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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NON-CONFRONTATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND TEACHERS' CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

Prof. Emenike Obi & Echezona Zimuzo Nnatu
Department of Educational Management and Policy Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria
ez.nnatu@unizik.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities in secondary schools in Anambra State. The study was guided by one research question and one null hypothesis. The correlational research design was adopted. The population of the study was made up of 6,815 teachers while the sample of the study was 2,727 teachers sampled using proportionate random sampling technique. Structured instruments developed by the researchers were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts who are lecturers in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The reliability of the instruments was determined through a trial testing in five public secondary schools in Enugu State. The data were analysed using cronbach alpha method. Alpha coefficients of 0.78 were obtained of PCMSQ while a coefficient of 0.80 obtained for TESAQ. The researchers administered the copies of the instrument through electronic means with the help of 5 research assistants each covering the six education zones. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used in data analysis. Findings indicated that a high positive and significant relationship existed between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities. Based on the findings, it was recommended teachers should endeavour to take advantage of principals' non-confrontational management strategy to enhance their classroom activities, compliance to principals' directive as well as teachers' participation in meetings, committees and outdoor school activities in secondary schools.

***Keywords*:** Non-confrontational; conflict management strategy, and teachers' classroom activities

Introduction

Non-confrontational conflict management strategies promote the giving up of the wishes or demands of a party in favour of another (Thote and Gowri, 2020). In other words, it is a 'win-lose' approach. This is where the principals try to meet the needs of all those who are involved in the conflict. For instance, to maximize the teaching time, the principal may demand that remedial lessons be held outside the stipulated teaching time. The school principals view teachers as competent and does not want to lower their moral, they may retain the stipulated teaching time to maintain a good relationship with the teachers. Non-confrontation Strategy: according to Ogazi (2019), involves the extent to which individuals seek to avoid or downplay the significance of conflict

scenarios. School principal that adopts this strategy may make serious efforts to avoid issues that give rise to conflicts. Rather, he or she may dialogue with teachers. He may also go out of his way to appease teachers through the use of diplomacy or incentives. It is a fact as noted by Lange (2023) that a worker such as a teacher or principal, has valued goals and rewards which he hopes to achieve by minimizing conflict and increasing areas of co-operation. Therefore, when such a worker understands what determines conflict for him and his job, he is likely to take actions to minimize such conflict. To obtain increase in wages and wage - related benefits, he tries to observe prescribed work procedures and rules. The school management body or the school's administrator, on the other hand, seeks maximum productivity for the schools and at the same time, realizes the consequences of strike or violence in the school system. They too try to manage conflict when they identify the possible sources of conflict. Such conflict management phenomenon if properly identified and channeled, is an important element in fostering organizational co-operation. Teachers' engagement in school activities has both behavioural and affective dimensions. Hence, extent of teachers' participation to school curricular and extra-curricular activities such as classroom instructions, reinforcing students' discipline, keeping the students' record, functioning as form teachers, participation and contribution during staff meetings and working in school committees are the behavioural dimension (Henkins etal, 2019). The affective dimension is the extent to which teachers identify with school and feel they belong to the school. Fouts (2021) noted that teachers that are engaged in school activities have internalised conception of belongingness that they are discernibly part of the school environment and that school activities constitute important parts of their own experience. Such teachers value success in school and strive more towards achieving these goals. On the other hand, teachers that are disengaged with the schools are only interested with their salary payment and do not care if they effectively engage in school activities or not. They always find reasons to avoid participation during parents' teachers' association meetings, avoid attending other teachers' ceremony, or serving in school committees. To such teachers, the attainment of the school goal is the problem of the principal. The extent to which such teachers can contribute to school improvement is thereby largely doubtful.

Research question: What is the relationship between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Method

It's a correlation study carried out in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study was made up of 6815 secondary school teachers in the six education zones of Anambra State. The composition of the population based on education zones includes: 1657 teachers in

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Awka zone, 1254 teachers in Onitsha zone, 1047 teachers in Aguata education zone, 1122 teachers in Nnewi zone, 1097 teachers in Ogidi zone, 638 teachers in Otuocha zone. The data was obtained from Post Primary Secondary School Commission (PPSSC, 2023). Simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample of 2727 teachers in the six education zones using 40%. Two instruments developed by the researchers were used. The first instrument is titled "Principals' Conflict Management Strategies Questionnaire (PCMSQ) and while the second is tagged "Teachers' Engagement in School Activities Questionnaire" (TESAQ). The instrument was validated by experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha method and co-efficient values for PCMSQ and TESAQ were 0.78 and 0.80 respectively. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents through electronic method mode in their schools with the help of research assistants. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse data.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities.

Table 1: Pearson r on Relationship between Non-Confrontational Conflict Management Strategy and Teachers' Classroom Activities

Source of Variation	N	R	p-value	Remark
Non-Confrontational Management Strategy	2340	0.718	0.01	High Positive Relationship
Teachers' Classroom Activities				

Data in Table 1 show that there is a high positive relationship existing between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is 0.718. Furthermore, the analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.718) has *p*-value <0.05. The null hypothesis one was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study showed that a high positive and significant relationship existed between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities. This could be traceable to the fact that teachers tend to have favourable disposition towards a non-confrontational style of conflict management given that their self-esteem is not compromised. Thus, with such a favourable disposition, teachers' classroom activities are enhanced to the satisfaction of the students who are the direct beneficiaries of the effective teachers' classroom activities.

Corroborating the findings of the current study, Ogazi (2016) observed that in non-confrontation, individuals seek to avoid or downplay the significance of conflict scenarios. The adoption of the afore-mentioned promotes a spirit of co-operation among the warring factions which brings about improvement in teachers' classroom activities. School principal that adopts this strategy may make serious efforts to avoid issues that give rise to conflicts. Similarly, Lange (2013) noted a school principal has valued goals and rewards which he hopes to achieve by minimizing conflict and increasing areas of co-operation. Therefore, when such a worker understands what determines conflict for him and his job, he is likely to take actions to minimize such conflict.

Conclusion

Based on the interpretation of the findings, the data collected and analysed, and discussion of results, it was concluded that the finding of the study showed that a high positive and significant relationship existed between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities. The implication is that a high positive and significant relationship existed between non-confrontational conflict management strategy and teachers' classroom activities. This implies that non-confrontational conflict management strategy enhances teachers' classroom activities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendation were made

1. Teachers should endeavor to take advantage of principals' non-confrontational management strategy to enhance their classroom activities.

2. Teachers' compliance to principals' directive as well as teachers' participation in meetings, committees and outdoor school activities in secondary schools should be adopted.

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