

**ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES AND
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN
NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS IN
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MAY, 2021

DECLARATION

This Project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or for any other award. No part of this Project should be reproduced without authority of the author or/and Kenyatta University.

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Signature

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I confirm that the work reported in this Project was carried out by the candidate under my supervision as the appointed University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my beloved husband Elijah Kariuki, my sons Mark Adriel and Dylan Ayden and my mother Jesimonder Mwaniki. Thank you for all the love, support and encouragement throughout my entire studies.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Avoidance	A conflict resolution technique that employs a lose-lose approach where both sides in the conflict withdraw or fail to deal with the issue(s) causing the disputes.
Collaboration	A conflict resolution technique which reaches a win-win solution as the conflicting parties are ready to meet each other's needs without downplaying any of the needs.
Employee performance	The contribution an individual employee makes towards the attainment of organizational goals through completion of assigned tasks and meeting set performance goals.
Mediation	A conflict resolution technique where parties in conflict involve an impartial third party to help them resolve the dispute.
Negotiation	A conflict resolution technique that entails a dialogue between two or more people or parties in a conflict intended to reach a beneficial outcome over the issues generating the conflict.
Organizational conflict	It's the lack of agreement that happens when the needs, objectives, values or interests of the organization

members are not met or understood such that it affects the members' capabilities to meet the firm goals.

Organizational conflict management technique An approach through which a firm can point out the source of disputes and come up with ways to resolve the underlying issues.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BSC	Balanced Scorecard
CUE	Commission for University Education
HR	Human Resource
JKUAT	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
LIA	Letter of Interim Authority
OCM	Organizational Conflict Management
PMM	Performance Measurement Matrix
PMQ	Performance Measurement Questionnaire
PSC	Public Service Commission
RBV	Resource Based View
ROA	Return on Assets
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
USIU	United States International University
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

ABSTRACT

Employee performance is an integral part of any organization without which attainment of organizational goals may not be realized. Similarly, organizational conflicts are inevitable in any work-organization. However, there is contestation as to whether management of organizational conflicts enhances or deteriorates employee performance. This study sought to investigate the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on employee performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance as conflict management techniques on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study was based on the human relations, human capital and contingency theories. The study adopted descriptive research design. The study site was selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya which included University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, JKUAT, Moi University and Egerton University. The study population was 1,600 low, middle and top management level employees drawn from the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. A sample of 160 participants was chosen using stratified and simple random sampling methods. The research tool for the study was a questionnaire whose reliability was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, with a set reliability threshold of at least 0.70 at 5% significance level. Validity of the questionnaire was ascertained through content expert review. The analysis of the gathered data was done using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The research findings were presented in form of frequencies, means, percentages and standard deviation. Association between the study variables analysis was achieved using correlation and multiple linear regression analysis. Confidentiality of information obtained, anonymity in processing and reporting of study data, voluntary participation and using the study data for research purposes only, formed this study's ethical considerations. The study established that there was a strong positive and significant relationship between negotiation and employees' performance ($a=0.707$, $p=.000$); a strong positive and significant relationship between mediation and employees' performance ($a=0.621$, $p=.001$) and a strong positive and significant relationship between collaboration and employees' performance ($a=0.736$, $p=.000$). However, avoidance as a conflict management technique was found to have a negative and significant relationship with employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya ($a=-0.469$, $p=.027$). The study concluded that negotiation, mediation and collaboration as organizational conflict management techniques positively influenced employees' performance while avoidance as an organizational conflict management technique adversely affected employees' performance. It was recommended that the managements/administrators of Kenya's public universities should institute regular evaluations on how work disputes impact employees' performance within the institutions in the country. This could be helpful in guiding management decisions and choices as to the most effective organizational conflict management techniques to apply to resolve existing workplace conflicts.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Performance in the firm is a process that is characterised by the management of the employees and coming to an agreement on the best practices to use to achieve agreed results. This process is continuous and flexible (Armstrong, 2016). Performance in any firm is as a result of a sequence of processes that are done in an agreed flow from the gathering of resources to development of competencies and capabilities and coming up with systems to act as a guide to ensure that the firm employees achieve the desired results (Al-Matari, Al-Swidi & Fadzil, 2014). In view of this, firm performance can be viewed as the end result of organizational activities and includes the actual outcomes of the organization operational process (Stannack, 2016).

As explained by Williams (2012), the performance of any organisation is as a result of the environmental factors affecting it and the patronization given by customers which is affected by the firm characteristics that include open hours, advertising, service quality, the layout of the organisation, products it offers, location and how these traits compare to the customer to the customers expectations. Additionally, the firm characteristics are also affected by other factors that include industry regulations, the existing demand and competition available, which enhance or diminish its overall performance (Santos, 2012). The performance of an entity is used to indicate its overall wellbeing in a given period and can be used as a comparison

element with other organizations in the industry or in other related industries to gain a better perspective (Bennett, Lance & Woehr, 2014).

Austin (2013) indicated that organizational performance should be measured through various indicators depending on its organizational structure and goals. In agreement, Pradhan and Jena (2017) notes that the performance of a firm is quantified by the association between the firm objectives and the results obtained from its operations. Other authors (Bititci, Garengo, Dörfler & Nudurupati, 2012; Al-Matari, Al-Swidi & Fadzil, 2014; Lazarus, 2014) argued that organization performance is related to customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and increase in productivity, and reported margins for the organization.

Further with the evolution of the resource-based view (RBV), there was more emphasis on the specific assets of the organisation rather than the specific assets of the industry when it came to organisational performance, with the contributions of human resource identified as a core measure of an organization's performance (Olang, 2017). Today employees are regarded as important assets of any firm. The performance of employees has further been shown to influence the firm performance (Agwu, 2013).

In the past the performance of an organisation was mostly quantified by financial measures more so by use of the following measures increase in the market share, return on assets (ROA) and growth in sales (Austin, 2013). However, financial performance measurement approach to organizational performance evaluation has its limitations since it concentrates on financial factors in the likes of return on

investment, return on equity, and return on assets, profitability, and growth in sales and in some cases earnings per share. These measures cannot be used to make comparisons across industries or firms since they have some specific accounting elements that a firm chooses to use. Further the emphasis of the measures is only on the financial outlook and do not take into account other processes that often influence performance in an organisation (Wheelen & Hunger, 2010).

However, with time there have been other performance measures that accommodate both the non-financial and financial elements of the firm. Such measures include the Performance Measurement Matrix (PMM) developed by Keegan, Eiler and Jones in 1989, the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) developed by Kaplan and Norton in 1996, and the Performance Measurement Questionnaire (PMQ) developed by Dixon, Nanni and Vollmann in 1990. These combine both financial and non-financial elements that affect the performance of enterprises. Every one of these measures gives a different view on measuring the performance of enterprise (Parmenter, 2015).

1.1.1 Employees Performance

According to Lazarus (2014), for workers to perform as expected there should be direction and motivational factors that help the employees perform their duties with efficiency and effectiveness. This however should be done in line with the goals of the firm. Stannack (2016) argued that employee performance shows the individual worker results after making an effort to do their responsibilities. On their part, Pradhan and Jena (2017) argued that the performance of workers in a firm is a continuous process that comes up after a mutual understanding on the goals to be met

at the firm. Similarly, Siljanen (2010) pointed that the performance of an employee is characterized by completion of the worker responsibilities as provided and supervised by a supervisor or the firm. The tasks should be done to a specified standard which ensuring that the resources used are used in an efficient and effective manner.

From these perspectives of employee performance, it is evident that in simple words, employee performance means the contribution that an individual employee makes towards the attainment of organizational goals (Parmenter, 2015). Measuring the performance of an individual worker requires providing the worker with certain tasks and expectations, motivating and enhancing the competencies of the worker and assessing the outcome and giving constructive feedback (Williams, 2012).

In contemporary working environment, the management of the workers performance entails ensuring that the employee agreed performance outcomes, competencies, skills, development and measures are in line with the goals of the firm (Bititci *et al.*, 2012). While considering employees performance, the emphasis should be on development, learning and enhancement to improve the workers performance and to achieve the goals of the firm (Austin, 2013).

As explained by Pradhan and Jena (2017), a performance management system that is effective provides guidelines for excellent performance by: 1) aligning the performance goals of the individual with the firms goals and policies ensuring the worker is aware how they need to contribute to the overall performance of the firm; 2) providing clear performance goals by using expected behaviors, actions and result; 3) come up with clear development plans, and 4) regularly discussing with the employee

during the performance process which is inclusive of mentoring, coaching, constructive feedback and assessment. The evaluation of the performance of an individual employee may be done using work quality, quantity and efficiency metrics (Williams, 2012).

Quantifying and improvement of the workers performance is vital in any firm since it streamlines the expected daily results from the workers and aligns the expectations with the goals of the firm, it helps pinpoint areas where there is need for improvement or training and monitors the work quality and productivity of the workers (Longe, 2015). The essence of employee performance lies in ensuring that the effect of the employee's performance works in positively impacting the effectiveness which leads to achievement of the organization objectives, if well handled, it is meant to lead to engaged and motivated workers, more focus on improving business results and a more nurtured talent (Stannack, 2016).

A wide range of studies on employee performance have pointed out a few HR practices which positively affects employee's performance including placement of employee's practices, promotion, dispute resolution, performance evaluation, compensation, training, recruitment and selection practices (Van De Voorde *et al.*, 2012; Mwangi & Ragui, 2013; Lepak *et al.*, 2018). In addition, other organizational elements including communication, work-life balance, leadership, motivation, organizational structure and organizational culture have also been highlighted as being key drivers of employee performance (Pandita & Bedarkar, 2015). In contrast, existence of knowledge/skills gap, lack of clarity about one's responsibilities, unhealthy work environment and culture, negative employee attitude, inadequate

resources to execute one's tasks, failure to recognize employee's efforts, workplace conflicts, excessive workloads, poor leadership among others are recognized as some of the variables that lead to poor employee performance (Gomes, 2016).

To optimize employee performance, deliberate effort must be made by those in authority within the organization to enhance the facilitators/enablers of employee's performance while at the same reducing or eliminating any factors that adversely impact on employee performance (Stannack, 2016). There is no denying that, the effectiveness with which an organization manages, develops and stimulates their employees performance is an important cornerstone for how the organization performs and particularly in today's operating environment which is characterized by intense competition and dynamism (Kehinde, 2011).

1.1.2 Organizational Conflict Management Techniques

The nature of today's firms, whether in the service or manufacturing industry and whether public or private, inevitably generates conflicts which result from the scarcity of freedom, positions and resources, structurally challenges such as communication and leadership problems as well as differences in the personality, attitudes, feelings, needs and perceptions between and/or among the staffs (Saranya, 2016). Organizational conflicts are thus endemic in most of the contemporary organizations and manifests in various forms including rivalries, fight for power and favor, jealousy, personal disagreements or in more serious forms such as staff strikes and legal actions (Mughal & Khan, 2013).

Longe (2015) explains organizational conflict as the lack of good rapport that happens because the actual or perceived needs, goals, interests or values of the different members of the same do not agree and there is frustration as each of them tries to bring their own contribution to the achievement of the firm's goals. Organizational conflicts are bound to occur especially because the firm has different individuals and the daily relationship with others can lead to disagreements and discord in the firm (Awan & Saeed, 2015). Thus, conflicts in organizations are common and will always happen especially because there is competition for security, recognition, power and roles (Olang, 2017).

In the management of today's organizations, executives face difficult decisions relating to the choice of conflict resolution mechanisms and choosing the best means to resolve conflict fairly while still motivating the employees to do their best so that they can deliver organizational goals and objectives (Kazimoto, 2013). However, organizational conflicts are not always an aberration. In some instances, they provide a chance for reconciliation and learning opportunities for the good of the worker and the firm (Kehinde, 2011). This is suggestive of the fact that a conflict that is resolved properly can better an organization through identification of viable solutions that take into account of the various interests and needs of the conflicting parties (Agwu, 2013). Indeed, if properly handled, organizational conflicts can improve the performance of an individual (Awan & Saeed, 2015).

However, their effects can lead to negative consequences especially if they result to hate among the employees or teams within the organization with attendant negative consequences such as missed deadlines, delayed decisions, depression, reduced

teamwork and opting to solve problems alone rather than as a team, distrust, poor customer service, disruptions while doing tasks, diversion of employees' time and energy from the main issues, among others (Mwangi & Ragui, 2013). A research by Weerarathna (2014) notes managers have to spend twice as much time in finding solutions to employees' conflicts compared to the past placing conflict management high up on management agenda. In view of this, real-time management of organizational conflicts can enhance the performance of the worker and their motivation (Awan & Anjum, 2015).

Organizational conflict management (OCM) reduces the negative elements of conflict and increases the positive conflict elements by use of various styles and techniques in managing the conflict(s) between and/or among individuals or groups (Prause & Mujtaba, 2015). According to Ajike *et al.* (2015) organizational conflict management involves the firm identify the root of the conflict and coming up with ways to minimize or stop the conflict. Similarly, Rahim (2017) expressed the view that organizational conflict management is characterized by coming up with effective methods to control conflict and to improve the positive effects of conflict so as to allow the workers to learn and be effective in completing their responsibilities. This therefore shows that organizational conflict management techniques refer to methods that the management uses to resolve disputes within the organization (Adeyemi and Ademilua, 2012).

Saranya (2016) notes that managing conflicts constructively lead to increased performance. However, when conflicts are not well managed there is polarization and dislocation in the firm which reduces the performance of the workers. Additionally,

proper conflict management showcases the existing weaknesses in the decision-making process which can lead to changes and better decision-making processes (Mughal & Khan, 2013). Therefore, proper conflict management helps resolve conflicts in amicable ways for the sake of safeguarding organizational performance, a positive work environment and staff commitment (Ajike, Akinlabi, Magaji & Sonubi, 2015). Since conflicts occur frequently within organizations, firms that want their workers to perform excellently will have to come up with effective ways of resolving these conflicts (Kehinde, 2011).

In this study, four organizational conflict management techniques were used as the study variables. These included avoidance - which employs a lose/lose approach where both parties of the conflict withdraw or fail to deal with the issue(s) causing the dispute; mediation - where parties in conflict involve an impartial third party to help them resolve the dispute; negotiation - this is a conversation made among parties especially in times of conflict whose aim is to reach a beneficial outcome for all the parties involved and to solve the issues at hand; and collaboration - where everybody wins and the parties to the dispute agree willingly to meet the other party's needs (Currie *et al.*, 2017).

1.1.3 Universities in Kenya

The Kenyan education sector has grown tremendously since the country achieved its independence. Kenyan universities both publicly and privately owned have grown and complement each other while ensuring that Kenyans and other international students can easily access higher education (Nyangau, 2014). The first Kenyan public

university was the University of Nairobi and the first private one was USIU. By 2012, the country's universities had grown to 33 in number where seven of these were public while the remaining 26 were private. The country by then also had 24 constituent colleges. In the following year, the universities had increased to 53 where in this case 14 were private universities and the rest were private universities (Ministry of Education, 2014). Four years later in 2017, the country's university sector had grown tremendously as the total number of chartered universities was 70.

The higher education sector growth didn't go without notice as the country now had the largest university systems in the African continent. The 70 universities were made up of 33 and 37 public and private universities respectively. The 33 public institutions of higher learning were made up of 23 fully-chartered universities and 10 universities constitute colleges. The 37 private universities constituted of 17 fully-fledged private universities, 14 LIA institutions, 5 constituent colleges and one registered college (CUE, 2018).

However, the Commission for University Education (CUE) was of the opinion that 4 of the 10 public constituent colleges should be awarded charters. These colleges that were eligible for the charter award included Taita Taveta University College, Rongo University College, Machakos University College, and Murang'a University College. This would see the number of public universities in Kenya rise to 27 (CUE, 2018). The Commission for University Education is the agency mandated by the Kenyan government to regulate the universities and the services they give in the country. Some of the responsibilities include maintenance of the expected education standards, relevance and education quality in all the levels of high education research, training

and education in Kenya (Munene, 2016). University education in Kenya cannot be downplayed when it comes to the role it plays in the growth of the country's economy since it provides skills to the students and produces and transfers knowledge making sure graduates are able to successfully provide knowledge to the economy (Okioga *et al.*, 2014). The universities selected for this study included University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, JKUAT, Moi University and Egerton University with their selection being because they form a core part of the country's higher education.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Employee performance is an integral part of every organization and an organization's overall performance largely reflects the performance of its employees (Agusioma, 2018). Attaining high levels of work performance among the universities employees in Kenya has proved to be challenging for the universities' management (Ibua, 2017). Over the years, the performance of employees in the country's institutions of higher learning have been adversely affected by persistent workers strikes and go-slows, which paralyze learning in the institutions, as the university staffs protest over poor working conditions, low pay, understaffing among other grievances (Ng'ethe, 2013).

As a consequence, the low performance of the universities employees in the country is manifested in high levels of absenteeism, high staff turnovers, failure of students to complete their courses within the prescribed timeline and generation of graduates who barely fit into the job market (Mwanza, 2012). Given that organizational conflicts are inevitable within university settings owing to the diversity and dynamism of the

workforce, it was imperative that an empirical investigation was carried out to examine how various organizational conflict management techniques, namely negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance, affected employees' performance in these institutions.

Several studies on management of conflicts and employees' performance existed. In a study done in India, Saranya (2016) evaluated how conflict management styles impacted employee performance and reported that how organizational conflicts were managed had a significant impact on employees' performance. Various conflict management techniques could be applied to resolve conflicts before they get out of hand. Similar sentiments were espoused in studies in India and England by Pradhan and Jena (2017) and Rahim (2017) respectively. Regionally, studies in Nigeria by Longe (2015) and Ajike et al. (2015) and in Ghana by Donkor et al. (2015) on effect of conflicts on employees' performance also pointed out given the significant negative effects of organizational conflicts on employees' performance, organizations should utilize relevant conflict management mechanisms to ensure that the conflicts are addressed sooner than later.

Locally, Agusioma (2018) looked into the effect of organizational conflicts management on the performance of workers in Kenya's Public Service Commission and reported that lack of adequate conflict resolutions regulations negatively affected the performance of the said workers. Mwikali (2016) studied how methods used in conflict management on Kenya power workers influenced their performance and the conclusion made was that an association existed between the choice of conflict management techniques and employee performance in the company. Similar results

were also observed in studies by Olang (2017) in Stima Sacco Society Limited and Momanyi (2016) in Kenya Commercial Bank.

However, none of the local studies evaluated the impact of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in Kenya's non-private universities. This indicated that there was dearth of empirical literature on organizational conflict management techniques and employees performance in Kenya's public universities - which was the research gap addressed/filled by this study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

Below were the specific objectives of this research;

1. To establish the effect of negotiation on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
2. To examine the effect of mediation on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

3. To investigate the effect of collaboration on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
4. To determine the effect of avoidance on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses tested included;

- H₀₁. Negotiation has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- H₀₂. Mediation has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- H₀₃. Collaboration has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- H₀₄. Avoidance has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings recorded may be of great use to the managements of public universities in Kenya in that it provides insights on ways that can be used to solve firm related

disputes that often affects the productivity of even the best organization employees. The result being that it may inform implementation of better policies within the institutions of higher learning to address organizational conflicts in an effort to enhance employee's performance.

The desire to optimize employees' performance and to effectively manage organizational conflicts is not limited to public universities and therefore private universities in Kenya may also benefit from this study as it highlights how various organizational conflict management techniques affect universities employees' performance. This may in turn inform their decisions on organizational conflict management policies and interventions required to enhance their employees' performance.

In the same effect, the Kenyan government, as a major player in Kenya's education system, may gain insights as to the role of organizational conflicts in the performance of employees in the university education sector in the country. This may inform government policy formulation on organizational conflict management within the country's institutions of higher studying, particularly in light of enhancing the universities employees' performance.

Organizational conflicts are not limited to educational institutions only and therefore other publically or privately owned organizations in the country may also benefit from this research with respect to knowledge as to the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on their employees' performance. This may lead to better decisions on the kind of conflict management techniques to adopt.

Lastly, this research study adds to available literature on the study topic, giving other academicians and scholars, reference materials and a background from which they can research further on the topic.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research-study only dwelt on selected public universities in Kenya (namely, University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, JKUAT, Moi University and Egerton University) and the low, middle and top management level employees in these universities formed the study respondents. Study data was collected at their campuses located at the Nairobi City County, Kenya. As such Nairobi City County, Kenya formed the geographical scope of this study. The study scope was on the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance and therefore the dependent variable of the study was employees' performance while the independent variable of the study was organizational conflict management techniques which were broken down into 4 constituent constructs namely negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance conflict management techniques.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Study data was collected from employees of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya using a questionnaire as the research tool. The researcher had no way to ascertain the honesty of responses given by the respondents. To limit the impact of this limitation, the researcher encouraged the participants to respond to

the research tool honestly and assured them that their responses wouldn't be assessed by unauthorized individuals and would only help in accomplishing study's intention.

Some cases of incomplete or missing data in the questionnaires were encountered. To counter this limitation, the researcher performed data cleaning before the final analysis to ensure completeness of the information availed through questionnaires. In addition, the study was limited to the universities' campuses located at the Nairobi City County, Kenya as the study units and hence the research outcomes may not be generalized to all the universities in the country. To counter this limitation, the study has recommended for a broader study on the research topic covering other universities in the country. Lastly, the current study failed to find sufficient literature on the study subject from local sources. As such the researcher also utilized literature materials from other external sources.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research project consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction and describes the study background, statement of the study problem, objectives of the study, research questions, study significance, limitations of the research and its scope being provided. The second chapter provides a review of the literature, a review of empirical studies, summary of the reviewed literature and the conceptual framework.

The third chapter gives the methods that helped undertake the research study comprising of the design used for the study, research philosophy, the population of the research, size of the sample, sampling techniques, research toll for collection of data and the analysis of the gathered

data and presentation of the analyzed data. The fourth chapter highlights the results of the research in line with the study objectives, their interpretation and discussion. The fifth and last chapter contains summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looked at theories that formed the basis of this study, reviewed empirical studies done in the past related to the study subject and provides a physical association of the variables being researched presented as conceptual framework. Lastly, a summary of the reviewed literature is provided.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The three theories that formed the basis of this study were Resource Based View Theory, Dynamic Capability Theory, Human Relations Theory, Human Capital Theory and Contingency Theory.

2.2.1 Resource Based View Theory

The resource based view (RBV) theory was developed by Barney in 1991 through his work titled 'Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage' (Barney, 1991). The theory's central proposition is that if a firm is to achieve a state of sustained competitive advantage, it must acquire and control valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). The resource based view (RBV) suggests that competitive advantage and performance results are a consequence of firm-specific resources and capabilities that are costly to copy by other competitors. Consequently, the theory argues that organizations should aim to maximize their internal resources to create and dominate future opportunities (Bryson, 2011).

The RBV theory lays emphasis on the importance of firm's internal resources and its implications to a firm's competitive position. This theory stems from the principle that the source of firms' competitive advantage lies in their internal resources, as opposed to their positioning in the external environment. That is, rather than simply evaluating environmental opportunities and threats, a firm's competitive advantage depends on the unique resources and capabilities that it possesses (Madhani, 2010). Thus, the aim of a resource based approach in firm competitiveness is to improve firm's resource capability through achieving a strategic fit between resources and opportunities and obtaining added value from the effective deployment of resources (Hart, 1995).

Critiques of this theory however argue that: 1) The theory has no managerial implications; 2) the theory implies infinite regress; 3) the theory is largely untestable 4) The theory's applicability is too limited; 5) the value of a resource is too indeterminate to provide for useful theory; 6) the definition of resource in the theory is unworkable; and that 7) little effort has been made to develop the practical implications of the theory given that, though the theory recognizes the mechanisms that enable competitive advantage, it does not attempt to explain how these mechanisms operate (Lockett, Thompson & Morgenstern, 2009; Bryson, 2011).

The theory was relevant to the study given that the selected universities' employees constitute a critical internal resource while their capabilities and performance provides a powerful tool through which the universities can enhance their competitive position.

2.2.2 Dynamic Capability Theory

The dynamic capability theory was formulated by David Teece and Gary Pisano in 1994. The theory was developed as part of efforts to address the limitations of the RBV theory which is criticized as being conceptually vague and redundant, with limited focus on the mechanisms by which resources actually contribute to competitive advantage (Jurksiene & Pundziene, 2016). Therefore, the dynamic capability theory sets out to explain how competitive advantage is achieved from the perspective of a dynamic and fast-changing operating environment (Helfat & Peteraf, 2009). The theory is based on the premise that it is difficult for firms to preserve their competitive advantage when the competitive environment of the firms is continuously changing. Therefore, there is need to continuously re-configure and re-deploy a firm's internal and external resources and capabilities to match the changing needs of its operating environment (Samsudin & Ismail, 2019).

The ability to achieve new forms of competitive advantage by being flexible and fast in dealing with changing market environments is what Teece and Pisano referred to as 'dynamic capabilities' (Teece & Lazonick, 2002). Thus, based on this theory, dynamic capability is designed to build new competitive advantage that meets the changing market needs of an entity in a timely manner in which emphasis is laid on two aspects. First, the 'dynamic' aspect which refers to a firms' capacity to renew its resources and competences, and second, the 'capabilities' aspect which refers to the firms' ability to create change through the process of integrating, building, and reconfiguring its competences to match the changing environments (Li & Liu, 2014). Hence, the dynamic capability theory is different from RBV theory for two main

reasons; first, RBV is static in nature meaning it's insensitive to environmental change while dynamic capabilities address the changing environment, and second, RBV theory focuses on utilization of firm's resources and capabilities to create competitive advantage while the dynamic capability theory focuses on the best way of re-integrating, renewing, reconfiguring, recreating and re-deploying the resources bundle to sustain the firm's competitive advantage (Samsudin & Ismail, 2019).

The concept of dynamic capabilities exists because of dynamic interactions between environments and the firms' capabilities, and the needs to sustain competitive advantage through capability building. This is because dynamic capabilities assess the environments and realign the resource base to gain future performance (Winter, 2013). In highly volatile market, sustaining competitive advantage is difficult to do since firms are continuously dealing with unstable structures. The firms' continuity of competitive advantage under the condition of dynamic environments can be assured when firms consistently develop and renew capabilities over time to respond to emerging opportunities or threats and changing goals (Samsudin & Ismail, 2019).

This theory has however been criticized on the grounds that while dynamic capabilities (of all types and levels) can be valuable, they are not the ultimate source of sustainable competitive advantage. While developing such capabilities is desirable, there are important limitations to their effectiveness. Unfortunately, it is not just having a dynamic capability that is necessary, it is having a capability that is better than that of every possible competitor. For the dynamic capability to be truly rare and valuable, it must be an extraordinary capability that ultimately only one firm in the universe can possess, which in itself is almost impossible (Winter, 2013; Jurksiene &

Pundziene, 2016). This theory was relevant to the study in that improving employees' performance through knowledge and skills enhancement forms a critical dynamic capability pathway through which public universities in Kenya can enhance their competitive position and be able to better respond to emerging changes in their operating environment.

2.2.3 Human Relations Theory

Mayo is hailed for the development of this theory in 1933. Mayo examined the impact of motivation, social relations and satisfaction levels of workers on the productivity of the employees. Mayo stressed on the power that is in natural teams where he explained that social relations are always more important than the structural of the organizations. According to him, communication which is a two-way process between the employee and the manager and vice versa is important. Additionally, leaders should effectively communicate to the employees their work objectives to allow them to make the right decisions (Currie, Gormley, Roche & Teague, 2017).

Firms also expect their members of staff to efficiently communicate information to others, to openly express their feelings, to deduce the feelings of others and to amicably resolve disputes and come to an understanding as this theory does not recognize conflict as a creative force (Prause & Mujtaba, 2015). When executives are able to have such competencies, they can maintain good relationships with their customers (Mughal & Khan, 2013). The theory emphasizes on conflict resolution and its effect on employee performance making it relevant to the current research study.

2.2.4 Human Capital Theory

Schultz developed the human capital theory in 1961. Later, Becker developed it further in 1964 as can be found in a paper titled “Human Capital: A theoretical and Empirical Analysis to special reference to education”. The theory’s development followed the acceptance of the notion that physical capital growth forms a limited part of organizational performance (Tan, 2014). Economist Theodore Schultz came up with return-on-investment, that provided an analysis of the costs and benefits deduced from training and educating ones employees. Highlighting Schultz’s outcomes on the returns accrued from this investment, Becker came up with the general-purpose and firm-specific human capital that are commonly used by human resource managers globally (Josan, 2013).

According to this model, the training and education of workers increase their performance by imparting useful knowledge and skills. Further, the model points out that educating and training employees by a firm is expensive and at best termed as an investment because it is done to improve one’s income. The model is in most instances used to give explanations for differences in wages given to employees (Campbell, Coff & Kryscynski, 2012). Becker likens human capital to the physical ways of production such as machines, factories which means that investment in human capital is possible in terms of training, education, medical treatment and there is an expected output which is the return on investment due to this investment. Therefore, human capital is a way of production whereby increase in investment leads to increased output (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Therefore, by investing in human capital through staff training and development, the firm will retain the skilled

personnel who are now more motivated and whose productivity is likely to increase which will improve firm performance (Awan & Saeed, 2015).

The theory is not without flaws as critics note that it assumes that training and education will equals to job retention. Additionally, the theory fails to consider transfer of knowledge. Workers who take on extra training and education might not want to be retained in the firm and in some instances might go for a better paying job outside the organization (Tan, 2014). The theory was of value to this research study as it focuses on the concept of employee performance within organizations, which is influenced by the level of employees' skill and knowledge.

2.2.5 Contingency Theory

This behaviorist theory was provided in 1958 by Woodward. The theory argues that there are many ways of managing a firm. The best course of management is contingent or depends on internal and external forces. Firms should come up with the best managerial system for that time after considering the conditions and situation the firm is in (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Thompson points out a big challenge for firms in his 1967 classic organization in action model as the achievement of originality in a world faced by uncertainties. According to him, firms seek to meet certain results. However, they are in a dynamic environment that is surrounded by uncertainties which makes it difficult for them to come up with the right plan that can be fully employed to give the desired results. According to Thompson, although firms are open system the environment in which they are is uncertain and the firms have little control over it (Cole & Kelly, 2011).

According to the contingency theory, a firm should come up with clear decisions and actions which have a relationship with some defined environments that are able to create a match (Islam & Hu, 2012). The theory further postulates that the organization does not only own a duty of care to its shareholders only but to its stakeholders too. Examples of these stakeholders include employees, suppliers, customers, communities, creditors, government and regulatory bodies, and current and potential investors all who impact the firm performance in a significant way (Agusioma, 2018). But those who are against the theory arguments base their arguments on the notion that the theory lacks an explanation on the action to be taken where the leader and the situation at hand do not match and that the theory further fails to give an explanation as to the reasons why some leaders with their leadership styles do well in some situations but fail terribly in others (Lazarus, 2014).

When applied to organizational conflict management, this theory argues that the choice of the conflict management techniques is contingent on the setting context from which the conflicts arise (Toku, 2014). This theory thus advances the notion that conflict management approaches or mechanisms can vary considerably, depending on the organizational circumstances that led to the emergence of the conflicts. Thus, the management must carefully select conflict management techniques in light of prevailing circumstances in the organization and the desired conflict outcomes (Cole & Kelly, 2011). The theory was relevant to the current research since it evaluates the impact of contingent variables such as conflicts on organizational workforce performance.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

2.3.1 Negotiation and Employees' Performance

In a study carried out in Pakistan, Awan and Saeed (2015) used a case study of Askari Bank Ltd to investigate conflict management and firm performance. The study focused on conflict situations, their causes and possible solutions for improving the organization's work environment. The study established that conflicts stemmed from incompatibility of goals and interests within the organization. The study also pointed that conflicts affected the organization in various ways including decreased employee productivity, decreased job satisfaction, insubordination, economic loss, poor performance and disunity among the workforce. The study concluded by suggesting that management should use methods that help manage conflict for the improvement of the overall performance of the firm, that allow for open communication between the executives and the employees and that promote interpersonal relationships among the staff. The current study was not a case study as was the case with Awan and Saeed's study. In addition, while this study established the effects of conflicts on the performance of firms, it did not focus on how conflict management influenced employees' performance which this research focused on.

In an empirical study conducted in China, Zhu (2013) evaluated conflict management between employees from different departments. In the study, interviews were conducted among 129 members of staff of different industries and firms in China. The recorded findings were in agreement with the hypothesis that negotiation as a method of conflict management was an antecedent to employees in the organization to have

constructive dialogues and which in turn influenced the results of the conflict more so the undertaking of responsibilities, the worker decision to stay or leave the firm and their decision to cooperate in the future. The outcomes also revealed that employees who felt as part of the firm were likely to discuss controversy issues compared to those who felt as if they were outsiders. However, the study participants in Zhu's study were drawn from different industries in China while for the current study; the participants were drawn from the same industry/sector - public universities in Kenya.

A study done by Oni-Ojo, Iyiola, Osibanjo and Igbino (2014) on how best conflicts in the workplace can be managed in Nigeria identified negotiation as one of the key conflict resolution techniques that yielded positive conflict resolution outcomes among business firms in the country. The study observed that, among Nigerian business organizations, workplace conflict was an important issue and therefore its management remained top of the management's agenda. The study observed that business entities that did not resolve conflicts in the right manner were bound to face challenges because disputes were important phases in the life of firms with disadvantages and advantages. The study expressed the view that negotiations were a viable dispute resolution mechanism that could help organizations manage workplace conflicts; and thereby contributing to their success in attainment of organizational goals. While this study identified negotiation as one of the mechanisms of resolving workplace conflicts in the business environment in Nigeria, the current study expands on its scope by evaluating how negotiation as a conflict resolution mechanism affects employees' performance.

In another Nigerian study, Longe (2015) investigated the effect of management of conflict in businesses on the performance of workers. This study used a case study of a manufacturing company based in Nigeria. The study participants comprised of 250 employees of the firm selected using stratified random sampling technique. Data were generated via a validated structured questionnaire and gathered data analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The outcomes showed a favorable and significant association between negotiation as a workplace conflict management technique and employee performance. Further, another finding was that conflicts in the firms were due to organization factors particularly those related to incompatibilities of goals or economic reasons. The current research sought to validate the findings in the Kenyan situation. Further the current research used a descriptive research design while Longe's study applied a case study design.

In a descriptive survey study carried out in Kenya, Olang (2017) looked into the effect of conflict management on *Stima Sacco Society Limited* performance. The study targeted employees from all cadres including top, operational and low-level management working at *Stima Sacco Society Limited* as respondents. Census technique was applied in selection of the study sample of 153 respondents. Structured questionnaires were used as the research tools and gathered data analysis done with the assistance of SPSS version 21 software. The results indicated that most of the participants represented by 64.4% were in agreement that negotiation affected the performance of the workers at *Stima Sacco* to a great extent. Additionally, a statistically positive relationship was established between negotiation and the performance of the firm ($r=0.438$, $p \text{ value} < 0.05$). The current study will investigate

the influence of negotiation as one of the methods used in conflict management on employees' performance instead of on organizational performance as was the case in this study. Further, in Olang's study, respondents were selected using Census technique while in the current study, respondents were chosen using stratified random sampling method.

2.3.2 Mediation and Employees' Performance

In an empirical study conducted among Icelandic organizations, Violetta (2012) sought to evaluate the impact that use of mediation conflict management method had on the performance of employees in Nordic companies. In the study, the conflicts that were noted to be common in the organizations under study were intergroup and interpersonal disputes. According to the outcome most of the managers of the Icelandic firms were well aware of the processes to use in resolving conflicts and many of them applied various conflict management methods, including mediation, to resolve workplace conflicts. The study revealed the use of mediation as a conflict resolution method had a positive influence on employees' performance in the selected firms. The conclusion was that use of mediation led to a rise in employee performance. The current study sought to validate these observations in the local context.

In an empirical investigation carried out in Nigeria, Ajike *et al.* (2015) examined how mediation conflict management technique influenced employee performance at Nigerian Access Bank Plc. This was a case study that used 81 members of staff as the study sample. They were administered with questionnaires to respond to. Descriptive

and regression analysis with the help of SPSS helped determine the association between study variables. The results indicated a favorable association between mediation and employee performance ($r= 0.715$; $p<0.05$). A recommendation made was that the banks management should come up with different and proper methods to resolve disputes immediately they arose before they could escalate to unsolvable levels. The current study differed from this study in that it was based on institutions of higher learning as the study units and not a bank as was the case in Ajike *et al.*'s study.

In another study, Lazarus (2014) sought to deduce the impact of conflict management methods on the performance of workers in the civil service of Nigeria. Mediation was one of the methods of conflict resolution that was looked at. The descriptive design study utilized a self-administered questionnaire in data collection. The study sample was made up 240 participants from different ministries. The sample was chosen using stratified random sampling method. Multiple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation helped analyze the nature of the relation between the study variables. The findings revealed that mediation as a conflict resolution method had a favorable and significant contribution to employees' productivity. The study concluded that workers at all levels in the Nigerian Civil Service should be trained on conflict management and provided with proper orientation on ways to resolve disputes. This study was conducted among workers drawn from different ministries in Nigeria's civil service, while the current study was conducted among public universities' workers in Kenya.

In a study done in Kenya, Olang (2017) investigated the impact conflict management had on *Stima Sacco's* posted results. The descriptive survey study has a population that included employees from top, operational and low-level management cadres working at *Stima Sacco Society Limited*. Census technique was applied in selection of the study sample of 153 respondents. Structured questionnaires were used as the research tools and analysis of the gathered data was done using standard statistical methods of analysis using SPSS version 21 software. The results indicated that many of the participants represented by 71% were in agreement that mediation influenced the performance of the firm to a great extent. In addition, a statistically significant favourable relationship was established between mediation and the firm's performance ($r=0.539$, p value < 0.05). The current study differs from this study in that its focus is on the association between conflict management methods and employees' performance instead of with organizational performance as was the case with Olang's study.

In another study carried out in Kenya, Mwikali (2016) investigated the impact of the use of methods of managing conflict on the performance of staff of Kenya Power Limited. The descriptive study had target population of 1055 respondents. The sample has 290 participants who were chosen by purposive and random sampling methods. Questionnaires were the data gathering tools in the study. Inferential and descriptive statistics with the assistance of SPSS version 20 analyzed the primary data. The results of the study showed that many of the participants were in agreement to a great extent that mediation as a conflict resolution mechanism influenced employees' performance and that involvement of impartial

third parties to mediate parties in conflict had a high chance of achieving a positive outcome in relation to resolving of organizational conflicts. While the study was based on a firm that was part of the Kenyan energy industry, this study focus is on institutions in the country's education sector.

2.3.3 Collaboration and Employees' Performance

In Ghana, Toku (2014) investigated conflict management procedures in some institutions found in the *Ashanti's Region*. The goal of the research was to determine conflict management within the schools. Face-to-face interviews and observation were the data gathering methods. The study established that collaboration was a common conflict management method in the selected institutions in the study area. The study observed that this conflict management style was more focused on the concern for other parties than on one self. The study also noted that, of all the problems that proved difficult in the management of work disputes, lack of cooperation from the conflicting parties was the biggest one. Conflict management was seen to be significant in strengthening workers and management relationship and bond. The conclusion reached was that collaboration was the most desirable conflict management technique in the institutions. However, while this study adopted qualitative data approaches, the current study utilized quantitative data approaches. Further, the current study also explored the effect of collaboration on employees performance, an aspect not covered in Toku' study.

In a Nigeria's study, Longe (2015) sought to know the impact of conflict in the workplace on organizational performance using the case of a Nigerian

manufacturing organization. The study participants comprised of 250 employees of the firm chosen by the use of the stratified random sampling method. The study tool was a validated structured questionnaire. Data analysis was made with the help of inferential and descriptive statistics. The results indicated a favorable and significant positive association between collaboration as an integrative conflict management technique and the organizational performance of the selected manufacturing firm. Regression analysis outcomes showed that the variable that gave the highest positive coloration with the performance of the organization was collaboration. The conclusion made was that conflict could not be avoided in contemporary organizations and depending on the conflict management methods adopted, it could positively or adversely influence organizational performance. However, unlike Longe's study which utilized a case study design, the current study adopted descriptive research design.

In a similar Nigerian study, Agwu (2013) looked at Nigerian based Julius Berger Plc conflict management and employees' performance. The descriptive study used a sample of 50 participants who were purposively chosen. Twenty five (25) of thee sampled workers were in management while 5 were not, inferential and descriptive statistics helped analyzed the data. The outcomes showed that there was a favorable significant association in Julius Berger Nigeria Plc between collaboration as a method of conflict management and the performance of the workers and that the results were the same in the two groups of the sample selected. The recommendation of the study was the utilization of collaborations and a review of conflict management policies. While the current study sought to validate

these findings in the Kenyan context, in contrast to Agwu's study, the respondents for the current study were drawn from different institutions.

In an empirical study, Ekechukwu (2016) looked at the effect of the management of conflicts on Nigerian Breweries Plc employees' performance. The null hypothesis for this research was that there existed no significant association between the management of conflict and the morale of the workers of the Brewery and further that no significant association existed between the management of conflict and performance of the workers of the brewery. The study adopted a quantitative survey research designing with the study tool being a questionnaire. The relationship between the variables being studied was deduced with the help of Ordinary Least Square method. The outcome showed a favorable and significant association between the management of conflict and the performance of workers. The researcher recommended that the brewery ought to enhance the methods it uses for conflict management particularly compromise, collective bargaining and collaboration because these enhanced the productivity of the workers. While the study was quantitative, this research will be descriptive in nature.

In a Kenyan study, Iravo (2011) sought to how conflict management impacted performance of public secondary schools in Machakos County. This research-study adopted descriptive survey research design and utilized both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. One hundred and forty secondary school principals formed the target population. The sample was chosen by use of stratified probability sampling method since the school categories were not the same. a sample which equaled 30% of the targeted schools was selected. Each of the schools chosen

principles were also included which led to another sample of 43 principles. A questionnaire was the research tool while ANOVA and regression analysis helped deduce the association between the study variables. The findings of the correlation analysis showed a significant positive association, $r = 0.69$. Both the ANOVA and regression coefficients showed that the association between collaboration as a conflict management method and performance of the schools were strong and positive. It was concluded that it a positive and significant association did exist between the management of conflicts and firm performance. While this study was based on public secondary schools in Machakos County, the current study dwelt with selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

2.3.4 Avoidance and Employees' Performance

In a study carried out in Pakistan, Abdullah (2015) looked at the impact of conflict management on firm effectiveness of the country's Ministry of Higher Education. The study sought to establish the factors that generated interpersonal conflicts and to identify conflict management approaches applied in conflict situations in the Ministry. The results of the research showed that avoidance was one of the conflict management approaches that adversely impacted on organizational effectiveness in the Ministry. The study noted that avoidance led to delayed response to factors contributing to organizational conflicts which in turn led to their exacerbating. The study recommended that it was necessary for the Ministry of Higher Education in the country to deploy other conflict resolution mechanisms other than avoidance with a view of enhancing its organizational effectiveness. While this study linked conflict

management to organizational effectiveness, the current study attempted to find the relation between conflict management and employees' performance.

In an empirical study conducted in Thailand, the researcher sought to evaluate the effect of conflict management in sports firm found in the public sector on workers job satisfaction and performance. The study adopted a mixed research design. The sample was made of 378 participants who were randomly chosen and according to the results the management of conflict positively affected job satisfaction and organizational performance. However, too much managerial monitoring led to decreased satisfaction and reduced the performance of the firm. The research recommended integration of various conflict management practices including avoidance for non-essential conflicts (Terason, 2018). The current study sought to validate the findings though in a local context though it applied quantitative approaches only while Terason's study combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches

On his part, Alajekwu (2017) carried out a study that sought to investigate how well managed disputes could enhance employee's performance in Nigerian universities. The descriptive study had a sample of 1,200 participants, the sampled members were chosen from the public universities found in Nigeria southern eastern locations, the research tool was a questionnaire that had 22 questions and used a likert scale for responses. From the results, the data was concluded to be reliable from a coefficient value of 0.78. The results of the study showed that organizational conflicts arising among school administrators, teaching-staffs, students and non-teaching staffs had a significant unfavorable effect on employees' performance within the south eastern

Nigerian universities. Use of avoidance conflict resolution technique was also found to negatively correlate with employees' performance. However, while the participants in Alajekwu's study were chosen using convenience sampling technique, the current study utilized stratified random sampling method in its sample selection.

In an earlier study, Oni-Ojo *et al.* (2014) deduced the effect of management of conflict on Nigeria's public sector firms' workers performance. The descriptive research had a sample of 100 participants who had been chosen with the help of stratified sampling method. The study was based on primary raw data gathered using a validated questionnaire. Primary data analysis was done with the help of descriptive statistics while the association between the study variables was done with the help of correlation and regression analysis. The findings showed that effective conflict management enhanced employee's performance in the firm. However, while the study by Oni-Ojo and others utilized respondents drawn from diverse sectors of the public service in Nigeria, the current study was based on data gathered from public universities' staff in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

In a Kenyan study, Agusioma (2018) sought to determine how staff conflict resolution impacted employee performance at the Kenyan Public Service Commission (PSC). The design used by the research was mixed methods design. The study population focused on the top, middle and junior managers in the commission. 141 participants that were chosen by use of stratified proportionate random sampling method provided the primary data. A questionnaire was the research tool with descriptive and inferential analysis of the data performed using SPSS 21.

Regression analysis produced a coefficient of 0.606 implying that staff conflict resolution (staff participation in conflict and dispute resolution) impacted strongly and favorably on the performance of the staff at the Kenyan PSC. The study concluded that dispute resolution improved employee performance. Hence, conflict resolution played a favorable role in improving the staff and organizational performance. The current study adopted a descriptive research design and not a mixed methods design adopted in Agusioma’s study.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

The below table 2.1 gives the reviewed literature summary and the existing research gaps.

Table 2.1: Summary of literature gaps

Author & Year	Topic	Methodology	Findings	Gap to be filled
Olang (2017)	The influence of conflict management on organizational performance: A case of Stima Sacco Society Limited	Descriptive research design	Most of the research participants agreed that negotiation impacted organizational performance of Stima Sacco to a great extent.	This was a case study while the current study will be a survey involving several institutions.
Mwikali (2016)	Impact of the use of conflict management techniques on staff performance: A case of Kenya Power Company, Nairobi County	Descriptive research design	Involvement of impartial third parties to mediate parties in conflict had a high chance of achieving a positive outcome in relation to resolving of organizational	While the study was based on a firm in the energy sector in Kenya, the current study will be based on institutions in the country’s

			conflicts.	education sector
Awan & Saeed (2015)	Conflict Management and Organizational Performance: A Case Study of Askari Bank Ltd.	Descriptive survey design	Conflicts stemmed from incompatibility of goals and interests within the organization	This was a case study while the current study will involve several institutions
Longe (2015)	Impact of workplace conflict management on organizational performance: A case of Nigerian manufacturing firm	Descriptive research design	Conflicts in the firm arose over multiple factors of organizational experiences and particularly those related to economic and goal incompatibility orientations.	While this study was done in a manufacturing firm in Nigeria, the current study will be done in universities in Kenya.
Toku (2014)	Conflict management practices in selected basic schools in the Ashanti Region	Quantitative and qualitative research design	Conflict management played a significant role in strengthening the bond between the management and workers.	The current study departs from this study in that it seeks to establish the effect of conflict management techniques on employees' performance of
Zhu (2013)	Conflict management between employees from different departments: Contribution of organizational identification and controversy	Mixed research design	Negotiation as a conflict management technique was an antecedent to employees in different departments engaging in constructive dialogues and	The study failed to establish the link between conflict resolution mechanisms and employee performance which is the focus of the

			which in turn influenced conflict outcomes	current study
Violetta (2012)	The influence of development of conflict management techniques on organizational effectiveness in the Nordic companies	Qualitative research design	Interpersonal and intragroup conflicts were identified as the main types of conflicts in Icelandic organizations.	While this study related conflict management techniques to organizational effectiveness, the current study will relate conflict management techniques to employees' performance.
Iravo (2011)	Impact of conflict management on the performance of public secondary schools in Machakos County	Descriptive survey research design	The conclusion reached was that there was a strong association between collaboration as a conflict resolution mechanism and performance of the selected institutions.	Study based on public secondary schools in Machakos County, the current research focus is on selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Source: Researcher (2020)

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a visual representation that depicts the association between the variables of the study. The conceptual framework for this study was as follows;

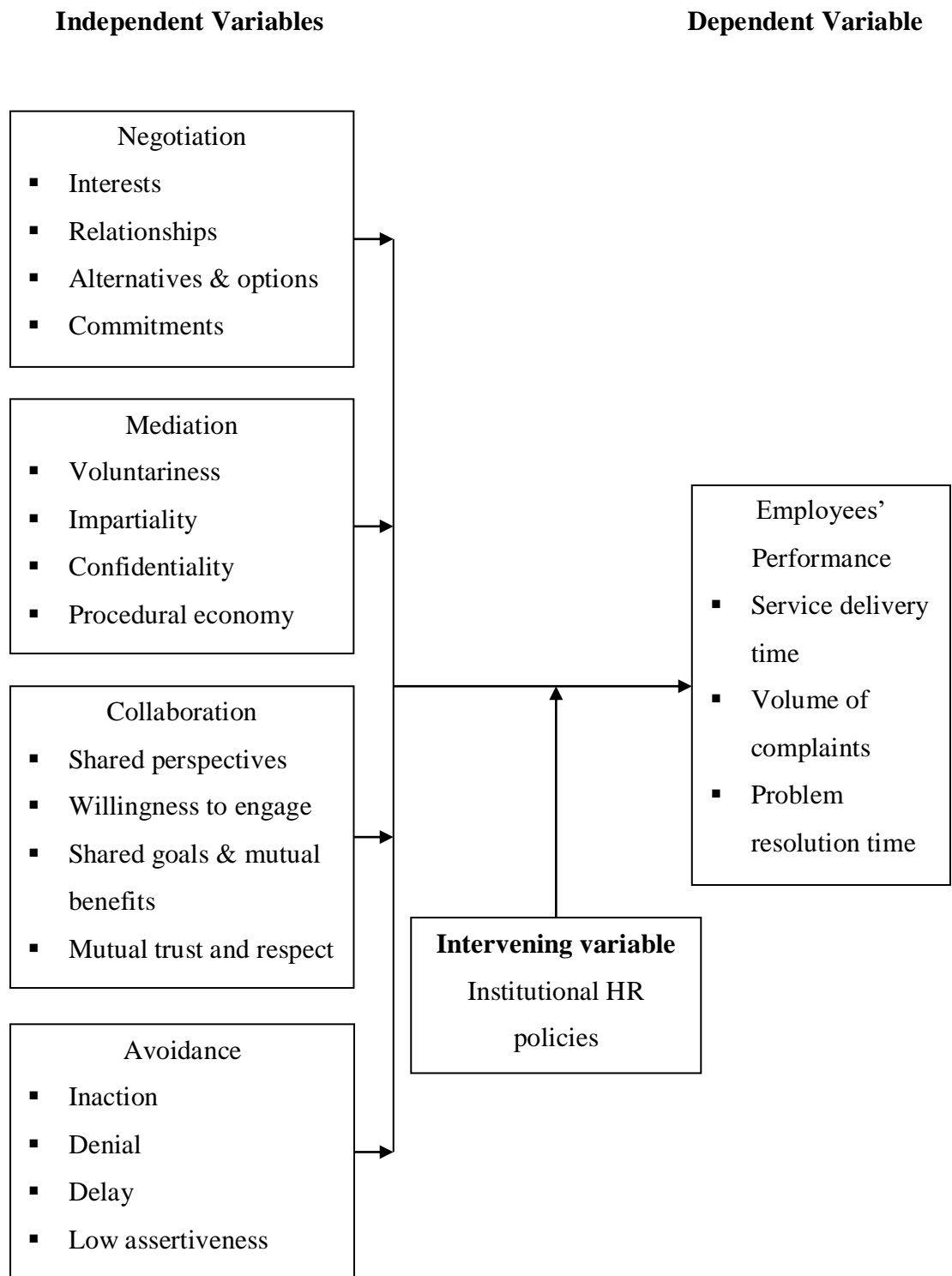


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation of this study's variables. As illustrated in Figure 2.1 above, the independent variables of the study were negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance. These were the chosen constructs representing the study's independent variable (organizational conflict management techniques). The dependent variable of the study was employees' performance with its indicators being service delivery time, volume/number of complaints and problem resolution time. The intervening variable of the study was institutional human resource policies.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter highlights methods that guided the researcher in conducting the study's. The chapter contains details on the philosophy used for the study, design used in this study, the population, size of the research sample, sampling techniques, data gathering tools, validity and reliability of the tools, procedures for collecting data, data analysis and presentation and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

Descriptive research design was used in this research study. Kothari (2004) and Muathe (2010) points out that this kind of design provides a glimpse of the current situation in its environment. The design aims to give reliable data on the behaviors, events and situations as they happen naturally. The other objectives that the design hopes to meet are to provide the true traits of a phenomenon or group, estimation of the unit's percentage in a given environment and to deduce perceptions and evaluate if there is a relationship between different variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). This design was preferred as it enabled the description of the subject under review devoid of bias or manipulation (Kothari, 2004).

3.3 Target Population

This represents the total population from which data is obtained. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) provides that a population has specific set of events, elements,

services, household, things and people that are the center of the research. The target population comprised of low, middle and top management level employees of chosen public universities in Nairobi County, Kenya, the 3 cadres chosen to ensure an organization-wide participation of the various institutions' staff. The study population focused on the employees stationed in these universities' Nairobi City campuses. The campuses in Nairobi city that were chosen were for University of Nairobi, JKUAT, Moi University, Kenyatta University, and Egerton University on account of them being at the core of Kenya's higher education. In all, based on the most recent HR records of these universities, there were 1,600 employees working in the 5 selected public universities' Nairobi City County campuses (HR Departments of the Universities, 2020). These were current research target population. The target population distribution was as depicted in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Population distribution

Universities	Target population	Percent
University of Nairobi	560	35.0
Kenyatta University	370	23.1
JKUAT	290	18.1
Moi University	220	13.8
Egerton University	160	10.0
Total	1,600	100

Source: HR Records of Selected Public Universities (2020)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Method

Stratified random sampling method helped in choosing the study sample. Stratified random sampling procedure was useful in categorizing the employees on the basis of the universities while at the same time according every subject the same opportunity of being chosen which does away with representative biasness. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), stratified sampling is most preferred for heterogeneous samples that require grouping into distinct categories/cadres for easier analysis.

The size of the sample was 160 respondents, representing 10% of the study's target population. Kothari (2004) recommended that the sample size fit for making inferences was in the range of 10% to 30% of the target population and that this was adequate for statistical reporting. The sample size distribution is as depicted in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Sample size distribution

Universities	Target population	Multiplier factor	Sample size	Percent
University of Nairobi	560	10	56	35
Kenyatta University	370	10	37	23
JKUAT	290	10	29	18
Moi University	220	10	22	14
Egerton University	160	10	16	10
Total	1,600	10	160	100

Source: Researcher, 2020

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, a self-administered structured questionnaire helped in the collection of the study's data. The queries in the research instrument were close ended. The questionnaire was deemed ideal as the method of data collection since it was economical and was a practical method to use considering the study's population size (Denscombe, 2014).

3.6 Pilot Testing

To help refine the data-gathering instrument, a pre-test of the study tool was done among 16 university employees, that is, 4 from University of Nairobi, 4 from Kenyatta University, 4 from JKUAT, 2 from Moi University and 2 from Egerton University (representing 10% of the study sample size). The 16 participants who participated in the pre-test did not form part of the main study. The pilot test helped in doing away with questions ambiguity and in enhancing the preparation of the data gathering tool ensuring that the questions were easy to understand which refined the data gathering tool. Pre-testing helps pinpoint any challenges in the research tool that need to be addressed prior to the main study (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) agreed that 10% of the sample size was enough to pre-test the data gathering tool. Where necessary, adjustments were made to improve on the research instrument.

3.7 Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity indicates how well a measure quantifies what it is expected to quantify. It is how accurate, sound and effective a research tool is when measuring the subject for which it was prepared to measure/evaluate (Kothari, 2004). It is also the extent to which outcomes truly reflect the studied phenomenon (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). To evaluate the validity of this study's research tool, the opinion of experts in this case the supervising lecturer was sought and who helped evaluate the study tool's content validity thereby ensuring that the tool adequately measured what it was expected to measure.

3.8 Reliability of the Research Instrument

It represents the evaluation of a research tool to deduce if it gives the same results after numerous trials under the same measuring conditions (Nsubuga, 2006). Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was employed to measure the internal coefficient and reliability of the study tool. The acceptable value of the measure was 0.70 at $\alpha=0.05$ significance level. Where a low co-efficient was obtained, adjustments were made accordingly in order to enhance the study instrument's reliability.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

The data gathering procedure was characterised by the researcher seeking appropriate approvals for the conduct of the study from the selected public universities as well as from Kenyatta University. The participants consent was also required before the

respondents agreed to be part of the research. The researcher utilized the drop and picking the research instrument later, in a period of two weeks. This gave the participants enough time to understand and provide responses to the queries in the research tool hence ensuring that a good and acceptable response rate was achieved.

3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation

After the data gathering exercise, obtained data was coded and categorized to different groups for easier analysis. The close ended questions were analyzed through descriptive statistics (Muathe, 2010). The descriptive statistics used included percentages, means, and standard deviation and frequencies. The recorded results presentation was in the form of figures and tables.

The study also applied regression analysis to test for the association of the variables. As explained by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the regression analysis helps to deduce any variations in the dependent variable following a variation in one of the independent variables while the others were kept/held constant. Regression analysis is useful in any research since it helps determine the extent to which a change in any of the independent variables affected the dependent variable (Kothari, 2004). Below was the multiple regression model adopted for this work;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where;

Y = Dependent variable (employees' performance)

$X_1 = \text{Negotiation}$

$X_2 = \text{Mediation}$

$X_3 = \text{Collaboration}$

$X_4 = \text{Avoidance}$

$\beta_1 - \beta_4 = \text{Beta coefficients of independent variables}$

$\varepsilon = \text{Error term}$

$\alpha = \text{Constant}$

The significance of the regression model was evaluated using F statistic while the significance of the regression estimators was evaluated using t statistic, both at 5% level of significance.

The researcher also did three diagnostic tests which included correlation, normality and multicollinearity tests. Pearson correlation coefficients helped in identifying the nature and strength of the association of the study variables. The normality test was done using the Shapiro - Wilk test at a significance level of 5%. For $p \geq 0.05$, the assumption made was that there was normality while for $p < 0.05$ the assumption made was that there was deviation from normality.

Multicollinearity was also determined using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values with VIF values ≤ 3 and Tolerance values > 0.1 showing lack of multicollinearity among the study variables. The

two tests done were important as they helped ensure the data gathered met the given assumptions made in the use of regression analysis. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23.0

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought approval from Kenyatta University to commence the study and from the management of the other selected public universities. The goal of the research was also made known to the participants plus consent sought from the participants before they became part of the study. The respondents were made aware that being part of the study was purely voluntary and that no one would be coerced to participate. Those who wished to withdrawal from it were at liberty to do so at their own pleasure and at any stage of the data collection without penalties. The data obtained was handled with confidentiality and only used to meet the study goal. The respondents' names or anything that could reveal their personal identity were never captured in or by the study tool. The data and any other research materials obtained were also safely kept in readiness for data entry and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the findings obtained after the use of the methods outlined in the third chapter on the gathered data. The chapter contains the following: reliability test results, response rate, demographic information of the respondents, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The findings were based on the study objectives.

4.2 Response Rate

The study targeted 160 employees of selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as respondents. From the 160 questionnaires administered, the researcher was able to obtain adequate responses from 124 of the respondents translating into a response rate of 77.5%. The response rate was both representative and essential in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) provision that the acceptable rate of response that is enough to be analyzed and reported should be at 50%, a higher response rate at 60% or 70% and above is good and excellent respectively.

4.3 Reliability Test Results

A pre-test helped determine if the data gathering instrument was reliable. The pilot study was made up of 15 respondents, drawn from selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya and who did not form part of the main investigate. The reliability test of the research tool was necessary in order to tell

whether the research tool yielded consistent outcomes after multiple trials under similar conditions. It helps to indicate the research instrument's level of internal consistency (Nsubuga, 2006).

The reliability of the data gathering tool was determined using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, which measures internal consistency, with the acceptable reliability threshold being a Cronbach alpha coefficient of at least 0.7 at 5% significance level. The outcomes of the test are as provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Reliability results

Study variables	Number of items per variable [N]	Reliability results [Cronbach's Alpha coefficient]	Remarks
Negotiation	5	.861	Reliable
Mediation	5	.847	Reliable
Collaboration	5	.895	Reliable
Avoidance	5	.812	Reliable
Employees performance	6	.903	Reliable
Overall reliability of the questionnaire	31	.877	Reliable

Source: Pilot test data 2020

The findings in Table 4.1 above indicate that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the study variables were 0.861 for negotiation; 0.847 for mediation; 0.895 for collaboration; 0.812 for avoidance and 0.903 for employees' performance. In addition, coefficient for the whole questionnaire was 0.877.

This therefore shows that all the study variables and the questionnaire as a whole had a reliability coefficient higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.7. Therefore, the researcher conclusion is that the research instrument has a high level of internal consistency and hence the study questionnaire is reliable. This finding is in line with Kothari (2004) and Nsubuga (2006) assertion that a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above at 5% level of significance denotes that the research instrument has a high level of internal consistency.

4.4 Demographic Information of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the study participants was evaluated. Demographic characteristics have to do with age, gender, duration worked in the institution, level of education and whether the respondents had witnessed workplace conflicts in their organization. Table 4.2 below contains the findings.

Table 4.2: Respondents' demographic characteristics

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	71	57.3
	Female	53	42.7
	Total	124	100.0
Age	18 - 25 years	11	8.9
	25 - 34 years	38	30.6
	35 - 44 years	52	41.9
	45 years and above	23	18.5
	Total	124	100.0
Education level	Certificate	18	14.5
	Diploma	53	42.7

	Graduate	40	32.3
	Masters	13	10.5
	Total	124	100.0
Duration worked in the organization	1-5 years	21	16.9
	6-10 years	70	56.5
	Over 10 years	33	26.6
	Total	124	100.0
Whether witnessed workplace conflicts	Yes	124	100.0
	No	0	0.0
	Total	124	100.0

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The findings in Table 4.2 above indicate that 57.3% (n = 71) of the respondents were male while 42.7% (n = 53) were female; most of the respondents were aged 35 - 44 years (41.9%, n = 52) and 25 - 34 years (30.6%, n = 38); most were either diploma holders (42.7%, n = 53) or graduates (32.3%, n = 40); most had worked in their organization for 6 - 10 years (56.5%, n = 70) and that all had witnessed workplace conflicts in their organization (100%, n = 124).

This showed that the study participants were relatively young male and female adult employees of the selected universities in Nairobi County, Kenya with a sound education background, that had worked in the institutions for quite a while and who were cognizant of existence of workplace conflicts in their organization. Similar demographic attributes were reported in studies by Saranya (2016) and Idua (2017) in which the respondents were of both genders, in their productive years, had a sound education background and had experienced/witnessed conflicts in their work place.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

4.5.1 Negotiation as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to establish the effect of negotiation as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study determined the level of agreement by the respondents with different on negotiation as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Table 4.3 contains the findings.

Table 4.3: Respondents' level of agreement with statements on negotiation as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Negotiations provide a quick, inexpensive and flexible approach to conflict resolution	4.13	0.650
Negotiations help enhance communication among conflicting parties which preserves their relationships	4.29	0.595
Negotiations are usually risk-free since communication are prejudice free and when the parties can't come to an agreement, they are free to seek other	4.05	0.854
Negotiations can help clarify and narrow down issues and encouraging an environment of co-operation, openness and collaboration even when an agreement on the best decision is not achieved	4.21	0.628
Negotiations may lead to enhanced satisfaction and adherence to settlements when parties are made part of the decision making and the coming up with agreements	4.36	0.589
Overall scores	4.21	0.663

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The outcomes provided in Table 4.3 indicate that workers of the chosen universities in Nairobi City County Kenya were in agreement that negotiations may lead to enhanced satisfaction and adherence to settlements when parties are made part of the decision making and the coming up with agreements (mean = 4.36); negotiations help enhance communication among conflicting parties which preserves their relationships (mean = 4.29) and that negotiations can help clarify and narrow down issues and encouraging an environment of co-operation, openness and collaboration even when an agreement on the best decision is not achieved (mean = 4.21);

They further agreed that negotiations provide a quick, inexpensive and flexible approach to conflict resolution (mean = 4.13) and that negotiations are usually risk-free since communication are prejudice free and when the parties can't come to an agreement, they are free to seek other options (mean = 4.05). The overall score of a mean of 4.21 showed that the employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya agreed with the various listed statements on negotiation, with the overall standard deviation of 0.663 denoting that the respondents' responses were not highly variable. This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya acknowledged the significance of negotiation as a conflict management technique in their organizations.

This agreed with Oni-Ojo et al. (2014) who also identified negotiation as one of the key conflict resolution techniques that yielded positive conflict resolution outcomes. The study espoused the view that negotiations were a viable dispute resolution mechanism that could help organizations manage workplace conflicts; thereby contributing to their success in attainment of organizational goals. Similar sentiments

were shared by Longe (2015) and Olang (2017) who also observed that negotiation, as a conflict resolution technique, allowed parties in conflict to foster a climate of openness, co-operation and understanding leading to quicker settlement of disputes in turn enhancing staff performance. Awan and Saeed (2015) agreed adding that negotiations enhance relationships between warring parties and increases the likelihood of the parties' compliance with mutually agreed settlements to the conflict.

4.5.2 Mediation as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to examine the effect of mediation as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study sought to know the agreement levels of the respondents with different statements on mediation as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The results were as provided in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Respondents' agreement level with statements on mediation as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
In mediation, the parties are active participants in dispute resolution and are provided with the chance to listen to each other without confrontation and in a confidential setting	4.14	0.691
Mediation enhances staff productivity as there is potential to a speedy resolution of conflicts, saving various resources including time and money	4.09	0.827

Mediation provides the conflicting parties with a chance to test the strengths, weaknesses and theories of their case	4.01	0.760
Mediation enhances staff performance as it preserves or allows continuing relationships between parties in conflict	4.20	0.650
Mediation facilitates staff performance as it is the parties, rather than the mediator who makes the final decision	4.27	0.679
Overall scores	4.14	0.721

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The study findings in Table 4.4 above indicate that the chosen public universities employees concurred that mediation facilitates staff performance as it is the parties, rather than the mediator who makes the final decision (mean = 4.27); mediation enhances staff performance as it preserves or allows continuing relationships between parties in conflict (mean = 4.20) and that in mediation, the parties are active participants in dispute resolution and are provided with the chance to listen to each other without confrontation and in a confidential setting (mean = 4.14). They further concurred that mediation enhances staff productivity as there is potential to a speedy resolution of conflicts, saving both time and money (mean = 4.09) and that mediation gives an opportunity for the conflicting parties to test the theories, weaknesses and strengths of their case (mean = 4.01).

The overall score of a mean of 4.14 showed that the employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya concurred with the various listed statements on mediation, with the overall standard deviation of 0.721 denoting that the respondents' responses were not highly variable. This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya did acknowledge the

importance of mediation as a conflict management technique and its role in enhancing staff performance in the universities.

This concurred with Ajike *et al.* (2015) who also identified mediation as a viable conflict management technique by according parties in conflict an opportunity to be heard in a confidential setting. Similar observations were made by Lazarus (2014) who pointed that mediation helps prevent lengthy contracted conflicts by allowing speedy resolution of arising conflicts. Olang (2017) and Mwikali (2016) also shared the view that mediation was a conflict resolution mechanism that had a high chance of achieving positive outcomes in relation to resolving of organizational conflicts. In contrast, Rahim (2017) and Currie *et al.* (2017) were of the view that mediation may not always yield optimal outcomes in conflict resolution particularly in instances where one party has greater power and advantage over the other, or where the mediator is biased towards one side of the argument or a position held by one of the parties.

4.5.3 Collaboration as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to investigate the effect of collaboration as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study sought to know the agreement levels of the respondents with different statements on collaboration as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral,

4=agree and 5= strongly agree. The findings were as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Respondents’ agreement with statements on collaboration as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Embracing dialogue in managing conflicts results into positive conflict outcomes in turn leading to better employee performance	4.41	0.585
Collaboration helps in achievement of mutual optimal outcomes in conflict resolution given its focus on building relations and integrating solutions	4.22	0.693
Collaboration enhances employees performance as it emphasizes that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other demands in full	4.18	0.675
The collaborating conflict management style provides a suitable way to bring together the different insights of individuals on the various problem perspectives and the end result can be an unwavering commitment to the decision made from all the parties	4.11	0.746
Through collaborating conflict management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued	4.29	0.622
Overall scores	4.24	0.664

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The study findings in Table 4.5 above indicate that staff from the chosen public universities in Nairobi City County Kenya agreed that embracing dialogue in managing conflicts results into positive conflict outcomes in turn leading to better employee performance (mean = 4.41); through collaborating as a conflict

management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued (mean = 4.29) and that collaboration helps in achievement of mutual optimal outcomes in conflict resolution given its focus on building relations and integrating solutions (mean = 4.22).

They further agreed that collaboration enhances employees performance as it emphasizes that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other demands in full (mean = 4.18) and that the collaborating conflict management style provides a suitable way to bring together the different insights of individuals on the various problem perspectives and the end result can be an unwavering commitment to the decision made from all the parties (mean = 4.11).

The overall score of a mean of 4.24 depicts that the employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya agreed with the various listed statements regarding collaboration, with the overall standard deviation of 0.664 denoting that the respondents' responses were not highly variable. This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya were cognizant of the important role that collaboration played in conflict resolution and creating an enabling working environment in their organizations.

The findings were in agreement with those of Toku (2014) who in a study on conflict resolution techniques in Ghana found that collaboration was a desirable conflict management technique as it strengthened the bond among organization members. The findings also agreed with Agwu (2013) who in a study carried out in Nigeria supported utilization of collaboration as a conflict management technique given its

emphasis that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other demands if possible.

Ekechukwu (2016) and Iravo (2011) also shared the view that collaboration was one of the most effective conflict resolution techniques as it allowed resolution of organizational conflicts through dialogue, relationship building and integrating of varied solutions while also making parties to a conflict feel valued and appreciated. In contrast, Kazimoto (2013) and Longe (2015) were of the view that collaboration is only effective and workable where parties in conflict have shared perspectives, are willing to engage, have shared goals and perceive mutual benefits and there is mutual trust and respect - without which it cannot work.

4.5.4 Avoidance as a Conflict Management Technique

The study sought to determine the effect of avoidance as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study sought to know the agreement levels of the respondents with different statements on avoidance as a conflict management technique in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree. The responses were as provided in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Respondents' level of agreement with statements on avoidance as a conflict management technique

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Keeping off from insignificant conflicts improves an employee's performance	4.06	0.824
The avoidance technique adversely impacts employees performance by allowing conflicts to fester	4.35	0.614
The avoidance technique focuses on the giving of time and ability to more urgent or crucial challenges instead	4.19	0.646
The avoidance technique gives one to prepare and gather data before acting	3.94	0.849
By failing to address conflicts, organizational long-term goals may fail to be met	4.39	0.608
Overall scores	4.19	0.708

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The responses in Table 4.6 show that the chosen public universities in Nairobi City County Kenya employees were in agreement that by failing to address conflicts, organizational long-term goals may fail to be met (mean = 4.39); the avoidance technique adversely impacts employees performance by allowing conflicts to fester (mean = 4.35); the avoidance technique focuses on the giving of time and ability to more urgent or crucial challenges instead (mean = 4.19); keeping off from insignificant conflicts improves an employee's performance (mean = 4.06) and that the avoidance technique gives one time to better prepare and collect information before acting (mean = 3.94). The overall score of a mean of 4.19 depicts that the

employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya agreed with the various listed statements regarding avoidance, with the overall standard deviation of 0.708 denoting that the respondents' responses were not highly variable. This implied that employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya did acknowledge that avoidance was not a favourable conflict management technique in their organizations.

This was in line with the findings of Abdullah (2015) who in a study carried out in Pakistan observed that avoidance was a conflict management approach that adversely impacted on organizational operation effectiveness as it led to delayed response to causes of organizational conflicts in turn leading to the conflicts exacerbating. Similar observations were made by Oni-Ojo *et al.* (2014) and Alajekwu (2017) who also argued that avoidance was not a desirable conflict resolution technique due to its tendency of leaving conflicts to get out of hand due to causes of the conflicts remaining unaddressed. As argued by Agusioma (2018), timely conflict resolution is instrumental to workplace harmony and better staff performance. However, this cannot be achieved by leaving conflicts to fester as is the case with avoidance as a conflict resolution technique, which makes it undesirable. In contrast, Agwu (2013) and Saranya (2016) did not perceive avoidance as being a necessarily bad conflict resolution technique, arguing that avoidance may indeed be desirable in inconsequential disputes, disputes in which a party is out rightly hostile and illogical and instances where a relationship is of short term basis.

4.5.5 Employees' Performance in the Selected Public Universities

The study also evaluated the respondents' agreement level with different statements made on employees' performance in their organization using a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Table 4.7 shows the findings.

Table 4.7: Respondents' extent of agreement with statements on employees' performance

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
There is notable decrease in client service waiting time in our organization	4.09	0.874
There is notable increase in employee productivity in our organization	4.03	0.764
There is a notable reduction in clients' number of complaints regarding the service quality of our organization	4.30	0.611
There is notable decrease in problem/complaint resolution time in our organization	4.24	0.655
There is improved transparency and accountability in service delivery in our organization	3.88	0.984
There is notable improvement in employees meeting the set objectives	4.12	0.717
Overall scores	4.11	0.768

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The responses in Table 4.7 indicate that the staff members of the chosen public universities in Nairobi City County Kenya were in agreement that there was a notable reduction in clients' number of complaints regarding the service quality of their

organization (mean = 4.30); there was notable decrease in problem/complaint resolution time in their organization (mean = 4.24); there was notable improvement in employees meeting the set objectives (mean = 4.12); there was notable decrease in client service waiting time in their organization (mean = 4.09); there was notable increase in employee productivity in their organization (mean = 4.03) and that there was improved transparency and accountability in service delivery in their organization (mean = 3.88).

The overall score of a mean of 4.11 depicts that the employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya agreed with the various listed statements regarding employee performance status, with the overall standard deviation of 0.768 denoting that the respondents' responses were not highly variable. This implied that there was general consensus among majority of the employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya that their performance at work had notably improved.

In studies by Longe (2015) and Mwikali (2016), effective conflict resolution was also found to lead to improved employee performance. Similarly, Kehinde (2011) and Mughal and Khan (2013) were of the view that timely and effective conflict resolution creates a conducive working environment enabling employees to perform at the highest possible level which in turn translates into improved overall organizational performance.

4.6 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics, as pointed out by both Kothari (2004) and Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), help in analyzing the association or relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable of a study. In this study, the researcher utilized both correlation and regression analysis to test for the association of the variables under study.

4.6.1 Diagnostic Tests Results

The diagnostic tests performed were correlation, normality and multicollinearity tests. The tests were important as they helped the study meet the provided assumptions made during the regression model analysis. The findings of the tests done were as detailed below;

4.6.1.1 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was used to evaluate the association between the study's independent variables and the dependent variable at 5% significance level. The correlation analysis outcomes were as summarized in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Correlation matrix

	Employees' performance	Negotiation	Mediation	Collaboration	Avoidance
Employees' performance (r)	1.000				
(p) Sig. (2 tailed)					
Negotiation (r)	0.716	1.000			
(p) (2 tailed)	0.000				
Mediation (r)	0.662	0.037	1.000		
(p) Sig. (2 tailed)	0.018	0.321			
Collaboration	0.743	0.115	0.236	1.000	
	0.000	0.207	0.131		
Avoidance (r)	-0.481	0.088	0.045	0.123	1.000
(p) Sig. (2 tailed)	0.021	0.149	0.327	0.182	

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Results of the Pearson's correlation coefficients, shown in Table 4.8 above, depicts that there was a strong favourable and significant correlation between negotiation ($r=0.716$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$); mediation ($r=0.662$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) as well as collaboration ($r=0.743$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) as organizational conflict management techniques and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The findings also indicate that there was a negative and significant correlation between avoidance ($r=-0.481$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) as an organizational conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Therefore, it is implied that the use of negotiation, mediation and collaboration as conflict management techniques positively influenced employees' performance in the chosen public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya while the use of avoidance, as a conflict management technique, had a negative impact on the performance of the said employees. This agreed with Agwu (2013), Longe (2015), Ekechukwu (2016) and Olang (2017) all of whom reported that negotiation, mediation and collaboration as organizational conflict management techniques positively influenced employees' performance. The findings also agreed with those of Abdullah (2015) and Alajekwu (2017) who identified a negative association between avoidance and employee performance.

4.6.1.2 Normality Tests

In this study, normality of the gathered data testing was done with the help of the Shapiro - Wilk test. The study's significance level was $p = 5\%$. For $p \geq 0.05$ the assumption made was that there exists normality while for $p < 0.05$, the assumption made was that there was deviation from normality. The outcomes of this test are depicted in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Tests of Normality

Variables	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Negotiation	.881	52	.675
Mediation	.917	52	.724
Collaboration	.921	52	.703
Avoidance	.862	52	.649
Employees' performance	.945	52	.781

Source: Survey Data, 2020

From the outcomes in Table 4.9 above, the Shapiro-Wilk tests significance values were 0.675 for negotiation, 0.724 for mediation, 0.703 for collaboration, 0.649 for avoidance and 0.781 for employees' performance. From the results it's evident that the p-values of Shapiro-Wilk tests for each of the study variables were higher than the given alpha level of 0.05. This leads to the acceptance of the hypothesis that data used came from a normally distributed population. The outcome of the tests shows that the population was normally distributed. Since the normality test was encouraging and there was no violation of the normality requirements, the researcher could go on and perform the regression analysis.

4.6.1.3 Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity tests if the independent variables are highly correlated. The key emphasis of this test is that in case the extent of multicollinearity rises, the coefficients of the regression model end up being unstable and the coefficients

standard errors become highly inflated. Multicollinearity, for this research was determined using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values with VIF values of ≤ 3 and Tolerance values of > 0.1 . This was proof that there was no multicollinearity among the existing variables. Table 4.10 contains the multicollinearity tests results.

Table 4.10: Multicollinearity tests results

Variables	Collinearity Statistics	
	VIF	Tolerance
Negotiation	1.366	0.724
Mediation	1.511	0.618
Collaboration	1.140	0.857
Avoidance	1.709	0.915

Source: Survey Data, 2020

From the test results provided in Table 4.10 above, multicollinearity among the research independent variables doesn't exist as all the VIF results were lower than 3 while the variables Tolerance results were all > 0.1 . Since no multicollinearity exists in the research independent variables, it was okay to do the regression analysis.

4.6.2 Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the variables being studied. The independent variables (negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance) were regressed against the dependent variable (employees' performance). The outcomes were as summarized below;

Table 4.11: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.847 ^a	0.718	0.708		.5435

Predictors: (Constant), negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance

Source: Survey Data, 2020

According to Table 4.11 above, R square is the coefficient of determination indicating the change in the dependent variable due to variations in the independent variables. the R square value is at 0.718 indicating that a 71.8% change in employees' performance in the chosen public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya was due to variations in the use of negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance as organizational conflict management techniques. Hence, 28.2% of variation in the dependent variable (employees' performance in the chosen universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya) could only be explained by other factors that were not part of the study model and were unstudied in this research.

Table 4.12: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	91.714	4	22.92850	75.71	.0000 ^a
	Residual	36.039	119	0.30285		
	Total	127.753	123			

a. Predictors: (Constant), negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance

b. Dependent Variable: Employees' performance

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is made up of tests that give data on the variability levels within a regression model and are the basis on which the model significance is based on. The "F" column gives the statistic for determining the hypothesis that all $\beta \neq 0$ against the null hypothesis that $\beta = 0$ (Weisberg, 2005).

From the results shown in Table 4.12, the significance value is .0000 which is lower than the given significance level of 0.05, showing that the regression model was statistically significant in determining the way negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance as organizational conflict management techniques affected the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Further, outcome of the F critical at a level of significance of 5% is 2.58. Because the value of F calculated at 75.71 was higher than the value of F critical at 2.58, this is enough affirmation that the used regression model was significant. The regression coefficients results were as provided in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Regression coefficients results

	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.571	.645		5.536	.000
Negotiation	0.707	.151	.661	4.682	.000
Mediation	0.621	.187	.582	3.321	.001
Collaboration	0.736	.143	.714	5.147	.000
Avoidance	-0.469	-.209	-.427	2.244	.027

Source: Survey Data, 2020

From the findings obtained from the regression coefficients in Table 4.13 above, the regression model is given as;

$$Y = 3.571 + 0.707 X_1 + 0.621 X_2 + 0.736 X_3 + -0.469 X_4 + \ell$$

According to the above equation, taking the 4 predictor variables (that is, negotiation, mediation, collaboration and avoidance) at a constant level of zero, employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya would be 3.571. On the overall, the regression analysis results showed that negotiation, mediation and collaboration positively correlated with employees performance as depicted by beta coefficients values of 0.707, 0.621 and 0.736 respectively while avoidance negatively related with employee performance as denoted by a beta coefficient value of -0.469, with all having p values < 0.05.

These results are further elaborated under sub-section 4.6.3 below;

4.6.3 Hypotheses Tests Results

The regression analysis model, in view of the study's research hypotheses, espoused the following results;

H₀₁ Negotiation has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

A unit change in application of negotiation as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.707 positive change in employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Given that the p value for negotiation (a

value of .000) was lower than 0.05 the significance level, the relationship between application of negotiation as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya was significant.

Thus, there exists a strong positive and significant relationship between application of negotiation as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that negotiation as a conflict management technique had a significant impact on the performance of employees in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Similar findings were reported by Zhu (2013) and Longe (2015) that negotiation as an organizational conflict management technique positively influenced employees' performance. In contrast, studies by Posthuma (2011) and Weerarathna (2014), reported that negotiations had an adverse effect on employees performance while Mwikali (2016) found no significant association between negotiation and workers performance.

H₀₂ Mediation has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

A unit change in application of mediation as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.621 positive change in employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Given that the p value for mediation (a value of .001) was lower compared to the significance value of 0.05, the relationship

between application of mediation as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya was significant.

Thus, there was a strong positive and significant relationship between application of mediation as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that mediation as a conflict management technique had a significant effect on the performance of employees in the chosen public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

In their studies, Ajike *et al.* (2015) and Lazarus (2014) reported similar findings that mediation as an organizational conflict management technique had a positive effect on employees' performance. Mediation, as a conflict resolution technique was also found to favourably affect employees' performance as reported by Olang (2017) and Mwikali (2016). However, in contrast, in studies by Ajike *et al.* (2015) and Currie *et al.* (2017), mediation as a conflict resolution technique was found to affect employees' performance in an unfavourable way.

H₀₃ Collaboration has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

A unit change in application of collaboration as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.736 positive change in employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Given that the p value for collaboration (a value of .000) was lower than the selected significance level of 0.05,

the relationship between application of collaboration as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya was significant.

Thus, there was a strong positive and significant relationship between application of collaboration as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that collaboration as a conflict management technique had a significant impact on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This concurred with findings by Toku (2014) and Longe (2015) who also identified a positive and significant association between collaboration as an organizational conflict management technique and employees' performance. Similarly, Iravo (2011) and Ekechukwu (2016) also reported that collaboration as a conflict resolution approach had a positively influence/effect on performance of organizational employees. However, in contrast, in studies by Lazarus (2014) and Donkor *et al.* (2015), application of collaboration in conflict resolution was not found to have any positive effects on employees' performance.

H₀₄ Avoidance has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

A unit change in application of avoidance as a conflict management technique would lead to a 0.469 negative change in employees' performance in the selected public

universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Given that the p value for avoidance (a value of .027) was lower than 0.05 the given significance level, showing that the relationship between application of avoidance as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya was significant.

Thus, there was an inverse (or negative) and significant relationship between application of avoidance as a conflict management technique and performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and the study accepted the alternate hypothesis that avoidance as a conflict management technique significantly impacts employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The findings were in line with those of Abdullah (2015) and Alajekwu (2017) who also established that avoidance as a conflict resolution technique adversely impacted employees' performance, a view also espoused by Oni-Ojo *et al.* (2014). However, in contrast, in studies by Lazarus (2014) and Mwikali (2016), use of avoidance as a conflict resolution technique was not found to have any adverse effects on employees' performance, while Kagucia (2014) reported a positive association between avoidance and workers performance.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the summarized findings, the reached conclusions from these results and recommendations made. The chapter also provides further research areas that scholars can focus on related to the study topic. This study sought to determine the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

5.2 Summary

Over the years, the performance of employees in the country's institutions of higher learning have been adversely affected by persistent workers strikes and go-slows, which paralyze learning in the institutions, as the university staffs protest over poor working conditions, low pay, understaffing among other grievances. None of the local studies evaluated the impact of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in Kenya's public universities. This study therefore sought to investigate the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

The first objective of the study sought to establish the effect of negotiation as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County,

Kenya. The study determined that a strong positive and significant relationship existed between application of negotiation as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as depicted by a positive beta coefficient value and a significance value less than the chosen significance level. This implied that application of negotiation as a conflict management technique helped enhance the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This finding was supported by the views of employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya who were in agreement that negotiations may lead to enhanced satisfaction and adherence to settlements when parties are made part of the decision making and the coming up with agreements and that negotiations can help enhance communication among conflicting parties which preserves their relationships.

They were also in agreement that negotiations can help clarify and narrow down issues and encouraging an environment of co-operation, openness and collaboration even when an agreement on the best decision is not achieved; negotiations provide a quick, inexpensive and flexible approach to conflict resolution and that negotiations are usually risk-free since communications are prejudice free and when the parties can't come to an agreement, they are free to seek other options.

The second objective of the study sought to examine the effect of mediation as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study found that a strong positive and significant relationship existed between application of mediation as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as depicted by a positive beta coefficient value and a p value lower than the chosen significance level. This implied that application of mediation as a conflict management technique helped enhance the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This was further affirmed by the views of employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya who did agree that mediation facilitates staff performance as it is the parties, rather than the mediator who makes the final decision; mediation enhances staff performance as it preserves or allows continuing relationships between parties in conflict; in mediation, the parties are active participants in dispute resolution and are provided with the chance to listen to each other without confrontation and in a confidential setting; mediation enhances staff productivity as there is potential to a speedy resolution of conflicts, saving various resources including time and money and that mediation provides the conflicting parties with a chance to test the strengths, weaknesses and theories of their case.

The third objective of the study sought to investigate the effect of collaboration as a conflict management technique on employees'

performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study also established that a strong positive and significant relationship existed between application of collaboration as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as depicted by a positive beta coefficient value and a p value less than the chosen significance level. This implied that application of collaboration as a conflict management technique helped improve the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This was affirmed by the opinions of employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya who agreed that embracing dialogue in managing conflicts results into positive conflict outcomes in turn leading to better employee performance; through collaborating as a conflict management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued as a conflict management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued; collaboration helps in achievement of mutual optimal outcomes in conflict resolution given its focus on building relations and integrating solutions; collaboration employees performance as it emphasizes that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other demands in full and that the collaborating conflict management style provides a suitable way to bring together the different insights of individuals on the various problem perspectives and the end result can be an unwavering commitment to the decision made from all the parties.

The last objective of the study sought to determine the effect of avoidance as a conflict management technique on employees' performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study established that an inverse (or negative) and significant relationship existed between application of avoidance as a conflict management technique and employees' performance in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as depicted by a negative beta coefficient value and a p value less than the chosen significance level. This implied that application of avoidance as a conflict management technique negatively influenced the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This was further affirmed by the opinions of employees of the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya who concurred that by failing to address conflicts, organizational long-term goals may fail to be met; the avoidance technique adversely impacts employees performance by allowing conflicts to fester; the avoidance technique focuses on the giving of time and ability to more urgent or crucial challenges instead; keeping off from insignificant conflicts improves an employee's performance and that the avoidance technique gives one time to better prepare and collect information before acting.

5.3 Conclusions

Application of negotiation as a conflict management technique was instrumental in enhancing the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Application of mediation as a conflict management technique positively and significantly impacted on the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Application of collaboration as a conflict management technique positively correlated with the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Application of avoidance as a conflict management technique negatively impacted the performance of employees in the selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. This means that avoidance as a conflict management technique should not be used to resolve workplace conflicts in Kenya's public universities unless the conflicts in the question are trivial or inconsequential.

5.4 Recommendations

The managements/administrators of public universities in Kenya should consider application of diverse organizational conflict management techniques such as negotiation, mediation and collaboration tapping into their respective strengths in conflict resolution and in light of their effects on employees' performance.

The administrators of Kenya's public universities should limit the use of avoidance as an organizational conflict management technique in light of its adverse effects on employees' performance. This organizational conflict management technique should only be applied when dealing with insignificant/less important conflicts.

The managements/administrators of Kenya's public universities should institute regular evaluations on how work disputes impact employees' performance within the institutions in the country. This could be helpful in guiding management decisions and choices as to the most effective organizational conflict management techniques to apply to resolve existing workplace conflicts.

Depending on the nature of organizational conflicts being experienced, the managements/administrators of Kenya's public universities may apply a mix of different organizational conflict management techniques to achieve optimal outcomes in resolution of organizational/workplace conflicts. This is in appreciation of the fact that a single organizational conflict management technique may not yield optimal resolution of the existing organizational conflicts. This is also in appreciation of the fact that organizational conflicts are diverse in nature and while one conflict management technique may yield positive results with respect to a given organizational conflict, it may not yield same good results in a different kind of an organizational conflict.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

Since the current study explored the effect of organizational conflict management techniques on employees' performance in selected public

universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya; a wider study involving other public and private universities in the country is hereby recommended. This will enable a better and broader comparison to be made and also a better generalization of the study results to be made. In addition, other studies may review the effect of other organizational conflict management techniques, not covered in this study, on employees' performance in the country's public and private universities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

My name is Gertrude Muthoni Mwaniki, a student at Kenyatta University, pursuing a Masters of Business Administration degree in Human Resource Management. I am carrying out a research study on: **Organizational Conflict Management Techniques and Employee performance in selected public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.**

I am requesting for your participation in the study through responding to the study's data collection instrument. The information that you will provide will not be shared with unauthorized individuals and will only help me in achieving the goals of this research. Also note that participation in this study is voluntary and your name or anything else that may identify you will not appear anywhere in the study.

Thanks in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Gertrude Muthoni Mwaniki

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Title of the study: Organizational Conflict Management Techniques and Employee Performance in Selected Public Universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Date:

Code:

Instructions:

- a) Do not write your name(s) on the questionnaire.
- b) Tick ALL appropriate responses in the spaces provided in each question.
- c) Respond to ALL questions. DO NOT leave any questions unanswered.

Section A: Demographic information

1. What is your gender? Male Female

2. What is your age in years?

18-25 years 25-34 years

35-44 years 45 years and above

3. What is your highest level of education?

Certificate Diploma Graduate

Masters PhD

4. For how long have you worked in your organization?

Less than 1 year 1-5 years

6-10 years []

Over 10 years []

5. Have you witnessed workplace conflicts in your organization?

Yes []

No []

Section B: Negotiation

6. To what extent do you agree with these statements on negotiation as a conflict management technique in your organization? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree [Tick on each statement appropriately]

	1	2	3	4	5
Negotiations provide a quick, inexpensive and flexible approach to conflict resolution					
Negotiations help enhance communication among conflicting parties which preserves their relationships					
Negotiations are usually risk-free since communication are prejudice free and when the parties can't come to an agreement, they are free to seek other options					
Negotiations can help clarify and narrow down issues and encouraging an environment of co-operation, openness and collaboration even when an agreement on the best decision is not achieved					
Negotiations may lead to enhanced satisfaction and adherence to settlements when parties are made part of the decision making and the coming up with agreements					

Section C: Mediation

7. To what extent do you agree with these statements on mediation as a conflict management technique in your organization? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree [Tick on each statement appropriately]

	1	2	3	4	5
In mediation, the parties are active participants in dispute resolution and are provided with the chance to listen to each other without confrontation and in a confidential setting					
Mediation enhances staff productivity as there is potential to a speedy resolution of conflicts, saving various resources including time and money					
Mediation provides the conflicting parties with a chance to test the strengths, weaknesses and theories of their case					
Mediation enhances staff performance as it preserves or allows continuing relationships between parties in conflict					
Mediation facilitates staff performance as it is the parties, rather than the mediator who makes the final decision					

Section D: Collaboration

8. To what extent do you agree with these statements on collaboration as a conflict management technique in your organization? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree [Tick on each statement appropriately]

	1	2	3	4	5
Embracing dialogue in managing conflicts results into positive conflict outcomes in turn leading to better employee performance					
Collaboration helps in achievement of mutual optimal					

outcomes in conflict resolution given its focus on building relations and integrating solutions					
Collaboration enhances employees performance as it emphasizes that the conflicting parties should be willing and prepared to meet each other demands in full					
The collaborating conflict management style provides a suitable way to bring together the different insights of individuals on the various problem perspectives and the end result can be an unwavering commitment to the decision made from all the parties					
Through collaborating conflict management style, all conflicting parties feel understood and valued					

Section E: Avoidance

9. To what extent do you agree with these statements on avoidance as a conflict management technique in your organization? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree [Tick on each statement appropriately]

	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping off from insignificant conflicts improves an employee's performance					
The avoidance technique adversely impacts employees performance by allowing conflicts to fester					
The avoidance technique gives the ability/time to focus on more important or more urgent issues instead					
The avoidance technique gives one time to better prepare and collect information before acting					
By failing to address conflicts, organizational long-term goals may fail to be met					

Section F: Employees Performance

10. To what extent do you agree with these statements on employees' performance in your organization? Use a scale of 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree [Tick on each statement appropriately]

	1	2	3	4	5
There is notable decrease in client service waiting time in our organization					
There is notable increase in employee productivity in our organization					
There is a notable reduction in clients' number of complaints regarding the service quality of our organization					
There is notable decrease in problem/complaint resolution time in our organization					
There is improved transparency and accountability in service delivery in our organization					
There is notable improvement in employees meeting the set objectives					

Thank you for your time and participation

Appendix IV: Research Authorization from Kenyatta University



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

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P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 020-8704150

Our Ref: D53/OL/CTY/32067/2017

DATE: 30th July, 2020

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MS. GERTRUDE MUTHONI
MWANIKI – REG. NO. D53/OL/CTY/32067/17**

I write to introduce Ms. Gertrude Muthoni Mwaniki who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for MBA degree programme in the Department of Business Administration.

Ms. Mwaniki intends to conduct research for a MBA Project Proposal entitled, “Organizational Conflict Management Techniques and Employees Performance in Selected Public Universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.”

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

**PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**



Appendix V: Research Permit from NACOSTI

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 635495	Date of Issue: 26/August/2020
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms.. Gertrude Muthoni Mwaniki of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: Organizational Conflict Management Techniques and Employees Performance in Selected Public Universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya for the period ending : 26/August/2021.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/20/6423	
635495 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Verification QR Code	
	
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THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is Guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period
2. The License any rights thereunder are non-transferable
3. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) within one of completion of the research
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice

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