.49 was accepted as high extent; a mean score of 1.50-2.49 indicated little extent, while a mean score of 0.05-1.49 indicated very little extent. Independent t-test will be used to test the corresponding null hypotheses formulated for the study and each will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis One

Ho1: The integration conflict management technique does not have a significant impact on the quality of patient care provided by healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.

Table 1:

	integration conflict management technique	quality of patient care
integration conflict management technique	1	0.246 0.002 383
Pearson Correlation		
Sig. (2-tailed)		
N	383	
quality of patient care	0.246	1
Pearson Correlation	0.002	
Sig. (2-tailed) N	383	383

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data

The Pearson Correlation between the integration conflict management technique and quality of patient care is 0.246. The p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.002, which is below the significance level of 0.05.

Interpretation of Pearson Correlation:

A Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.246 indicates a positive but weak correlation between the integration conflict management technique and the quality of patient care. Since the p-value (0.002) is less than 0.05, the correlation is statistically significant. This means we can reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and conclude that the integration conflict management technique has a significant impact on the quality of patient care.

Table 2: Model Summary

del	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.246 ^a	0.060	0.006		0.1667

a. Predictors: (Constant)

Source: Primary data.

Model Summary:

R (correlation coefficient) = 0.246: This represents the strength and direction of the relationship between the integration conflict management technique and the quality of patient care. It is consistent with the Pearson correlation.

R^2 (R Square) = 0.060: This shows that approximately 6% of the variance in the quality of patient care can be explained by the integration conflict management technique.

Adjusted R Square = 0.006: The adjusted R^2 is slightly lower, which means after adjusting for the number of predictors, the explained variance is still low, suggesting that there are other factors influencing the quality of patient care.

Std. Error of the Estimate = 0.1667: This measures the accuracy of the model's predictions. A smaller value indicates a better fit.

The results indicate that the integration conflict management technique has a statistically significant but weak impact on the quality of patient care. Although the correlation is weak, the significance suggests that integration techniques can positively influence patient care quality, though other factors likely play a larger role in determining the overall quality of care.

Hypothesis Two:

Ho2: The mediation conflict management technique does not significantly contribute to enhancing job satisfaction among healthcare workers in Anambra State General Hospitals.

Table 4.3:

	mediation conflict management technique	job satisfaction among healthcare workers
mediation conflict management technique	1	0.246 0.002 383
Pearson Correlation		
Sig. (2-tailed)		
N	383	
job satisfaction among healthcare workers	0.246	1
Pearson Correlation	0.002	
Sig. (2-tailed)		
N	383	383

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data

The Pearson Correlation between the mediation conflict management technique and job satisfaction among healthcare workers is 0.246. The p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.002, which is less than the 0.05 significance level.

Interpretation of Pearson Correlation:

A Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.246 suggests a weak positive relationship between the mediation conflict management technique and job satisfaction among healthcare workers.

Since the p-value (0.002) is less than 0.05, this relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho4) is rejected; indicating that mediation as a conflict management technique significantly enhances job satisfaction among healthcare workers.

Table 4.4: Model Summary

del	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.246 ^a	0.060	0.006		0.1667

a. Predictors: (Constant)

Source: Primary data.

R (correlation coefficient) = 0.246: This confirms a positive, though weak, relationship between mediation and job satisfaction.

R² (R Square) = 0.060: This indicates that the mediation conflict management technique explains only 6% of the variation in job satisfaction.

Adjusted R Square = 0.006: After adjusting for the number of predictors, the value remains low, implying that the mediation technique plays a minor role in influencing job satisfaction, and other factors are likely more influential.

Std. Error of the Estimate = 0.1667: This reflects the average error in predicting job satisfaction from the mediation conflict management technique.

Although the mediation conflict management technique has a statistically significant impact on job satisfaction among healthcare workers, the relationship is weak (Pearson correlation of 0.246) and explains only 6% of the variation in job satisfaction. Other factors likely contribute more to job satisfaction, but mediation still plays a measurable role in enhancing it.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Based on the text of hypothesis, the study revealed that;

1. Integration as a conflict management technique positively influences quality of patient care, but the relationship is weak. The Pearson correlation coefficient between the integration conflict management technique and quality of patient care was 0.246, with a p-value of 0.002.

2. Mediation contributes to job satisfaction, though its influence is significant but relatively weak. The correlation analysis showed a Pearson coefficient of **0.246**, with a p-value of 0.002, indicating a significant relationship between mediation and job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the study underscores the importance of adopting a tailored approach to conflict management in healthcare settings. Each technique—whether it be integration, avoidance, accommodation, or mediation—has its specific merits and limitations. Therefore, hospital administrators and managers should aim to develop a comprehensive conflict management framework that integrates multiple techniques, depending on the nature of the conflict and the desired performance outcome. While accommodation proved to be the most effective in enhancing teamwork, the relatively weak correlations between the other techniques and performance measures suggest that conflict management in healthcare is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires continuous attention and refinement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance conflict management and improve healthcare worker performance in Anambra State General Hospitals:

1. **Training on Conflict Resolution:** Healthcare workers and managers should undergo regular training on conflict resolution techniques, focusing on fostering collaboration (integration) and promoting compromise (accommodation) to boost teamwork and patient care quality.
2. **Balanced Use of Conflict Management Techniques:** While accommodation and integration are highly beneficial, reliance on avoidance should be minimized to prevent unresolved conflicts from hindering work efficiency and service delivery.
3. **Institutionalizing Mediation:** Mediation should be formalized as part of hospital policy to address conflicts before they escalate, thus contributing to higher job satisfaction and overall organizational harmony.
4. **Continuous Evaluation and Feedback:** Regular assessment and feedback mechanisms should be implemented to evaluate the effectiveness of conflict management strategies. This will help in fine-tuning approaches based on real-world experiences and outcomes, ensuring that conflict management practices are both relevant and effective.

REFERENCES

1. Abd-Elrhaman, E. S. A., & Ghoneimy, A. G. H. (2018). The effect of conflict management program on quality of patient care. *American Journal of Nursing Science*, 7(5), 192-201.
2. Abiodun, T. (2021). Organizational conflict and staff efficiency in Owo Local Government of Ondo State. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
3. Adelue, G. W., & Komolafe, C. T. (2019). Crisis management in educational system. (Unpublished Manuscript).
4. Adeoji, S. N. (2021). Strategies for conflict resolution in Nigeria Universities: 2019 and 2019 University of Ilorin Crises. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Ilorin, Ilorin.
5. Adeyemi, T. O., & Ademilua, S. O. (2021). Conflict management strategies and administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 3(3), 368-375.
6. Armstrong, M. (2017). A handbook of human resource management practice. London and Sterling: Kogan Page. Arnold, J. D. (2008). When the sparks fly. New York: McGraw Hill Inc.
7. Bankole, F. T. (2021). Nature of conflicts between academic and non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Bornu State. *Educational Research and Review*, 4(4), 89-98.
8. Boulton, C., & Cole, R. (2016). A comprehensive dwelling unit choice model accommodating psychological constructs within a search strategy for consideration set formation. *Transportation Research Part B: Methodological*, 79, 161-188.
9. Bacal, R. (2016). Conflict and cooperation in the workplace. Retrieved, March 13, 2019 from <http://www.work911.com/articles/orgconflict>.
10. Bacel, R. (2016). Organizational conflicts-The good, the bad and the ugly. Retrieved, February 14, 2017 from <http://www.work911.com/articles/orgconflict.htm>

11. Bankole, F. T. (2019). Nature of conflicts between academic and non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Bornu State. *Educational Research and Review*, 4(4), 89-9.
- Best, S. G. (2016). *Introduction to peace and conflict studies in West Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
12. Block, R., & Mouton, J. (1994). *The Managerial Grid*. Huston TX: Publishing Curmeroun and Whethes (1985), being a paper presented at the orientation workshop for member of the new Government councils for Nigeria federal universities "Crises management in Nigeria universities" university system.
13. Cinar, F., & Kaban, A. (2021). Conflict management and visionary leadership: An application in hospital organizations. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58.
14. Cassey, M., & Cassey, P. (2017). Self-esteem training as an aid to acquiring conflict management skills. *Australian Journal of Adult and Community Education*, 37(3), 160-166.
15. Cole, G. A. (2015). *Management: Theory and practice*. London: DP Publications.
16. Daniel, E. C. (2015). The impact of accommodating on conscientiousness and courtesy in oil and gas companies. *The International Journal of Business & Management*, 3(11), 159.
17. Dobre, O. (2019). Employee motivation and organizational performance. *Review of Applied Socio-Economic Research*, 5(1), 53-60.
18. Daniel, H. (2020). The impact of organizational and innovator variables on instructional innovation in higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 53(4), 567-588.
19. Darling, J. R., & Brownlee, L. (Jr.) (2008). Conflict management in the academic institution. *Journal of Education*, 11(3), 243-257.
20. David, F. K. (2019). *Strategic management: Concepts and cases* (12th ed.). New York: Prentice Hall.
21. Denga, D. I. (1990). *Managerial psychology in business and educational administration*. Calabar: Rapid Educational Publishers.
22. Dreu, C. D., & Vliert, E. V. (2021). (Eds.). *Using conflict in organizations*. London: Sage Publications.
- Drucker, P. (2021). *The practice of management* (5th ed.). New York: Harper and Brothers.
23. Echeruo, S. M. (2017). Sources of conflicts in universities in Abia State. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Assessment*, 1(2), 63-78.
- Edem, (2021). *Personnel conflicts and administrative behaviour of secondary school principals in Calabar Education Zone*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis), University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
24. Eischardt, Kahwaju, & Bourgeors III (2017). Perceived organizational support and employee diligence, commitment, and innovation. *Journal of Applied Sciences*, 71(1), 51-53.
25. Enyi, D. (2020). Students' perception of sources and the management strategies for resolving student-related conflict in universities: A study of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In A. U. Akubue & D. Enyi (Eds.), *Crises and challenges in higher education in developing countries*. Ibadan: Wisdom Publishers.
26. Evans, G., & Newham, J. (2018). *The dictionary of world politics*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
27. Ezegebe, C. (2017). Management of conflict in Nigeria educational system. In A. N. Ndu, L. O. Ocho, & B. S. Okeke (Eds.), *Dynamics of educational administration and management: The Nigerian perspective*. Awka: Meks Publishers.
28. Ezeocha, D. A. (2019). *Educational administration and planning*. Nsukka: Optimal Computer Solution.
29. Echeruo, S. M. (2017). Sources of conflicts in universities in Abia State. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Assessment*, 1(2), 63-78.
30. Edem. (2019). *Personnel conflicts and administrative behaviour of secondary school principals in Calabar Education Zone*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
31. Ebrahim, M., El, A., & Keshk, L. I. (2019). Managers' conflict management styles and its effect in staff nurses' turnover intention at Shebin El Kom Hospitals, Menoufiya Governorate. *World Journal of Medical Science*, 11(1), 132-143.
32. Farahani, A. K. (2019). Evaluation of relationship between conflict management styles and organization effectiveness, 7(4), 795-800.
33. Fusch, P. I., & Fusch, G. E. (2015). Leadership and conflict resolution on the production line. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*, 14(1), 21-39.
34. Fadipe, J. O., & Ojede, P. K. (Eds.). (2019). *Management of education in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Daily Graphics Nig. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2019).
35. National policy on education. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Fisher, R. J. (2019). Sources of conflict and methods of conflict resolution. Retrieved February 15, 2019 from <http://www.aupeace.org/files/fisher-sources-of-conflict-and-methods-of-resolution.pdf>.
36. Folarin, F. C. (2019). Imperatives of effective communication in school organization and management. *African Journal of Educational Development*, 2(3), 81-92.
37. Galadima, S. (2021). "Basics of conflict reporting." In P. Umuaru (Ed.), *Introduction to conflict reporting in Nigeria*. Lagos: Frankad Publishers.
38. Geoffrey, C. (2017). Conflicts within the university community. *Studies in Higher Education*, 2(1), 3-8.
39. Harvey, B. (2019). Sources of conflicts between academic and non-academic staff of colleges in Greater Manchester. Available online at: www.res.org/education/quality.htm. Retrieved on 13th October, 2023.

40. Imhabekhai, I. C. (2010). Management of school records. Lagos: Longman Publishers.
41. Iravo, M. A. (2020). Effect of conflict management in performance of public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya, 170.
42. Jones, S. J. (2018). Human Resource Management. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
43. Kaimenyi, C. K. (2019). The influence of conflict management styles on leadership approaches within small-scale businesses in Kenya, 16(9), 55–59.
44. Kassim, M. A. M., Abdullah, M. S., & Mansor, M. F. (2018). The mediating role of conflict management styles between organizational justice and affective commitment among academic staffs in Malaysian public universities. In *MATEC Web of Conferences* (Vol. 150, p. 05012). EDP Sciences.
45. Khalid, S., & Fatima, I. (2016). Conflict types and conflict management styles in public and private hospitals. *Pakistan Armed Forces Medical Journal*, 66(1), 122–126.
46. Kinnander, M. (2020). Conflict management: How to manage functional conflicts within project teams, 1–52.
47. Lather, A. S., Jain, S., Shukla, A. D., & Studies, M. (2019). Cross cultural conflict resolution styles: An extensive literature review. *Asian Journal of Management Research*, 130–146.
48. Latif Khan, M., Langove, N., Ali Shah, F., & UmairJavid, M. (2015). The modes of conflicts and managerial leadership styles of managers. *An International Journal*, 7(2), 44–53.
49. Liu, & Wilson, A. (2018). Conflict management strategies in coping with students' disruptive behaviors in the classroom: Systematized review. *Journal of Advances in Medical Education & Professionalism*, 6(3), 102.
50. Longe, O. (2015). Impact of workplace conflict management on organizational performance: A case of Nigerian manufacturing firm. *Journal of Management and Strategy*, 6(2), 83–92.
51. Lun, Y., & Cheung, J. (2019). Effects of conflict management styles on relationship quality. *Asian Journal of Shipping and Logistics*, 25(2), 209–229.
52. March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (2018). Organizations. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
53. Milton, D. (2019). Conflict in education. New York: Praeger Publishers.
54. Minu, D. A. (2020). An empirical analysis of the relationship between organizational characteristics and conflict resolution in Nigerian universities. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
55. Muhammed, R. (2016). Strategies for managing conflicts in academic institutions in Enugu State. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 114–120.
56. Nayir, F., & Timur, S. (2019). Conflict resolution methods and leadership: A study in the health sector. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58.
57. Ngozi, N. U. (2022). Strategies for conflict resolution among academic and non-academic staff of universities in South-East Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(9), 85–90.
58. Okpechi, C. N. (2015). Causes and resolution strategies of conflicts in Nigerian schools: Implications for global peace and security. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5 (23), 105–115.
59. Obasi, I. N. (2019). Conflict management in Nigerian universities: A study of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
60. Rahim, M. A. (2019). Managing conflict in organizations (5th ed.). Routledge.
61. Robbins, S. P. (2018). Organizational behavior. Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
62. Shih, C., & Susanto, E. (2018). Conflict management styles, emotional intelligence, and job performance in public and private organizations in Indonesia. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 41(12), 943–956.
63. Simons, T., & Peterson, R. (2015). Task conflict and relationship conflict in top management teams: The pivotal role of intragroup trust. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(1), 102–111.
64. Taylor, J. B. (2019). Managing conflict: A practical guide to resolution in the workplace. London: CIPD Publishing.
65. Taiwo, A. (2016). The influence of conflict resolution on employees' performance. *Research Journal of Business Management*, 5(8), 149–156.
66. Ukwai, J. K. (2021). Conflict management strategies and the performance of secondary school principals in Cross River State. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 4(2), 109–117.
67. Venter, K. (2018). Theories of conflict resolution. In M. Maiese (Ed.), *International conflict resolution* (pp. 67–89). Boston: Brill Publishers.
68. Vickers, A. (2021). Managing conflict in organizations. New York: McGraw Hill.
69. Wang, Y., & McLean, G. (2015). The impact of organizational conflict on employees' performance: A study in the Malaysian service sector. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 7(10), 103–112.
70. Wanjohi, E. W., & Obonyo, G. (2019). The influence of conflict management styles on employees' job performance in Kenya: A case of insurance companies. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 8(7), 87–94.
71. Wahab, O. E. (2021). Conflict resolution and academic performance in Nigerian universities. Lagos: Macmillan Publishers.
72. Yusuf, N. (2019). Impact of conflict management strategies on employee performance in public secondary schools in Mandera County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 10(15), 103–110.
73. Zikmann, R. (2021). Resolving conflicts in educational institutions. London: Sage Publications.