

Gender, Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution Proficiency of Managers in Nigerian Organizations

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Abstract. This study investigated the influences of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos, Nigeria using one hundred participants (52 males and 48 females). Findings of the study revealed a significant effect of emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency ($t(1, 99) = -18.364, P < 0.05$). Results also showed that significant differences exist between female and male managers' conflict resolution proficiency $t(1, 99) = -72.859, p < 0.05$. The study further revealed an interactive influence of the two variables on managers' conflict resolution proficiency $F(1, 99) = -13.462, P < 0.05$. Based on findings of the study, we recommend that organizations should adopt the policy of recruiting male and female managers with high EI and high conflict management proficiency. This is because hiring employees and managers who have these characteristic traits yields twice as much result compared to those with low EI and low conflict management proficiency. Organizations should also provide conflict management proficiency training to their managers for efficient and effective performance. Lastly, changes should be effected in the design of today's organizations to accommodate flatter, decentralized, and less complex social systems that will make it easier for the managers to manage in order to reduce

conflict in the organization to its barest minimum.

Keywords: Gender, Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Management, Proficiency, Managers

1. Introduction

Managerial leadership is a topic of great importance to people who are administrators or managers, to people who aspire to be administrators or managers and to those who are employees in organizations. The concept of managerial leadership has fascinated mankind for thousands of years. The kind of managerial leadership style in a workplace enhances subordinates' performance, involvement and commitment and further determines the manager's ability to resolve conflicts in the organization. What a manager or leader does influence to a greater extent the level of effectiveness and cooperation of his or her subordinates and vice versa.

In examining the social system in an organizational set up, systematic appraisal needs to be done to understand the kind of manager or leader the organization has. This is because the man in the organization who overcomes great odds, battles seemingly un-surmountable obstacles, influence followers to do the things that he wants them to do; and achieves great success is the image of the leader or manager

and his ability to run the organization effectively and efficiently. The concept of managerial leadership suggests a process of goal attainment, follower satisfaction and group cohesion and support. Managerial leadership requires a dynamic and innovative approach to problems commonly perceived by a group of people. The primary function of the manager/leader in any group is to facilitate the accomplishment of group goals.

Over the years valuable questions have been raised about managerial leadership to include the following-How are leaders or managers made? When and why is managerial leadership seen as being important? How do leaders or managers come to be perceived as such? These questions signify that managerial leadership is an interpersonal issue as well as a personal one. The social psychology of interpersonal relations and the psychology of interpersonal influences are both crucial to the manager or leader in order to take care of the interactions between him (the leader) and his subordinates. Within organizational context, Krietner and Kinicki (2001) posit that managerial leadership is a social influence process in which the manager seeks the voluntary participation of his or her subordinates in an effort to reach set organizational goals/targets.

Managerial leadership entails more than just wielding power and exercising authority; it is exhibited at varying levels. At the individual level, for example, leadership involves mentoring, coaching, inspiring, and motivating (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001); the leader builds teams, creates cohesion, and resolve conflicts at the group and organizational levels. Finally leaders build culture and create change at the organizational level. What the leader does, rather than who he is, is the determinant of how well he leads; leaders behave in characteristic ways. Steers (1999) and Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2003) in their seminal works identified three of such patterns of leadership behavior as participative, authoritarian, and delegate ship usually termed "leadership styles". A style of leadership is a relatively enduring set of behaviors which are the characteristics of the individual regardless of the situation.

Although in recent times our organizations have been constantly changing in order to improve

their competitive position, this does not, of course, mean that such organizations are learning to manage conflict more effectively. The problem is that managers and administrators attempt not so much to understand and deal with conflict functionally as to find ways of reducing, avoiding, or terminating it. It appears that this state of affairs has remained unchanged. Steers (1999) concludes that unresolved conflict often results in loss of productivity, the stifling of creativity and the creation of barriers to cooperation and collaboration. Perhaps most importantly for managers, good conflict resolution ability equals good employee retention. Managers who don't deal with conflict will eventually watch their good talents walk out the door in search of healthier and safer work environment. As a result, Rahim (2002) concludes that valuable resources are wasted as employees engage in dysfunctional conflict and miss the opportunity of utilizing functional conflict to improve their effectiveness.

For any organization to excel in today's highly competitive global economy there is need to properly address the issue of its leadership especially the manager's style, proficiency and ability to promptly address the interpersonal and intergroup conflicts in his or her organization which are key factors in determining how well its employees will get along, get involved and be committed to work. Once the style of leadership does not encourage employee commitment and involvement; they become de-motivated and tend to feel like aliens in the organization and this consequently leads to low motivation in pursuing creative ideas that will enhance organizational productivity. This can further brew dysfunctional conflict that can manifest at varying levels in the organization.

Several underlying factors that are of interpersonal, intergroup and organizational nature, contribute to workplace conflict. The most obvious forms of conflict are those based on interpersonal relationship and tensions; office politics, gossips, rumors, etc (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001; Steers, 1999) and their consequences are easy to observe. Clashing personality types, language and cultures as well as gender conflict often lead to harassment or discrimination charges (Birkhoff, 2017; Watson, 1988). Hierarchy and conflicting interests lead to

work-related conflicts. They can arise out of resource allocation, workload or benefits (Krietner & Kinicki, 2001) as well as role ambiguity and role conflict (Mwantu, 2007). If groups perceive unequal treatment, this can lead to resentment and conflict over real or imagined disparities (Kelman, 2009).

Each of us has his or her way of dealing with conflicts. Studies have indicated that our ability to address conflicts both at home and at work are based on many variables, such as our gender, our personality and emotional quotient, the environmental situations, the nature of the conflict, and where we are in our professional career (Birkhoff, 2017; Semadar, Robins & Ferris, 2006). Conflict is a common occurrence in organizations, and with the advent of women in the managerial realm (Juliet, 2003; Leah, 2005; Songra, 1989; Watson, 1988), researchers have become interested in the question of whether women and men vary significantly in their conflict management styles and conflict management abilities?

Although this interest has encouraged many researchers to investigate the issues of gender differences and conflict management styles (Chusmir & Mills, 1989; Bastian, Burns & Potter, 2005; Songra, 1989) and conflict management proficiency (Kaushik & Dhaka, 2010; Rahim, Psenicka, Polychroniou, Zhao, Yu, Chan, et al, 2001; Watson, 1988); there has been limited research to explore the interactive influences of gender and managers' EI on their conflict resolution effectiveness and proficiency particularly in Nigeria. This particular study therefore hypothesized that gender, and the manager's emotional intelligence or EQ are likely to have significant influences on Nigerian managers' conflict resolution proficiency.

Because female and male managers occupy different roles at work and at home, role theory suggests that they would use different conflict resolution behaviors in each role and will therefore exhibit different abilities in resolving such conflicts too (Songra, 1989). Gender for example, have been found to affect and permeate conflict dynamics at the individual, organizational, and societal levels (Birkhoff, 2017). Understanding the role of gender in conflict according to Birkhoff is best accomplished through an analysis of individual

levels, interactional levels and societal levels (p.1) Birkhoff further posits that within these three levels of analysis, there are two paradigms namely the essentialist paradigm which assumes a separate female world - one in which women are by nature different from men; and the post-modern feminism paradigm which focuses on the exchange between the social construction of individuals and the individual's constitution of themselves.

Various other studies have also been conducted on the influence of gender as a predictor of managers' conflict negotiation behavior. Carol Watson investigated whether gender or power was a better predictor of manager's negotiation behavior (Watson, 1988). She hypothesized that perceived gender differences in negotiation behavior are an artifact of status and power difference between men and women. That study provided a more realistic view of the legitimacy of gender stereotype by comparing the effects of power and gender on conflict negotiation behavior. Watson found that power was a better predictor of the feelings, behavior and outcomes of managerial negotiations than gender (Watson, 1988; Birkhoff, 2017).

The construct of emotional intelligence has also attracted a lot of research attention in the health sector, education, psychology and the world of work in recent times. Several studies by Cherniss and Adler (2000), Karuri and Tanko (2007), Coe, Palmer and Elshabazz (2012) and Reece (2014) have found that emotional intelligence has significant impact on various elements on everyday living including the individual's organizational job performance and ability to negotiate in conflict situations. Coe et al (2012) found that higher emotional intelligence was a good predictor of life satisfaction. Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as a subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and use the information to guide ones thinking and actions. Salovey and Meyer further proposed a model that identified four different factors of emotional intelligence: the perception of emotion, the ability to reason using emotions, the ability to

understand other's emotions and the ability to manage one's own and others' emotions.

- (i) Perceiving emotions: The first step in understanding emotions is to accurately perceive them. In many cases, this might involve understanding non-verbal signals such as body language and facial expressions.
- (ii) Reasoning with emotions: The next step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. Emotions help prioritize what we pay attention and react to; we respond to things that garner our attention.
- (iii) Understanding emotions: The emotion that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. For example, if someone expresses an angry emotion, the observer must interpret the cause of the anger and what it might mean.
- (iv) Managing emotions: The ability to manage emotions effectively is a key part of emotional intelligence. Regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspects of emotional management.

Studies have also shown that emotional intelligence is related to perceived stress and social adjustment (Franzoi, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence is an important factor that determines success in life as well as an individual's psychological wellbeing. Everyone have certain level of emotional intelligence and will take a position towards what is confronting him either positive or negative life events and will compromise with them.

A person who has high emotional intelligence gives order and stability to his life in such a way that with high emotional intelligence, he will experience less negative events in his life (Franzoi, 2000). For example, most psychologists consider happiness as one of the basic human emotions just as anger, disgust,

surprise and sadness (Franzoi, 2000; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001).

Franzoi further posits that happiness' essential components include: positive emotions, life satisfaction, and lack of negative emotions; positive relations with others, having purposeful life, personal growth and love of others which are all direct aspects of our emotional intelligence. Thus, this study seeks to examine the effects of the variables of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency or ability. It is the view of this study that when the variables are taken together, a better understanding of their effects on workplace behavior would be of considerable help in developing a more effective and robust conflict resolution model and practical counseling and dispute resolution techniques for managers of Nigerian organizations in particular and conflict resolution practitioners in general.

A brief look at workers' productivity in today's organizations reveals that most workers have a hard time fitting into the work environment and acclimatizing with the organizational culture, Furthermore, the level of anger, hate and unfriendly "politics" (organizational politics) shows a heightened need for proper orientation and or reorientation about emotional intelligence. Today's organizations hold high standards when it comes to strict organizational culture and meeting of deadlines and this has over the years posed very serious challenges particularly to the management of such organizations. This effect also puts employees under high pressure to meet deadlines, interact with customers and produce results and these attempts in some cases lead to conflicts between employees themselves, and between employees and management of the organization.

The ability to resolve such conflicts however differ from one manager to the other; some previous studies have held many individual variables, such as gender, personality and emotions, the environmental situations and the nature of the conflict, as factors responsible for such diversities (Birkhoff, 2017; Sogra, 1989). This study therefore examined the role of gender and emotional intelligence as factors that

influence the manager's organizational conflict resolution proficiency/ability.

The main aim of the study therefore was to investigate the roles of gender and emotional intelligence on the manager's conflict resolution proficiency/ability. The study examined the following specific research objectives:

- (i) Ascertain the relationship between gender and conflict resolution proficiency.
- (ii) Determine the predictive impact of emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency;
- (iii) Investigate the predictive interaction effects of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiencies.
- (iv) Proffer plausible solutions by way of recommendations towards effective conflict resolution in work organizations in Nigeria.

In order to achieve these objectives, the study hypothesized that:-

- There would be significant effect of gender on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos, Nigeria.
- There would be significant effect of emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos, Nigeria.
- There would be significant interaction effects of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos, Nigeria.

The study was conducted in public and private organizations in the metropolis of Jos and Bukuru in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study was necessary because it will provide information on the specific influences of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' ability to resolve conflict in the workplace. The results of findings could also help policy makers in formulating policies that boarder on labor laws that could help with recognizing gender issues and the

place of emotional intelligence in resolving endemic disputes at the workplace. The findings of this study will be useful to top management in public and private organizations in designing effective policies that could enhance their organizational culture to create friendly environments for high level productivity.

2. Method

Participants and Setting

The participants were 100 supervisors and managers (52 males and 48 females) drawn from public and private organizations in Jos/Bukuru metropolis. As stated above, the organizations used in the study included the Plateau State Revenue Commission, Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Jos District Office and owners, supervisors and managers of selected private businesses such as Poultry farms, welding outfits, hair dressing and barbing salons and sports lottery game outfits. Others are car and tricycle hiring companies, pharmaceutical stores and restaurants all drawn from a pool of Small Scale to medium businesses that operate in the metropolis. The respondents in the study were selected using the convenience sampling technique since participation was voluntary. The selection of participants caught across the genders.

Research Design

The 2x2 factorial designs were used for the study; this is because there are two independent variables of gender (Male and Female) and emotional intelligence (low and high), respectively. The dependent variable in the study was manager's conflict resolution proficiency.

Measures

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection in the study. The questionnaire is a self-report paper and pencil test which was administered individually to participants. Three scales of measurement were merged to get the responses of the participants. The questionnaire therefore was divided into three sections. Section A assessed participants' socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, highest educational qualification, marital status, position, and years of managerial work experience). Section B of the questionnaire contained items on emotional intelligence scale

which was used to measure participants' level of emotional intelligence and Section C measured the respondents' proficiency in conflict management.

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)

Developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998); the scale is a 32-item scale with a five-point Likert-type scale. The instrument has three categories: (a) the appraisal and expression of emotion assessed by 13 items; (b) the regulation of emotion assessed by 10 items; and (c) the utilization of emotion assessed by 9 items. Participants read each statement and decided whether they 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', are 'undecided', 'agree', or 'strongly agree' with the statement. Schutte et al. (1998) reported a Cronbach alpha of 0.90 internal consistency for adults with mean age of 29.3 (SD = 10.2) and $r = 0.78$ for test-retest reliability after a two-week interval on the scale for a smaller group drawn from the sample. Schutte et al. (1998) further reported predictive validity of $r(63) = 0.32$ for first year GPA of college students. For the scale's discriminate validity they reported $r(41) = -0.06$ for the correlation between the scale and SAT scores, and $r(22) = -0.28$ to 0.54 for subscales of NEO Personality Inventory of scores of college students. The scale is scored by summing up scores. A higher score is indicative of high emotional intelligence, while a lower score is indicative of low emotional intelligence.

Conflict Management Proficiency Scale (CMPS)

The Conflict Management Proficiency Scale was developed by Vanadan Kaushik and Sunati Dhaka in 2010 to assist male and female managers in identifying their attitudes toward conflict management (Kaushik & Dhaka, 2010). The scale assesses managers' proficiency in managing organizational conflicts. Different people have approached conflict management differently and conflict management proficiency assessment is the essential first stage in the process of conflict management and resolution. The scale according to Kaushik and Dhaka, offers a reflective tool, which clarifies disputants' interests, positions and issues and allows revealing of others. At the same time, it builds a shared body of knowledge and information made available to the manager

through the use of this scale of measurement. The tool then, at times, may begin to reframe relationships, build interests and issue-based coalitions (Shmueli 2003). There was requirement for developing such conflict management proficiency assessment tool that is embedded in reflection and social learning and can help reveal disputes through self-discovery. Present tool can bring those issues into lime light that are important to disputants in addition to understanding the priorities that motivate the beliefs and actions of others. Assessment using this tool can be helpful in building relationships and in eliciting the managers' participation in managing and resolving conflict.

The instrument has received international adaptability with significantly high reliability and validity coefficients and good inter-item factor analysis coefficients even on African samples including Nigeria (Akintayo, 2006; Rahim et al, 2001). After item analysis, CMP scale was subjected to test of reliability for judging its stability so that it yields consistent results. The CMP scale was found to be reliable for the study of Conflict Management Proficiency of managers and leaders. The values of reliability coefficient of correlation by split - half method and test - retest method were found to be 0.82 and 0.79 respectively. The scale, thus, had both internal consistency and stability.

The tool was further validated to assure its dependability in assessing conflict management proficiency in managers in the study setting. Criterion related validity of the scale was established by calculating the index of reliability that came to be 0.903 by split - half and 0.89 by test - retest method.

Procedure

The researchers selected two public organizations namely the Plateau State Board of Internal Revenue and Power Holding Company of Nigeria, Jos District Office and seventy five owners of small/medium business private organizations all operating in Jos/Bukuru metropolis using the convenience sampling method (Coolican, 2009). Thereafter, the researchers approached the management of the respective selected organizations and sought for permission to carry out the study. When permission was granted, the researchers administered the Questionnaires based on

willingness to participate by the respondents. This is due to the tight and busy nature of this set of respondents. One hundred and eight Questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The Questionnaires were administered personally by the researchers so as to ensure a high rate of validly completed document that would generate the information and data required for the study. The completed Questionnaires were collected and out of the number administered, 100 were finally selected for the study. The remaining eight were discarded due to incomplete supply of information or errors made in completing them. Participants were debriefed regarding the study. Furthermore, the completed questionnaires were coded and analyzed.

Data Analysis Tools

A number of descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used for the purpose of analysis with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software Version 21. These include the percentage and standard deviation and Regression Analysis of Variance (RANOVA). The Regression Analysis of variance is a statistical test procedure for comparing multivariate population means of several groups; it uses the variance-covariance in testing the statistical significance of the mean differences of the variables used in a study. Statistical reports of the data generated for this particular investigation provided individual p-values for each independent variable, indicating whether differences and interactions are statistically significant. The results are presented below:

3. Results

Descriptive Statistics

S/N	Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Gender	1.48	.502
2	Age Group	1.88	.795
3	Marital Status	1.71	.591
4	Religion	1.46	.610
5	Years of Service	1.78	.773

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	52	52.0
Female	48	48.0
Total	100	100.0
Age Group	Frequency	Percent
20-35yrs	38	38.0
36-45yrs	36	36.0
46 & Above	26	26.0
Total	100	100.0
Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	36	36.0
Married	57	57.0
Divorced	7	7.0
Total	100	100.0
Religion	Frequency	Percent
Christianity	60	60.0
Muslim	34	34.0
Others	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0
Years of Service	Frequency	Percent
1-10yrs	43	43.0
11-20yrs	36	36.0
21yrs & Above	21	21.0
Total	100	100.0

Table one shows that, out of the 100 respondents who were supervisors and managers in public and private organizations used for this research, 52.0% of them were males whereas 48.0% were females, respectively. Age ranges of participants were from 20-46years. The table shows that 38.0% of the respondents were within the ages of 20-35 years; 36.0% were within 36-45yrs while 26.0% were 46 years old. Concerning marital status of the respondents, 57.0% were married while 7.0% were divorced. None of the respondents was single. Sixty percent of the respondents in the study were Christians, 34.0% were Muslim and 6.0% were worshipers of the African Traditional Religion (ATR), respectively. Finally, the managerial experiences of respondents were also analyzed and it was found that 43.0% of the respondents had either served the organization as Supervisor or manager for 1-10years; whereas 36.0% had manage their respective organizations for between 11-20years and 21.0% had manage the organization for 21 years and above.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviations of Respondents on Demographic Variables

Table two presents the mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents' gender, age group,

marital status, religion and years of service respectively. For instance, mean 1.48 and SD of .502 for Gender, Mean 1.88 and SD of .795 for Age Group of the respondents, Mean 1.71 and SD of .591 for marital status, Mean 1.46 and SD of .610 for Religion and Mean 1.78 and SD of .773 for years of service/managerial experience of respondents, respectively.

In order to test the hypotheses of this study, the data were further analyzed using Regression Analysis of Variance (RANOVA) and the results are presented below.

H1: There would be significant effect of gender on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Variance (RANOVA) of Respondents' Gender on Conflict Resolution Proficiency

	Paired Differences					t	df	Correlation	Sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Gender- Managers' Conflict Resolution Ability	-76.890	10.553	1.055	-74.984	-74.796	-72.859	99	.075	.461

Table 3 indicates that, there is a significant effect of gender on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos. The result shows $t(1, 99) = -72.859$, $p < 0.05$. The table further reveals that a significant difference exists between female and male managers' conflict resolution effectiveness. This vividly reveals the influence of gender on the respondents' conflict resolution effectiveness. The result supports or confirms hypothesis one.

resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos.

Table 4 indicates that there is a significant effect of emotional intelligence on manager's conflict resolution proficiency in the organizations studied. The result shows $t(1, 99) = 18.364$, $P < 0.05$) that emotional intelligence has significant effect on manager's conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in the area the study was conducted indicating that the result of analysis supports hypothesis two.

H2: There would be significant effect of emotional intelligence on manager's conflict

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Variance (RANOVA) of Respondents' EI on Conflict Resolution Proficiency

	Paired Differences					t	df	Correlation	Sig
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Emotional intelligence & Managers conflict resolution ability	35.760	19.473	1.947	31.896	39.624	18.364	99	.419	.000

The result as presented in table 4 confirms the significant influence of emotional intelligence on the respondents' conflict resolution proficiency. This indicates that managers with high EI are assets to their respective

organizations in terms of performance, employee cooperation and the manager's ability to resolve interpersonal and intergroup conflicts compared to managers with low emotional intelligence.

Table 5 indicates that, there is a significant interaction effect of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency/ability in public and private organizations in Jos. The result shows $F(1, 99) = -13.462, P < 0.05$. Therefore, gender and emotional intelligence have significant interaction effects on managers' conflict resolution proficiency/ability in public and private organizations.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of Variance (RANOVA) of the Interactive Effects of Gender and EI on Respondents' Conflict Resolution Proficiency

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression					
1 Residual	3280.777	3	1093.592	-	.000b
Total	7798.533	96	81.235		
	11079.310	99			

4. Discussion

Findings of the study were discussed in light of the results presented above. Hypothesis one stated that there would be significant effect of gender on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos. The result revealed a significant effect of gender on the respondents' conflict resolution ability in the public and private organizations the respondents manage. This result corroborates previous research which found that multiple variables such as gender have some correlation to conflict resolution effectiveness (Babajide, 2000). Of great interest is the interaction of heterogeneous (opposite sex) and homogeneous (same sex) dyads in managing subordinate conflicts (Akintayo, 2006; Monroe, Disalvo, Lewis & Berzi, 1991). These authors investigated the effect of gender on conflict management style of supervisors in relations to difficult subordinates and reported that the supervisors' perceived sex of the difficult subordinates had the greatest effect on conflict resolution style and ability of the manager. They found that male subordinates use relational leverage (confrontation) more often with a

female supervisor and female subordinates use avoidance more often with male supervisors.

The finding further reveals that female managers in selected work organizations were more effective in managing industrial conflicts than their male counterparts. This may be due to the fact that female managers mostly adopt democratic management style in the course of managing industrial conflict which makes them to be more proficient and effective than male managers, who tend to adopt autocratic management style which in itself at times brews more conflict.

There is also some evidence that male managers tend to use more aggressive competitive, confronting, assertive, pro-task and coercive strategies more often and faster than female managers (Ajaja, 2004; Akintayo, 2006; Sorenson & Hawkins, 1995; Watson, 1989). Babajide (2000) on the other hand, noted that authoritarian style is prevalent among female managers while the democratic style is manifested more by male managers.

Further supporting this result, Birkhoff (2017) in her investigation explained that gender is a significant determinant of manager performance in the workplace. She emphasized that male and female managers differ in their abilities to resolve conflict at home and in the organization. If this is the case, the implication could be that gender has a significant correlation with job performance and particularly the manager's ability to handle conflicts that occur between employers and employees, and between different groups of employees in the organization.

In contrast with the findings of this study, some researchers do not agree to the fact that gender significantly has an impact on the manager's conflict resolution proficiency and ability (Korabic, Baril & Watson, 2000; Cole & Streeter, 2003). These authors found that female managers do not differ from male managers in preferred conflict management style; but they do differ from their conflict resolution effectiveness. Leah (2005) reported that gender does not have as much influence as the experience of the managers in conflict resolution and managerial effectiveness in work places.

Hypothesis two stated that there would be significant effect of emotional intelligence on

manager's conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos. The result obtained from a test of the hypothesis indicates that there is a significant effect of emotional intelligence on manager's conflict resolution proficiency among the respondents in this particular study. In corroborating this result, previous studies also concluded that by using their own emotional competencies, managers can encourage subordinates to enhance their performance and problem-solving strategy (Karuri & Tanko, 2007). The perception of subordinates of their supervisors' use of these skills may have positive impact on the subordinates' problem-solving strategy and proficiency in conflict resolution in the organization in particular and the community in general. Therefore, the major challenge for 21st Century organizations is to enhance the emotional intelligence of their managers.

Goleman (1998), Cherniss and Adler (2000) and Reece (2014), in their respective studies concerning the influence of EI concluded that managers may be trained to enhance their EQ so that their subordinates are encouraged to use more problem-solving and less bargaining strategies of handling conflict. This will help the supervisors and subordinates to work together to attain organizational goals. Improving managers' EQ would however, involve education and specific job-related training. Managers should also be encouraged to enhance their skills through continuous self-learning. Supporting this result further, Dabke (2016), studied the relationship between performance-based EI and transformational leadership as exhibited by participants in the workplace with leadership effectiveness as perceived by their supervisors and subordinates. The sample comprised 200 managers who were administered the Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso EI Test and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X scale. Superior's perception of leadership effectiveness was measured via the MLQ 5X scale as well as effectiveness scale developed by Shanock and Eisenberger (2006).

Hypothesis three revealed that there is a significant interaction effect of gender and emotional intelligence on managers' conflict resolution proficiency in public and private organizations in Jos. This result corroborates

previous studies that were conducted on the different variables of this study as have been presented above. (See Ettany & Okem, 2016; Mukhuba, 2016) for related studies on gender influence on managers' conflict resolution ability. Goleman (1998) and Bar-on, Handley and Fund (2006) for related studies concerning the influence of EI on managers' conflict resolution ability. Others are Rahim et al (2002) and Kaushik and Dhaka (2010) for results of studies that investigated the influence of manager's conflict management proficiency to resolve organizational conflicts.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that gender and high emotional intelligence significantly increase employee productivity and a manager's ability to resolve organizational disputes and conflicts. This reflects the kinds of research that are the current focus within the area of emotional intelligence and employee work productivity. The fact that gender and emotional intelligence significantly influence employee productivity may have valuable implications for organizational recruiters, trainers, and supervisors. Emotional intelligence and conflict management proficiency are particularly important as they enable male and female managers with these traits to tackle important organizational problems including the resolution of interpersonal and intergroup conflicts to enhance achievement of organizational goals.

The management of people at work is an integral part of the management process. To understand the critical importance of people in the organization is to recognize that the human element and the organization are synonymous. An effective organization will therefore make sure that its workers remain motivated and productive, having a spirit of cooperation; with little or no space left in the organization for disputes and conflicts. It is an undisputable fact that conflict management proficiency is the essential first stage in the process of conflict management and resolution.

6. Recommendations

Nigerian Organizations may have to adopt the policy of recruiting male and female managers with vision and charisma who are likely to be high in EI and proficient in managing conflicts. This is because hiring employees and managers who have these characteristic traits gives twice as much result compared to those with low EI and low conflict management proficiency. High EI and proficient managers enhance better achievement of organizational goals and add more value to the organization (Reece, 2014). To achieve this, organizations should provide conflict management proficiency training to their managers for effective and efficient performance.

Lastly, all 21st Century Organizations should effect changes in their design to accommodate creating flatter, decentralized, and less complex social systems that will make it easier for the managers and leaders to manage in order to reduce conflicts in the organization to its barest minimum.

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