



CONFLICTS AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARY STAFF: CAUSES, EFFECTS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study – This paper showcased the causes, effects and management strategies of conflicts on staff job performances of academic libraries in Delta State. Design/methodology/approach – Three research questions guided the study which adopted a descriptive survey design. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. 317 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and only 220 were successfully retrieved. The research instrument came in three sections: A, B and C. Section A investigated the causes of conflicts, section B the effects of conflicts on staff job performances, and section C the management strategies for resolving effects of conflicts on staff job performances. Findings – The study reported that poor communication among staff, role ambiguity, poor library policies among others, are some of the causes of conflicts in the academic libraries. The study further revealed that poor collaboration among academic library staff, reduced morale, poor customer library services delivery among others are some of the effects of conflicts on academic library staff job performances. The study also revealed the management strategies for conflicts in academic libraries. Practical Implication – This paper addressed conflicts and Staff Job Performances: the causes, effects and the management strategies. The findings of the study will inform librarians and academic institutions with the practical knowledge of how to overcome conflicts in order to improve staff job performances in workplaces to make libraries remain relevant. Originality/value – The study reported the actual causes of conflicts, the effects of the conflicts and the management strategies in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Conflict management, Academic Libraries, job performance, Library staff, Delta State.



Introduction

The term conflict is as old as mankind. It is a noticeable character associated with the social cohabitation of humanity. It reflects in the form of anger, quarrel, hatred, misunderstanding, war, killings destruction etc. Any idea or opinion that tends to bring strain into a peaceful environment or situation is likely to result into conflict. Actions such as envy, discontentment, impunity, arrogance, greed that are capable of introducing a breakdown of law and order in human relations are conflict inclined. Hocker and Wilmot as cited by Omisore and Abiodun (2016), defined conflict as “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards and interference from other parties in achieving their goals. Literally, conflict can be defined, as a misunderstanding between two or more individuals, family, personnel in organizations and even countries on issues that tends to tamper on ego, character, personality, self-esteem as the case maybe(Akinrinade and Adeboye,2018). When conflict is properly managed in any situation, it can lead to improved working conditions, teamwork, unity or improved relationship among the affected parties involved. Library personnel and the library as an organization are not exempted from having conflicts, this is because in human interactions there is bound to conflicts. It should be established that every employee in any organization could be a male or female, with various years of work experience invested into the organization. These variables determine the level of conflict management.

Conflict management is a term used to describe a situation whereby an authority uses any legitimate means to resolve any

form of disagreement fairly and effectively within an organization. Conflict are caused by various factors which include but not limited to lack of clarity in the responsibility of the team members, inappropriate interpersonal relationship shared by the members of the organization such as poor communication and differences in personalities, resources not shared equally, sexual harassment, decrease in productivity, mental health concerns, violence, lack of creativity, inadequacy in sharing and respecting opinion of others, accommodation, career or skill development and compensation policy. Rahim (2002) defines conflict management as a process which involves implementing strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict and to increase the positive aspects of conflict at a level equal to or higher than where the conflict is taking. It is critical to note that conflicts have their own beneficial consequences in the society or organization, they are important factors in the process of societal transformation. Conflict in the academic library need to be manage effectively because of their consequences in the institutions environment. The academic library environment is an indispensable services delivery unit in the academic institutions considering the fact that it is the instrument for actualizing the research, teaching and learning functions of the institutions. Any conflict in this unit will affect the overall academic health of the institution. This is one sector where conflict must essentially be managed given the institution’s threat of poor users’ academic performances resulting in poor job performance whenever there is conflict that is not well managed. The staff who work in academic libraries have increases in the mix with the attendant application of ICTs in



libraries. Moreover, the cases of conflict are bound to become more prevalent. The staff include academic librarians, library officers, ICT officers, software vendors and other technical staff who are involved in library operations. It is against this backdrop that this study is set up to examine conflicts: causes, effects and management strategies and job performances of staff in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria.

Statement of problem

Conflict in any organization seems to have destabilizing effects on the overall performances of the staff the organization. Series of visit to academic libraries within and outside the study area show that conflict exist and this single action tends to lead to poor performances of functions of the library personnel. This may further lead to disharmony in the attainment of the parent organization's aims and objectives. Attaining organizational goals is possible if efforts are always made to reduce the overall level of conflicts within the organization.

Conflict emerges in the academic library when individuals perceive that their aspirations or egos are threatened or hindered by the activities of some other colleague. Most conflicts in the library arise from the inability of the organization to fulfill its agreement with its employees resulting in employees embarking on industrial actions which maybe work-to-rule or total strike. It could also be conflicts brewed internally among colleagues. Employees' industrial action usually results in losses of man-hours, machine hours, output, skilled personnel, employees' morale and organizational reputation. Consequently, it is very imperative that efforts are made towards finding ways of effectively managing conflicts so as to achieve organizational

objectives. The causes of conflicts, its effects and management strategies for handling conflicts to prevent its negative effect on staff' job performances academic libraries is the concern which this study tries to address.

Research questions

1. What are the causes of conflict in job performances of staff of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of conflict on job performances of staff of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria?
3. What are the conflict management strategies for job performances of staff of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria?

Review of related literature

Conflicts in the workplace often arise from a combination of interpersonal, organizational, and environmental factors. The causes of conflict are too numerous, however, few causes shall be highlighted in the course of this study, which if properly managed, will go a long way in addressing future conflicts to its barest minimum. According to Burton(1979) in his Human Theory of needs, dictum lies in its assumption that persons or groups, or groups of persons engage in conflicts because they are denied their economic, political, social, spiritual, educational and psychological needs that are required for achieving their aims- pleasure, prestige, power, fulfilments and others.

Academic library management have long sort to comprehend what usually cause conflicts among library staff and also tries to fathom strategies that will provide lasting solutions to these causes. Recently, particular focus of enquiries have revealed that some of the causes of conflicts on employees' job performances on staff of academic libraries



includes poor communication factor. This refers to the ineffective exchange of information between individuals or groups, leading to misunderstandings, confusion, and a breakdown in the transmission of intended messages. It hinders the accurate conveyance of ideas, expectations, or instructions, potentially causing disruptions, conflicts, and decreased productivity in both personal and professional settings. It can further lead to misunderstandings and conflicts among employees. Robbins and Judge, (2019), stated that poor communication can arise from lack of clarity, ineffective listening, mismatched communication styles, assumptions and stereotypes, emotional barriers, poor timing, information overload or under load, language barriers, power imbalances, technological distractions and feedback issues.

In the same vein, Robbins & Judge, (2019), observed that interpersonal issues, which can be attributed to individual preferences, working styles, and personal issues can result to conflicts within an organization. Interpersonal issues generally refer to personality clashes which occur when individuals with different personality traits, communication styles, or behavioral preferences find it challenging to work together with others harmoniously. These clashes can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, and difficulties in interactions. Individual preferences which is the differences in personalities may include varying levels of assertiveness, communication preferences, and approaches to problem-solving, and even contrasting values or priorities. Understanding and managing personality clashes is crucial for fostering a positive and productive work environment. Finding common grounds and cultivating empathy are frequently required

to foster collaboration despite varying personality types. Communication styles, conflict resolution approaches, values and views, job preferences, decision-making preferences, interpersonal skills, cultural differences, leadership approaches, personal habits, and fairness perception are a few frequent factors that contribute to personality conflicts. It's critical to understand that personality clashes are inevitable in any organization and it is important to manage and capitalize on the strength of these differences for enhanced work output rather than trying to remove them.

Role Ambiguity: This is the lack of clarity or uncertainty about one's job responsibilities, expectations, and the scope of authority within an organization. Carter and Harper (2016), define role ambiguity as a dual process of stress that occurs when roles are not clearly understood, and the outcomes that emerge as a consequence of such uncertainty. This ambiguity can lead to conflicts. Unclear job roles and responsibilities can result in employees stepping on each other's toes or feeling undervalued. Uncertainty about roles among employees can result in overlapping duties and unclear expectations, which can cause friction within the library. It can also cause stress and frustration. Leaders in organizations must comprehend how role ambiguity result in disputes.

Bad governance: This refers to the failure or deficiencies in an organization's or broader governance structure's decision-making processes, policy implementation procedures, and resource management practices. Conflicts may be exacerbated by weak governance in a number of ways. Practically in every organization, this is one of the main sources of conflict resulting from the leadership of the organization's decisions



and activities. This could be a situation when management uses the available resources but is unable to satisfy the requirements of the workers. Mukhtar, Abdullahi and Ishaq (2017) define bad governance as the failure to govern competently, effectively and proficiently. Most employees are deprived of their welfare benefits, salary increment, promotion benefits and arrears etc. When these vices are not effectively controlled, they can cause social instability and stagnation within the workplace, which can then result in disputes. Lack of transparency, corruption and nepotism, ineffective rule of law, resource mismanagement, Lack of accountability, violation of human rights, and social inequality are all examples of poor governance. Conflicts resulting from poor governance frequently call for structural improvements, more openness, accountability systems, and initiatives to make sure that decision-making procedures are impartial and inclusive. Understanding the role of governance in conflict dynamics is crucial for fostering stability and sustainable development in workplace.

Disparity in resource allocation:

This refers to an uneven or unequal distribution of resources, such as financial resources, time, manpower, or other assets, among individuals, groups, or entities within an organization. This imbalance can lead to conflict and may be perceived as unfair or unjust by those who experience this imbalance. In an organization this refers to an uneven or unequal allocation of resources, such as financial resources, time, personnel, or other assets, among persons, organizations, or institutions. For instance, if one department routinely obtains more financial allocations than another without obvious reasons. This may lead to irritation, low morale, and potential disputes amongst

groups of people or teams who believe that the allocation is unfair. Adomi and Anie (2006) remarked that disparity in resource allocation can arise from various factors, within the organizations and on a broader societal level. Inequitable policies, lack of transparency, corruption, political influences, social and economic inequality, inadequate planning and assessment, limited access to information inefficient governance structure are some of the aftermath of disparity of resource allocation. A fair and supportive corporate culture will reduce potential disputes and ensure that resources are used equitably in harmony with organizational goals.

Effects of conflicts on job performances of staff of academic libraries in Delta State

Conflicts in academic libraries can have wide-ranging detrimental effects on both the internal functioning of the library and the quality of services provided to patrons. These negative consequences are observable in the services delivery and attitude of the library staff. This refers to how internal disputes and tensions within an organization can negatively impact the attitudes, motivation, and efficiency of its employees. Some of the effects of conflicts on staff job performances in the academic library include:

Decreased morale and work productivity: When conflicts arise among library staff, it can lead to tension and disagreement, which in turn create a negative work environment that brings down productivity and removes job satisfaction. It can create a toxic or tense work environment that can lead to feelings of frustration, disillusionment, and dissatisfaction among employees. According to Ugwuanyi and Idoko (2012), conflicts lead to considerable delay in relaying and implementing official



decisions. This effect can lead to low productivity and poor job performances from the library staff.

Poor library staff Collaboration and Communication: These refer to ineffective or insufficient interaction and teamwork among individuals or groups in a workplace. When conflicts arise, there is bound to be unclear, ambiguous and confusing messages in workplace, working in isolation, and failing to knowledge and information can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations among library staff which further compounds the situation leading to reduced effectiveness and efficiency in providing library services. Alharrasi and Alhijji (2016) highlighted cultural and psychological issues, including resistance to change, lack of understanding, mistrust, and attitude of indifference and insensitivity, as barriers to poor staff library collaboration and communication with resultant intricate effects on workplace harmony.

Poor Quality Service Delivery: This refers to the quality of service delivery provided by the library staff to users as a result of conflict among the staff. Some of the negative effects of conflicts on customer service delivery decreased responsiveness to library practices and services, negative atmosphere, staff turnover, inconsistent service delivery, poor communication etc. Ferguson and Collins (2007), stated that disagreements or tensions among staff members may spill over into interactions with library patrons, affecting the level of assistance and support offered to users.

Diminished Innovation and Creativity: This refers to a decline or reduction in the generation of new ideas, solutions, products, or processes, as well as a decreased ability to think creatively and

adapt to change. Conflict can stifle innovation and creativity within the library. This can take the form of lack of novel ideas, limited problem-solving options, reduced experimentation, decreased adaptability, loss of competitive advantage that affects productivity. According to Haddow & Klobas, (2004), when staff members are preoccupied with resolving conflicts or are hesitant to share ideas due to fear of backlash, they can be hindered from the exploration of new approaches and initiatives. It's essential for library staff to cultivate a culture that encourages experimentation, embraces failure as a learning opportunity, and values diverse perspectives in order to foster innovation and adaptability.

Risk of Reputation Damage: This refers to the negative impact on how an individual, organization, or institution is perceived by others due to internal disputes, disagreements, or confrontations. In the academic library, this damage can manifest as a perception of unprofessionalism, loss of trust, negative word-of-mouth, damage to brand image, impact on funding/support, and the attrition of talent. Aman, (2010), stated that the quality of academic library services is directly related to the quality of the library staff and that a well-qualified, experienced, and happy library staff devoid of conflict attributes can provide high quality and efficient services. The public perception of the academic library can be adversely affected by existing internal conflicts among staff members, with negative workplace dynamics. This may rob off on the image of the institution, potentially damaging its reputation and credibility within the academic community. The damage resulting from conflicts in an academic library can have significant long-term consequences in



its ability to fulfill its mission, attract users, secure funding, and retain talented staff.

Conflict management strategies that enhance job performances of staff in academic libraries

Conflict management strategies are systematic approaches employed to handle and resolve conflicts within organizations. These strategies aim to address differences and disputes in a constructive manner, minimizing negative consequences and fostering positive outcomes. They are a set of techniques required to identify and resolve conflict in the workplace. Since conflict is a normal part of any work environment, conflict management's goal is to detect and minimize the negative effects of conflict rather than eliminate it. These management strategies are used to handle conflicts with fairness and efficiency. The following are strategies used to manage conflicts that will enhance staff job performances in the academic library environment:

Collaboration: When people or parties to a dispute cooperate to find amicable resolutions, it is referred to as a cooperative approach. Collaboration emphasizes open communication, understanding, and cooperative problem-solving in order to create a win-win scenario as opposed to a win-lose situation. According to Keyton (2020), collaboration is any form of contact when members of a team, organization, or person work together to accomplish a common activity, objective, or output. It is necessary for parties to communicate honestly about their wants, concerns, and points of view when using collaboration as a conflict management technique. This promotes empathy and understanding. There is also the need for each party to listen actively to the other's point of view, fostering

a deeper understanding of the underlying issues. Additionally, the emphasis is on coming up with solutions that take into account the interests and worries of all parties, which frequently entails brainstorming and investigating original ideas. In order to build a long-lasting solution that will increase the productivity of the business, collaboration requires a foundation of mutual respect and a willingness to accept the validity of other opinions. When collaborating, maintaining the parties' connection is a top goal and the relationship is significant, collaboration is very beneficial. Instead of promoting antagonistic dynamics, it promotes a good and cooperative atmosphere that fosters a sense of cooperation.

Compromise: This entails locating a compromise or a well-balanced solution that only partially meets the requirements and interests of all parties. It is a solution to an issue that permits two or more opposed or dissimilar things to coexist, according to the online Cambridge dictionary (2023). This approach acknowledges that in order to come to a consensus, each side might need to give up some of their preferences. For example, in an academic library, disputes between departments on the purchase of specific books may arise. One department is adamant about buying books in their particular subject, while another department makes the case for a larger library. A middle ground would be to give each department a certain percentage of the money so that each can purchase certain books that interest them. When conflicting requirements develop in the presence of scarce resources, conflict may also result. A solution may be reached by allocating resources—like study space or research materials—in a way that takes into account the interests of different user groups.



The same holds true for disagreements over budget and policy formulation. Poor communication could be checkmated to prevent conflicts by promoting clear and open communication channels, fostering active listening, and providing communication training, and creating a culture that values transparent and respectful interactions. Open communication, adaptability, and a readiness to give in for the benefit of the library community as a whole are necessary for compromise. In the organizational context, encouraging open communication, building awareness of other viewpoints, and fostering a culture of cooperation can help lessen the effects of personality conflicts.

Mediation: This is an approach whereby a mediator—a third person who is impartial—helps disputing parties communicate and negotiate in order to arrive at a solution that works for both. Mediation is a voluntary procedure "where a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage, or resolve a conflict by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements,"(United Nations ,2012).Mediation may be a useful technique in an academic library setting for resolving conflicts and promoting a cooperative and positive atmosphere. This can be accomplished through the use of an unbiased mediator who schooled in conflict resolution, or it can be accomplished by allowing each side to the dispute a chance to voice their concerns and points of view during an open presentation. Creating a formal agreement or action plan outlining the agreed-upon outcome can facilitate further mediation. When there is a significant and continuing relationship between the disputing parties, such as in the academic community, mediation is very helpful. It encourages

comprehension, gives people the power to actively engage in problem-solving, and may help create a productive and cooperative work atmosphere in the library.

Negotiation: This is a conflict resolution technique where parties to a disagreement have talks and discourses to get to a mutually agreeable resolution to an intriguing situation. Negotiation may be used to resolve conflicts on a range of topics in the setting of an academic library, including resource distribution, policy formulation, and interpersonal conflicts among library workers. To do this, the management of the academic libraries must first pinpoint the problems that are giving rise to the disagreement (Gruning, 2022). Everybody involved is expected to be ready for the discussion by outlining their goals, areas of interest in the conflict, and possible solutions. Parties who have been wrong will also be forced to voice their fears, desires, and concerns while actively brainstorming and listening to other people's points of view to find a common ground. Compromise and trade-offs will need to be made; which may entail coming up with original ideas to solve everyone's main concerns. This process finally results in an agreement. To maintain accountability and clarity, it is crucial to document the terms, condition and acts of each agreement that is made. Negotiation is a flexible and dynamic process that allows for the exploration of multiple perspectives and the development of solutions that can be acceptable to all parties involved. It's a valuable strategy for resolving conflicts in the academic library setting (Thwala, 2022).

Training and Education: These proactive approaches to conflict management in academic libraries deals with giving people the abilities, information, and consciousness. Afshaneh (2023) remarked



that education plays an important role in conflict management. It is used to promote human rights, strengthen civil society and foster greater respect for rule of the law, it reduces potential for violence and promotes understanding between different cultures. During the process of giving people the specialized information, abilities, and skills needed to increase productivity and performance in their current roles. Academic libraries may provide a peaceful, encouraging environment where disputes are resolved early and maintain a good mood for both staff and library patrons by making investments in training and education of library staff. Training and education of staff of the academic libraries can be achieved through attending workshops on conflict resolution, where valuable conflict resolution skills and knowledge of conflict management can be impacted. Training and educating library staff to understand leadership skills can instill conflict prevention and resolution as essential components of effective management.

Establishing Clear Policies and Procedures: This entails developing formal policies that specify how disputes will be identified, dealt with, and settled in a library environment. It's similar to having a guidebook that everyone can consult when things become complicated. Conflicts that arise inside the organization should be clearly defined by acknowledging the increasingly important role policy plays in the organization (Hinterleitner and Sager, 2022). This might include policy about conflicts arising from resources within the library, arguments among staff members, or confrontations with patrons. Setting up precise standards facilitate early detection and assistance. Clear communication, well-defined job roles, and regular feedback can

mitigate the negative effects of role ambiguity and reduce the likelihood of conflicts. It should be clearly stated how staff or patrons can bring disputes to the attention of the library administration. For example, having a hotline or toll free line for conflicts which allows everyone to call in when the need arises. Creating a conflict resolution team or designating specific staff members or conflict desks as points of contact for conflict-related issues will moderate the emergence of conflicts. There should be a clearly stated procedure of how conflict related information will be handled to protect the privacy of those involved. This builds trust and encourages individuals to come forward with their concerns. Developing a step-by-step guide (blueprint) for handling conflicts will also help avoid the emergence of conflicts within the organization as the process is more predictable and transparent. The creation of disputes will be further controlled by clearly defining the repercussions of wrong behavior and the disciplinary actions that may be taken in the event that disagreements remain unresolved. This acts as an incentive and emphasizes how crucial it is to follow library regulations and provides a mechanism for the periodic evaluation and revision of conflict management guidelines. Policies should be updated by the library administration to reflect changing conditions and frequent evaluations will guarantee that the guidelines are still applicable and efficient. This will help to create a positive and healthy environment in the library by promoting consistency, justice, and openness. The choice of conflict management strategy depends on various factors, including the nature and severity of the conflict, the relationship between parties, and the desired outcomes. Effective conflict management



often involves a combination of strategies tailored to the specific situation.

Research method

The descriptive research was employed in carrying out this study. The research design was chosen because it enabled the researcher to draw conclusion by collecting data from the representative of the entire population. The population of the study consisted of all 317 (academic librarians and library officers) library staff in Delta State higher institutions of learning comprising of all the universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education in Delta State(See Appendix A) . The entire population of 317 was used for the study since it can be conveniently managed by the researcher. The instrument for data collection for the study is a structured questionnaire which bothers on the research questions. 317 instruments were distributed, but only 220 questionnaire were returned giving a 69.40 % return rate. The research instrument was in two part, A and B. Part A covered information on personal data, while part B, is based on the research questions. Part B, has sections A, B and C. section A has

11 items on the causes of conflict in staff job performances of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria and Section B has 6 items on the effects of conflicts on staff job performances of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria, while section C has 13 items on the strategies for conflict management in staff job performances of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. The instrument occurs in a five point rating scale, which are Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Moderately Agreed (MA), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research question. The decision rule was derive on a 5 point Likert Scale, based on the normal value and were interpreted using real limit of values. Thus any item with a criterion mean (x) rating of 3.00 and above were accepted while items with mean rating below 3.00 were rejected.

Data Analysis

Research question 1: What are the causes of conflicts in job performances of library staff in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Causes of conflicts on library staff job performances on staff of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria.

S/N	Items	SA	A	MA	D	SD	Σ	X	Std	Remk
1.	Poor communication	101	75	24	15	5	912	4.15	1.00	Acpt
2.	Role ambiguity	120	65	25	8	2	953	4.33	0.83	Acpt
3.	Library policies	92	70	35	13	10	881	4.00	1.10	Acpt
4.	Cultural differences	60	71	52	20	17	797	3.62	1.19	Acpt
5.	Lack of training	80	103	21	12	4	894	4.06	0.96	Acpt
6.	Inadequate facilities	60	60	45	35	20	765	3.48	1.29	Acpt
7.	Limited resources	131	60	22	5	2	973	4.42	0.83	Acpt
8.	Interpersonal issues	112	69	30	5	4	940	4.27	1.17	Acpt
9.	Workload and stress	96	54	48	12	10	874	3.97	1.14	Acpt
10.	Bad governance	88	90	27	9	6	907	4.12	0.95	Acpt
11.	Power dynamics	90	71	39	12	8	883	4.01	1.06	Acpt



The library staff were required to indicate their level of agreement to the various stipulated items.

Table 1 above shows library staff scores on 11 items statement in which they were requested to indicate the causes of conflicts in their job performances. The collated scores guided the researcher’s findings. From the results in table 1, item 7 (limited resources) recorded the highest mean of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 0.83 respectively. This affirms that limited resources in the form of finance, manpower, time and other assets in an organization can lead to conflicts and consequently, poor job performances of library staff. This item was closely followed by item 2 (role ambiguity) with a mean score of 4.33 and standard deviation of 0.83 respectively. Interpersonal issues and poor

communication were next in line of items with mean scores of 4.27, and 4.15 with standard deviation of 1.17 and 1.00 respectively. Bad governance, lack of training, poor dynamics and library policies were next. They have mean scores and standard deviation of 4.12 (0.95), 4.06 (0.96), 4.01 (1.06) and 4.00 (1.10) respectively. Still on the causes of conflicts in job performances of library staff, workload and stress, cultural differences and inadequate facilities were also indicated as causes of conflicts. They have mean scores and standard deviation of 3.97 (1.14), 3.62 (1.19) and 3.48 (1.29) respectively.

Research question 2: What are the effects of conflicts on job performances of library staff in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Effects of conflicts on job performances of library staff of academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria.

S/N	Items	SA	A	MA	D	SD	Σ	X	Std	Remk
1.	Poor collaboration and communication	112	77	15	10	6	939	4.27	0.96	Acpt
2.	Diminished innovation and creativity	88	72	34	18	8	874	3.97	1.10	Acpt
3.	Reduced morale and productivity	94	70	37	15	4	895	4.07	1.01	Acpt
4.	Negative impact on customer services	100	100	12	6	2	950	4.32	0.77	Acpt
5.	Lead to retention issues	77	84	30	19	10	859	3.90	1.11	Acpt
6.	Reputation damage	65	102	33	11	9	863	3.92	1.00	Acpt

The library staff were required to indicate their level of agreement on the various statement items on effects of conflict on staff performance. Table 2 above shows library staff scores on 6 items requesting to find out the effects of conflicts on job performances. The collated scores guided the researcher’s findings. From the results in table 2, item number 4 recorded the highest mean score of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.77 respectively. This was closely followed with item number 1, which has a mean score of 4.27 and a standard deviation of 0.96. Item number 3 stated that conflict reduced morale

and productivity have a mean score of 4.07 and a standard deviation of 1.01 respectively. The item stating that conflict diminishes innovation and creativity was recorded to have a mean score of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 1.10. Other items recorded to have acceptance mean scores include; items number 6 and 5. They have mean scores of 3.92 and 3.90 and standard deviations of 1.00 and 1.11 respectively

Research question 3: What are the conflict management strategies that will enhance job performances of staff in academic libraries in Delta State?



Table 3: Strategies to overcome conflicts in job performance of staff in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria.

S/N	Items	SA	A	MA	D	SD	Σ	X	Std	Remk
1.	Conflict resolution workshops	80	88	44	4	4	904	4.11	0.89	Acpt.
2.	Mediation	132	73	12	3	---	997	4.53	0.66	Acpt.
3.	Training in Communication	79	89	39	9	4	890	4.05	0.93	Acpt.
4.	Leadership development	80	80	44	14	2	882	4.01	0.95	Acpt.
5.	Team building	73	91	31	11	14	858	3.90	1.11	Acpt.
6.	Clear policies	122	70	22	5	1	967	4.40	0.78	Acpt.
7.	Open communication channels	111	61	45	3	---	938	4.26	1.16	Acpt.
8.	Confidential reporting mechanisms	107	58	39	7	9	907	4.12	1.20	Acpt.
9.	Regular review policies	102	70	30	15	3	865	3.93	1.00	Acpt.
10.	External resources	90	56	50	20	4	868	3.95	1.07	Acpt.
11.	Conflict prevention strategies	86	71	51	7	5	886	4.02	0.98	Acpt.
12.	User education programs	81	72	49	9	9	867	3.94	1.06	Acpt.

The library staff were required to answer questions on conflicts management strategies to indicate their level of agreement on the various statement items. Table 3 above shows library staff scores on 12 items in which they were requested to find out the conflict management strategies that will enhanced their job performances. The collated scores guided the researcher's findings. From the results in table 3, item 2 recorded the highest mean score of 4.53 and a standard deviation of 0.83 respectively. This indicates that meditation is a vital tool in conflict management that can enhance library staff job performances. Clearly spelt out library policies was next with a mean score of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.78. Open communication channels, compromise and conflicts resolution workshops were closely followed with mean scores and standard deviation of 4.26 (1.16), 4.12 (1.20) and 4.11 (0.89) respectively. Training in conflict management, conflict prevention strategies and leadership development have mean scores and standard deviation of 4.05(0.93), 4.02(0.98) and 4.01(0.95) respectively. At the lowest level of agreement on conflict management strategies are negotiation, user

education Programme, regular review policies and collaboration (team building). They have mean scores and standard deviation of 3.95(1.07), 3.94(1.06), 3.93(1.00) and 3.90(1.11) respectively.

Discussion of findings

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that all the 11 statements were agreed as items that cause conflicts in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. This is as a result of the fact that they all score above the criterion mean of 3.00 and above. These remarks of acceptance align with the opinions of Robbins and Judge (2019), Carter and Harper (2016), Mukhtar, Abdulahi and Ishaq (2017), that interpersonal issues, role ambiguity, bad governance, lack of clear library policies, poor communication, limited resources are major causes of conflicts in an organization.

Included in the findings of the study are the effects of conflict on job performances of staff in academic libraries in Delta State. The study revealed that when conflict exist in the academic libraries, it create negative impact on the customers' services delivery, poor collaboration and



communication among library personnel, reduction on staff morale and productivity tends to arise among the staff, poor innovation and creativity are not left out as consequences of conflict in the academic libraries. Reputation damage and retention issues among staff are also some of the consequences of conflict in the academic libraries in Delta State. All these accepted items corroborated the views of Alharrasi and Alhijji (2016), Ugwuanyi and Idoko (2012), Aman (2010).

In addition, findings from the study show that all the items stated as strategies for managing conflicts were accepted. This is because they scored above the criterion mean of 3.00 and above. This clear cut acceptance is in line with the views of Keyton (2020), the United Nation (2012), Hinterleitner and Sager (2022), Arulsamy et al (2023), that maintained that conflict resolution workshops, team building within the organization, clear library policies, good meditation between conflicting parties, engaging conflicting parties in negotiation, compromise, training and users education program etc are good strategies for managing conflicts that will in-turn enhance and improve the library staff's job performances.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is therefore concluded that poor communication, lack of clear library policies, workload and stress, limited resources in the form of finance, personnel, facilities lack of training and interpersonal issues are some of the major causes of conflicts in the academic libraries in Delta State Nigeria.

Consequently, for entrenching a harmonious work environment that is minimally devoid of conflict, in academic libraries in Delta State Nigeria, the study reveal that, there

should be existing documented library policy to consistently guide the staff conducts, the staff should be willing to compromise on issues that will create a harmonious working environment, there should be collaboration among staff, there should be regular review of the library policies and good communication training.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings from this study, the following recommendations were proffered in order to sustain a harmonious workplace in academic libraries in Delta State Nigeria:

1. Effort should be made by the library management to identify major causes of conflicts in libraries and ensure that library operate a clear policy indicating these black spots so that staff will become aware and avoid them. They should also make provision for regular review of the policy.
2. Management should having identified the effects of these conflicts put up stringent measures to curb their occurrence and map out consequences for defaulters. They should create a committee for conflict management. Creating a section for conflicts and conflict management resources will raise awareness of this concern that is critical in libraries and the nation at large.
3. Efforts should be made to create room for implementation of conflict management strategies meditations, negotiation, open communication among staff, and organize conflicts resolution seminars/workshops for the library staff. This will help salvage and boost unhealthy rivalry among staff.



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