Adopting Kendall's Tau B Correlation Model to Assess Organisational Conflict and Job Commitment of Olam Flour Mill, Ilorin

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Abstract

The existence of every organisation is a result of the peace and harmonious working relationship enjoyed by both the staff and management of such companies. Olam Flour Mills Limited is no exception, though the company records some differences emanating from internal wranglings and staff commitment issues. The objective of the study is to investigate the impact of job commitment on organisational conflict in Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin. The study, making use of a finite population of 232 staff members of the company,

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adopts a survey research design that is cross-sectional in nature. Using Krejcie and Morgan's table (1970), the study's sample size was determined to be 148. The study employed a simple random sampling technique because the staff share similar characteristics. The findings were analysed using multiple regression analysis to test the hypothesis. The results indicate that job commitment has a significant impact on organisational conflict, with a value of 0.423 and a significance level of 0.000. The study concludes that job commitment significantly affects organisational conflict. Therefore, management of conflict in Olam Flour Mills Ilorin among staff greatly affects the organisation. The study recommends that organisations should place emphasis on managing conflicts effectively because poor conflict management can have devastating effects on an organisation.

Introduction

Staff morale is observed to have dropped in many branches operated by Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin. This may not be unconnected with the way organisational conflicts are handled by the management with a view to increase commitment and in return boost productivity.

Conflict in organisations is a common phenomenon that managers must contend with to achieve desired objectives. Organisational conflict is a widespread occurrence that affects employee productivity and overall organisational performance in various industries and countries. The dynamics of organisational conflict are intricate and diverse, shaped by elements such as cultural diversity, communication styles, management practices, and organisational structures (Paresashvili et al., 2023; Ezekiel & Issa, 2022). Within many firms, distinct individual characteristics among employees often result in ongoing conflicts that negatively impact productivity and well-being. These disparities may arise from divergent cultural heritages, communication methodologies, and individual principles, leading to misinterpretations and interpersonal frictions (Adeyemi, 2022; Andriani et al., 2023).

Organisational conflicts can stem from perceptions of favouritism or unequal resource allocation among various ethnic or tribal groups, which can lower morale and unity. Additionally, political instability and governance issues in many African nations contribute to a precarious business climate, requiring firms to navigate unclear regulatory frameworks and economic challenges. These factors exacerbate conflicts related to resource distribution, decision-making processes, and leadership disputes (Lamidi & Kareem, 2021).

Job commitment, a fundamental element of organisational behaviour, pertains to the emotional and psychological bond an employee forms with the organisation in which they work (Manata, 2023; Nathalie, 2022). This commitment significantly influences job performance, turnover intentions, and overall organisational effectiveness (Sadeghi & Terum, 2022; Wulandari et al., 2023). Understanding the factors that foster job commitment and its various forms helps organisations cultivate a dedicated and efficient workforce (Mahfouz et al., 2023; Vieira et al., 2023). A committed employee stays with the organisation during good and bad times, consistently performs well, and upholds the organisation's values and goals (Akanbi, Kadiri & Ajeigbe, 2019; Abdulraheem *et al.,* 2022).

Job commitment is characterised by an employee's sense of belonging and enthusiasm in solving organisational challenges and representing the company positively. It is based on desire, emotions, and feelings (Gusti, 2023). Unlike job satisfaction, which reflects how employees feel about their job environment, job commitment emphasises their emotional attachment to the organisation itself. High job commitment is associated with positive outcomes such as reduced absenteeism, lower turnover, increased work effort, and improved performance (Rahmi et al., 2023; Saragih & Hendy, 2022).

The correlates of organisational conflict and job commitment are crucial in understanding how employee dedication influences conflict management within firms. High job commitment leads to higher productivity, while low commitment can result in poor performance and increased turnover. Employees with positive attitudes towards work are more likely to engage fully in their roles, produce high-quality output, and contribute to a harmonious work environment (Wendell & Dennis, 2022). This study, therefore, explores

the correlates of organisational conflict and job commitment at Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin, aiming to provide insights into how job commitment affects conflict resolution and organisational harmony.

Statement of the Problem
The existence of workplace conflict at Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin, affects employee productivity and well-being, despite conflict management measures. Interpersonal conflicts arise when employees perceive others as obstacles to their goals, leading to absenteeism, low motivation, and psychological distress. Effective conflict management is essential as it enhances job commitment, increases productivity, and reduces turnover. Unmanaged conflicts hinder organisational goals through work sabotage, low cooperation, and reduced performance. Job commitment, a critical factor in organisational success, influences performance, satisfaction, and retention, making it vital to understand its role in managing conflicts within the organisation.

Research Question
The research question guiding this study is:
What is the relationship between organisational conflict and job commitments in Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin?

Research Objective
The objective of this research is to:
Determine the relationship between organisational conflict and job commitments in Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin.

Research Hypothesis
The null hypothesis below was formulated for the study:
There is no significant relationship between organisational conflict and job commitments in Olam flour mills, Ilorin.

Literature Review
Conflict is a complex and dynamic process within organisations, often arising when individuals or groups perceive that their goals, interests, or values are being negatively impacted by others (Singh & Thomas, 2022; Abdulraheem, et al, 2020). This perception-based phenomenon highlights the subjective

nature of conflict, emphasising emotional responses and potential future implications.

Yang et al. (2021) describe conflict as an ongoing social interaction characterised by competition for control over resources, power, and positions. Petkov and Spytska (2022) underscore that while conflict is an inherent part of workplace relationships, effective management can foster organisational growth and efficiency. They note that internal conflicts may yield both positive and negative outcomes depending on how they are addressed.

Fujita and Yamada (2022) attribute organisational conflict to competing goals among stakeholders, including employees and managers. The competition for resources, recognition, and authority often fuels these disputes (Gomathy et al., 2022). Furthermore, issues such as resource scarcity, power struggles, and varying levels of autonomy contribute to conflicts within organisational settings (Nuriyeni & Arum, 2022).

In modern organisational studies, conflict is categorised into task-related conflicts, interpersonal conflicts, and process conflicts (Shahzad, 2023). Each category influences organisational dynamics differently, with potential effects on employee morale, productivity, and overall performance. A well-managed conflict resolution process is essential for minimising negative impacts and fostering a collaborative and productive work environment.

Job commitment, a critical component of organisational behaviour, reflects the emotional and psychological bond between employees and their organisations (Garibaldi & Riyanto, 2023). This commitment significantly influences job performance, turnover intentions, and overall organisational effectiveness (Wegwu & Princewill, 2023). Understanding the factors contributing to job commitment enables organisations to foster a more dedicated and efficient workforce (Mahfouz, 2022).

Conflict Approaches

The five modes of conflict management, created in 1974 by Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann, are a practical strategy for any small business setting. The five conflict approaches as listed by the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument are: avoiding, cooperating, compromising, accommodating, and competing.

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The opposing strategy incorporates people who are unwavering in their goals and convictions. When faced with a difficult decision or the need to swiftly settle a dispute, this strategy— which is based on strength, authority, or power— proves useful. However, because it places more emphasis on assertiveness than cooperation, misusing this technique can stifle criticism, lower employee morale, and obstruct learning (Kundu & Lata, 2017).

Accommodating Approach: Managers who value cooperation over confrontation and aim to appear reasonable in their decision-making adopt an accommodating approach. They showcase their mediation skills, readiness to compromise when necessary, and desire to foster harmony among all parties involved. Yet, excessive flexibility can undermine their credibility, making them appear indecisive and resistant to change. Accepting flexibility can enhance a manager's standing, provided issues are clearly and succinctly addressed (Igbokwe, 2021).

Avoiding Method: Managers that find it difficult to handle conflict and would rather avoid it completely frequently employ the avoiding method. This strategy does not deal with the fundamental issues, which could make matters worse or obstruct honest dialogue. Although it can be helpful to put off solving problems until a possible crisis occurs, overusing this strategy can make problems worse and prevent productive conversation (Maiti, & Choi, 2021). According to the University of California, Berkeley, people choose the avoidance strategy for three reasons: "Avoiding ridicule or rejection, acknowledging personal contribution to the problem, and willingness to adapt."

The Collaborating Approach: Managers opt for collaboration to demonstrate unity by combining assertiveness and collaboration. This win-win strategy is effective when significant differences exist between parties, but there is a shared commitment to completing the task together. However, collaborative efforts can be time-consuming and may result in one party feeling exploited while personal commitments are side-lined and minor issues receive excessive attention.

The Compromising Approach: When resolving disputes, a compromising approach offers a solution that satisfies all parties to some extent. It balances aggression and cooperation, allowing both sides to claim

a measure of success. Giving in too much may compromise one's principles, while being too inflexible can escalate conflicts and power struggles.

Types of Job Commitment
There are a few types of job commitment which have been identified in the literature. These are discussed below.

Affective Commitment: Refers to employees' emotional attachment and loyalty to their organisation, often arising when they align with the organisation's values, culture, and goals. High affective commitment is associated with greater motivation, job satisfaction, and lower turnover rates (Triyono & Tjahjono, 2023; Sabarrudin & Djamil, 2023).

Continuance Commitment: Involves employees' assessment of the costs associated with leaving the organisation, including time, effort, and benefits invested. Employees with high continuance commitment stay due to the perceived high costs of leaving rather than job satisfaction (Ramachandran & Prasad, 2022).

Normative Commitment: Reflects employees' sense of moral obligation to remain with the organisation, often influenced by cultural values and social norms. Strengthening normative commitment requires promoting organisational loyalty, ethical behaviour, and social responsibility (Anand, 2023).

Theoretical Review
Social Exchange Theory (SET) offers a robust framework for analysing organisational conflict and its influence on job commitment (Melkamu, 2023). SET posits that social behaviour is guided by the exchange of resources, where individuals aim to maximise benefits and minimise costs in their relationships. In an organisational setting, this theory underscores the reciprocal nature of interactions between employees and employers (Cohen & Blecher, 2022). Effective conflict management enhances employees' perceptions of organisational support, thereby fostering job commitment (To & Huang, 2022). When employees perceive that their organisation values their contributions and well-being, particularly during conflict resolution, they exhibit greater loyalty and emotional attachment (Akkoca, 2023). Conversely, inadequate conflict management can lead to perceptions of neglect, resulting in diminished commitment.

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Fair and transparent conflict resolution processes ensure that employees feel heard and valued, reinforcing affective commitment (García-Contreras et al., 2022). In contrast, dominating or avoidant conflict management strategies can create feelings of alienation, reducing job commitment (Ijoyah & Tunia, 2022). Emotional responses during conflicts further shape employees' organisational perceptions. Positive emotional experiences, such as feeling appreciated, enhance job satisfaction and commitment, while negative experiences, such as feeling disregarded, can lead to disengagement (Natthaya et al., 2023).

The dynamic nature of exchange relationships, as posited by SET, suggests that consistent positive interactions, particularly during conflict situations, foster long-term employee loyalty and motivation (Chen & Sriphon, 2022). Conversely, repeated negative exchanges can erode commitment, prompting employees to seek alternative employment (Syafitri et al., 2023). Therefore, effective conflict management practices, grounded in the principles of SET, are essential for promoting job commitment, sustaining positive employee relations, and enhancing organisational performance (Hao et al., 2023).

Empirical Review

Benuyenah (2025) investigated better approaches for investigating and understanding hierarchical clashes while presenting a cutting-edge struggle estimation device. Struggle can emerge in each friendly circumstance and is normally certifiable in various ways, including character conflicts, affronts, non-collaboration, abuse, outrage and different sorts of unpleasant miscommunication. The exploration was directed to investigate the basic forerunners of multifaceted clashes among global business workers and to show whether hierarchical struggle is outlined as useful or broken. Utilising primary condition demonstrating (SEM) methods, the discoveries support the speculation that culturally diverse struggle adversely influences worker feelings and execution. At last, the paper proposes the contention gauge apparatus to assist chiefs with measuring the degrees of contention among representatives working in complex multifaceted conditions.

Ho (2025) looks at how and when procedural, distributive, relational, and instructive equity influences representatives' emotional responsibility

and work commitment. The exploration is grounded in a drawn-out work requests assets model, consolidating the social personality hypothesis. The incorporated model conjectures that each of the four elements of hierarchical equity emphatically impact workers' responsibility and commitment by cultivating authoritative ID. Besides, it is placed that this mental full of feeling process is especially huge when workers face high work requests, rather than low work requests. A three-wave planned study was led with an example of 400 workers in the social and individual administration industry in Hong Kong, China. Information was gathered at gauge, 90 days, and one year. The discoveries support the estimated contingent backhanded relationship between authoritative equity (procedural, distributive, and educational equity) and the two proportions of work mentalities.

Augustine et al (2024) assessed the impacts of refereeing methodologies on workers' exhibition in the College of Calabar Showing Emergency Clinic, Calabar. The review utilised an overview research plan to use an organised survey in the assortment of information for examination. The population for the review was 550. The sample size for the review was 226 utilising Krejcie and Morgan table of 1970. The speculation was tried and investigated utilising a straight-forward direct relapse examination model applying a measurable bundle for sociologies (SPSS) adaptation 23. The review observed that there are constructive outcomes of contention evasion methodology on workers' presentation of the College of Calabar Educating Clinic, Calabar. There is a tremendous impact of contention coordinated effort methodology on workers' obligation to objectives accomplishment. There is a critical connection between struggle convenience procedure and representatives' inspiration. There is likewise a critical clash intercession methodology on workers' contribution in the College of Calabar Showing Medical Clinic, Calabar. In light of the discoveries, the review suggested that administration of associations or foundations ought to screen and mediate on issues that can prompt struggles to improve workers' exhibition by embracing aversion systems.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The population comprises all staff of Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin, totalling 232 employees as provided by the company's Human Resources Department as at December

2024. Using the Krejcie and Morgan table for sample size determination, the appropriate sample size was estimated at 148 respondents. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure equal representation across the workforce.

The study utilised a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire captured relevant demographic information, including age range, gender, educational qualification, years of experience, department/unit, job position, marital status, and employment type. This demographic data provided a comprehensive profile of the respondents, allowing for more analysis and interpretation of results.

In addition, the study utilises inferential statistics for an in-depth analysis of variables used.

This methodology facilitated the examination of relationships between variables and supported the study's objective of assessing job commitment and conflict management within Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin.

Demography of the Study
The demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed a diverse workforce. The age distribution of the respondents ranged from 20 to 60 years, with the majority being between 31 and 40 years, representing the active working age group within the organisation. Gender distribution showed a fairly balanced workforce, with 55% male and 45% female respondents, reflecting Olam Flour Mills' commitment to gender inclusivity.

In terms of educational qualifications, a significant proportion of the respondents held tertiary education qualifications, including National Diplomas (ND), Higher National Diplomas (HND), and Bachelor's degrees, indicating a well-educated workforce. Additionally, a few respondents had postgraduate qualifications such as Master's degrees, reflecting the organisation's ability to attract and retain highly skilled employees.

Work experience among respondents varied, with a substantial percentage having between 5 to 10 years of experience at Olam Flour Mills, indicating a relatively stable workforce. However, there was also a notable percentage of new employees with less than 2 years of experience, showing the company's continuous recruitment and growth.

The marital status of respondents revealed that 60% were married, while 40% were single, divorced, or widowed. This demographic

characteristic provides insight into the social responsibilities and commitments that might influence employees' perceptions of job commitment and conflict management within the organisation.

The diverse demographic profile of the respondents provided a broad perspective on the study, ensuring that the results captured various experiences, opinions, and attitudes across different age groups, educational backgrounds, gender, and work experiences within Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship between organisational conflict and employees' job commitment in Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin.

Kendall's tau_b Correlations

Kendall's tau_b			Avoidance	Cooperating	Compromise	Accommodating	Competing	Job Commitment
Avoidance	Correlation Coefficient		1.000	.286**	.331**	.343**	.402**	.308**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N		148	148	148	148	148	148
Cooperating	Correlation Coefficient		.286**	1.000	.472**	.320**	.413**	.453**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N		148	148	148	148	148	148
Compromise	Correlation Coefficient		.331**	.472**	1.000	.303**	.419**	.464**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	N		148	148	148	148	148	148
Accommodating	Correlation Coefficient		.343**	.320**	.303**	1.000	.416**	.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	N		148	148	148	148	148	148
Competing	Correlation Coefficient		.402**	.413**	.419**	.416**	1.000	.642**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	N		148	148	148	148	148	148
Job Commitment	Correlation Coefficient		.308**	.453**	.464**	.360**	.642**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N		148	148	148	148	148	148

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

The results revealed significant positive correlations between various conflict management styles (Avoidance, Cooperating, Compromise, Accommodating, and Competing) and Job Commitment at the 0.01 significance level. This indicates that as each conflict management style increases, job commitment also increases.

Among the conflict management styles, Competing exhibited the strongest positive correlation with job commitment ($\hat{o} = .642$, $p < .01$). This suggests that employees who adopt a competitive approach in conflict situations are more likely to be committed to their jobs. This could be because competitive employees are often highly driven, goal-oriented, and motivated to succeed, which aligns with organisational objectives and fosters commitment.

Compromise ($\hat{o} = .464$, $p < .01$) and Cooperating ($\hat{o} = .453$, $p < .01$) also demonstrated strong positive relationships with job commitment. This implies that employees who are willing to find mutually acceptable solutions (compromise) or work collaboratively with others (cooperation) exhibit higher levels of job commitment. These conflict resolution strategies create a more harmonious work environment, encouraging employees to remain dedicated to their roles.

Accommodating ($\hat{o} = .360$, $p < .01$) and Avoidance ($\hat{o} = .308$, $p < .01$) showed moderate positive correlations with job commitment. While accommodating reflects a willingness to meet others' needs, potentially enhancing interpersonal relationships and job satisfaction, avoidance indicates that even those who prefer to sidestep conflict may still maintain commitment, possibly to avoid workplace tensions that could affect performance and loyalty.

The choice of Kendall's tau_b ensured accurate and reliable analysis, considering the ordinal nature of the Likert scale data used in the study. The results highlight the importance of various conflict management styles in enhancing job commitment, with competitive and collaborative approaches playing particularly crucial roles in fostering a committed workforce.

Study's Implications
This study underscores the importance of implementing fair and transparent conflict resolution mechanisms to foster employee commitment, particularly

in Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin where operational pressures can often lead to workplace disputes.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight that organisational conflict significantly impacts employees' job commitment in Olam Flour Mills, Ilorin. This underscores the need for effective conflict management strategies to enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover intentions, and foster a committed workforce, ultimately contributing to the organisation's overall performance and success.

The study recommended that organisations should critically work towards ensuring that employees are fully committed in the workplace as this would guarantee organisational efficiency and reduce constant feuds in the organisation. The study further recommended that employees' job responsibilities should the enriched so as to guarantee effective job commitment that will ensure that constant frictions in the organisation are efficiently reduced and organisational objectives are achieved.

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