

Integrating Conflict Management Strategies with Employee Productivity among Employees of Premium Steel and Mines Limited, Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between conflict management strategies (CMS) and employees' productivity (EP) among employees of Premium Steel and Mines Limited Warri, Delta State, Nigeria. In order to evaluate the relationship between CMS and EP, the following measures of CMS, namely; collective bargaining, avoidance strategy, accommodation strategy, and compromise Strategy in relation to EP were used. The study adopted descriptive survey design. A sample size of 267 was drawn from the targeted population of employees of Premium Steel and Mines Limited Warri by utilizing Yamane's (1967) calculation of the sample size at 5% significant level while systematic sampling technique was used in selecting respondents to whom questionnaire were administered. The descriptive statistics and correlation matrix was used to ascertain the direction of relationship that exists between CMS and EP. The testing of hypotheses formulated for the study was performed using simple linear regression analysis with the aid of SPSS version 23. The findings showed that collective bargaining, avoidance strategy, accommodating strategy, and compromising strategy have significant positive effect on EP. Finally, the study concluded that there is a positive significant relationship between CMS and EP among employees of Premium Steel and Mines Limited Warri. The study recommended that managers should embrace collective bargaining as a strategy for tackling complex or high-stakes conflicts, use avoidance strategy when the issue at hand is minor, or when more information is needed before diving into a resolution. Furthermore, managers should encourage their employees to use accommodating strategy selectively—like when it comes to fostering team cohesion, easing tension, or being flexible in collaborative environments and promote compromising strategy in time-sensitive situations or when maintaining working relationships is crucial, as it encourages fairness and balance. This in turn will enhance employee's productivity.

Keyword: conflict management strategies, collective bargaining, avoidance strategy, accommodation strategy, compromise strategy, employee productivity

INTRODUCTION

Every organization is made up of a diverse workforce, and they do not operate in a vacuum; instead, they exist in an environment that is constantly changing. In this complex and dynamic business landscape, conflict is almost inevitable because employees come from various cultural backgrounds. Conflicts can manifest in many ways, like disputes among coworkers, disagreements between management and staff, or even tensions between different departments or teams (Ojiaku & Obinna, 2025). How organizations in Nigeria handle these conflicts can significantly influence their overall productivity and success (AL Hussaini, 2024). Managing conflict is a crucial part of organizational behavior and is becoming increasingly important in today's globalized and competitive market.

Conflicts can be either harmful, leading to lower morale, higher turnover, and decreased productivity, or they

can be beneficial, sparking innovation, improving decision-making, and fostering growth (Khaled, Taha & Ibrahim, 2025). Okoro and Agboufa (2023) also pointed out that when conflict is managed constructively, it can boost performance, while poor management can escalate tensions, divide teams, and ultimately affect productivity and job performance. The way an organization addresses conflicts can shape which of these outcomes occurs. In Nigeria, organizations function within a diverse and multicultural society, encompassing a variety of cultural, ethnic, and religious groups. This diversity can offer a wealth of perspectives and ideas, but if not handled well, it can also lead to conflicts (Igbomor, 2025). Conflict in organizations is a significant factor that can disrupt the smooth and effective operation of various activities and processes. It has become a common reality in the workplace, as employees often find themselves vying for authority, recognition, and limited resources. These conflicts typically stem from employees feeling that their interests are being overlooked or obstructed by the actions of others (Esbati & Korunka, 2021; Ofobruku, 2022).

From this discussion, we can see that conflict can escalate to such a degree that it leads to serious disagreements, potentially resulting in violence and loss of life. When people think of conflict, they often associate it with war, fighting, misunderstandings, arguments, chaos, stress, crises, and a host of other negative interactions between individuals, groups, communities, nations, and states. Conflict is often described as a competitive situation where the parties involved recognize that their future positions are incompatible, and each party aims to secure a position that conflict with the other's desires (Igbomor, 2025). When we look at conflict from another angle, it is often seen as a situation where one or more parties feel that things are unfair, unworkable, or maybe even both. This feeling captures a mix of emotions and reflects the current state of economic and political issues, marked by disagreement, fierce competition, and a sense of hostility (Babarinde & Alade, 2024). This definition aligns with earlier ones, emphasizing that conflict is an inherent part of human relationships. In every society, there are various interests and needs, competing individuals and groups, and differing social beliefs that often clash. Therefore, conflict is a normal part of life, as long as it does not escalate into violence (Ele, Ekpenyong, Okongo, Eneh & Arikpo, 2024). Moreover, Nigeria is grappling with economic, political, and infrastructural hurdles, which can heighten tensions within organizations. Therefore, understanding how conflict is managed and how it influences employee productivity in the Nigerian context is essential (Aruoren, & Ugbehene, 2003).

Nigerian organizational leaders often face criticism for their inability to effectively manage and respond to conflict situations. This lack of understanding can lead to poorly positioned interventions, making managers appear as either intentional or unintentional instigators of conflict or exacerbators of existing tensions. When organizational conflict is not addressed properly, it can spiral into a destructive cycle that undermines employee productivity, especially if the underlying causes, key players, and dynamics of the conflict are not carefully considered. In addition, it is clear that there is a significant need to look deep into how CMS impact employee productivity at Premium Steel and Mine Limited in Warri, Delta State, Nigeria. Tackling this research question could pave the way for establishing best practices in CMS within the company, offering insights that could truly benefit the organization. Ultimately, leading to improved productivity and more sustainable growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of conflict

Conflict occurs when people or groups have opposing goals, thoughts, or feelings. It emerges whenever there are differences in needs, values, interests, aspirations, or perspectives. This is a completely normal part of human relationships and can pop up in all sorts of environments—whether in communities, workplaces, families, or even on a global scale. In any formal organization, conflict is bound to arise due to the diverse interests and viewpoints of its members, teams, and management (Imene & Udjo-Onovughakpo, 2023). In today's work environment, conflict is a common issue that can hinder performance because of the complexities of human relationships (Belias, Rossidis, Sotiriou & Malik, 2023). Since organizations are made up of individuals with different attitudes, opinions, skills, and personalities, encountering some form of conflict is simply unavoidable.

As noted by Khaled et al. (2025), conflicts are a natural byproduct of daily interactions among coworkers and, if managed well, can actually serve as a positive force that drives innovation and growth. Additionally, Babarinde and Alade (2024) suggest that the competitive nature of individuals, groups, or organizations striving for

success—often at the expense of others—creates a tendency for human societies to engage in conflict. Okoro and Agboufa (2023) point out that disagreement can occur between individuals or groups. Intergroup conflicts often arise between departments, trade unions, or between management and employees as they work to implement the organization's policies and programs, while interpersonal conflicts typically happen between a supervisor and a subordinate or among peers at the same level within the organizational hierarchy.

Conflict Management (CM)

Conflicts are less likely to escalate unproductively when people know how to address them. According to Sanda (2018), CM provide organizations with knowledge and guidance on how to settle conflicts and approach the maintenance of improved relationships between organizations and workers in order to achieve defined objectives and goals more successfully. Additionally, Esbati and Korunka (2021) argued that while poorly handled conflict can harm a relationship, respectful and constructive handling of dispute can be an opening for growth, strengthening the bond between two people. Gaining the abilities required for successful conflict resolution can help maintain and strengthen relationships on both a personal and professional level. Therefore, a high-performing team needs to become proficient in dispute resolution. Conflict is most often caused by miscommunication between people about their desires, beliefs, opinions, aspirations, or ideals, even though very few people deliberately seek it out (Anyakie, 2018; Iskamto, Ghazali, Afthanorhan, 2022).

Unmanaged disputes, however, have the potential to develop into impediments that impair team cohesiveness and organizational performance. For example, Ewuru, Abang, Shehu, and Abua (2024) claimed that when workers go on strike, it signifies a more serious dispute between the workers and the government or between the workers and the institution's administration. Workplace conflicts need to be appropriately managed and settled. Failing to do so may cause the dispute to become exaggerated, which may cause animosity among coworkers. Furthermore, disagreements have a detrimental effect on worker efficiency, which subsequently consequence affects how well employees function in the workplace, according to Babarinde and Alade (2024). Disagreements and a change in attitude are two common elements that affect employee productivity and effectiveness (Babarinde & Alade, 2024; Usendok, 2022).

However, studies have also demonstrated that conflict do not only negatively affect worker performance and productivity. This is demonstrated in a study by Ogaga (2017), which found that task and process conflicts have a positive effect on workers' production whereas relationship conflict has a negative impact on performance. This implies that when disagreements are handled amicably, they may lead to improved communication between the persons involved, which will increase output. To manage and resolve conflict in ways that produce positive outcomes, it is essential to comprehend its nature. Conflict can take many different forms, ranging from little arguments to large-scale conflicts, and it is not always associated with violence or animosity. Whether conflict results in development, transformation, and improved understanding or in devastation, animosity, and division depends on how it is handled.

Conflict Management Strategies (CMS)

There are several strategy adopted by an organization in managing conflict. However, the following strategies were discussed.

Collective Bargaining: This approach serves as a legal means to settle disputes that arise from employment contracts between employees and management and among coworkers. It creates a space where all parties involved in a disagreement can express their views freely, without any bias, no matter their rank or role. So, when managers are mediating a conflict, it's crucial that they not only let everyone have their say but also give equal importance to what everyone agrees on (Awan & Saeed, 2015).

Avoidance Strategy: This is another method that some people adopt to handle ongoing conflicts. Often called a conflict-avoidance tactic, it involves people choosing to overlook the issue and steer clear of confrontation. While this can be effective for minor disputes or temporary issues, relying on it too much can leave problems unresolved. Ebhote and Monday (2015) pointed out that organizations taking this route are essentially sitting on a powder keg, just waiting for trouble to strike.

Accommodating Strategy: According to Ele et al. (2024), the Accommodating Strategy is about smoothing things over and stands in contrast to a competitive approach. One side might decide to concede to the other's demands to maintain the relationship or prevent further escalation. This method is often employed when the issue at hand is less significant than keeping the peace. It allows organizations to tackle conflicts swiftly, even if it means one group's needs are prioritized over another's. It requires a degree of sacrifice, selflessness, and a lower level of assertiveness (Ele et al., 2024).

Compromising Strategy: One effective way to deal with disagreements is through the compromise strategy. In this approach, both sides in a conflict agree to give up some of their values or interests to pave the way for peace (Adekunle, Abimbola, & Ehimen, 2019). Each party makes concessions to find a middle ground. While this method may lead to a solution where neither side gets everything they desire, both can feel satisfied that their essential needs have been addressed.

Employees Productivity (EP)

The concept of productivity does not have a one-size-fits-all definition; it varies from one organization to another (Igbomor, 2024). As Saranya (2016) points out, productivity is all about how efficiently resources are organized and utilized to reach a specific goal. Meanwhile, Tamunosiki-Amadi, Timi, and Dogitimiye (2020) describe productivity as the actual output of an organization compared to its goals, objectives, and intended results. It is about achieving the best possible performance while using the least amount of resources. To measure productivity, we look at the relationship between inputs and outputs. Outputs refer to the results achieved, while inputs are the resources consumed by the organization, including labor, money, time, space, and technology. Worker productivity hinges on the balance between these inputs and outputs.

Productivity is usually gauged by comparing the output generated—like goods, services, or completed tasks—to the input utilized, such as time, effort, or resources (Osazevaru, Aruoren, & Okunima, 2021). When productivity is high, it means employees can provide more value in less time without sacrificing quality (Tarurhor, Aruoren & Owolabi, 2022; Aruoren & Echewa, 2023). It is not just about working faster; it is also about maintaining high standards, meeting deadlines, and making meaningful contributions to the organization's goals. Sev, Kwahar, Emakwu, Dewua, and Agema (2016) note that when employees are not productive, projects take longer to complete, which ultimately costs companies more. Igbomor (2024) added that organizations should recognize that increased productivity leads to a stronger competitive edge due to lower unit costs. Periodically measuring employee productivity is an essential responsibility for any organization that wishes to survive in a competitive business climate. Measuring and guaranteeing high productivity in the workplace is crucial in this digital age because employees' attention is divided between personal emails, social media, smartphones, and the demands of their personal lives and their jobs (Umair, Aslam & Yousaf, 2018).

CMS and EP

CM is crucial for boosting employee productivity in any organization (Lazarus, 2014). It is a fact that workplace conflict is bound to happen, based on the variety of personalities, work styles, values, and expectations inherent in the organization. If these conflicts are not handled properly, they can spiral into stress, low morale, poor communication, and even absenteeism, all of which can seriously hinder productivity. Also, when conflict is managed effectively, it paves the way for a positive work environment where issues are tackled constructively. This allows employees to concentrate on their work without the distraction of unresolved tensions or interpersonal issues (Shakoor, Hafeez, Maenuddin, Yusrini & Hussain, 2020).

Ojiaku and Obinna (2025) explored how different conflict resolution strategies impact employee performance in small and medium enterprises located in the Abuja area. Their study specifically focused on the effects of five strategies: avoiding, obliging, compromising, dominating, and integrating. Five hypotheses based on data gathered from 280 employees working in these businesses were formulated and tested. The results showed that the compromising, dominating, and integrating strategies had a notably positive and significant impact on employee performance in the Abuja metropolis. Meanwhile, Khaled et al (2025) explored how CM can enhance the organizational work environment by investigating the connection between the two. Their findings indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between effective CM and improvements in the work environment.

It was clear that good CM fosters better collaboration, boosts productivity, and nurtures a positive workplace atmosphere. The results also highlighted how crucial it is for management to support CM strategies and provide the necessary training to tackle challenges that arise from workplace conflicts.

AL Hussaini (2024) examined how CMS affects employee productivity and promotion by using a mixed-methods approach. This involves gathering data through surveys, various interviews, and questionnaires across different organizational settings. The study aims to uncover patterns and challenges related to conflict resolution strategies, ultimately providing actionable insights to enhance workplace dynamics. By analyzing the data, the research reveals a clear link between effective conflict resolution, improved employee productivity, and career growth. In the same way, how CMS impact on employee performance in selected manufacturing firms in Lagos State was investigated by Babarinde and Alade (2024). Their study involved 357 employees from various manufacturing companies, using a stratified random sampling technique. The findings showed a significantly positive relationship between CMS—like collective bargaining, accommodation and compromise—and achieving organizational goals. Also, non-integrative CMS, such as dominating, competing and avoidance, negatively affected goal attainment. Additionally, the results highlighted a significant connection between CMS (including collective bargaining, accommodation, confrontation, and avoidance) and performance.

Ewuru et al (2024) studied the connection between CM and employee productivity among business educators in Colleges of Education in Cross River State. To realize this goal, the study was structured around three specific objectives, three research questions, and three null hypotheses. A correlational design was used, with a study population of 38 respondents, including 30 business educators from FCE Obudu and 8 from COE Akamkpa. The result indicated that collaboration, compromise and competitive styles of CM have a significant relationship with employee productivity among business educators in the region. In another study, Ele et al (2024) assessed the impact of CMS on employee performance at the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital in Calabar. This research utilized a survey design, employing a structured questionnaire to gather data for analysis. The study's population consisted of 550 individuals. Results indicated that conflict avoidance strategies positively influence employee performance at the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital. Additionally, a significant influence of conflict collaboration strategies on employees' commitment to achieving goals, a notable link between conflict accommodation strategy and employee motivation, and a significant impact of conflict mediation strategies on employee involvement at the hospital.

Okoro and Agboufa (2023) took a closer look at how employee CM impacts organizational productivity within (the banking sector) in Rivers State, Nigeria. They opted for a cross-sectional survey design for their study. The results revealed a noteworthy connection between the four key aspects of employee CM—conflict identification, regulatory control, conflict displacement, and mediation—and two indicators of organizational productivity: profit and market patronage. Based on these findings, the researchers suggested that management in the sector should actively implement the dimensions discussed in their study to boost effective organizational productivity. In another study, Imene and Udjo-Onovughakpo (2023) explored how different CMS affect employee productivity in Nigeria's tertiary institutions. They gathered data from eighty well-designed questionnaires distributed across two institutions in Delta State, using SPSS analytical tools for their analysis. Their findings indicated that the collaborating, accommodation, and avoiding approaches all have a significant positive relationship with employee productivity, while the compromising approach showed no impact. In the same direction, Ngonadi and Nwanodi (2023) investigated the link between CM and organizational performance at the Ministry of Works in Anambra State. The results highlighted a significant positive relationship between effective collaboration and enhanced employee productivity within the Anambra State Ministry of Works. It was concluded that effective CM plays a crucial role in improving organizational performance in this context.

Salami, Orishde, and Morka (2022) explored how CM affects employee productivity within a public sector organization, specifically focusing on the Transmission Company of Nigeria. They used a survey research design and selected 100 respondents through a stratified sampling technique. The results showed that effective CM boosts employee performance and that the organization's CM system plays a crucial role in influencing this performance. Similarly, Okereke, Eze, and Asogwa (2022) examined the impact of CMS on employee performance at the Federal Inland Revenue Service in Enugu State. Their specific goals included determining how collaboration affects employees' efficiency in processing payment claims and tax refund requests, assessing the role of compromise in enforcing and prosecuting tax defaulters, and analyzing how avoidance impacts the

prompt processing of these claims and requests. The findings indicated that collaboration, compromise, and avoidance strategies all had a significantly positive effect on employees' ability to process payment claims and tax refunds promptly, as well as on their capacity to enforce tax compliance.

Binyanya (2021) looked into different CMS and how it affects employee performance in hospitals. It was shown that compromising, avoiding, and dominating styles are the most frequently used among public hospitals, including doctors, nurses, and clinical officers. The compromising style stands out because it encourages everyone to participate; it's a mix of assertiveness and cooperation, often leading to temporary solutions. On the other hand, the avoiding style is preferred for its ability to withdraw from conflicts, while the dominating style is preferred in emergencies due to its quick decision-making. Meanwhile, Utile, Utile, and Tyoapine (2020) explored the link between CMS and staff performance at Benue State University in Makurdi. They conducted a survey with 331 respondents, using a questionnaire to gather primary data. The results showed that integrating, avoidance, dominating, and obliging strategies influences staff performance. Notably, the study found that the dominating strategy negatively impacted staff performance, while integrating, obliging, and avoiding strategies positively influenced it.

Shakoor et al (2020) conducted a study to explore conflicts at workplace and their impact on employee productivity. They also looked into how workplace politics might mediate the relationship between these conflicts and productivity among faculty members at general public universities in Rural Sindh. The results revealed a negative correlation between workplace conflicts and employee productivity. In a related study, Lazarus (2014) investigated how CMS affect employee productivity within a Nigerian civil service context. Four CMS were considered: negotiation, collective bargaining, imposing and avoidance. The findings indicated that collective bargaining and negotiation had a significantly positive impact on productivity, while avoidance and imposing strategies were linked to negative outcomes. The study emphasized that conflicts, regardless of their nature, should not be overlooked but rather managed effectively to enhance productivity. It's crucial for employees at all levels to receive training and proper behavioral guidance on conflict resolution. Additionally, there's a pressing need for ongoing training for supervisors/managers to equip them with the skills necessary to handle conflicts effectively, ultimately leading to improved productivity in the place of work.

Based on this premises, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Collective Bargaining and Employees Productivity in Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Avoidance Strategy and Employees Productivity in Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Accommodating Strategy and Employees Productivity in Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between Compromising Strategy and Employees Productivity in Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri.



Figure 1: Conceptual framework

METHODOLOGY

Research design is like a detailed roadmap that lays out how a research study will unfold. It can also be seen as a blueprint for gathering, measuring, and analyzing data to tackle specific research questions or goals. For this study, which looks at the link between CMS and employee productivity of Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri, a survey research design was used. This approach allows the researcher to collect information directly from respondents through a self-administered questionnaire. According to Ahmad, Alias, and Razak (2023), the population in research is the full set of people, things, or events that are the subject of the study and have a common attribute. It stands for the entire collection of components the researcher intends to examine and make inferences from. A crucial stage in research design is population definition, which establishes the parameters and extent of the study's conclusions. Garg (2016) stated that in order to guarantee the validity, reliability, and application of their findings, researchers need to have a thorough understanding of the population and sample. Employees of Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri, Nigeria, with a total population of eight hundred (800) made up the study population.

A sample is a subset of the population from which the researcher uses in making its judgment. Thus, a sample will be used in the study due to the large nature of the population. A sample size of 267 was drawn from the targeted population of 800 employees of Premium Steel and Mine Limited Warri by utilizing Yamane's (1967) calculation of the sample size at 5% significant level while systematic sampling technique was used in selecting respondents to whom questionnaire were administered to. The research instrument was administered by the researcher to the respondents at the company's premises. The items were also explained to the respondents for clarity. Two hundred and sixty-seven copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents of which two hundred and fifty-four were valid. CMS were measured by the CM measurement scale adapted from de Dreu, Evers, Beersma, Kluwer and Nauta (2001). Collective bargaining, avoidance strategy, accommodating strategy and compromising strategy were measured by 5 items each on a 4 point likert scale ranging from (4) strongly agreed to (1) strongly disagreed. Employee productivity was measured by Employee productivity scale adapted from Ezeamama (2019) with 5 items on a 4-point likert scale ranging from (4) strongly agreed to (1) strongly disagreed.

Data that were obtained from the respondents was analyzed by means of descriptive and inferential (Pearson correlation and simple linear regression analysis) statistical techniques. While Pearson correlation was used to establish the nexus between CMS and employee productivity, simple linear regression analysis was used to assess the effect of the independent variable (CMS) on the dependent variable (employee productivity).

Model Specification

The study was guided by the models below:

$$EP = f(COB)$$

$$EP = \partial_0 + \partial_1 COB + E_1 \quad 1$$

$$EP = f(AVS)$$

$$EP = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 AVS + E_2 \quad 2$$

$$EP = f(ACS)$$

$$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ACS + E_3 \quad 3$$

$$EP = f(COS)$$

$$EP = \mu_0 + \mu_1 COS + E_4 \quad 4$$

Where EP = Employee productivity, COB = Collective bargaining, AVS= Avoidance strategy, ACS= Accommodating strategy, COS= Compromising strategy, ∂_0 , α_0 , β_0 , μ_0 = Constant Terms,

$\partial_1, \alpha_1, \beta_0, \mu_1$ = regression coefficients, $E_1 \dots E_4$ = Error terms.

Presentation of Results

The demographic information of the study respondents, including their gender, age, marital status, and length of service, is detailed in Table 1. The findings reveal that 192 respondents, or 76%, are male, while 62 respondents, making up 24%, are female. In terms of age, the data shows that 39 respondents (15%) fall into the 20–30-year age group, 68 respondents (27%) are in the 31–40-year range, 88 respondents (35%) are aged 41–50 years, and 59 respondents (23%) are 51 years and older. In terms of marital status, 157 respondents (62%) are married, whereas 97 respondents (38%) are single. Lastly, regarding their length of service, 103 respondents (41%) have been with the company for 1 to 10 years, while 151 respondents (37.8%) have been employed for 11 years and more.

Table 1: Demographic Data

Variables	Parameters	Frequency (F)	Rate
Respondent gender	Male	192	76%
	Female	62	24%
	Total	254	100%
Respondents age	20 – 30years	39	15%
	31 – 40years	68	27%
	41 – 50years	88	35%
	51years and above	59	23%
	Total	254	100%
Respondents marital status	Single	97	38%
	Married	157	62%
	Divorced	0	0%
	Total	254	100%
Respondents length of service	1 – 10 years	103	41%
	11 years and above	151	59%
	Total	254	100%

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

The reliability of an instrument indicates how consistently it measures the same thing, yielding similar results when the conditions remain unchanged. A reliable instrument helps reduce random errors and provides reliable data for analysis. To evaluate the internal consistency of the research instrument, we conducted a Cronbach alpha statistical test. This test checks how consistently the items within a scale measure the same underlying concept. After the analysis, the results showed that our research instrument is reliable, as none of the Cronbach alpha values for the variables fell below the benchmark of 0.70, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Reliability Result

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Collective Bargaining	0.90	5
Avoidance Strategy	0.76	5

Accommodating Strategy	0.86	5
Compromising Strategy	0.82	5
Employee Productivity	0.84	5

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 presents the perception of the study respondent regarding collective bargaining strategy of managing conflict. Based on the computed mean of the items which were above 2.5, it is evident that the respondents understand the use of collective bargaining as a strategy to manage conflict when it arises. In addition, the values for standard deviation indicate the absence of variation in the responses of the respondents.

Table 3: Collective Bargaining

Items	Mean	Std. D
I explore issues with others to find solutions that meet everyone's needs	3.36	0.55
When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can to keep the lines of communication open	3.42	0.50
I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved.	3.67	0.47
I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open	3.60	0.49
When there is a disagreement between someone and myself, I tell him or her my ideas and ask for theirs	3.63	0.48

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 showed how the respondents perceive the avoidance strategy for managing conflict within the company. The computed mean for the items, all of which were above 2.5, clearly shows that the respondents also recognized avoidance as a viable strategy for handling conflicts while the standard deviation values suggest that there is little to no variation in how the respondents answered.

Table 4: Avoidance Strategy

Items	Mean	Std. D
When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible	3.63	0.68
Being at odds with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious	3.68	0.49
I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself	3.62	0.54
There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem	3.72	0.48
I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over	3.54	0.61

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

The respondents' opinions of the accommodating approach to CM in the company were displayed in Table 5. The estimated mean for the items—all of which were over 2.5—means that those who responded acknowledge the accommodating technique as a workable approach to resolving conflicts. Furthermore, the standard deviation values indicate that the respondents' responses varied slightly to not at all.

Table 5: Accommodating Strategy

Items	Mean	Std. D
When there is a disagreement, rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree	3.67	0.47
I try to accommodate the wishes of my friends and colleagues when there is a disagreement	3.44	0.51
I may not get what I want, but it is a small price to pay for keeping the peace	3.75	0.43
I might try to soothe others' feelings and preserve our relationship	3.43	0.69
If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views	3.65	0.48

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 6 showed the respondents' perceptions of the company's compromise-based conflict resolution strategy. As indicated in Table 6, the mean for the items, all of which were above 2.5, clearly shows that respondents accept the compromising strategy as a practical method of resolving disputes. The standard deviation also showed that there was little to no variation in the respondents' answers.

Table 6: Compromising Strategy

Items	Mean	Std. D
I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on	3.34	0.52
I try to negotiate and adopt a "give-and-take" approach to problem situations	3.35	0.51
Getting part of what you want is better than not getting anything at all	3.52	0.52
I will let him or her have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine	3.66	0.48
I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for us both.	3.75	0.43

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

The items in Table 7 were put forward to assess the level of employee productivity in the company. However, it was discovered that the employee are performing well based on the acceptance of all the items put forward to assess their level of productivity in the company.

Table 7: Employee Productivity

Items	Mean	Std. D
I complete my work tasks within the assigned deadlines.	3.59	0.50
I prioritize my tasks effectively to meet objectives.	3.63	0.52
I manage my time efficiently during the workday.	3.72	0.46
I minimize distractions and stay focused on tasks.	3.65	0.48
I consistently meet or exceed performance expectations.	3.61	0.50

Source: Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Table 8 showed the results of the correlation between the different CMS used in this study and their relationship with employee productivity. It reveals a correlation coefficient of 0.619 for collective bargaining and employee productivity, 0.777 for the avoidance strategy, 0.603 for the accommodating strategy, and another 0.833 for the compromising strategy. All these coefficients are quite close to +1, which suggests a positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 8: Correlation Matrix

Variables	COB	AVS	ACS	COS	EP
COB	1				
AVS	0.505**	1			
ACS	0.637**	0.531**	1		
COS	0.732**	0.788**	0.691**	1	
EP	0.619**	0.777**	0.603**	0.833**	1

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

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2025

From the regression statistics in Table 9, a regression coefficient of 0.851 was obtained between COB and EP. 1 unit movement in COB would result to about 85% movement in EP. As indicated in Table 9, a t-value of 12.499 with a sig. value of $0.000 < 0.05$ was obtained. This indicates a significant positive effect of COB on EP. The R-square tells us the degree of variance in EP that is explained by COB. The R-square as shown in Table 9 is 0.383, which suggests that 38.3% variation in EP can be explained by COB. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate is accepted. Hence, the study shows that there is a significantly positive effect of COB on EP. The adjusted R-square value of 0.380 represents the goodness of fit which means that the model is statistically significant.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients for COB and EP

Model	Coefficients	Std.Error	T	Sig. V	R-square	Adjusted R-square
(Constant)	0.631	0.242	2.612	0.010		
COB	0.851	0.068	12.499	0.000	0.383	0.380

Dependent variable: EP

Source: Author's Computation, 2025.

In Table 10, we see a regression coefficient of 0.820 between AVS and EP. This suggests that a one-unit change in AVS leads to approximately an 82% change in EP. As shown in Table 10, the t-value is 19.618 with a significance value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. This indicates a strong positive effect of AVS on EP. The R-square in Table 10 is 0.604, meaning that 60.4% of the variation in EP can be attributed to AVS. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative. This study clearly demonstrates a significant positive effect of AVS on EP. Additionally, the adjusted R-square value of 0.603 reflects the model's goodness of fit, confirming its statistical significance.

Table 10: Regression Coefficients for AVS and EP

Model	Coefficients	Std.Error	T	Sig. V	R-square	Adjusted R-square
(Constant)	0.660	0.153	4.317	0.000		
AVS	0.820	0.042	19.618	0.000	0.604	0.603

Dependent variable: EP

Source: Author's Computation, 2025.

The regression coefficient between EP and ACS is 0.736, as shown in Table 11. This implies that a 74% increase in EP results from a one-unit change in ACS. The t-value is 11.984 with a significance value of 0.000, as seen in Table 11, which is significantly below the threshold of 0.05. This suggests that ACS has a significant positive effect on EP. According to R-square of 0.363 in Table 11, ACS accounts for 36.3% of the variation in EP. Consequently, we accept the alternate and reject the null hypothesis. This study unequivocally shows that ACS significantly increases EP while adjusted R-square value of 0.361 reflects the model's goodness of fit, confirming its statistical significance.

Table 11: Regression Coefficients for ACS and EP

Model	Coefficients	Std. Error	T	Sig. V	R-square	Adjusted R-square
(Constant)	1.000	0.221	4.515	0.000		
ACS	0.736	0.061	11.984	0.000	0.363	0.361

Dependent variable: EP

Source: Author's Computation, 2025

The regression coefficient linking EP to COS stands at 0.829, as illustrated in Table 12. This indicates that a one-unit change in the COS leads to an impressive 83% boost in EP. The t-value is 23.939, with a significance value of 0.000, also shown in Table 12, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. This strongly suggests that COS has a meaningful positive impact on EP. Furthermore, the R-square value of 0.695 in Table 12 reveals that COS explains 69.5% of the variation in EP. As a result, we accept the alternate hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. This study clearly demonstrates that the COS significantly enhances EP, while the adjusted R-square value of 0.693 indicates the model's good fit, confirming its statistical relevance.

Table 12: Regression Coefficients for COS and EP

Model	Coefficients	Std. Error	T	Sig. V	R-square	Adjusted R-square
(Constant)	0.720	0.123	5.862	0.000		
Compromising Strategy	0.829	0.035	23.939	0.000	0.695	0.693

Dependent variable: EP

Source: Author's Computation, 2025.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study looked at the connection between CMS and employee productivity at Premium Steel and Mine Limited in Warri, Nigeria. To gather primary data, a survey was conducted among the study participants to test the hypotheses put forth by the researcher. The analysis of the responses revealed that COB as a CMS has a strong positive correlation with EP ($p.0.000 < 0.05$). This strategy encourages open communication, respect, and collaborative problem-solving. When employees are encouraged to share their viewpoints and work together to find solutions that benefit everyone, they feel happier and understood. This sense of inclusion not only boosts morale but also enhances engagement and instills a sense of ownership over their work. Consequently, employees are more driven to contribute effectively, resulting in higher individual and team productivity. Moreover, COB helps prevent recurring conflicts by tackling the root causes instead of merely addressing surface-level issues. This leads to more stable and harmonious workplace relationships, reducing tension and

disruptions that can hinder productivity. The emphasis on creative solutions also promotes innovation and efficiency, as teams collaborate to develop improved strategies and workflows. Khaled et al (2025), Ewuru et al (2024), Babarinde and Alade (2024), Lazarus (2014) findings also showed a significantly positive effect of CMS—like COB on EP, performance and achieving organizational goals.

The analysis showed that using AVS can actually boost employee productivity ($p.0.000 < 0.05$). When conflicts are minor, temporary, or emotionally charged, stepping back for a bit can give everyone a chance to cool off and tackle the issue more rationally later on. By keeping the workplace organized and preventing needless escalation, this strategy enables staff members to focus on their task. Teams can keep a consistent workflow and prevent wasting time and effort on issues that don't significantly impact the results by avoiding unnecessary confrontations. Additionally, AVS can be a helpful short-term tactic in high-pressure scenarios where prompt conflict resolution is not feasible or additional information is required. It lets employees and managers focus on what's most important without getting caught up in personal disagreements. When paired with clear follow-up plans and a broader conflict resolution strategy, AVS can act as a temporary tool to keep things stable and productive while gearing up for more constructive discussions. Imene and Udjo-Onovughakpo (2023), Ele et al (2024), Utile, and Tyoapine (2020) studies also highlighted a positive effect of AVS on EP and performance. However, Lazarus (2014), Babarinde and Alade (2024) studies found a negative relationship on the link between AVS and EP.

ACS has been shown to significantly boost employee productivity ($p.0.000 < 0.05$). When used correctly, this approach to CM can really enhance productivity, especially in situations where maintaining harmony and good relationships is more important than pushing one's own agenda. By being willing to compromise or support their colleagues' needs, employees help foster a cooperative work environment. This not only eases tension and prevents minor issues from escalating but also keeps teams aligned with their common goals. When employees sense that their coworkers are considerate, it creates a positive atmosphere that promotes teamwork and sustained performance. Accommodating behavior can also help resolve conflicts more swiftly, particularly when the issue at hand is not critical or when one party has more expertise or a bigger stake in the matter. This efficiency helps teams sidestep unnecessary disruptions and stay focused on their work, ultimately boosting overall productivity. However, it's crucial to balance this strategy with open communication and mutual understanding to ensure that accommodating doesn't turn into a one-sided affair or lead to lingering resentment. Imene and Udjo-Onovughakpo (2023) in their investigation also found a positive effect of ACS on EP

Finally, a compromise-based CMS can really boost employee productivity ($p.0.000 < 0.05$). It encourages quick, balanced solutions that keep work moving forward without dragging out disputes. In fast-paced settings where time is of the essence and both parties have important goals, compromise helps avoid deadlock by promoting mutual concessions. This practical approach makes sure that conflicts don't hold up progress, allowing teams to keep their momentum and hit deadlines efficiently. By finding common ground, employees feel happier and appreciate the importance of flexibility, which can enhance team cohesion and cooperation. When team members know their concerns will be taken seriously and that both sides are expected to give a little, it eases tension and builds a healthier relationship. This collaborative mindset reduces the negative effects of conflict and improves interpersonal relationships, leading to better communication and smoother workflows. Ojiaku and Obinna (2025), Ewuru et al (2024) finding is also similar with our finding.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study looked at the link between CMS and employee productivity at Premium Steel and Mine Limited in Warri, Nigeria. To achieve the study's goals, a thorough review of relevant literature was conducted, and data was collected and analyzed. The findings revealed that conflict is an inherent aspect of organizational life, but its effects—whether beneficial or detrimental—largely hinge on the management strategies employed. The research identified four main styles of CM: collective bargaining, avoidance, accommodating, and compromising. Notably, the collaborative and compromising methods were found to be most positively linked to enhanced productivity, as they promote open communication, mutual respect, and collaborative problem-solving. Ultimately, the study highlighted the critical need for organizations to cultivate effective CM skills. By training managers or supervisors to adopt more cooperative strategies, organizations can not only resolve

disputes in a more constructive manner but also create a healthier work environment. This approach leads to increased employee satisfaction, improved teamwork, and, in the end, greater productivity.

Companies, especially Premium Steel and Mine Limited in Warri, Nigeria, should really embrace collective bargaining as a strategy for tackling complex or high-stakes conflicts. This approach is crucial when relationships, innovation, and mutual understanding are on the line. With the use of collective bargaining, organizations can build trust among employees, encourage a variety of perspectives, and pave the way for more innovative and sustainable solutions that ultimately enhance productivity. To make collective bargaining effective, companies should invest in training programs that focus on effective communication, negotiation, and emotional intelligence skills. Leaders need to set an example by demonstrating collective bargaining behaviors and creating safe spaces where employees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts without the fear of counter reaction. While it might take a bit longer than other strategies, the long-term rewards—like stronger relationships, improved decision-making and heightened employee engagement—far outweigh the initial time and effort. Making collective bargaining a core value and part of everyday practices helps create a workplace where both individual and collective goals can thrive.

The avoidance CMS can be a smart choice when the issue at hand is minor, or when more information is needed before diving into a resolution. It's important for organizations to guide their employees and managers on how to use avoidance strategically. For example, it can be helpful to take a step back during emotionally charged moments or to sidestep unnecessary disruptions over small matters. When applied thoughtfully, avoidance can help keep the workplace stable, lower stress levels, and give individuals the time they need to gear up for more productive conversations, ultimately supporting overall productivity. On the other hand, the accommodating CMS is a great way to promote harmony and maintain relationships at work, especially when the issue is minor or when it's more advantageous to preserve goodwill rather than push one's own agenda. Organizations should encourage their employees to use this approach selectively—like when it comes to fostering team cohesion, easing tension, or being flexible in collaborative environments. The compromising CMS, is needed when quick, mutually agreeable solutions are necessary, particularly when both parties have equally important goals. Organizations should promote this method in time-sensitive situations or when maintaining working relationships is crucial, as it encourages fairness and balance. Compromise also helps employees appreciate diverse perspectives and develop practical problem-solving skills that enhance collaborative productivity.

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