

## **Conflict Management and Employees Performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper discussed conflict management and employees performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. It views organizational conflict as a dispute that occurs when interests, goals or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible with each other. It assumes that integration of all stakeholders' interests will go a long way in reducing conflicts in organizations and enhancing employees' performance. It is based on the democratic conflict management strategy. The research question addressed the extent of the relationship between conflict management strategies and employees' performance and employees/management perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. The place of study is Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island while the duration of study is between August, 2012 and September, 2013. A descriptive research design was used in executing the study using 50 purposively selected sample respondents consisting of 25 managerial employees and 25 non-managerial employees of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. The core aspect of the study is the use of cross sectional survey research design in generating the required primary data. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results from the data analysis indicated that significant relationship exists between conflict management strategies and employees' performance and no differences exist between managerial and non-managerial employees' perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies. The research therefore recommends among others: promotion of industrial democracy, regular management/employees meetings, and strict implementation of collective agreements and regular review of personnel policies.*

**Keywords:** conflict, conflict management strategies, employees' performance, industrial democracy, Julius Berger.

### **1.1 Introduction**

The award of the civil aspect of the Bonny NLNG construction project in 1996 to Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. necessitated the extension of the company's activities to Bonny Island and the employment of many individuals for the project execution. Since the individuals have diverse backgrounds and culture their interests, goals and values may not be compatible with that of the organization hence conflict may arise. The word conflict brings to mind images such as antagonism, struggles between parties, opposition processes and threats to cooperation. But not all conflicts come in these forms especially in the construction industry. They come in form of needs to be met or desires to be satisfied, disagreements to be settled and ideas to be shared that eventually lead to change of attitudes, feelings and perceptions.

Fadipe (2000) sees conflict as a form of disagreement in an establishment between two individuals or groups who have cause to interact formally or informally. Similarly, Miller and King (2005), see it as basically a disagreement between two or more individuals or groups over compatible goals. Conflict therefore is a process of incompatible behaviours. It may involve the interference or disruption by one person or group of persons, or in some way or ways which make another action less likely to be effective.

According to Deutsch (1973), conflict inevitably means that people are working against each other, in such a manner that what one wants is incompatible with that which another wants. It could bring about competition in the pursuit of goals. What the competitor gets comes at the expense of others or the job. It is therefore counter-productive, disruptive, unnatural, and produces a deviation from the free flow of events.

A major factor that can throw parties into a state of incompatibility is their perception of the issue at hand or issue of interest. There are other factors that can contribute to the creation of conflict in organizations like task interdependence, scarce resources, goal incompatibility, communication failures, individual differences and poorly designed reward system (Mgbekem, 2004).

Conflict is a necessary and useful part of organizational life. It is inevitable and an integral part of the process of change. Indeed, it is an aid to cooperation, not an obstacle. There are two sides to conflict, one is destructive and unhealthy and the other has a problem-solving base where those involved are willing to sublimate personality differences, to listen to others' views and to be open and candid to each other, to be supportive and helpful whereas the former defeats cooperation.

Albert (2001) averred that there are productive and destructive conflicts. According to him, "A conflict is said to be positive when it is constructively discussed by the parties and amicable terms for settlement reached". Constructively managed conflict induces a positive performance while poorly managed conflict heats up the environment to bring about 'dislocation of the entire group and polarization, reduced productivity on job performance, psychological and physical injury, emotional distress and inability to sleep, interference with problem activities, escalation of differences into antagonistic position and malice and increased hostility (Akanji, 2005). Through conflict management a cooperative atmosphere is created for promoting opportunities and movement directed towards non-violent, reconciliation or basic clashing interest. However, no matter how one looks at conflict, it is important to realize that conflict is one of the best ways in the world to turn the tide and improve unsatisfactory conditions. As a matter of fact, sometimes there may be no real dispute to be managed, but there may be need for greater understanding, cooperation and team work to promote interpersonal harmony and good organizational climate for teaching and learning. Therefore, conflict should not always be seen as something undesirable but rather as a necessary outcome that can bring positive consequences if properly managed. It is against this background that it becomes pertinent to examine conflict management and employees performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

### ***1.2 Statement of the Problem***

Conflict emerges in an organization when an individual perceives that his goals are threatened or hindered by the activities of another person. Most conflicts in in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island, arises from the inability of the company to fulfill its collective agreement with its employees resulting in employees embarking on industrial action which may be work-to-rule or total strike. Employees' industrial action usually results in loss of man-hours, machine-hours, output, skilled personnel, employees' morale and organizational reputation. Though, Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. has not been experiencing incessant labour unrest since its mobilization to Bonny Island in 1996, it becomes pertinent to examine its conflict management strategies and employees performance from the perception of the managerial and non-managerial employees of the company.

### ***1.3 Research Objectives***

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine the extent of the relationship between conflict management strategies and employees' performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.
2. To determine the extent of the relationship between managerial and non-managerial employees perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

### ***1.4 Research Questions***

The incompatibility of the interests, goals and values of organizational members usually dovetails in competition for jobs, resources, power, recognition and security thus prompting the following research questions:

1. Does any significant relationship exist between conflict management strategies and employees' performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island?
2. Does any significant relationship exist between managerial and non-managerial employees perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island?

### 1.5 Research Hypotheses

In view of the above research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

1H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between conflict management strategies and employees' performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

2H<sub>0</sub>: There is a significant relationship between managerial and non-managerial employees perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

### 1.6 Literature Review

In any organization, there are many causes of conflicts; however, conflicts within an individual usually arise when a person is uncertain about what task is expected to do, if not clearly defined by the supervisor or the person in charge (Henry, 2009). Furthermore, if the tasks of individuals working as a group are not clearly defined by the management they will lead to more conflicts. Conflicts between individuals may result from role-related pressures. Conflicts would arise between individuals and groups if the goals were not specified for individuals within a group (Duke, 1999). Additionally, according to the literature, there are innumerable origins of organizational dispute and each produces its own variety of effects. In general, there are six major sources: (i) the interpersonal disagreements that arise when one person is experiencing individual stress; (ii) the problems resulting from role conflict, a condition that occurs when there is a clash over one's role in the organization; (iii) the power struggles that pit persons and groups against one another to achieve their own selfish objectives; (iv) the misunderstandings and disagreements from differentiation, i.e., the clashes that arise because people approach common problems from very different orientations; (v) the interdependence requirements for collaboration which, if not extensive and balanced between the parties, cause communication and interaction breakdowns which, in turn, if critical, lead to more intensive conflicts; and (vi) the external pressures from forces outside the enterprise that breed internal pressures as the system seeks to adapt but not to disrupt its internal order. Jung (2003) declares that conflict is clearly associated with power and can emerge when goal achievement of an organization is avoided.

It is also believed that people are aware of the factors that generate conflicts such as scarcity, obstruction and incompatible interests or goals (Robbins, 1983). Conflict can also be broken out when one party avoids the goal achievement of the other one. However, (Pondy, 1966) opined that it is probable that causes for conflicts are not highly correlated with goal and objective achievement in situations of routine behavior where procedures are well defined and environment is stable. In these circumstances, conflict variables are probably more related to personality, autonomy reasons, functional interdependence and status.

Some of the reasons that justify conflict escalation according to Ikeda *et al.* (2005) are: (i) as departments grow, people lose contact with other departments, or yet, members of a department start to think differently from other areas; (ii) the increase of emphasis in the financial measures as a tool for motivation for managers and the establishment of different profit centers inside an integrated business system end up creating many conflicts; (iii) the increasing rise of emphasis in functional specialization, politics of promotion and recruiting reinforce the isolation of departments, generating conflicts; (iv) today there is more room for workers to show criticism among each other, while this freedom of speech can be beneficial for society as a whole, in organizational context can be transformed into conflicts and (v) consumers demand lower prices, better quality in products and services, creating pressures so that departments work more effectively which can result in conflicts among departments.

Another reason pointed by (Kumar *et al.* 1995) for the occurrence of conflicts is the asymmetric degree of interdependence that affects the level of trust and commitment of the groups. Asymmetric interdependence occurs when parties have different levels of dependence among each other. That is, in one same group some individuals can depend on people that, in turn, show independence in relation to them. In total interdependence, on the other hand, individuals are totally dependent on one another. Kumar *et al.* (1995) states those relationships with total interdependence have less conflict than the ones with asymmetric interdependence. For (Jung, 2003), conflict is smaller in highly dependent relationships because, in general, the dependent party conforms itself that it cannot alter the situation and accepts the leader's power.

Conflict can be managed in different ways, some focusing on interpersonal relationships and others on structural changes. Robinson *et al* (1974) advocates that managing conflict toward constructive action is the best approach in resolving conflict in organization. When conflict arises, we need to be able to manage them properly, so that it becomes a positive force, rather than a negative force, which would threaten the individual or group. Parker (1974) argued that if conflicts arise and are not managed properly, it will lead to delays of work, disinterest and lack of action and in extreme cases it might lead to complete breakdown of the group.

Unmanaged conflict may result in withdrawal of individuals and unwillingness on their part to participate in other groups or assist with various group action programs in the organization.

*Avoidance* of the situation that causes the conflict is an example of an interpersonal approach (Robert & Jane, 1969). Another way of coping with conflict is through *smoothing*, emphasizing the areas of agreement and common goals and de-emphasizing disagreements. A third way according to Robert & Jane (1969) is *forcing*, pushing one's own view on others; this, of course, will cause overt or covert resistance.

A traditional way of coping with conflict is to compromise, agreeing in part with the other person's view or demand. The biggest problem in developing the institutions of conflict control in organization is to develop an action of plan to identify conflicts at its initial stage. Conflict situations are frequently allowed to develop to almost unmanageable proportions before anything is done about them, by this time it is often too late to resolve the conflict by peaceable and procedural means.

Knippen and Green (1999) argued that the best way to handle conflicts objectively is to follow six process that involves describing the conflict situation to the other person, asking the other person how he sees the conflict situation, responding the way the other person sees the situation, jointly deciding how to resolve the conflict, making commitment to resolve the conflicts, and promising to be committed in future to continue resolving conflicts, which might arise. Another way of coping with organizational conflicts is to make structural changes. This means modifying and integrating the objectives of groups with different viewpoints. Moreover, the organization structure may have to be changed and authority-responsibility relationships clarified. New ways of coordinating activities may have to be found. Tasks and work locations can also be rearranged.

Derr (1975) opined that Contingency Theory is one of the conceptual tools useful for managing organizational conflicts. He stated that there are three major conflict management approaches from which an intervener can draw to formulate an approach appropriate for resolving a dispute: collaboration, bargaining and power play. The appropriate use of these methods depends on the individual and organizational state. *Collaboration* involves people surfacing their differences (get them out in the open) and then work on the problems until they have attained mutually satisfactory solutions. This approach assumes that people will be motivated to expend the time and energy for such problem-solving activity. *Bargaining* on the other hand assumes that neither party will emerge satisfied from the confrontation but that both, through negotiation, can get something they do not have at the start, or more of something they need, usually by giving up something of lesser importance. One party generally wins more than the other; by the skillful use of tactical trades, he can get the maximum possible from the other side. Third approach is *Power Play*, which differs from the other two approaches because its emphasis is on self-interest. Whereas, in *collaboration* and *bargaining* the two sides come together to try to resolve their problems, when power is the dominant mode, the actions are unilateral or in coalitions acting unilaterally. Table 1 below illustrates the various technologies applicable to each major cause of conflict given the three different approaches.

**Table 1: Conflict Management Paradigm**

| CAUSES OF CONFLICTS                                  | CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGIES  |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | COLLABORATION   | BARGAINING   | POWER PLAY  |
| External pressures                                   | Open systems planning   | Negotiation  | Force and threats of force, use of laws co-optation, strategic use of information, coalition building |
| Individual stress                                    | Counseling, coaching, problem solving   | Contracting  | Transfer, careful job description   |
| Power struggles                                      | Build organizational climate, make decisions close to information source, best ideas prevail, encourage participation problem-solving | Negotiation, solve substantive issues of scarce resource, allocation, establish power parity | Use of legitimate authority, co-capitation, coalition building, favor system                          |
| Low interdependence                                  | Increasing <i>group</i> Interaction   | Negotiation to enhance interaction   | Use of legitimate authority to structure more interaction   |
| Role disputes, differentiation, high interdependence | Team building, communication skills, problem solving, confrontive style, imaging, third party consultation, climate                   |  | Support with formal authority and rewards   |

Source: Derr, G. B. (1975): Major causes of organizational conflict: Diagnosis for action; Working paper, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California.

According to Lee (2011) there is a belief in the traditional view that conflict is destructive, and its impact is always negative as it usually leads to gradual loss of performance, and as such, it is good to avoid conflict. Consequently, conflict avoided always end up in violence, destruction and irrationality. In the traditional view the manager in the process of reducing, suppressing or eliminating conflict unconsciously start to become authoritarian, which hide the causes of the conflict and the positive features of conflict. Verma (1998) viewed conflict from human relations perspective and concluded that conflict is unavoidable as it is a natural phenomenon in any organization and its response determines whether the result will be positive or negative.

### 1.7 Conceptual Framework

Conflict emerges in an organization when an individual perceives that his goals are threatened or hindered by the activities of another person. Schramm-Nielsen (2002) defines a conflict as a state of serious disagreement and argument about something perceived to be important by at least one of the parties involved while Azamosa (2004) says industrial conflict involves the total range of behaviour and attitudes that is in opposition between individual owners and managers on one hand and working people on the other. However, there are many sources of organizational conflicts as categorized by Jones and George (2003) with each category having its unique characteristics as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1: Various sources of organizational conflicts

**Source:** Jones and George (2003) *Organizational Conflict, Negotiation, Politics, and Change*, contemporary management 3rd edition; PowerPoint Presentation by Charlie Cook The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Duke (1999) observed that conflicts could arise between individuals or groups in an organization if the goals are not specified or when the management shift blame on all or a unit(s) involved in work process. However, not all conflicts are bad and not all conflicts are good. Tseveendorj (2008) observed that Malaysia bank employees rated communication, perception, values and culture problems as moderately serious sources of conflict although the staff differed from the officers in their perception to the degree of seriousness of these problems while Odusami (2002) identified conditions of service, opportunity, salary and wages and job security as the leading sources of conflict in Nigeria.

**1.8 Theoretical Framework**

People tend to view conflict as a negative force operating against successful completion of group or common goals. Conflict can create negative impact to group but may also lead to positive effects depending on the nature of the conflict. Figure 2 depicts the level of conflict that is ideal and essential for an organization to attain optimum performance and effective decision making.

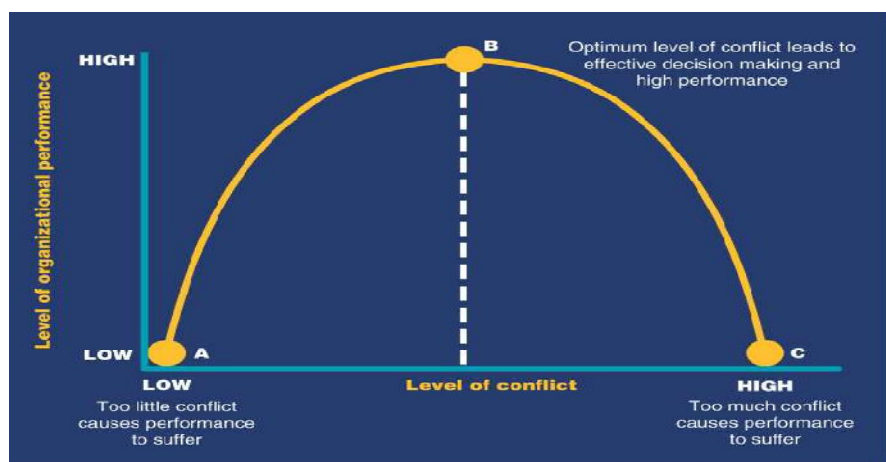


Figure 2: Relationship between performance and level of conflict

**Source:** Jones and George (2003) *Organizational Conflict, Negotiation, Politics, and Change*, contemporary management 3rd edition; PowerPoint Presentation by Charlie Cook The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Hence, management are duty bound to resolve conflicts properly for the sake of increasing organizational performance because the result of such action will result to good communication, time management, good cooperation and increase organizational performance.

A good conflict improves decision outcomes especially on task-related conflict and group productivity by increasing the quality through a constructive criticism and individual playing a devil advocate role since most task related conflict allows the exchange of ideas and assist better performance among work force.

Various conflict management theories opined that a healthy conflict management system should integrate the internal sub-system with the higher level of the organizational hierarchy while Ford (2007) provides a four-way process which include assessment and inquiry, addresses the design, implementation and evaluation aimed at reaching a valid and objective conflict management decision. Ekong (2000) reported a positive correlation between democratic management styles and organizational stability. He noted that democratic strategies would promote inclusion in decision and by consequence workers identification with decisions and commitment to the organization. This research is based on this theory of democratic conflict management strategy.

Korbanik, Baril and Watson (1993) and Wall and Galenes (1986) commented on the integrating style of handling conflict which shows that this style results in high joint benefits for the parties. Vigil-King (2000) also found that the use of more integrative conflict management strategies are likely to have higher commitment than teams using less integrative styles while it was noted that a supportive leader engenders respect, job satisfaction and higher productivity from his staff while an authoritarian leader represents the opposite, even if productivity is higher in the short run, it is bound to fall in the long run. Rahim (2004) suggested that the nature of leadership power in an organization mediates the needs of conflict management strategies. Thus, organizational stability may be maintained even when the leader is low in conflict management because workers sometimes exhibit acceptance behaviour over the superior's attitude thus reflecting apathy and subjugation with little manifestation of aggression (Gbadamosi and Adebakin, 1996).

## **2. Research Methodology**

The scope of this research is limited to the employees of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. It is assumed that responses obtained from the sample respondents would be representative of the opinions of all managerial and non-managerial employees of the company on their perception of conflict management and employees performance in their company. The duration of study is between August, 2012 and September, 2013. A descriptive research design was used in executing the study using 50 purposively selected sample respondents consisting of 25 managerial employees and 25 non-managerial employees of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. The core aspect of the study is the use of cross sectional survey research design in generating the required primary data. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The questionnaire was designed to obtain a fair representation of the opinions of the 50 sample respondents using a four-point Likert type scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA)-4 points, Agree (A)-3 points, Disagree (D)-2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD)-1 point. The questionnaire responses of the sample respondents were presented using tables while formulated hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance for sampling error. A total of 50 copies of the questionnaire were administered, collected and used for the analysis.

## **3. Analysis and Results**

The analysis was carried out in accordance with the research questions. In each case, the responses to questionnaire questions were scored and the mean and standard deviation determined. A mean response cut-off score 2.50 (i.e.  $(4+3+2+1)/4$ ) was adopted. Responses to the various questions were obtained from the analysis of the statements and the results as shown in the table 2 below.

| S/No. | Statements  | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|-------|---|------|--------------------|
| 1.    | <b>Causes:</b> Unacceptable terms of employment such as poor hours of work, poor salary and lack of fringe benefits | 2.61 | 1.18               |
| 2.    | Poor human relations between management and employees   | 2.78 | 0.88               |
| 3.    | Non consultation with employees before key decisions affecting them are taken                                       | 2.67 | 0.93               |
| 4.    | Perceived autocratic style of managers  | 2.81 | 1.13               |
| 5.    | Anti-union posture of management  | 2.54 | 0.86               |
| 6.    | Poor decentralization of decision making and workers non-representation in management                               | 2.74 | 0.87               |
| 7.    | Cumbersome and ineffective means of communicating grievances to top managers  | 2.85 | 1.22               |
| 8.    | Lack of effective mechanism for the prevention of conflict  | 2.63 | 1.44               |
| 9.    | Poor government economic and industrial policies  | 2.97 | 1.01               |
| 10.   | <b>Strategies:</b> Consulting with workers in order to resolve the conflict   | 2.61 | 1.08               |
| 11.   | Putting machineries in place to address the sources of conflict   | 3.41 | 0.85               |
| 12.   | Effecting necessary changes in process and procedure management   | 2.78 | 0.67               |
| 13.   | Putting in place a formal procedure for conflict Prevention so as to avoid future conflict                          | 2.63 | 1.12               |
| 14.   | Intimidation of workers   | 2.97 | 0.84               |
| 15.   | Enforcing strict disciplinary rules on workers  | 2.61 | 0.98               |
| 16.   | <b>Effects:</b> Improved performance  | 2.83 | 1.01               |
| 17.   | Improved quality of service   | 2.63 | 1.12               |
| 18.   | Better human relations between management and staff   | 2.97 | 0.87               |
| 19.   | Reduced incidence of conflicts  | 2.68 | 0.93               |
| 20.   | Less disruptions in construction activities   | 3.02 | 1.03               |
| 21.   | Less wastages in time and resource usage  | 2.96 | 0.93               |
| 22.   | Reduced late coming and absenteeism   | 2.65 | 0.79               |
| 23.   | Less delays in task performance   | 2.81 | 1.04               |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.



### 3.1 Test of the first Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between conflict management strategies and employees' performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

To analyze this hypothesis, a response to the questionnaire was used. The test statistics is the t-test of a single independent mean. The overall mean response of the statements was tested against the expected mean of **2.50** which is the mean response that would be obtained if conflict management strategies did not have any significant effect on employees' performance. The test statistic was calculated as:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X} - 2.50}{S/\sqrt{n}}$$

$$S/\sqrt{n}$$

Where:  $\bar{x}$  = average mean of responses (= 2.67)

S = standard deviation of responses (= 0.95)

n = number of respondents (= 50)

$$t = \frac{2.67 - 2.50}{0.95/\sqrt{50}}$$

$$= \frac{0.17}{0.135}$$

$$= 1.26$$

$$t\text{-cal} = 1.26 < t\text{-tab} (0.05, 49) = 2.021$$

Since the calculated value of the t- test is greater than the table value, we conclude that conflict management strategies have a significant effect on employees' performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. This conclusion is buttressed by Vigil-King (2000) who observed that the use of more integrative conflict management strategies are likely to have higher commitment, job satisfaction and higher performance than teams using less integrative styles. The results also show that conflict management strategies in place at Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island have been relatively useful in minimizing the incidence of disruptive conflicts while impacting positively on employees' performance.

### 3.2 Test of the Second Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between managerial and non-managerial employees perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

To analyze this hypothesis, the mean responses and standard deviation was calculated from table 2 for both managerial and non-managerial employees of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. The test statistic was the t-test of independence of means. The result is presented in table 3 below

**Table3: t- test on the effectiveness of conflict management strategies**

| Category of Employees    | Mean | Standard deviation | No of respondents | Degrees of freedom | t-calculated | t-critical |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|
| Managerial employees     | 2.79 | 0.97               | 25                | 48                 | 1.769        | 2.024      |
| non-managerial employees | 2.56 | 1.08               | 25                |                    |              |            |

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Since the t-cal. value is less than the critical t-cal. at the 5% level of significance, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative that there is a significant relationship between managerial and non-managerial employees perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. This conclusion is buttressed by Rahim (2004) who observed that the nature of leadership power in an organization mediates the needs of conflict management strategies. The results also revealed that the main sources of conflict in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island relate to perception and value problems. The specific issues bother on employees' compensation, welfare and inadequate communication. It was further observed that Julius Berger management in Bonny Island uses a combination of compromise, problem solving and dominating conflict management strategies in the resolution of employees' grievances.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The paper has discussed conflict management and employee's performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island. It assumes that integration of all stakeholders' interests will go a long way in reducing conflicts in organizations and enhancing employees' performance. It is based on the democratic conflict management strategy. The three major findings of the research are as follows:

- ❖ Conflict management strategies in place at Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island have been relatively useful in minimizing the incidence of disruptive conflicts.
- ❖ There is a significant relationship between conflict management strategies and employees' performance in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.
- ❖ There is a significant relationship between managerial and non-managerial employees perception of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island.

Arising from the findings of this paper, it is suggested that the management of Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. Bonny Island should take the following measures to reduce organizational conflicts to the barest minimum:

- 1. Entrenchment of Industrial Democracy:** Julius Berger management in Bonny Island should create room for equal participation of employees of all categories in resolution of trade disputes.
- 2. Regular employees/management meetings:** Employees/management meetings should be conducted on regular basis to identify and resolve labour/management issues that could result in labour unrest.
- 3. Strict implementation of collective agreement issues:** Julius Berger management in Bonny Island should strictly implement agreements it reached with labour unions.
- 4. Establishment of additional communication channels:** Management should create additional channels of communication with employees as means of obtaining prompt feedback on organizational policies.
- 5. Regular review of personnel policies:** Julius Berger management in Bonny Island should regularly review their personnel policies to eliminate clauses that could trigger labour unrest.
- 6. Regular training of employees:** Julius Berger management in Bonny Island should embark on regular training of its employees to eliminate ignorance and reduce areas of friction between labour and management and eliminate unnecessary labour unrest.
- 7. Fair remuneration of employees:** Julius Berger management in Bonny Island should fairly compensate their employees for their efforts so as to reduce dissatisfaction among the workforce.

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