

Form of Knowledge Management and Influence on Conflict Management Effectiveness among Senior Staff of Public Universities in South-West Nigeria

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Abstract

Conflict management remains a significant challenge in public universities in South-West Nigeria, affecting academic programs, staff morale, and institutional reputation. While knowledge management has been recognized for enhancing organizational performance, its role in conflict management effectiveness within Nigerian tertiary institutions remains underexplored. This study investigates the influence of knowledge management—specifically knowledge acquisition, sharing, and retention—on conflict management effectiveness among senior staff in six public universities. Data were collected from 428 senior academic and non-teaching staff using a descriptive survey design. Findings revealed that knowledge acquisition ($\beta=0.116$, $p=0.012$) and knowledge sharing ($\beta=0.178$, $p=0.000$) significantly enhance conflict management effectiveness. The study highlights the importance of strengthening knowledge retention mechanisms, improving knowledge-sharing practices, and optimizing knowledge acquisition processes. Recommendations include fostering inclusive knowledge management practices to mitigate conflicts and enhance institutional stability. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and university administrators seeking to improve conflict resolution strategies.

Keywords: *Knowledge Management, Conflict Management, Effectiveness, Public Universities.*

Introduction

Public Universities in South West, Nigeria face various conflicts, including student unrest, faculty disputes, and administrative issues. Effective conflict management is crucial for maintaining a conducive learning environment and promoting academic excellence. Knowledge management, which involves creating, sharing, and utilizing knowledge, can play a vital role in conflict management.

Conflict management has also been the focus of abundant scholarly work. Early studies by Deutsch (1973) laid the

foundation for understanding the various dimensions of conflict and methods for its resolution. Building upon this work, Thomas (1992a) presented an array of conflict-handling styles that have been applied in multiple organizational settings. In the specific context of higher education, Ogharen, et al., (2022) explored and identified factors that contribute to interpersonal conflicts between secondary school teachers and principals in Nigeria.

The management of conflict within organizations has generated considerable scholarly discourse. Conflicts, whether

arising from resource allocation, task responsibilities, or interpersonal relations, are virtually inevitable in complex organizational systems (Rahim, 2023). Effective conflict management strategies are, therefore, vital for maintaining organizational integrity and performance. Various models and frameworks, including Rahim's (2002) organizational conflict model, the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974), the Interest-Based Relational Approach (Fisher, et.al., 2011), and the Dynamic Conflict Model (Barki & Hartwick, 2004), have been developed to address the complexities of organizational conflict in diverse settings.

Public Universities in South West, Nigeria had faced various conflicts, and conflict resolution procedures that has had deleterious effect on institutional calendar and academic programmes in tertiary institution in Nigeria. It is pertinent to note that effective conflict management is crucial for maintaining a conducive learning environment and promoting academic excellence. Knowledge management, which involves creating, sharing, and utilizing knowledge, can play a vital role in navigating conflict management process in tertiary Institutions.

Resulting from these empirical facts from previous researchers, effective conflict management is crucial to mitigate these consequences through knowledge management, which involves creating and sharing knowledge; Identifying and leveraging expertise, facilitating collaboration and innovation and fostering a culture of peace that is required for continuous learning (Oyewumi, 2020; Adekunle, 2018). Effective conflict management is crucial to mitigate these

consequences through knowledge management, which involves creating and sharing knowledge; Identifying and leveraging expertise, facilitating collaboration and innovation and fostering a culture of peace that is required for continuous learning. Knowledge management and conflict management have each been the focus of extensive scholarship, far less attention has been given to the interface between these two critical domains. However, this interface merits careful exploration; the practices and systems that underlie the management of knowledge within public university could potentially have significant implications for how conflicts are navigated and resolved. This study is therefore designed to investigate the influence of knowledge management practices on conflict management effectiveness in the Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. By exploring this relationship, the study seeks to contribute to the development of effective conflict management strategies, informed by knowledge management principles, to enhance the overall performance of tertiary institutions in the region.

Objectives

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the impact of knowledge management on conflict management effectiveness among senior staff of public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. Specifically, the specific objectives are to:

1. examine the contribution of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities

2. find the impact of knowledge sharing to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities.

Hypotheses

1. *Hypothesis 1*: There is no significant contribution of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities
2. *Hypothesis 2*: There is no significant impact of knowledge sharing to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities

Literature Review

In relations to the study of influence of knowledge management practices on conflict management effectiveness in the Public Universities, the researchers studied the related concepts in order to understand more about the points. These related concepts include knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing on conflict management effectiveness in public universities as well as the related researches. The detail is as follow.

1. Knowledge Acquisition

Knowledge acquisition encompasses the process of acquiring experiences, values, and abilities, either individually or collectively, with the aim of enhancing an organisation's human capital (Ngoce-Thang and Anh-Tuan, 2020). Therefore, the quality of human capital is imperative for maintaining a firm's competitive advantage (Siachou et al., 2022). Furthermore, according to scholars Lu, Wang, Tung, and Lin (2010), organisations that face intense competition should improve their value-creation processes by leveraging intellectual capital to gain a competitive edge. They argue that acquiring relevant knowledge can contribute to an organisation's ecological sustainability.

Friedmann and Pedersen (2023) assert that companies achieve sustainable growth when the environmental impact resulting from their overall growth is lower than the effects of their efforts to enhance efficiency. Moreover, firms must prioritise the viability and health of ecosystems to avoid catastrophic collapses, as emphasised by Abel, Cumming, and Anderies (2006). Thus, firms ensure ecosystem integrity by harnessing extensive knowledge. Knowledge acquisition can be achieved through the provision of appropriate training that aligns with customers' needs and desires, heightened competition, and increased cost-effectiveness. Training and development are ongoing activities in organisations aimed at enhancing knowledge acquisition. However, Keep (2006) argues that if the training provided does not align with employees' needs, it will not effectively enhance their flexibility and employability.

Consequently, this has a negative impact on the overall effectiveness and performance of the company. Organisations can establish sustainable structures by acquiring knowledge through benchmarking and utilising cutting-edge technology. Akoko (2022) suggest that giving a man a fish will only provide sustenance once, but if he is taught how to fish, he will be able to feed himself for a lifetime. This illustrates the importance of training in acquiring knowledge and is crucial for long-term success and sustainability.

In contrast, Farrada and Serpell (2013) proposed that knowledge acquisition is a powerful tool that can enhance productivity within the manufacturing industry. Jamilu et al (2015) reported that training was utilised as a means of knowledge management in Nigeria to bring about substantial changes in the agricultural and industrial sectors, consequently leading to a reduction in poverty among rural Nigerians. IFAD further asserted that effective knowledge management techniques can aid

organisations in identifying necessary shifts in culture and behaviour in order to implement incentive programmes that promote positive changes. The advantages of knowledge management methods can be categorised into operational and strategic benefits. Training and development initiatives should be customised to meet specific demands and should aim to enhance employee enthusiasm and commitment, ultimately resulting in improved corporate performance and greater market share in terms of production quality. Lord (2006) suggested that the effectiveness of production can be enhanced by employers restructuring employment to ensure the applicability of learned information.

Khan et al. (2011) confirm a significant correlation between Knowledge Management Practices (KMPs) and performance, highlighting the importance for organisations to prioritise training and development programmes that elevate employees' skill levels to meet customer expectations regarding product quality. This indicates that acquiring knowledge can help bridge the skills gap, ultimately boosting both the performance and prosperity of the economy (Yang et al 2021). Khan et al. (2011) defines training as a method of knowledge acquisition that aims to align with organisational requirements, enhance individuals' employability, and convert skills into corporate effectiveness and performance. However, sustainable growth may not be achieved by companies unless they employ prudent knowledge management practices (Yang et al 2021) to ensure that the acquired knowledge remains relevant and enables effective resolution of competitive issues. Companies operating in service industries, specifically banking, are widely recognised for their focus on knowledge acquisition and utilisation. These companies allocate significant resources towards gathering knowledge, which they rely on to generate profits and gain a

competitive advantage. Intellectual assets are considered just as valuable, if not more, than tangible assets, as they contribute to improving production, service delivery, and overall competitiveness. Prior research conducted in Britain, Germany, and the USA has highlighted the negative impact of insufficient investment in staff training and inefficient firm size on Britain's performance (Katou & Budhwar, 2014).

2. Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing, also referred to as knowledge dissemination, is the process of transferring both explicit and implicit knowledge among personnel within an organisation (Mazorodze & Buckley, 2020). It involves the exchange of information and the utilisation of verified performance data. Information sharing can be facilitated through benchmarking, which enables the integration of tacit and explicit information. This integration occurs through socialisation processes, leading to the creation of innovative outcomes (Memon et. al., 2020). This approach facilitates the transfer of knowledge resources within organisations by selecting relevant material and distributing it to promote learning. Muhammed and Zaim (2020) argue that the emerging knowledge-based economy emphasises not only the creation of knowledge but also the dissemination and utilisation of it. Knowledge capacity refers to the collective abilities, knowledge, and expertise within an organisation that contribute to its unique characteristics, competitive performance, and long-term viability. Effective knowledge sharing plays a crucial role in enhancing innovation and organisational capabilities (Hammouri & Altaher, 2020).

Kwayu, Abubakre, and Lal, (2021) have highlighted that knowledge management lacks value without well-structured dissemination systems. Additionally, Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh, and Eldabi, (2020) have emphasised the strategic integration of knowledge creation and efficient

distribution as essential for driving corporate performance and promoting economic progress in an economy characterised by creative destruction and the emergence of new combinations. Rashid, Tout, and Yakan, (2021) assert that informal knowledge sharing is the primary pathway to innovation, as it provides operational advantages that enable individuals to optimise labour efficiency and minimise employee attrition. Additionally, it enhances individuals' job satisfaction and effectiveness while also promoting operational advantages that contribute to increased productivity. Garcia, and Sosa-Fey, (2020) argue that mentoring serves as a means of transferring knowledge, providing emotional support, coaching, and role modelling, which ultimately boosts employees' motivation, work relationships, commitment, and job performance. Performance evaluation has emerged as a significant mechanism for knowledge sharing.

According to Shao, and Ariss, (2020), its purpose is to empower, motivate, and reward employees for their exemplary behaviours. It helps organisations rectify performance discrepancies, thereby providing them with a competitive and sustainable advantage. On the other hand, benchmarking is a vital approach to knowledge exchange. As described by Bacon, Williams, and Davies, (2020), organisations achieve high performance by sharing information, establishing networks, and offering integrated quality products. These strategies enable them to gain a substantial market share and increase profitability. Benchmarking involves comparing personnel performance in one organisation with that of their counterparts in a rival enterprise. An organisation's dissemination of knowledge efficiently establishes a foundation of intellectual capital. Knowledge is acquired through various sources. Explicit knowledge is acquired through socialisation methods such as brainstorming, e-learning,

communities of practice, and informal meetings. Internalisation sources include documentation and reports, seminars and training sessions, and informal meetings. Externalisation sources involve workshops, seminars, training sessions, and informal visits. Tacit knowledge can be obtained through externalisation, socialisation, and internalisation processes (Gubbins, & Dooley, 2021).

The interaction between social capital and organisational capital can enhance knowledge diffusion (Glase et al., 2021). Sharing involves modifying information to align with an organisation's cultural and skill requirements, as this is crucial for improving performance and ensuring long-term viability. Maneash et al., (2020) posit that knowledge management, specifically knowledge sharing, has the potential to significantly benefit corporate management by reducing organisational layers, enhancing enterprise flexibility, and improving efficiency. Additionally, they highlight that knowledge management can contribute to addressing time inefficiencies associated with obtaining accurate information and making informed decisions, lowering manufacturing costs, improving success rates, and potentially decreasing research and development expenditures, as well as product development cycle time. The effectiveness and sustainability of organisations depend on their ability to manage the competencies of their human capital and knowledge effectively. This can be accomplished through various techniques, such as mentoring, performance appraisal, and benchmarking, which facilitate knowledge sharing.

Abu-Rumman, (2021) asserts that companies that employ effective knowledge management practices, including knowledge sharing and application, can obtain a competitive advantage by accessing and utilising pivotal information, enabling them to withstand competition and expand their

market share. Anshari, and Hamdan, (2022) suggest that companies should prioritise content, organisational culture, and motivational approaches in knowledge management practices rather than solely focusing on technology. This is because an excessive emphasis on technology can impede corporate effectiveness, equality management, customer satisfaction, and sustainability.

Hwang, (2022) argue that effective knowledge-sharing enhances organisational learning and creativity. This is because integrating new knowledge necessitates the acquisition and assimilation of relevant knowledge into the existing knowledge base. Ultimately, they contend that the act of sharing knowledge is pivotal in establishing a competitive edge for a company.

3. Conflict Management Effectiveness

A conflict could be a negative word. One associates it with irreparable damaging effects. Some conflict, research has been shown, is essential for considering, analysis, and, consequently growth, progress and innovation in organizations. However, conflict should be contained within certain acceptable limitations. To understand conflict management, it should first be defined that there are several definitions. It has been discussed as an interpersonal disagreement, or discord between two or more individuals, owing to the difference in opinion, competition, negative perceptions, poorly defined role expectations or lack of communication (Ellis and Abbott, 2011).

Conflict management effectiveness refers to the ability to handle disputes fairly and efficiently, with the goal of minimising negative impacts and increasing the odds of a positive outcome. It is an umbrella term for the way we identify and handle conflicts, and it involves using various conflict management styles and strategies. Conflict management is a crucial skill that

can be used to manage disputes at home or work.

Conflict management effectiveness in academic literature is a multifaceted concept. It is generally understood as the ability to handle conflicts within an organisation in a way that produces positive outcomes, minimising disruptive effects on the organisation's goals. Conflict is seen as both a positive and negative force, and its management should aim not to eliminate all conflict but only that which negatively impacts the organisation (Ouakouak, et al., 2021).

Conflicts are threatening for most people (De Dreu & Knippenberg, 2005), as they can affect one's positive view of self (Chen et al., 2013), mainly when the impact on the conflict partner's behaviour is limited because of service demands. However, conflicts have positive or negative consequences depends on how conflicts are managed (Dijkstra et al., 2009). Research on conflict management converges on the dual concern theory by Pruitt and Rubin (1986; cited in Davis et al., 2004), who describe five different conflict management strategies as functions of concern for self and concern for others (De Dreu et al., 2001; Van de Vliert, 1997).

An essential thing that plenty of companies look for is to avoid conflicts which imply lowering the personal importance of the issue and avoiding a confrontation with the conflict partner to prevent conflict escalation. Organizational conflict is basically considered to have an adverse effect on team functioning, weakening stability, disrupting the status quo and impeding productivity (Barr & Dowding, 2012). A distinction can obviously be made between the areas of conflict involving individual employees and conflict involving groups of employees. Most of the Literatures on conflict management systems contain a bias toward the treatment of conflict between employers and individual employees. This reflects the

origin of the field in studies of non-union firms, or in studies of dispute resolution procedures focused on personal unfairness, residing outside the purview of negotiated unfairness procedures and sometimes arising in the context of statutory employment rights (Colvin, 2004). For some writers, however, more conflict management options may be different to less rather than better than less (Subramony, 2009). The multiple components or options in systems could turn out to be more than the sum of the parts because conflict of interests are characterised by increasing marginal effectiveness as the number of alternative options available for addressing disputes increases, or as the degree of line management engagement in conflict prevention and resolution increases.

Conflict management effectiveness refers to the ability to handle and resolve conflicts in a way that minimizes negative consequences and promotes positive outcomes. Effective conflict management is crucial in various settings, including personal relationships, workplaces, and even in international diplomacy.

Methodology

Population and Samples

For this study however, the focus was directed towards the senior academic staff and senior non-teaching staff of the selected public Universities within the South-West geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study is therefore limited to the Senior Academic staff which includes Professors, Readers, and Senior Lecturers; Also, the Senior Non-teaching staff, included Technical and Administrative staff that selected from three (3) states and (3) federal universities in the South-West Nigeria. The target population comprised of all the senior staff of the selected six Universities from the three (3) States across the region, a total of

which is 4113. The sample size was determined by the adoption of Yamane sample size determination (Yamane, 1967), and 364 employees of Universities were selected using a random sampling technique.

Method of Data Collection

The primary and secondary data were utilized for the study. The data for this study was collected using a questionnaire based on the objectives of the study. The items on the questionnaire were structured questionnaire which covered all the key issues of independent and dependent variables. The questionnaire has 3 sections, which are demographic information, Knowledge Management scales and Conflict Management scales. The secondary source of data collected include the textbooks, academic journals, periodic annual reports and internet facilities.

Research tools

Demographic Information: Section A of the questionnaire comprises of demographic information of the respondents such as Age, Gender, Marital Status, Educational Qualification, Work Experience and Status.

Knowledge Management Scale: To measure Knowledge Management, the Organisational Renewal Capability Inventory developed by Kianto (2008), was used. The scale consists of 26 items, and it requires the respondents to answer a set of items on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 - Strongly disagree, 4- Strongly agree). The scale for knowledge acquisition examined the importance and fluency of knowledge acquired from extra-organizational sources, whereas the scale for knowledge sharing addressed horizontal knowledge flows

inside the organization. The reliability of the KM Scale was evidenced by a Cronbach alpha value of 0.89, as reported by Kianto (2008), indicating a high level of internal consistency among the scale items. This validation underscores the scale's efficacy in providing a comprehensive and reliable measure of KM practices within the selected public Universities in South-West Nigeria.

Conflict Management Scale: The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROC-II) developed by Rahim (1983) was used to identify five predominant conflict management styles: accommodating, integrating, avoidant, compromising, and dominating. This instrument consists of 15 items, each anchored on a four-point Likert modified scale of 4 Strongly Agree (SA, 4 points), Agree (A, 3 points), Disagree (D, 2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD, 1 point). The cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient of each of the scales. Within this structure, the scale is divided into seven items dedicated to integration, six to obedience, six to avoid, five to dominance, and four to the compromising style of conflict management.

Validity

The scaled-response survey questionnaire developed by the researcher, was subjected to face and content validation conducted by experts in questionnaire construction. Based on the validators' advice regarding the relevance and appropriateness of the items to the objectives of the study, proper modifications were made before producing the final copy of the questionnaire.

Reliability

To establish the reliability of the research instrument, a Pilot study was conducted at University of Ilesa, Ilesa, Osun State. A group of 20 senior staff of the University, served as respondents. The questionnaire was re-administered within the intervals of two weeks. This study adopted Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.7 as the benchmark to test for the reliability of the measures in the questionnaire for this study. The correlation statistics was carried out on the data collected during the pilot study in order to ascertain the consistency of the instrument. A Cronbach's Alpha co-efficient alpha of 0.85 was obtained and it was considered good for the instrument. Thus, the instrument is considered valid and reliable.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were collated and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 software for proper data mining/cleaning and analysis for the study. The researcher utilised descriptive statistics to depict the dataset, enabling them to present the data visually and in tabular format. The data were analysed using frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations. An inferential statistical study was conducted. The formulated hypotheses were subjected to Multiple regression analyses, the Pearson Products Moment Correlation analysis to determine the relationship between the variables under investigation.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the result from the study which it covers general information of respondents and the opinion of the respondents regarding knowledge acquisition knowledge sharing to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities. The detail is follows:

Respondents Personal Information

In terms of age distribution, the majority of the respondents (174, 40.7%) fall within the 35–44 age bracket, indicating that most senior academics are in the early to mid-career stages. This is closely followed by those aged 45–54, who constitute (145, 33.9%), reflecting a significant portion in their advanced career stages. A smaller proportion (83, 19.4%) are aged 55–64, while those aged 65–74 represent only (24, 5.6%). The oldest group, aged 75 and above, comprises a mere (2, 0.5%), reflecting the trend toward retirement in this demographic. The gender distribution shows a disparity, with male respondents making up (261, 61.0%) of the sample, while females constitute (167, 39.0%). This imbalance highlights potential gender inequities in senior academic positions that may require further exploration. Regarding marital status, an overwhelming majority of respondents (365, 85.3%) are married, suggesting a strong association between marital stability and progression to senior academic roles. Single individuals account for (37, 8.6%), while (20, 4.7%) are divorced and only (6, 1.4%) are widowed. The respondents' educational qualifications reveal a highly educated workforce. The largest proportion (174, 40.7%) hold Ph.D.

degrees, aligning with the typical requirements for senior academic positions. Those with Bachelor's degrees (123, 28.7%) and Master's degrees (108, 25.2%) form significant subsets, which may represent staff in transitional or adjunct senior roles. A small fraction (23, 5.4%) holds other qualifications, which might include professional certifications or equivalent credentials.

The professional status of the respondents shows that a majority (253, 59.1%) are categorized as “Other,” likely encompassing lecturers and adjunct staff. Among more defined roles, Senior Lecturers make up (88, 20.6%), while Associate Professors and Professors account for (47, 11.0%) and (40, 9.3%), respectively. This suggests that while there are clearly defined senior roles, a considerable number of staff fall into less explicitly categorized positions.

Work experience data indicate that nearly half of the respondents (204, 47.7%) have 10–15 years of experience, reflecting a predominance of mid-career professionals. A significant number (143, 33.4%) have 16–20 years of experience, showing a stable and experienced workforce. Smaller proportions have 21–25 years (58, 13.6%) or more than 25 years (23, 5.4%) of experience, aligning with the observed age distribution and suggesting a natural progression toward retirement for the most experienced individuals.

In general, the analysis on the demographic characteristics highlights a workforce dominated by mid-career and experienced professionals, with a strong representation of highly qualified individuals, albeit with notable gender disparities. The findings offer valuable insights into the composition and characteristics of senior academic staff at the selected universities.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Table 1: Ho: There is no significant contribution of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	22.999	2.777		8.283	.000
Knowledge Acquisition	.375	.148	.116	2.524	.012

a. Dependent Variable: Conflict Management Effectiveness
Source: Author's computation using SPSS

The coefficient table presented provides insights into the relative contributions of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness. This contribution assessed through the regression coefficients, the significance levels, and the standardized Beta values.

The constant represents the predicted baseline level of conflict management effectiveness when all predictors are set to zero. The significant t-value (8.283, $p=0.000$) indicates that this baseline level is statistically meaningful.

Knowledge acquisition has a positive unstandardized coefficient, indicating that an increase in knowledge acquisition is associated with an increase in conflict management effectiveness. The standardized Beta coefficient ($\beta=0.116$) shows a modest relative contribution. With a p-value of 0.012, the effect of knowledge acquisition is statistically significant.

Decision on the Hypothesis:

Given the p -value of $0.000 < 0.05$, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho). This result demonstrates that there is a significant contribution of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness.

Knowledge Acquisition ($B=0.375$):

Hypothesis Two

Table 2: Ho: There is no significant contribution of knowledge sharing to conflict management effectiveness in Public Universities

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	22.999	2.777		8.283	.000
Knowledge Sharing	.477	.133	.178	3.584	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Conflict Management Effectiveness
Source: Author's computation using SPSS

The coefficient table presented provides insights into the relative contributions of knowledge Sharing to conflict management effectiveness. This contribution assessed through the regression coefficients, the

significance levels, and the standardized Beta values.

The constant represents the predicted baseline level of conflict management effectiveness when all predictors are set to

zero. The significant t-value (8.283, $p=0.000$) indicates that this baseline level is statistically meaningful.

Knowledge Sharing ($B=0.477$):

Knowledge sharing has a positive unstandardized coefficient, suggesting that higher levels of knowledge sharing are associated with a increase in conflict management effectiveness. The standardized Beta coefficient ($\beta=0.178$)

Discussion

The study investigated form of knowledge management and influence on conflict management effectiveness among senior staff of public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. Two metrics of knowledge management was identified (knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing). Two hypotheses were tested to achieve the stated objectives in the study. The findings of the hypotheses tests reveal significant insights into the relationship between knowledge management metrics and conflict management effectiveness.

Hypothesis one was tested to achieve objective one set in the study, which is to examine the contribution of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness. The analysis demonstrated a significant contribution of knowledge acquisition to conflict management effectiveness. This suggests that organizations with robust knowledge management practices are better equipped to manage conflicts effectively. These findings align with the work of Davenport and Prusak, who assert that knowledge management enhances decision-making and problem-solving. Similarly, Alavi and Leidner argue that effective knowledge systems foster collaboration and mitigate conflict. However, the unexplained variance highlights the influence of additional factors such as emotional intelligence, leadership style, or organizational culture, as suggested by Rahim. From a theoretical perspective, the Knowledge-Based View of the firm

indicates a moderate positive impact. This relationship is statistically significant, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000.

Decision on the Hypothesis:

Given the p -value of $0.000 < 0.05$, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This result demonstrates that there is a significant contribution of knowledge sharing to conflict management effectiveness.

validates these results, emphasizing that knowledge is a critical resource for achieving competitive advantage. This is further supported by the Resource-Based View, which positions knowledge as a valuable and inimitable organizational asset.

The study also revealed relative contribution of the knowledge sharing, which was the second objective set in the study. Knowledge sharing also emerged as the significant predictor, underscoring its critical role in conflict management. Knowledge sharing also had positive and statistically significant contributions, albeit less pronounced. Knowledge sharing showed strong positive effects on problem-solving and compromise while reducing competitive tendencies, highlighting its importance in fostering trust and cooperation. The findings align with theories such as the Resource-Based View, which underscores knowledge as a strategic organizational resource, and Social Exchange Theory, which emphasizes the reciprocity inherent in effective knowledge-sharing practices.

Overall, the study demonstrates that knowledge management metrics significantly enhance conflict management effectiveness. These findings are supported by the Knowledge-Based View, Social Exchange Theory, and Gender Role Theory, among others. Future research should explore additional variables, such as organizational leadership and culture, to further refine the understanding of how

knowledge management practices contribute to conflict resolution.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study's findings demonstrate the substantial influence of knowledge management on conflict management effectiveness and offer essential insights into the unique contributions of several knowledge management indicators. The findings provide both practical and theoretical insights, highlighting the necessity for customised methods that focus on acquisition and sharing. These contributions significantly impact academics, policy, and practice, especially in improving the conflict management capacities of higher education institutions and other knowledge-driven organisations. The deduced recommendations from findings were;

- 1. Strengthen Knowledge Retention Mechanisms:** Investing in sophisticated knowledge retention methods, such as digital repositories, organised succession planning, and mentorship programs, is something that organisations ought to do. Both the preservation of institutional memory and the maintenance of continuity in conflict resolution procedures will be facilitated by these technologies.
- 2. Enhance Knowledge Sharing Practices:** There should be incentives in place to encourage staff to work together and share their expertise in order to foster trust and productivity. Problem-solving and compromise are two skills that may be improved via the use of strategies such as cross-functional taskforces, peer-learning sessions, and digital knowledge-sharing platforms.
- 3. Optimize Knowledge Acquisition Processes:** It is imperative that organisations make certain that their attempts to acquire knowledge are in line with both their short-term and their

long-term strategic objectives. A significant emphasis should be placed in training programs on the actual application of newly gained information in the context of conflict resolution.

- 4. Promote Inclusivity in knowledge management Practices:** In order to overcome disparities in perception that are based on gender, knowledge management systems should be structured to make use of a variety of views. Strategies for conflict resolution will be more effective if they are implemented in an atmosphere that is welcoming to all and takes into account the opinions of all individuals.
- 5. Integrate Technology in Knowledge Management Systems:** The integration of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, into knowledge management systems enhances the processes of knowledge acquisition, sharing, retention, and creation. These technologies offer real-time insights, promote collaboration, and improve decision-making in conflict situations.
- 6. Foster a Supportive Organizational Culture:** It is the responsibility of leadership to actively build a culture that supports activities related to knowledge management. Among these are the encouragement of transparency, trust, and cooperation, as well as the discouragement of silos and competitiveness, both of which are detrimental to the sharing and retention of information.

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