Research Paper

Local Government Employees Productivity; Leveraging on Conflict Management Indicators

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ABSTRACT: This study examined how the conflict side of the industrial social relatedness can be resolved to promote organizational productivity especially in the Local Government Areas of Rivers State. This cross-sectional study was conducted in twenty-three (23) local government councils in Rivers State. As a macro level study, a census of all the One hundred and eighty- four (184) directors in the local government councils and a 4-points Lykert scale closed ended questionnaire was constructed and used for data collection. Derived data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Formula and presented with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20.0). The results showed that, there is a strong positive relationship between conflict identification and measure of organizational productivity profitability with a significant level at r=0.979; p= 0.000 <0.05 and r=0.960; p= 0.000 <0.05, both at 95% confidence interval. Also, there is a strong positive relationship between conflict communication and measures of organizational productivity showing significant levels at r=0.979; p= 0.000 <0.05.and r=0.993; p= 0.000 <0.05, both at 95% confidence interval. Findings also revealed a strong positive relationship between mediation and measure of organizational productivity profitability and growth of which the significant at r=0.993; p= 0.000 <0.05.and r=0.989; p= 0.000 <0.05. There is a strong positive relationship between collaboration and measure of organizational productivity profitability and growth with a significant at r=0.992; p= 0.000 <0.05.and r=0.992; p= 0.000 <0.05. Relying on the empirical findings, the study concluded that all the tested dimensions of conflict resolution have relevant influence on employee's productivity in the local government councils in Rivers State and were therefore recommended for application
KEYWORDS: Conflicts Resolution, Conflict Identification, Conflict Communication, Collaboration   and Mediation

I.   INTRODUCTION

In an organization where diversity is practiced to its fullest, conflict is unavoidable. Studies have shown that employees have varied orientations in terms of skills, personality traits and peer influences. These variations only become useful when they are harnessed as contributory to a common goal. Local government councils are not left out in the crisis of conflicts. There is no passing month that one does not see in the print media or radio and television about shut-down of Local councils in Rivers State. Some of these are traced to the distance between expectation and available from leadership. This manifest mostly at the level of management and employees' relations. People see conflicting scenario from different lens, some see it from the perspective of nonconforming workforce, others see it from the perspective unyielding leadership. This is the major reason, resolving conflict is imminent. Our places and organizations are mostly shaped by conflicts between workers and supervisors, Unions and management, competition among departments and difficult behaviors by co-workers. What really becomes paramount in most cases is the interest of conflicting parties as each effort aimed at realizing their varied interests often end up in disagreement and variance which ere manifested in views, style of management and many more. The reactionary effect is due to the perceived incompatibilities resulting typically from some form of interference or opposition. [1] posited that most of the workers in an organization are often restless and confrontational in their approaches to issues which affect them as a group.   There are always challenges of managing a diverse work population. Managing diversity is more than simply

acknowledging differences in people. It also means involving the value of differences, combating discrimination and promoting inclusiveness. Managers may also be challenged with losses in personnel and work productivity due to prejudice and discrimination and legal actions against the organization. Perceived negative interdependence on the other hand, induces more distance, less openness and promotes competitive behavior, resulting in distinctive bargaining [2]. One of the most fundamental problems currently destabilizing the survival of many organizations is the negative differences that evolve between employees on the one hand and employees and leadership on the other. The human beings are seen as one of the most critical and valuable factors for organizational productivity and profitability. These individuals came into the organization from different background and carried along with them different character, behavior, value, religion that differs from each other leading to inter-employee's relational difference. This conflict arose from personality clash, value differences as well as cultural and religious differences. Therefore, for proper organizational productivity to be sustained in organizations, management must ensure that conflicts are resolved using conflict identification, effective communication, mediation and collaboration. When an organization failed in her duty to resolve conflict and allowed it sustainability, there is bound to be goal focus distraction, and likely business entropy. Therefore, this study intends to investigate the affinity between Conflict Resolution Strategies and Organizational Productivity of Rivers State Civil Service Sector in Port Harcourt. According to [3], we pay a heavy price for these conflicts, not only individually and relationally but organizationally and socially in litigation, strike, reduce productivity, poor morale, wasted time and resources, lost customers dysfunctional relationship with colleagues, destructive battles with competing departments, stifling rules and regulating gossip and rumors, and reduced opportunities for team work, synergy, learning, and change. Irrespective of the factors resulting in conflict among workers, it has been noticed that industrial conflicts produce considerable effects on organizations and should consciously managed as much as possible. Employee conflict occurs when members engage in activities that are incompatible with those of colleagues within their network, members of other collectivities, or unaffiliated individuals who utilize the services or products of the organization. For people to succeed at work and other aspect of life, the importance of cooperation must be recognized to ensure task attainment and stability in life. However, it will not be fair to say that cooperation is good while conflict is bad; this is because the two concepts are pervasive and co-exist in our social life. It is true that there can be no organization without conflict given the wide range of goal for different stakeholders in the organization and stifles innovation.

Deutch classic theory of competition and cooperation proved useful in analyzing conflict in many contexts, including management and employee, and identifying constructive ways of managing conflictual relationship at work [4]. It explores the antecedents and consequences of cooperation and competition but hardly has been used to study industrial relations in organizations, however, it allows insights into what can give rise to constructive and destructive conflict processes in employment relations [5]. The core of the theory is based on the perceived interdependence of parties. Positive interdependence promotes openness, cooperative relations and integrative problem solving. Therefore, the combination of different conflict management strategies is most common and can be beneficial. Strategies, being either cooperation and competition, or forcing, avoiding and problem solving are combined sequentially or simultaneously. Several studies have demonstrated that competitive behavior (such as forcing) and cooperative behaviors (problem solving) do not necessarily exclude one another, however the combination of strategies contributes to effective resolution outcomes. [6] Agreed that there are productive and constructive conflicts in the workplace, according to him, "conflict is said to be positive when it is constructively discussed by the parties and amicable terms for settlement reached. He also said that constructively managed conflict in workplace induces a positive employees' productivity, increases employee commitment, reduces employee turnover for skilled personnel, reduces the loss of man and machine hours as decreases defective products due to lack of employees' commitment to work. Employee conflicts do not only affect the organization 50% of resignations in the workplace occur due to unresolved employee conflict. [7]. Unmanaged employee conflict distorts the entire dynamics within the workplace and ultimately creates an atmosphere that negatively affects productivity. If employee conflict is not dealt with properly by managers, it can have unintended consequences such as hostility, violence and the destruction of relationships.

Confliction Identification - One of the most outstanding aspects of workplace. conflict is that it is practically intrinsic to the life and dynamics of teams. Conflicts is ever present in interpersonal relations. The best way to identify the source of conflict is by talking to the parties involved in the problem to unravel what sustains the conflictual issues. A clearly specified list of problem causing dispute is the most suitable basis for identifying strategies to resolve it. Conflict happens amongst individuals in all kinds of human relationships as well as in all social settings. It is naturally neither good nor bad in itself. According to [8], conflict has been defined variously by many authors but common to all. These definitions are that conflict is a perception. Conflict is a process which begins anytime a person perceives that another person is capable of affecting anything of value. Due to a wide range of possible differences among people which could be cultural, ethnic, education etc, the needfulness of conflict usually shows the absence of meaningful interaction. It is therefore

needful to encourage some levels of conflict for organizations to improve creativity and productivity. Advocates of the resolution focused view hold the idea that conflict is inevitable but we should appreciate constructive conflict. Focusing on interaction with customers and focusing on group members, produce stress, leave painful feelings and reduces trust and respect. [9], says that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of people working together and should be kept at a manageable level when it will not disorganize the activities of the organization towards the attainment of its objectives. They further asserted that conflict may also be beneficial to the organization where it brings about radical change in the organizational power structure, current interaction pattern and entrenched attitude and also can lead to increase in productivity. While some conflicts are functional, others are not. It can also affect the organization negatively when it is associated with decreased employee satisfaction, insubordination, decreased productivity, leads to economic loss, fragmentation to mention but a few. It is the management major responsibility to device strategies in bringing down conflict as low as possible, which will enable the organization to still function to succeed. Notably, interest serves as domineering factors for conflict manifestation. This means that there is always interest in a particular position in an organization which every one wishes to occupy. It occurs whenever our assumptions or expectations do not match with someone else's assumptions or expectations. [10], defines conflict as an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities (Individual, group and organizations) and opined that conflict may occur when (i) a party is required to engage in an activity that is incongruent with his or her needs or interest. (ii) a party holds behavioral preferences, the satisfaction of which is incompatible with another person's implementation of his or her preferences. (iii) a party wants more mutually desirable resource that is in short supply, such that the wants of everyone may not be satisfied fully. (iv) a party possess attitudes, value, skills, and goals that are salient in directing his or her behaviour but are perceived to be exclusive of the attitudes, values, skills, and goals held by the other(s). (v) Two parties have partially exclusive behavioural preferences regarding their joint actions (vi) Two parties are interdependent in the performance of functions or activities. *Transitions in Conflict Thought*- These are the three major known thought about conflicts identified by [11]. They are: *The **Traditional View**:* The early approach to conflict assumed all conflicts were bad. The belief is that all conflicts is harmful and must be avoided. Conflict was view negatively, and it was used synonymously with terms as violence, destructions, and irrationality to reinforce its negative connotation. This view was consistent with the attitude that prevailed about group behavior in the 1930s and 1940s. Conflict was seen as dysfunctional outcome resulting from poor communication, lack of openness and trust between people and the failure of managers to be responsive to the needs and aspiration of their employees. The view that all conflict is bad certainly offers a simple approach to looking at the behavior of people who create conflicts. Since all conflicts are to be avoided, managers need to direct their attention to the causes of conflict and correct these malfunctioning in order to improve group and organizational performance. *The **Human Relations View**:* The human relations view argued that conflict is a natural occurrence in all human groups and organizational settings. Since conflict is inevitable, the human relations school advocated acceptance of conflict. Proponents of this view rationalized its existence and asserts that conflict cannot be eliminated and that there are times when conflict may benefit the performance of groups. This view dominated conflict theory from the late 1940s through the mid–1970s. *The **Interactionist View**:* while the human relations approach accepted conflict, the interactionist approach encourage conflict on the grounds that a harmonious, peaceful, and cooperative group is prone to becoming static, apathetic, and nonresponsive to needs for change and innovation. The main contribution of the interactionist view, therefore, is encouraging group leaders to maintain an ongoing minimum level of conflict, enough to keep the group viable, self-critical and creative. The interactionist view does not propose that all conflicts are good. Rather, some conflicts support the goods of the group and improve its performance - these are functional or constructive forms of conflict while those that hinder group performance are dysfunctional or destructive forms of conflict. What differentiates functional from dysfunctional conflict is the value it attracts to group and work situations. They manifest in the form task conflict which relates to the content of the work, relationship conflict focuses on interpersonal relationship, and process conflict which relates to how work gets done. The best way to identify the source of conflict is by talking to the parties involved in the problem and explore the sustaining factors. A clearly specified list of problems causing dispute is the most suitable basis for identifying strategies to resolve it. Most times when there is interpersonal conflict among employee, the natural tendency is to come up with possible solutions. Consequently, the idea and discussion focus on the merits and problems of the proposed solution(s) rather than an in-depth discussion of the possible causes of the problem itself. Conflict identification is part of the scientific methods, as it serves as the first step in a systematic process to identify, evaluate a conflict and explore potential solutions. As the first step in conflict resolution strategies, if done well, provides foundation for a peaceful resolution. According to [12], a problem can be defined as an unacceptable discrepancy between expected and observed performance. Therefore, problem analysis aims to confine this discrepancy. The ability of a leader to quickly identify conflict helps the organisation to save up more time for productivity. It could possibly be said that a quick identification brings about a quick resolution, as was discussed earlier that conflict

is not the devil as many persons may look at it but lack of speedy identification and resolution gives room for escalation which is not healthy to organizations.

Conflict Communication - Conflict has proven to be everywhere in life, in the organization, in different countries even in our homes. Conflict thereby proves itself to be omnipresent in human existence. Since it is a dysfunctional and destructive component, human beings are beginning to come up with numerous methods for managing and resolving it. One of the method or strategy is effective communication; lack of effective communication is a major reason conflict exists in an organization. Meaning is the most important aspect of communication, because meaning is what people extract from communication. It is believed that every one cannot give a particular meaning to what is been said towards the end of every communication different meaning gotten from the message which is exactly how conflict transport itself into human lives. Organizations that withhold information or give it grudgingly may breed conflict, mistrust, suspicion, confusion, or crisis. From this perspective, management must communicate with staff regularly to achieve work relationship understanding. Most importantly, how we approach and communicate about these issues often determine the outcomes. It is noticed that the relationship between communication, conflict and its resolution is double-edged. This is because most conflict occurs as a result of misinformation and cannot be resolved without effective application of communication. Hence, the role of communication in resolving conflict is to come up with ways of reducing the benefits of the functional aspect in the traditional sharing of meaning between the parties involved in a conflict. The functionality or dys-functionality of conflict relies solely on communication skills and it`s applicability by the parties involved. For a team leader or a manager to resolve conflict in his team organization he needs to possess effective speaking and listening skills. [13] shared what they call the speaker-listener technique to help individuals to be more effective in communication. Communication is the number one element in all inter-personal disputes. Communication is seen as the best strategy for resolving conflict in an organization, this is because every other strategy cannot be effective without communication. Without communication there won't be negotiation, arbitrary collaboration in the organization, without communication conflict will rise to the level of distribution.

Collaboration - This can be seen as another way of bringing conflict to it's barest minimum in the work place. It can also be seen as the win/win situation that has to do with some high-level assertiveness and co-operations among workers. The most important activities in collaboration are integrating situations, matching prospective, gaining commitments, and leaving more about the other parties and the conflict itself. Collaboration is not just a process, but a continuous process of building and rebuilding relationships which needs a continuously engaged facilitator to move it from step to the other-through the project phase. The collaboration strategy is one in which one party shares information and clarifies issues on the point of conflict with the other party so as to reach a solution acceptable in both parties. Collaboration strategy rank high on both assertiveness and cooperativeness. Supporting a win-win orientation. Conflicting parties should be willing to forgive and work on trust rebuilding rather than destroying, escalating or refusal to engage further. [14] believes that there are a lot of benefits when using a collaborating strategy to handle inter-personal conflict situation. They opined that collaborating with the other party promotes creative problem solving within the organization, and it is a way of fostering mutual respect and supports among the parties.

Mediation - Mediation can be referred to as a way of resolving conflict in which a third party, who is neutral assist parties in conflict to resolve their conflict. This is a voluntary and the mediator does not take part in the outcome of the mediation process. This process allows the mediator and disputants to focus on the real problems. However, the conflicting parties are free to express their own interest and needs through an open dialogue in a less adversarial setting than a courtroom. The major reason for mediation is to enable people dedicating more time and attention to the creation of a voluntary, functional and durable agreement. Academic and policy interest in the application of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) within the workplace is more recent and largely comes from dissatisfaction with conventional right-based disputes procedures ad litigation as well as the time and money cost associated with it. [15]. Till this time, there is still no universally accepted definition or general theory of mediation. The intervention in a negotiation or a conflict of an acceptable third party who has limited or no authoritative decision-making power, (and) who assists the involved parties to voluntarily reach a mutually acceptable settlement of the issues in dispute. [16]. The emphasis is on the voluntary, informal, neutral and negotiated outcome principles of mediation. Mediation is identified as relevant for use in workplace for a variety of issues where there are ongoing working relationships including resolving interpersonal disputes at a relatively early stage, progressing, grievances in a loss confrontational manner expressing feelings in a relatively safe and secure environment. Workplace mediation is a form of early resolution and can be conducted more quickly than traditional processes, and it is more likely to restore the employment relationship and offers financial savings which costs five times lower than often lengthy grievance or disciplinary procedures as well as reducing the possibility of long-term absence and resignations [17]; [18]. A social factor related to the mediation process and successful mediation concerns the timing of the mediation. More specifically, this research examines whether mediation will be successful if it is initiated at certain points

in the 'life cycle' of a conflict before a conflict becomes violent'. In other words, their view is that early mediation is not very likely to occur even if early intervention is not possible. However, when there are other points which are attractive for the initiation of mediation, including shortly after violence has broken out in the immediate wake of a dramatic event, after the parties have reached a stage of reciprocal exhaustion or when a new third party has been introduced to the conflict. Leadership is one of the major research topics in the corporate and academic sector and has provided answers to some of the questions arising from that direction. It has also made enormous progress in revealing some of the enduring mysteries connected with leadership. Organizational communication and relational satisfaction of employee have the substantial impact with transformational leadership. Leadership is the process of moving employees towards desired out-come or goal. That is the reason why leadership is the moderating variable between employee conflict resolution strategies and organizational production. It is true that leadership interventions have a lot of impact on so many outcomes. There is a strong focus on right and wrong, on winners and loser. This makes people terribly risk – averse. Employees fear grievance procedures and the threat of a formal complaint hangs over the office. Mediation encourages people to work out their issues together, with specially trained mediations, to reach their own agreements. It makes it clear that the answer lies within. Just look at the different message that sends. While the traditional system is designed to keep people in line, mediation tells people that problems and obstacles are a normal part of working life and can be worked through and overcome.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study examined the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity of the 23 local government councils in Rivers State. The study was operationalized with the dimensions of conflict resolution strategies being conflict identification, effective communication, mediation and collaboration. Organizational productivity was measured by profitability and growth. As a descriptive study, using a cross sectional research design, all targeted population which comprised of all directors of the local government areas in Rivers State were censused. A total of 184 directors formed the study population from the 23 local government areas. The internal consistency of instrument which is the closed ended 4-points Lykert sale was achieved using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with all the items being above 0.70. The first section was designed to generate the demographic data of the respondents. The second section was structured to obtain data on the dimensions of conflict resolution, third was to elicit response and generate data on the measures of organizational productivity, and the last section was to generate data on the moderating variables. Inferential and descriptive statistics was used to analysed the data and results presented using tables, percentage, cumulative mean and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, through the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20.0). The test of reliability of the instrument was done as shown below:

Table 1: Test of reliability of the

Nos of items	Dimensions/ Measures/moderating Variable	Numbers of items	Numbers of Case	Cronbach Alpha (α)
1.	Conflict identification	4	144	.998
2.	Effective communication	4	144	.998
3.	Mediation	4	144	.997
4.	Collaboration	4	144	.997
5.	Profitability	4	144	.997
6.	Growth	4	144	.997
7.	Leadership	4	144	.997

Methods of Data Analysis

Based on the nature of the study, which tends to find the relationship between two variables, (Conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity), the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the data. However, the analysis was categorized under three headings; Primary analysis, Secondary analysis and Tertiary analysis: (i). the primary analysis here involved the use of descriptive statistics. (ii). the secondary analysis here is the results for the test on the hypotheses. The analysis on the relationship between the variables was carried out at a 95% confidence interval and 0.05% level of significance. (iii). the tertiary level of analysis involved the interpretation of the results of the secondary analysis which constitutes the finding with a view of making conclusions and recommendations. Kothari & Garg, (2004) argued that when there exists association or correlation between two variables, correlation technique should be used and when there exists cause and effect relationship between two variables in the case of bivariate population or between one variable on one side and two or more variable on the other side in case of multivariate population, partial

correlation technique is appropriate. This was the basis for the choice of the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient to test hypothesized relationships. In a bid to determine the existence and trend of this relationship, we plotted a scatter diagram as presented in the figure below conflict resolution as a predictor variable is plotted on the X axis whereas organizational productivity as the criterion variable is on the Y axis.
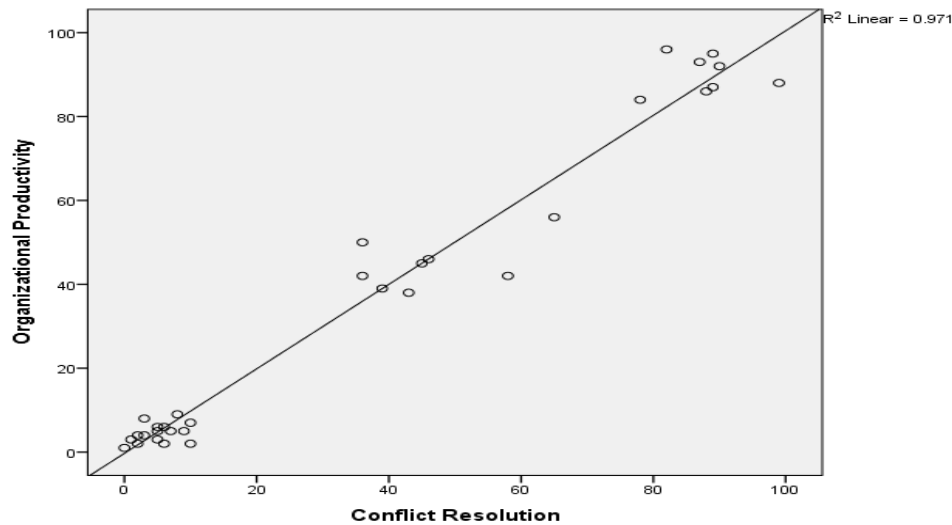

Figure 1: Scatter plot showing influence of conflict resolution on organizational productivity

The figure 2 above shows a strong relationship between conflict resolution (independent variable) and organizational productivity (dependent variable). The scatter plot graph shows at R^2 linear value of (0.971) depicting a strong viable and positive relationship between the two constructs. The implication is that an increase in conflict resolution simultaneously brings about an increase in the level of organizational productivity.

Presentation of Results on the Test of Hypotheses

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistics was calculated using the SPSS version 20 to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable. Correlation coefficients can range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while +1.00 represents a perfect positive correlation. A value 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. In testing hypothesis 1 – 9, the rules stated above were upheld in accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses earlier stated. All the coefficient values that indicate levels of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS were accepted and therefore, our null hypotheses rejected; when no significance is indicated in the coefficient (r) value, we accept our null hypotheses. Our confidence interval was set at the 0.05 (two tailed) level of significance to test the statistical significance of the data in this study.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix for conflict identification and organizational productivity

		Conflict identification	Profitability	Growth
Conflict identification	Pearson Correlation	1	.979[**]	.960[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	144	144	144
Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.979[**]	1	.990[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	144	144	144
Growth	Pearson Correlation	.960[**]	.990[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	144	144	144

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 2 shows the correlation of hypotheses one and two; the hypothesis one show a significant correlation at r = .979[**] where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:1), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between conflict identification and profitability of Local Government Councils in Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis two show a significant

correlation at r = .960** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_2$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between conflict identification and growth of Local Government councils in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix for effective communication and organizational productivity

		Effective communication	Profitability	Growth
Effective communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.979**	.993**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	144	144	144
Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.979**	1	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	144	144	144
Growth	Pearson Correlation	.993**	.990**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	144	144	144

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 3 shows the correlation of hypotheses three and four; the hypothesis three show a significant correlation at r = .979** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_3$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between effective communication and profitability of Local Government Councils in Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis four show a significant correlation at r = .993** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_4$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between effective communication and growth of Local Government councils in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix for mediation and organizational productivity

		Mediation	Profitability	Growth
Mediation	Pearson Correlation	1	.993**	.989**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	144	144	144
Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.993**	1	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	144	144	144
Growth	Pearson Correlation	.989**	.990**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	144	144	144

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 4 shows the correlation of hypotheses five and six; the hypothesis five show a significant correlation at r = .993** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_5$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between mediation and profitability of Local Government Councils in Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis six show a significant correlation at r = .989** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_6$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between mediation and growth of Local Government councils in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix for collaboration and organizational productivity

		Collaboration	Profitability	Growth
Collaboration	Pearson Correlation	1	.992**	.992**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	144	144	144
Profitability	Pearson Correlation	.992**	1	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	144	144	144
Growth	Pearson Correlation	.992**	.990**	1

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	144	144	144

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 5 shows the correlation of hypotheses seven and eight; the hypothesis seven show a significant correlation at r = .992** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_7$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between collaboration and profitability of Local Government Councils in Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis eight show a significant correlation at r = .992** where P-value = .000 (P<0.001). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis (Ho:$_8$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significance relationship between collaboration and growth of Local Government councils in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Showing Partial Correlation of the moderating effect of leadership between conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity

Control Variables			Conflict Resolution strategies	Organizational Productivity	Leadership
-none-[a]	Conflict Resolution Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.979	.972
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		Df	0	142	142
	Organizational Productivity	Correlation	.979	1.000	.994
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		Df	142	0	142
	Leadership	Correlation	.972	.994	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		Df	142	142	0
Leadership	Conflict Resolution Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.501	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.057	
		Df	0	141	
	Organizational Productivity	Correlation	.501	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.057	.	
		Df	141	0	

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

In table 6 above, the zero-order partial correlation between conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity shows the correlation coefficient where leadership is moderating the relationship; and this is, indeed, both very high (0.972) and statistically significant (p-value (=0.000) < 0.05). The partial correlation controlling for leadership however is (0.501) and statistically significant (p-value (= 0.000) < 0.05.). The observed positive "relationship" between conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity is due to underlying relationships between each of those variables and leadership. Looking at the zero correlation, we find that both conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity are positively correlated with leadership, the control variable. Removing the effect of this control variable reduces the correlation between the other two variables to be 0.501 and it is significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that: leadership significantly moderates the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity of Local Government employee in Rivers State, Nigeria.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study uses cross sectional survey design and inferential statistical methods in investigating the demographic characteristics of the respondents as well as the studied variables, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used in testing the relationship between the predictor variable (conflict resolution strategies) and the criterion variable (organizational productivity) of local government areas in Rivers State. The empirical findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between conflict resolution strategies and organizational productivity of local government area using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 95% confidence interval through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. The first and second hypotheses shows that, there is a strong positive relationship between conflict identification and measure of organizational productivity profitability and growth of which the significant is based on r=0.979; p= 0.000 <0.05.,and r=0.960; p= 0.000 <0.05., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H$_{0:1}$) and (H$_{0:2}$), and upheld the alternate and restated thus; there is a significant relationship between conflict identification and profitability and growth of local government area in Rivers State. This study findings

support the empirical findings of [19], who asserted that, a person would thus interpret a situation very differently when a professional identity (and its accompanying goals and expectations) is salient compared with when a family identity is salient. Behavioural conflict emerges when the responses associated with different salient identities are incompatible with each other. As the number of salient social identities increases, so too does the chance of experiencing heightened behavioural conflict and uncertainty. Identifying this uncertainty enhances the possible outcome of managing the conflicting situations.

The third and fourth hypotheses shows that, there is a strong positive relationship between effective communication and measure of organizational productivity profitability and growth of which the significant is based on r=0.979; p= 0.000 <0.05.,and r=0.993; p= 0.000 <0.05., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

The fifth and sixth hypotheses shows that, there is a strong positive relationship between mediation and measure of organizational productivity profitability and growth of which the significant is based on r=0.993; p= 0.000 <0.05.,and r=0.989; p= 0.000 <0.05., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ($H_{0:5}$) and ($H_{0:6}$), stated in the chapter one, and upheld the alternate and restated thus; there is a significant relationship between mediation and profitability and growth of local government area in Rivers State.

The seventh and eighth hypotheses shows that, there is a strong positive relationship between collaboration and measure of organizational productivity profitability and growth of which the significant is based on r=0.992; p= 0.000 <0.05.,and r=0.992; p= 0.000 <0.05., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ($H_{0:7}$) and ($H_{0:8}$), stated in the chapter one, and upheld the alternate and restated thus; there is a significant relationship between collaboration and profitability and growth of local government area in Rivers State. This study findings support the empirical findings of [20], the study assessed strategies for effective management of conflicts in public secondary schools and averting school unrest amongst students as perceived by principals, school board of management and students in Kenya. A total of 26 school principals, 104 board of management members, 183 teachers and 370 students participated in the study. Random and purposive sampling techniques were used to obtain the sample for the study. The findings of the study revealed that collaboration conflict management strategy was rated the best strategy of solving and averting conflicts in secondary schools in Kenya.

IV. CONCLUSION

Conflict has been generally accepted as one inevitable factor in human society. Human beings are of diverse interests and goals. The differences between individual goals and interest lies the conflict. And because it is inevitable, the successful growth and profitability of organization is achievable through effective conflict resolution strategies deployed by management of organization to curtain the menace of conflict in the organization.

In this study, the relationships between conflict identification, effective communication, mediation and collaboration have been investigated. A survey seeking for the relationships has been conducted on a sample of 144 directors of local government areas in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study results shows significant relationships between the variables hypothesized in the chapter one of this study and delineated as conceptual framework. Accordingly, the study strategy and methodology was designed in a way that points towards the achievement of the study objectives. The studied concludes that, conflict resolution strategies through the use of conflict identification, effective communication, mediation and collaboration significantly influences profitability and growth. A scattered plot diagram was also plot to see the relationship between the predictor variable (conflict resolution strategies) and the criterion variable (organizational productivity). The scatter plot graph shows at R^2 linear value of (0.971) depicting a strong viable and positive relationship between the two constructs. The implication is that an increase in conflict resolution strategies simultaneously brings about an increase in the level of organizational productivity of Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are hereby made:
i). Conflict should be identified by the management at the early stage in order to avoid escalation among members of the organization.
ii) Effective communication among employees should be encouraged and monitored as to curtain effect of conflict between organizational members.
iii) Mediation is a critical strategy in resolving conflict among members of organization despites the complexity of its acceptability among conflicting members due to interest differences, but when finally accepted, enhances effective conflict resolution.
iv) Collaboration strategy should be used as it enhances speedy conflict resolution between conflicting members.

v)   Leadership of local government area should apply the listed conflict resolution strategies in this study to resolved conflicts between members of the organization as to achieve maximum organizational productivity.

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