



# **Conflict Management Strategies and Teachers Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the relationship between conflict management strategies and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Four research questions and four hypotheses directed the study. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was two hundred and forty-five (245) school administrators from thirty-five (35) public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State. A sample of 245 school administrators was derived for the study through census sampling technique. Instruments titled “Conflict Management Strategies Questionnaire (CMSQ) and Teachers’ Performance Questionnaire (TPQ)” were used for data collection while; the test re-test reliability method was used to achieve a reliability index of 0.85 after validation by experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and the t-translation used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that conflict management strategies such as avoidance, collaborating, compromising and accommodating conflict management strategies have a strong relationship with teachers’ performance. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that principals should use the conflicts management strategies to resolve issues amicably with teachers to enhance teachers’ performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Keywords: Conflict, Avoidance, Collaborating, Compromising and Accommodating

## **INTRODUCTION**

Conflict is a common phenomenon in any organization where different interest groups exist. In an organizational setting, different groups and individuals come with various interests, which they desire to satisfy. When these interests are at variance, conflict is obvious. Brown (2010) defined conflict as a form of interaction among parties that differ in interests, perceptions and preferences. It is that process which begins when one party perceives that one or more of its concerns have been or are about to be frustrated or blocked by another party (Sisk, 2015).

Conflicts always exist in the life of individuals, groups, social structures and society in general. It inevitably arises between management and staff and between management themselves, as holding different views which are both natural and healthy to a group. It occurs when individuals or groups are not obtaining their own self-interest. Some forms of conflict can be destructive to the institution, for instance, when they take attention away from other important issues facing an institution.

There are different forms of conflict that exist in organizations and these are classified as: interpersonal conflict, intrapersonal conflict, intra-group conflict and intergroup conflict. These forms of conflict can be effectively managed using any of these strategies: compromising, avoidance and collaborating. Conflict

could have debilitating effects on the school's organizational structure. It is noteworthy that apart from Teachers Service Commission (TSC) code of regulation and conduct for teachers, the Ministry of Education does not provide formal guidelines on conflict management in secondary schools. Hence, the study investigated conflict management strategies and teachers performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

### **Conceptualization of conflict**

According to Ughamadu in Olubor, Abdulkareem, Alabi and Adeyanju (2017) conflict is a disagreement over an issue; sometimes such disagreements may be positive or negative. In the view of Sherrif (2014), it is an existing state of disagreement or hostility between two or more people. Conflicting situations arise in disagreement, anger, quarrel, hatred, destruction, killing or war. To this end, Sherrif (2014) further noted that, any outward attitude capable of charging up the political or social environment is likely to culminate in conflict. Greed, covetousness, self-centeredness, discontent, envy, arrogance, rudeness and impunity, among other acts are capable of producing a breakdown of human relations thus resulting in organizational conflict.

Within the school setting, conflict that is unresolved is highly detrimental to the institution, however strategies for resolution that can yield either negative or positive results exist. Therefore, the relationship between conflict and teacher's performance depends on conflict management strategies employed by school principals. Daniel (2017) identified five (5) levels of conflict which have been paraphrased thus: Level 0: This is often an unconscious conflict which is vaguely understood to pinpoint; whereby someone feels wronged but may not be able to single out the problem. Level 1: An issue which is seemingly problem is identified. Level 2: During the "Disagreement" individuals get involved in personal attacks thus losing sight of the issue at hand. Level 3: Exaggerations and mis-characterizations due to opposing alliances formed. Level 4: In stage 4 the focus moves from winning the conflict to destroying the opposing party completely; as the opposing party is characterized to be evil that must be completely annihilated. Level 5: The original issues are essentially forgotten and several misinterpretations has deepen the conflict series.

### **Avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers performance**

Avoidance conflict management strategy is a strategy that occurs when one party in a potential conflict ignores the conflicting issues that give right to the conflict. This strategy is typified by delegating controversial decision, accepting default decision and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings. It can be appropriate when victory is impossible, when the controversy is trivial, or when someone else is in a better position to solve the problem. Hossein and Nasser (2010) stated that, avoidance involves neglecting the conflict or deny the availability of conflict as one seeks for neither own concerns nor others. Methods of doing this include changing the subject, putting off a discussion until later, or simply not bringing up the subject of contention as stated by. This is a strategy in managing conflict that tends to affect teachers' performance, when there is a conflict in the school instead of confronting the conflict, sometimes this conflict maybe between teachers and administrators, most teachers tend to avoid it and the same problem continue and remain, and sometimes affect teachers in their performance in the class and school in general. Okoth (2012) was of the view that school managers who were fond of using avoidance strategy to manage conflict ended up in more conflict. However, in many situations, this is a weak and ineffective approach to take. Avoidance strategy become functional when: one party believes that the other party cannot face confrontation, one or both parties lack confrontation skills. Disaster is likely to ensue if confrontation takes place. Avoidance management strategy has the tendency to prompt counter productive work behaviour (Kehinde, 2011). When using this conflict mode a person knows there is a conflict but decides not to deal with it by ignoring, sidestepping, being non-committal or withdrawing from the issue or interaction. It puts parties in a lose/lose relationship where a choice is made not to address the feelings, views or goals of either party. Avoidance style of conflict management is used when there is a tendency for people, or groups in conflict to withdraw from the conflict situation or remain neutral. Managers using

this style are neither assertive nor co-operative. The relationship with the other party is unimportant. Avoidance management strategy is used due to the fact that people perceive conflict to be evil, unnecessary or undignified and people avoid it by withdrawing, or simply leaving the scene of conflict (Deborah & Dennis, 2016).

#### **Collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance**

Collaborating conflict management strategy is a conflict management strategy in which the parties to a conflict tries to work together with each other. Collaborating style of conflict management is sometimes called problem-solving or integrating, involves working through conflict differences and solving problems so that everyone wins. It seeks to resolve conflict by placing maximum focus on both groups' concerns. The collaborative strategy views conflict as problems to be solved and finding creative solutions that satisfy all the parties' concerns. Collaboration takes time and if the relationship among the parties is not important, then it may not worth the time and energy to create a win-win solution. It is commonly named as problem-solving style. Parties in collaboration aim to come up with a successful resolution of conflict without compromising their key issues (Olubor, Abdulkareem, Alabi & Adeyanju, 2017). Additionally, collaboration fosters respect, trust, and builds relationships. To make an environment more collaborative, conflict must be addressed directly and in a way that expresses willingness for all parties to get what they need. Collaborating strategy is employed in conflict management when the concern is to satisfy both parties. It is highly assertive and highly cooperative; the goal is to find a "win/win" solution. Appropriate use of the collaborating strategy leads to integrating solutions, learning, merging perspectives, gaining commitment, and improving relationships.

According to Wager (2013), using this strategy supports open discussion of issues, task proficiency, and equal distribution of work amongst team members and development of creative problem solving. Huan and Yazdanifard, (2012) argue that those who prefer collaboration style resolve conflicts in the best way which is accepted by all concerned parties. They view the style as one that tackles the conflict issues openly and frankly without taking sides and also communicating with all the parties. This strategy is appropriate to use frequently in teachers' environment and very ideal for their performance and therefore its underuse can result in using quick fix solutions, lack of commitment by other team members, disempowerment, and loss of innovation and morale hence poor performance of teachers. Baumgartner (2012) added that collaboration is the way to achieve the best outcome on important issues as well as build good relationships since it takes into account all of the parties' underlying interests. When this approach is adopted in the school, it makes sure that the needs of teachers involved in the conflict are satisfied.

#### **Compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance**

The compromising conflict management strategy is a conflict management strategy which involves the willingness of all parties to a conflict to concede some of their own views and focus on the others views to reach an agreement. The compromising strategy is finding a middle ground or forgoing some of your concerns and committing to other's concerns. The compromising strategy is used with issues of moderate importance, when both parties are equally powerful and equally committed to opposing views. Ghaffar (2012) observed that, this approach results in the parties' attempting to win as much as possible while preserving the interpersonal or inter-group relationships as much as possible. Compromising skills is the ability to communicate and keep the dialogue open, the ability to find answers that is fair to both parties, the ability to give up part of what you want, and the ability to assign value to all aspects of the issue. This involves a give-and-take situation in which both parties will give up something after negotiation in order to reach an agreement (Yuan, 2010). Overuse of the compromising strategy leads to loss of long-term goals, a lack of trust, creation of a cynical environment, and being viewed as having no firm values which results in making concessions to keep people happy without resolving the original conflict. Baumgartner (2012) added that compromise backfires when parties overlook important principles and long-term goals for the sake of the details. Moreover, it is not the best way to reach an optimal solution on important issues. The parties also risk engaging in excessive "horse-trading" while losing sight of the big picture.

However Baumgartner (2012) further stated that its underuse leads to unnecessary confrontations, frequent power struggles, and ineffective negotiating. This influences the performance of teachers.

#### **Accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance**

Accommodating conflict management strategy is a strategy that suppresses one's perceived views while focusing on the other's views of the situation. Accommodating entails setting aside one's personal needs because the individual desires to please others in order to keep the peace. The emphasis is on preserving a relationship. It can be useful when one is wrong or when you want to minimize losses as it preserves relationships (The Participation Company, 2016).

Accommodating strategy is appropriate to use in situations when you want to show that you are reasonable, develop performance, create good will, keep peace, retreat, or for issues of low importance. Accommodating strategy of conflict management can be good when it comes to academic performance because the students will be comfortable hence dedicate most of their time to studying. Accommodating skills include the ability to sacrifice, the ability to be selfless, the ability to obey orders, and the ability to yield. One of their main desires may be to keep everything the same. When accommodating is overused certain behaviors emerge. Some of these emergent behaviors include giving up personal space, being overly helpful and then holding a grudge, and speaking in an extremely quiet almost unintelligible voice. Underuse of the accommodating strategy can result in lack of rapport, low morale, and an inability to yield.

Baumgartner, (2012) pointed out that; the focus of this strategy is on the relationship, as opposed to the outcome. The downside is that your ideas do not get sufficient attention and may be neglected. This may cause poor teachers performance in an institution especially in schools. This strategy has a negative side though since the teachers may think that the principal is too good and not strive for efficiency and effectiveness of school goals hence poor performance.

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

Most school principals in Public secondary Schools do not undergo principalship training through the Nigeria Education Staff Institute (NESI). This is as a result of unexpected and abrupt appointments to replace disengaging teachers, due to retirement, death and job mobility.

These newly recruited principals find it a herculean task to handle conflict in their newly posted schools, thus causing tension which degenerates into teachers' poor performance in classroom management. In addition, conflict in senior secondary schools arise as a result of teachers sharing school facilities in course of doing their school work, invigilation of internal and external examinations, infighting and favoritism. No wonder Flanagan and Runde (2010) averred that leaders and managers should develop conflict competence if their organizations are to prosper. It is against this background that the study investigated conflict management strategies and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The study established the relationship between conflict management strategies and teachers' performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Specifically, the study:

1. Determined the relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Examined the relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. Determined the relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
4. Ascertained the relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers'

performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the extent of relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. What is the extent of relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?
3. What is the extent of relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?
4. What is the extent of relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level:

- Ho1 There is no significant relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- Ho2 There is no significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- Ho3 There is no significant relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- Ho4 There is no significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The research design used for this study was the correlational design. The total population consist of 105 Principals and 140 Heads of Departments totaling to 245 school administrators in the 35 public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. A sample size of 245 was gotten through a census sampling technique. Two structured questionnaires titled "Conflict Management Strategies (CMS)" and Teachers' Performance Questionnaire" (TPQ) were used to collect data from the respondents. The instruments had two (2) sections, sections A and B. Section A dealt with demographic information of respondents while Section B had 15 items. The response scale was structured based on modified likert rating scale Very High Extent (VHE); High Extent (HE); Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) with values 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Test-retest was used to determine and obtain a reliability index of 0.85. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical tool was used to answer the research questions while t-test transition was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### **RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *What is the relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State?*

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) Analysis on the Relationship Between Avoidance Conflict Management Strategy (AVCMS) and Teacher’s Performance (TP) in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas.**

		Correlations	
		AVCMS	TP
AVCMS	Pearson Correlation	1	.318**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	245	245
TP	Pearson Correlation	.318**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	245	245

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

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

The result on Table 1 above shows that there is a moderate and positive relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and school teachers’ performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis with a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value of .318\*\* ; P-value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 243. This infers that when school administrators adopted the avoidance conflict management strategy teachers’ performance in schools were positively correlated.

**Research Question 2:** *What is of relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers’ performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State?*

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) Analysis on the Relationship Between Collaborating Conflict Management Strategy (COLCMS) and Teacher’s Performance (TP) in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas.**

		Correlations	
		COLCMS	TP
COLCMS	Pearson Correlation	1	.597**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	245	245
TP	Pearson Correlation	.597**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	245	245

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

Table 2 above shows that there is a high and positive relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers’ performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis with a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value of .597\*\* ; P-value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 243. This infers that when school administrators adopted the collaborating conflict management strategy teachers’ performance in schools were high.

**Research Question 3:** *What is the relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State?*

**Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) Analysis on the Relationship Between Compromising Conflict Management Strategy (CCMS) and Teacher's Performance (TP) in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas.**

		Correlations	
		COMCMS	TP
COMCMS	Pearson Correlation	1	.275**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	245	245
TP	Pearson Correlation	.275**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	245	245

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

The result on Table 3 above showed that there is a low and positive relationship between Compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis with a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value of .275 \*\* ; P-value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 243. This infers that when school administrators adopted the compromising conflict management strategy teachers' performance in schools were low.

**Research Question 4:** *What is the relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State?*

**Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) Analysis on the Relationship Between Accommodating Conflict Management Strategy (ACCCMS) and Teacher's Performance (TP) in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas.**

		Correlations	
		ACCCMS	TP
ACCCMS	Pearson Correlation	1	-.443**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	245	245
TP	Pearson Correlation	-.443**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	245	245

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

Table 4 above shows that there is a moderate and positive relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and school teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis with a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value of -.443 \*\* ; P-value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 243. This infers that when administrators adopted the accommodating conflict management strategy teachers' performance in schools were moderately positive.

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Table 5: Summary of t-test Transition on the Significant Relationship Between Avoidance Conflict Management Strategy and School Teachers' Performance**

Variables	N	Df	PPMCC	t-cal.	t-crit.	LS	Decision
Avoidance Conflict Management	245						
		243	.318**	49.33	$\pm 1.96$	0.05	Rejected
School Teachers' Performance	245						

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

The result on Table 5 showed a t-test transition value of 49.33 which was greater than the t-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 level of significance and 245 degree of freedom, and the alternative hypothesis upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. It was therefore concluded that there is a significant relationship between Avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

**Table 6: Summary of t-test Transition on the Significant Relationship Between Collaborating Conflict Management Strategy and School Teachers' Performance**

Variables	N	Df	PPMCC	t-cal.	t-crit.	LS	Decision
Collaborating	245						
		243	.597**	49.39	$\pm 1.96$	0.05	Rejected
Teachers' performance	245						

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

Table 6 showed a t-test transition value of 49.39 which was greater than the t-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 level of significance and 245 degree of freedom, and the alternative hypothesis upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. It was therefore concluded that there is a significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

**Table 7: Summary of t-test Transition on the Significant Relationship Between Compromising Conflict Management Strategy and School Teachers' Performance**

Variables	N	Df	PPMCC	t-cal.	t-crit.	LS	Decision
Compromising	245						
		243	.279**	49.333	$\pm 1.96$	0.05	Rejected
Teachers' performance	245						

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

Table 7 above show the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient(r) analysis on the relationship between Compromising Conflict Management Strategy (COLCMS) and Teacher's Performance (CRM) in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas. The result on table 7 showed that the t-test transition of 49.333 was greater than the t-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 level of significance and 245 degree of freedom, and the alternative hypothesis was



upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. It was therefore concluded that there is a significant relationship between Compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Ho<sub>4</sub> There is no significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Table 8: Summary of t-test Transition on the Significant Relationship Between Accommodating Conflict Management Strategy and School Teachers' Performance**

Variables	N	Df	PPMCC	t-cal.	t-crit.	LS	Decision
Accommodating	245	243	.443**	49.338	±1.96	0.05	Rejected
Teachers' performance	245						

**Source: Field Survey (2020)**

The result on Table 8 showed a t-test transition of 49.338 which was greater than the t-critical value of ±1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at 0.05 level of significance and 245 degree of freedom, and the alternative hypothesis upheld which states that there is a significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. It was therefore concluded that there is a significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

## DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Finding on research question 1 shows a moderate and positive relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers' performance. This moderate and positive relationship was indicated by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) value of .318\*\*. Hypothesis 1 finding revealed a t-calculated value of 49.33 and a t-critical value of ± 1.96 which shows a significant relationship between avoidance conflict management strategy and teachers performance. In agreement, Okoth (2012) was of the view that school managers who were fond of using avoidance strategy to manage conflict ended up in more conflict. The finding was also in consonance with Kehinde, (2011) who was of the view that avoidance management strategy has the tendency to prompt counter productive work behaviour.

Finding on research question 2 showed a high and positive relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance. This high and positive correlation was indicated by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) value of .597\*\*. Hypothesis 2 finding indicated a t-calculated value of 49.39 and a t-critical value of ±1.96 which shows a significant relationship between collaborating conflict management strategy and teachers performance. This finding was in agreement with Huan and Yazdanifard,(2012) who noted that collaboration style resolves conflicts in the best way which is accepted by all concerned parties. Furthermore, Wager (2013) buttressed that using this strategy supports open discussion of issues, task proficiency, and equal distribution of work amongst team members and development of creative problem solving; and the needs of teachers involved in the conflict are satisfied.

Finding on research question 3 showed a low and positive relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers' performance. This low and positive correlation was indicated by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) value of .275\*\*. Again hypothesis 3 finding showed a t-calculated value of 49.33 and a t-critical value of ±1.96 which reveals a significant relationship between compromising conflict management strategy and teachers performance. This finding

corroborates with Yuan (2010) who observed that, overuse of the compromising strategy leads to loss of long-term goals, a lack of trust values, creation of cynical environment and being viewed as having no firm values which results in making concessions to keep people happy without resolving the original conflict. Baumgartner (2012) also noted that compromise backfires when parties overlook important principles and long-term goals for the sake of the details.

Finding on research question 4 revealed a moderate and positive relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers' performance. This moderate and positive correlation was indicated by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) value of  $-.443^{**}$ . Hypothesis 4 finding revealed a t-calculated value of 49.34 and a t-critical of  $\pm 1.96$  which indicates significant relationship between accommodating conflict management strategy and teachers performance. This finding agrees with Baumgartner (2012) who stressed that, the focus of this strategy is on the relationship, as opposed to the outcome.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the management strategies of conflict viz: avoidance, collaborating, compromising, and accommodating conflict management strategies have moderate and high positive relationship with teachers' performance. This implies that school administrators utilization of these conflict management strategies positively correlates with teachers performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study made the following recommendations:

1. School managers can use avoidance conflict management techniques while dealing with trivial issues in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State.
2. Collaborating conflict management strategy which has been proved to be the best conflict management strategy should be adopted by principals in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State
3. Principals should adopt the compromising conflict management strategy when dealing with issues of less importance to enhance effective teachers' performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
4. Principals should understand the nature and skills required for effective management and control of teachers in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

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