

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY IN  
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES: THE CASE OF OTOVWODO IN UGHELLI  
NORTH LGA, DELTA STATE**

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**Abstract**

*This study examined conflict resolution strategies and employees' productivity in small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. Four research questions guided the study. This study adopts a descriptive survey design to investigate the study variables. The population of the study constitutes of all small and medium enterprises owners in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There is no statistics to determine the actual number but the researcher used head count to arrive at 2,500. The researcher employed Purposive sampling approach select 211 small and medium enterprises owners for the study. Questionnaire was the main instrument used in collecting information for this study. The responses to the questionnaire's items were designed on a four-point scale of measurement. The weighted mean of 2.5 was used as the bench mark for assessing the results. Descriptive statistics and, mean rating were used to analyses the data obtained from the survey. The outcome of the study revealed that there are some major sources among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There are many reasons why conflict resolution is important among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There are many challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There are several strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. Conclusion was drawn and useful recommendations made which include among others that organizations be it private or public, small or big should formulate and execute policies, programme, rules and actions that are legal and employees based.*

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**Keywords:** Conflicts, small and medium enterprises, managers, resolution and productivity

**Introduction**

Conflict is prevalent in all social life, a foreseeable phenomenon in any system that involves human presence and collaboration. It is an inevitable part of living because it is related to circumstances of scarce resources, division of functions, power tussles and

role-differentiation (CRESTCON, 2020; Owsiak, 2021; Bercovitch, 2011). Employees often see themselves at intersection over certain decisions and habitually rattle over vital resolutions involving resources, policy issue directions, manner of statements and collaborations. It

is therefore not an incongruity to envisage conflicts in any system, particularly the environments. At times, these conflicts and crisis sometimes grow to enormous proportions where they become detrimental to the parties involved and the schools, thereby distracting administration and staff job performance.

Ositoye, Adebayo, Alade and Omolade (2012) attributed conflict to be a clash of interests, values, directions that often spark the phenomenon (skirmish). There can be conflict of facts, conflict of values and conflict of interests (Kauth, 2020; Krakoff, 2021). In addition, conflict is the inability of one of these parties i.e. principal and teacher, to reach agreement on any issue connected with activity. Conflict is equally a mental or spiritual struggle within, often unconscious, resulting from the opposition, clashing or variance of opposed principles, statements, arguments or the simultaneous functioning of mutual exclusive impulses, desires or tendencies. Christina and Anna (2022) defined conflict as the ferocious collision, a brawl or context, a battle or a mental struggle which can be destructive in any organization.

According to Kandell, (2024), conflict can significantly impact businesses in various ways, ranging from operational disruptions to financial losses. Understanding and proactively managing these impacts can help businesses navigate conflicts more effectively and minimize adverse effects. Ignoring workplace conflict can have several negative consequences, impacting

both individual employees and the overall organization (Kandell, 2024).

Employee's Productivity in work organizations centers on the relationship between output and input. That is the quality and quantity of goods and services produced relative to the resources put in place to achieve such output. Employee Productivity (sometimes referred to as workforce productivity) is an assessment of the efficiency of a worker or group of workers. Productivity may be evaluated in terms of the output of an employee in a specific period.

Typically, productivity of a given worker will be assessed relative to an average for employees during similar work, because much of the success of an organization relies upon the productivity of its workforce, employee productivity is an important consideration for organizations. (Appelbaum et al. 2019). When an organization is blessed with highly productive employees, profit of such organization will rise thereby giving room for more expansion and eventual contribution to rational output that can enhance more employment opportunities.

Productivity of employees is contingent on several factors such as availability of factors of production, good technology, good leadership, and managerial styles, good economic policies, business environment in terms of threats, weaknesses, strengths and opportunities, good remuneration, and motivation and above all the level of workplace labor management, peace and cooperation. That is, the existence of

conflict in the workplace if not well managed can degenerate into violence, strike, work stoppage, low productivity, labor management rancor, disharmony of interest, lack of cooperation and disruption of the lofty objectives and goals of the organization. (Donkar, 2015),

According to Akuyoma (2013), who mentioned that every conflict has its peculiar nature, this is embedded in a way the political, social-economic cultural and military setting. More so, Lussier (2016) outlined some major causes of conflict to include personal difference, information being interpreted differently, different objectives with incompatible roles, environment factors, poverty, scarcity of resources and conflict due to frustration.

Conflict is any disagreement between to individuals in the same or different organisations (Omene, 2021). Scholars alluded that conflict refers to when one person is aggrieved with another individual (Osabiya, 2015; Olukayode, 2015). In addition, Dialoke and Edeh (2017) stressed that conflict arises in the workplace when there is clash of interest amongst individuals working in the same organisation. It was shown that whenever differences exist, conflict is bound to take place (Osabiya, 2015). On the other hand, conflict resolution strategies are processes of resolving disagreement between employee and employer. Wainaina Magoma and Mange (2020) argued that conflict resolution strategies include avoidance, compromising,

accommodating, collaboration and competing.

Conflict management strategies help to not only resolve disputes but to cultivate an environment where collaboration thrives, enriching the delivery of educational services (Ohunakin, Adenike, Olumuyiwa, Adewale & Oluseyi (2019)). Kitz (2018), identified lack of motivation, anti-authority and chronic deviants as some of the challenges of conflict resolution This agrees with Malik, Baig & Manzoor (2020) who pointed out that the first step in resolving conflict is clarifying its source. Taking initiative, whether it's on a new project or facilitating conflict resolution is a leadership skill, and worth developing if you aspire to work in a managerial or supervisory role (Parag, 2023). Assertiveness can help to enhance management skills (Amede, 2022).

Research has shown that most effect ways to resolve conflict in any government parastatals are through avoidance and compromising strategies (Olukayode, 2015). Mba (2013) supported the above argument and admitted that avoidance and compromising strategies are the best for conflict resolution. In another perspective, Yusuf-Habeeb and Kazeem (2017) maintained that there is no one best strategy through which conflict cannot be resolved rather, the situation would be determinant factor. Adilo (2019) examined the relationship between conflict management and organizational performance in selected breweries in south east, Nigeria and discovered that conflict management has significant positive relationship with organisational performance. Dialoke and

Edeh (2017) examined conflict resolution strategies and workers' commitment in Rivers State, Nigeria and found that conflict resolution strategies such as integrating, collaborating and, compromising strategy have significant positive relationship with workers' commitment.

However, conflict resolution strategies are the lubricants for peace, harmony and orderliness in the workplace. Thus, the rate at which workers are aggrieved with their employer and coworkers generated a lot of argument amongst scholars (Özyildirim & Kayikçi, 2017). In their study confirmed that workers usually disagree with their employer whenever there is disparity in pay, uneven distribution of resources as well as favouritism. But Mba (2013) stated that the causes of conflict should be identified when selecting a strategy to avoid visiting same issue in the long-run. Agreeing with Mba (2013), argued that avoidance strategy and compromising strategy should be deployed in order to end conflict respectively. In addition, Yusuf-Habeeb and Kazeem (2017) argued that the use of avoidance and compromising strategies in settling dispute has shown that conflict can be handled amicably. It is based on these submissions that this research utilizes avoidance and compromising as the strategies for resolving conflict in selected government agencies in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Compromising is also known as reconciliation (Mayowa, 2015). Compromising refers to a situation whereby two parties forfeit some of their major issues for the purpose of reaching a consensus (Akhtar & Hassan, 2021; Uchendu, Anijaobi-idem & Odigwe, 2013). The

outcome of compromising strategy is win-win. Prior research has revealed that employee-employer conflict can be best resolved through a compromise approach (Yusuf- Habeeb & Kazeem, 2017). Some of the benefits of compromising strategy are job satisfaction, mutual benefits, speed settlement of disputes and cost efficiency (Kazimoto, 2013). On the other hand, avoidance is a process of settling a dispute where one party withdraw his/her demand to pave way for peace (Aja, 2014; Kazimoto, 2013). Abdullah (2015) affirmed that avoidance is a conflict resolution strategy whereby one party decides to avoid anything that could jeopardize the harmony that exists between the parties to a conflict.

Various studies have been conducted on conflict resolution strategies, yet many organizations are still broiled with regular skirmishes which have resulted in low production, reduced cash flows, endless excuses, reduction on the quality of its products Akhtar & Hassan, 2021; Uchendu, Anijaobi-idem & Odigwe, 2013). Every unresolved conflict has a measurable impact on your organization. Investing in conflict resolution is not just about restoring harmony, it's about protecting your organization's future. Unresolved conflicts carry costs that go far beyond the immediate disruption but include lost productivity, eroded trust and diminished morale, potential legal challenges and diminished employee wellbeing (Eve, 2025). Unresolved conflict within a team can have several negative impacts, affecting both the team's performance and the overall work environment (Studiocu, 2026). Investing in

conflict resolution is, in essence, an investment in the future health and performance of your organisation. It is in the light of the foregoing, that the study conflict resolution strategies and employees' productivities of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

### **Statement of the problem**

Conflict is not a strange thing for people because we all have our values, needs and habits, so it's easy to misunderstand or irritate one another or worse, to fall into conflict. Conflict occurs in every organization such as schools. Conflicts in business organization system should be handled with care and promptly in order not to disrupt effective service delivery. These conflicts range from conflicts between manager-employee, director-supervisor, and employee - employee to director-community etc.

However, if left unchecked, conflict can lead to bad decisions and outright disputes, bullying or harassment. The aftermath of conflict include teamwork breaks down, morale drops, and projects grind to a halt. Organizations feel the hit with wasted talent, absenteeism, and increased staff turnover. But when conflict is resolved, it can bring issues to light, strengthen relationships, and spark innovation.

The concern of this researcher is that if effective strategies of managing conflicts in small and medium enterprises are not put in place, service delivery will not be effective. This study therefore attempted an examination of conflict resolution

strategies and employees' productivity in small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo In Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

### **Research Questions**

- i. What are some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli South LGA, Delta State?
- ii. What are the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?
- iii. What are the challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?
- iv. What strategies can managers employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?

### **Objective of the study**

This study examined conflict resolution strategies and employees' productivity in small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo In Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

From this, the following specific objectives are drawn:

1. To examine the major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.
2. To verify the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

3. To find out the challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.
4. To determine the strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State

## Literature Review

### A. Causes of Conflicts in Business Organisations

Any scenario in which you live, work, and collaborate with others is susceptible to conflict. Because workplaces are made up of employees with different backgrounds, personalities, opinions, and daily lives, discord is bound to occur (Cole, 2025). When it comes to the complex tapestry of human relationships, conflicts are an inevitable part of the fabric (Powell, 2024).

Adeyemi and Ademilua (2012) defined conflict as all forms of opposition, disagreement, friction between two or more parties and it manifests in the forms of arguments, protests, demonstration, aggression and other destructive behaviours. In the same vein, Mboya, Kiplagat and Yego (2017) defined conflict as a dispute, opposition or disagreements between individuals or groups of people. They further added that conflict occurs when people take opposing stands concerning issues and this can be expressed verbally or through actions.

The endemic nature of conflict in human grouping has been traced to the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individual and/or groups in defined social and

physical environment (Otite, 2015). In similar cases, workplace conflicts can stem from factors such as unclear expectations, power dynamics, personality clashes, or even cultural differences. Addressing them efficiently prevents long-term resentment and fosters a more cohesive work environment (Helps, 2024). Team members may hold varying viewpoints on how a project should proceed, which strategy to adopt, or what goals to prioritize. These differences can escalate into full-blown disputes if left unchecked (Powell, 2024).

### B. Conflict Management

Shahmohammadin (2014) refers to conflict management as the practice of reducing the negative and unbeneficial outcomes of disputes and promoting the positive outcomes with the intension of making working conditions better, conducive and favourable for all players. Okoth, Yambo & Onyango (2016) asserted that every organisation should strive to effectively manage conflicts by employing all methods of conflict management, including guidance and counselling so as to avoid stress, unnecessary fatigue and tensions among stakeholders. In a meta-analysis by Brown and Fields (2018), they found that negotiation emerged as a key strategy for addressing conflicts in organisational settings. Coleman (2015) emphasized the importance of collaborative professional learning communities in addressing conflicts among peers.

Organizations should implement policies that encourage honest discussions. Open-door policies, regular feedback sessions, and structured team meetings can create an environment where employees feel heard and valued, reducing the likelihood of disputes

from escalating (Helps, 2024). However, Oresajo (2016) noted that conflict is not always negative; but the way it is handled may produce negative impacts. He further stressed that conflicts can be used constructively, if handled properly.

### **C. Collaboration Management Strategy**

Management strategy collaboration is a method of conflict management in which a person tries to work together with the other person (Crystal, 2007). Kofman, (2018) refers to it as constructive collaboration as the approach that reveals people's preferences and constraints, and engages everyone in constructing solutions that go way beyond the original alternatives. It maximizes efficiency through cooperation. Yet it is the most unusual because it requires shifting from unilateral control to mutual learning. He further affirms that constructive collaboration allows people to express and understand each other's needs and create new solutions. It addresses the task through consensual decision-making, the relationships through mutual respect, and each individual's self-worth through the consideration of his needs and values. Kalagbor & Nnokam (2015) consider collaboration the best method for conflict management. Huan, & Yazdanifard, (2012) feels that there are many advantages to using a collaborating strategy to handle interpersonal conflict situations. They posit that collaborating with the other party promotes creative problem solving, and it is a way of fostering mutual respect and rapport.

### **Methodology**

The study was conducted using descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design was used because it provides the basic data

needed from the respondents on their experiences and opinions of the problems under study and it helped to give a picture of situation or population and therefore provide the basis for drawing out possible solution to address the problems under study. The population of the study constitutes of all small and medium enterprises owners in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There is no statistics to determine the actual number but the researcher used head count to arrive at 2,500. The research employed Purposive sampling approach select 211 small and medium enterprises owners for the study. This sample size was adequate because according to Asika (1991), 10% element selected randomly from a population is to all INTENTS and purposes deemed to be representative of the population and the findings from a study of that sample can be generalized for the population.

A drafted questionnaire titled: Conflict Resolution Strategies and Employees' Productivity in Small and Medium Enterprises Scale (CRSEPMSCES) was used for this study. The questionnaire was divided into five sections: A-E. The questionnaire is a 4 Likert style questionnaire; strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The scores for the questionnaire should follow this pattern: strongly disagree- 1 point, disagree-2 points, agree-3points and strongly agree-4points. 2.5 weighted mean was used to assess the outcome of the findings.

The instrument was scrutinized by research experts at Novena University, Ogume and National Open University of Nigeria, Emevor study Centre to ascertain the content validity. They modified it and ensure that both the content and face validity of the instrument measured the variables it purported to measure.

The reliability is concerned with the degree to which a test consistently measures what it claims to measure. Instrument reliability was done by administering it on a sample of 30 employees of small and medium enterprises in Warri South Local Government Area, Delta state which was not part of the domiciled population. The exercise was repeated in two weeks interval and the data from both tests were analyzed with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, which gave a positive co-efficient of between .84.

Corrected instrument was administered by the investigator to the respondents. The purpose and intent of the research was well explained before the copies were duly distributed. All respondents were given adequate time to fill in the questionnaire and was not under any form of duress. The researcher waited patiently for respondents to supply valuable responses and also to guarantee a high rate of returns. Out of

the 211 copies of the questionnaires administered to the respondents, 188 were correctly filled and retrieved, which constituted 89% success.

Data that collected from the study were processed and analyzed with Microsoft excel and the SPSS statistical analysis software. Some of the statistical tools used for data analysis include the frequency counts, descriptive statistics and mean rating as they helped in expounding results and giving comparisons.

**Results**

**Answer to Research Questions**

Research Questions1: What are some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises**

S/N	Some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	Differences in communication styles	188	535.00	2.8457	.75476
Q2	Conflicting goals	188	507.00	2.6968	.77982
Q3	Personality clashes	188	507.00	2.6968	.80013
Q4	Misunderstandings	188	515.00	2.7394	.78157
Q5	Competition for resources	188	526.00	2.7979	.74690
Q6	Religious factors	188	522.00	2.7766	.80313
Q7	Personal difference	188	500.00	2.6596	.84084
Q8	different objectives with incompatible roles	188	516.00	2.7447	.73034
Q9	Conflict due to frustration	188	515.00	2.7394	.76776
Q10	Poverty had further aggravated the circumstance of conflict	188	468.00	2.4894	.89257
		1880	5111	2.72	.79

Table 1 showed the Descriptive statistics on some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. It revealed the total sum of 5111, average mean of 2.72 and a standard

deviation of 0.79. The average mean of 2.72 is greater than the bench mark of 2.5. The implication is that there are some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

**Research Questions 2:** What are the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises**

S/N	Reasons conflict resolution is necessary among employees of small and medium enterprises	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q11	Resolving conflict can reduce the stress levels of conflicting parties	188	550.00	2.9255	.71260
Q12	Resolving conflict provides the opportunity to understand a different point of view.	188	568.00	3.0213	.71618
Q13	Increased focus on tasks	188	565.00	3.0053	.80438
Q14	ultimately enhancing overall team productivity	188	524.00	2.7872	.81263
Q15	Improved morale, and a more efficient workflow	188	555.00	2.9521	.71114
Q16	Promotes collaboration	188	556.00	2.9574	.61904
Q17	Ensures issues are addressed before they escalate	188	554.00	2.9468	.70699
Q18	Resolving conflicts promptly maintains a harmonious working relationship	188	561.00	2.9840	.61597
Q19	Helps maintain a positive work environment where team members feel valued	188	564.00	3.0000	.66220
Q20	Develop leadership skills	188	552.00	2.9362	.57224
		188	5549	2.95	.69

Table 2 above revealed the Descriptive statistics on the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. It revealed the

total sum of 5549, average mean of 2.95 and a standard deviation of 0.69. The average mean of 2.95 is greater than the bench mark of 2.5. The implication is that there are many benefits of timely conflict

resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli

North LGA, Delta State.

**Research Questions 3:** What are the challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?

**Table 3: Mean rating on the challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises**

<b>Challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises</b>		N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q21	Conflict can be emotionally charged, and managing those emotions can be difficult.	188	530.00	2.8191	.77339
Q22	Communication breakdowns can occur during conflicts, making it hard to understand each other's perspectives and needs.	188	556.00	2.9574	.73732
Q23	Fear of reprisal attack when employees are punished	188	557.00	2.9628	.65709
Q24	Favouritism and nepotism	188	571.00	3.0372	.68106
Q25	Power imbalances can make it challenging to find a mutually beneficial solution.	188	536.00	2.8511	.78703
Q26	Unspecified responsibilities	188	516.00	2.7447	.73034
Q27	Cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings, making it harder to find major ground.	188	562.00	2.9894	.68591
Q28	Jumping to Conclusions without Having the Facts. ...	188	510.00	2.7128	.76867
Q29	Poor leadership	188	554.00	2.9468	.66810
Q30	There can be multiple perspectives on the same issue, making it hard to find a solution that satisfies everyone.	188	500.00	2.6596	.84084
Total		1880	5392	2.87	.73

Table 3 showed the Mean rating on the challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. Favoritism and nepotism top the list with average mean score of 3.0372 closely followed by cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings, making it harder to find major ground. (2.9894); again, by fear of reprisal attack when employees are punished (2.9628) and

communication breakdowns can occur during conflicts, making it hard to understand each other's perspectives and needs. (2.9574). The total sum was 5392 and the average mean was 2.87 which is above the standard average of 2.5. The implication is that there are many challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

**Research Questions 4:** What strategies can managers employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State?

**Table 5: Mean rating on the strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises**

<b>Strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises</b>		N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
S/N					
Q31	Problem-solving	188	487.00	2.5904	1.14570
Q32	Show Empathy	188	449.00	2.3883	1.16696
Q33	Cooperation	188	448.00	2.3830	1.12441
Q34	Acknowledge Criticism	188	471.00	2.5053	1.05210
Q35	Accommodation	188	511.00	2.7181	1.00814
Q36	Self-control	188	455.00	2.4202	1.07922
Q37	Avoidance	188	470.00	2.5000	1.19491
Q38	Assertive communication	188	457.00	2.4309	1.06500
Q39	Compromising	188	503.00	2.6755	1.19984
Q40	Collaboration	188	475.00	2.5266	1.10145
	Total	1880	4726	2.51	.13

Table 4 showed the Mean rating on the strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. Accommodation tops the list with average mean score of 2.7181, closely followed by compromising (2.6755); again, by problem-solving (2.5904) and collaboration (2.5266) The total sum was 4726 and the average mean was 2.51 which is above the standard average of 2.5. The implication is that there are essential strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among small and medium enterprises in

Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.

**Discussion of Findings**

**Research Question 1:** What are some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State? The finding shows there are some major sources of conflicts among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. This agrees with Ositoye, Adebayo, Alade and Omolade (2012) who attributed

conflict to be a clash of interests, values, actions or directions that often spark the phenomenon (conflict).

**Research Question 2:** What are the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State? The study reveals that there are many the benefits of timely conflict resolution among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. Conflict management strategies help to not only resolve disputes but to cultivate an environment where collaboration thrives, enriching the delivery of educational services (Ohunakin, Adenike, Olumuyiwa, Adewale & Oluseyi (2019)).

**Research Question 3** attempted to examine the challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. The analysis revealed that there are many challenges involved in conflict management. This agrees with Kitz (2018), who identified lack of motivation, anti-authority and chronic deviants as some of the challenges of conflict resolution.

**Research Question 4** sought to survey the strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. The analysis revealed that there are several the strategies that managers can

employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. This agrees with Malik, Baig & Manzoor (2020) who pointed out that the first step in resolving conflict is clarifying its source. Taking initiative, whether it's on a new project or facilitating conflict resolution is a leadership skill, and worth developing if you aspire to work in a managerial or supervisory role (CRESTCON, 2020). Assertiveness can help to enhance your management skills (Amede, 2022).

### **Conclusion**

The outcome of the study revealed that there are some major sources of among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There are many reasons why conflict resolution is important among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There are many challenges involved in conflict management among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. There are several the strategies that managers can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among employees of small and medium enterprises in Otovwodo in Ughelli North LGA, Delta State. However, organizations be it private or public, small or big should formulate and execute policies, programme, rules and actions that are legal and employees based.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are the recommendations.

1. Organizations be it private or public, small or big should formulate and execute policies, programme, rules and actions that are legal and employees based.
2. Conflict in whatever level should not be ignored but should be effectively managed for better employees' productivity in the workplace.
3. Since conflict is in evitable in an organization, workers at all levels should be trained and given the right behavioral orientation as to reduce the occurrence of conflict at work place.
4. Conflicts preclusion structures should be put in place to address issues that can produce conflicts before they break open. In similar vein, conflict situations should be promptly confronted and addressed whenever they occur rather than being avoided.

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