



Impact of Leadership Styles on Conflict Management in Federal Universities South-South, Nigeria

ETINOSA JAMES OMWANGHE, GODSENT OSAGIE OMOREGIE,
John Harris Library, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria

Abstract. This study investigated the impact of leadership styles on conflict management among librarians in federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. The research adopted a quantitative approach using survey design, with a population of 85 academic librarians from university libraries in the region. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that employees predominantly utilize collaborative approaches in conflict management (grand mean = 3.30), followed by avoidance (3.23), accommodating (3.15), sharing (2.97), and dominating strategies (2.61), with over 90% of respondents actively listening for solutions. The study examined two primary leadership styles – transformational and transactional – and their impact on conflict management effectiveness. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between leadership styles and conflict management ($r = .724$, $p < .05$), with leadership styles explaining 52.4% of the variance in conflict management effectiveness. Transformational leadership emerged as the dominant style ($\beta = .524$), characterized by high scores in approachability ($M = 3.36$) and team work facilitation ($M = 3.27$). While transactional leadership showed a lower but significant influence ($\beta = .369$). The study concluded that both leadership styles significantly influence conflict management, with transformational leadership having a stronger impact. Recommendations include investment in leadership development programs and establishment of formal mentoring systems to enhance conflict management capabilities in university libraries.

Keywords: Leadership styles, conflict Management, University libraries, Library personnel.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the higher education landscape in Nigeria has experienced significant transformation, accompanied by increasing complexity in institutional management and heightened potential for conflicts (Adeyemi & Ademilua, 2012). Federal universities, particularly in the South-South region, face unique challenges in maintaining organizational harmony while pursuing academic excellence. The dynamic nature of these institutions, characterized by diverse stakeholder interests, limited resources, and evolving academic demands, necessitates effective leadership approaches to manage inevitable conflicts, university head librarians, as leaders, play a pivotal role in attaining the university goals and objectives concerning teaching, learning and research activities of its faculty members and the entire university community (Akparobore & Omosekejimi, 2020). The leadership style and personal qualities of heads of libraries dictate the implementation and attainment of the library's vision and mission (Saliu et al., 2018). Leadership style, defined as the pattern of behaviors and strategies employed by leaders to guide and influence their subordinates, plays a pivotal role in determining how effectively organizational conflicts are managed and resolved (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The relationship between leadership approaches and conflict management has become increasingly crucial in academic institutions, where the intersection of academic freedom, administrative control, and stakeholder expectations creates a complex operational environment (Akpan & Ekpoh, 2015). Conflict management can take different forms such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration and litigation, depending on the context and the types of conflict (Chandolia, 2020).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Research indicates that different leadership styles can either exacerbate or mitigate conflicts, ultimately affecting institutional performance and stability. In the context of Federal Universities in Nigeria's South-South region, the challenge of managing conflicts has become particularly pronounced due to factors such as increased student enrollment, limited funding, and evolving staff expectations. Understanding the influence of leadership styles on conflict management in these institutions is crucial for developing effective organizational strategies and improving institutional governance. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of adaptive leadership in educational institutions (Ogbuiyi, 2019), yet there remains a significant gap in understanding how specific leadership styles impact conflict management processes in the unique context of Nigerian federal universities. This research aims to bridge this gap by examining the relationship between leadership styles and conflict management effectiveness in federal universities within Nigeria's South-South region.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the influence of leadership style on conflict management in federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- To examine the conflict management techniques employed in federal university libraries across South-South, Nigeria.
- To evaluate the prevalent leadership styles adopted by librarians in federal university libraries across South-South, Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

- What conflict management techniques are employed in federal university libraries across South-South, Nigeria?
- What leadership styles are predominantly practiced by librarians in federal university libraries across South-South, Nigeria?

1.4 Hypotheses

In order to achieve the objective of the study, the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance

H01: Leadership style has no significant influence on conflict management among librarians in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Leadership Styles

The concept of leadership has garnered diverse interpretations from various scholars in the field. Reed et al. (2019) conceptualize leadership as a relationship-driven phenomenon where leaders foster connections with followers to facilitate goal achievement through inspiration and guidance. The contextual nature of leadership is highlighted by Costa et al. (2023), who emphasize leaders' roles as change agents who provide direction and support to followers in pursuit of organizational objectives. Olanrewaju and Okorie (2019) expand this understanding by highlighting how leaders enhance organizational effectiveness through multiple mechanisms: they serve as motivators, inspire innovation, and maintain a results-oriented focus while developing their personnel. This perspective aligns with more recent research by Pembi et al. (2022), who frame leadership as an influence-based process that leverages persuasion to achieve organizational goals through effective delegation and principle application. The successful implementation of leadership is crucial for organizational development, particularly in managing technological integration and maintaining staff engagement. Effective organizational leadership must cultivate voluntary cooperation among members while implementing strategies that enhance both productivity and stakeholder satisfaction.

Leadership styles emerge from the unique combination of individual personalities, organizational contexts, and situational demands. Łukowski (2017) observes that leadership style significantly influences organizational innovation capacity, particularly when leaders actively support innovative processes. Building on this, Perera et al. (2021) characterize leadership style as encompassing a leader's distinctive approach to providing direction, implementing strategies, and motivating their team members.

2.1.2 Conflict Management

According to Adomi and Anie (2006), while libraries commonly experience various conflicts, library managers can transform these challenges into opportunities for constructive change. The management of conflicts requires careful attention from library administrators, as unresolved conflicts can hinder library operations and development. Therefore, conflict resolution abilities are essential

competencies for librarians. Abdulraheem (2020) describes conflict management as an individual's method of addressing conflict situations. Similarly, Khanaki and Hassanzadeh (2010) characterize these styles as behavioral responses exhibited during conflict encounters. Chandolia and Anastasiou (2020) further define them as specific approaches employed in conflict resolution. These management styles serve as strategic tools to mitigate conflict and prevent its detrimental effects on organizations. The theoretical framework for conflict management styles was first established by Follet in 1940, who identified five distinct approaches: integration, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising (Ilgan, 2020). Rahim (2010) later analyzed these styles through a dual-dimension model that considers both concern for others and concern for self.

2.2 Empirical review

Research on leadership styles in university libraries has yielded diverse findings. In a comprehensive study of 672 library staff across 23 university libraries in South-south Nigeria, Akpoborore and Omoosejimi (2020) identified autocratic leadership as the predominant management approach. Their research revealed that library staff expressed a preference for democratic leadership, citing its potential benefits for teamwork, organizational commitment, decision-making processes, and effective delegation. Contrasting results emerged from Lawrence's (2019) investigation of 43 library staff in Abraka, which examined the relationship between leadership approaches and staff attitudes. This study found that both democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles implemented by university librarians significantly enhanced library workers' devotion, commitment, and dedication to their professional responsibilities. A significant study conducted by Khalif (2019) examined the relationship between community leadership and conflict management in Somalia's Banadir region. Employing a descriptive survey design and utilizing primary data collected through questionnaires, the research revealed compelling insights into leadership's impact on conflict resolution. The regression analysis demonstrated that 40.2% of the variation in conflict management outcomes could be attributed to four distinct leadership dimensions: administrative, enabling, adaptive, and transformational community leadership. This substantial percentage underscores the significant influence of leadership approaches on conflict management effectiveness in the region. The study's findings were particularly noteworthy as they revealed that the Banadir region operated within a highly developed collaborative environment, suggesting that

structured leadership approaches played a crucial role in shaping conflict management outcomes. However, the research also acknowledged that the remaining percentage of variation in conflict management effectiveness was influenced by other factors not captured within these four leadership dimensions. Further insights into leadership effectiveness come from Ugwu et al.'s (2020) examination of 216 librarians across private, state, and federal university libraries in Nigeria. Their research demonstrated the superior impact of transformational leadership over transactional leadership in fostering knowledge sharing practices. The findings suggest that transformational leadership creates an environment conducive to collaboration and knowledge exchange among library staff members.

In a comprehensive study examining healthcare leadership dynamics, Grubaugh (2018) investigated the interrelationships between nurse managers' leadership capabilities, conflict management effectiveness, and team support in medical-surgical units. The research, which analyzed data from 257 staff nurses through multiple regression analyses and mediation modeling, revealed significant positive correlations among nurse manager leadership ability, conflict management, and team backup systems. Notably, the study demonstrated that staff nurses' perceptions of their managers' leadership capabilities served as a crucial predictor of both effective conflict management and team support mechanisms, ultimately influencing teacher productivity.

Recent studies have explored conflict management in educational settings across different contexts. Fossung's (2023) investigation focused on school effectiveness and principals' conflict resolution abilities in the Kumba I, II, and III Sub-divisions. Using a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaires and interviews, the study revealed that while no schools in these sub-divisions met the full criteria for effectiveness, several institutions approached the established benchmark standards.

In a related study examining conflict management in secondary schools, Wainanina (2020) investigated principals' conflict resolution strategies in Murang'a County. Through descriptive research methodology employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, the study identified the prevalence of established conflict management mechanisms within schools. The findings highlighted mediation as the primary approach for addressing principal-teacher conflicts, with results indicating a significant positive linear relationship between conflict management techniques and strategic conflict resolution outcomes.

3. Research Methodology

This research employed a descriptive design framework to investigate the research problem. The study was guided by two research questions, with one hypothesis tested at a 0.05 significance level. The research population comprised 85 Academic librarians from federal universities across South-South Nigeria.

Data collection was facilitated through a structured questionnaire. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software to generate both descriptive and inferential statistical outcomes. Given the manageable size of the target population, a total enumeration sampling technique was implemented to include all academic librarians within the specified geopolitical zone.

4. Findings and Discussion

Table:1 Demographics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
University	University of Port Harcourt	20	23.5
	University of Uyo	18	21.2
	University of Calabar	16	18.8
	Federal University of Petroleum Resources	13	15.3
	University of Benin	11	12.9
	Federal University of Bayelsa	7	8.3
	Total	85	100.0
Gender	Male	39	45.9
	Female	46	54.1
	Total	85	100.0
Age	20-30 years	10	11.8
	31-40 years	28	32.9
	41-50 years	23	27.1
	51 and above	21	24.7
	No Response	3	3.5
	Total	85	100.0
Professional Status	Assistant Librarian	17	20.0
	Librarian II	15	17.6
	Librarian I	20	23.5
	Senior Librarian	15	17.6
	Principal Librarian	10	11.8
	Deputy University Librarian	2	2.4
	University Librarian	6	7.1
	Total	85	100.0
Educational Qualification	BLS/BSc	25	29.4
	MLS/MLIS/MIRM	47	55.3
	PhD	13	15.3
	Total	85	100.0
Work Experience	0-5 years	19	22.4
	6-10 years	18	21.2
	11-15 years	21	24.7
	Above 15 years	23	27.1
	No Response	4	4.7
	Total	85	100.0

Source: Field 2025

Table 1 revealed that the study encompassed 85 Academic librarians from six federal universities in South-South Nigeria, with the University of Port-Harcourt (23.5%) and University of Uyo (21.2%) having the highest representation. The gender distribution showed a slightly higher female representation (54.1%) compared to male (45.9%). Age distribution indicated that most respondents (60%) were between 31-50 years, suggesting a mature workforce with considerable professional experience.

In terms of professional status, the majority of respondents occupied middle-management positions, with Librarian I (23.5%) and Assistant Librarian (20.0%) being the most prevalent ranks. The presence of six University Librarians (7.1%) indicates representation from all surveyed institutions. Educational qualifications reflect a highly educated workforce, with most respondents holding master's degrees (55.3%), followed by bachelor's degrees (29.4%), and a notable proportion possessing PhDs (15.3%). The work experience profile shows a balanced distribution, with 51.8% having over 10 years of experience, indicating a workforce with substantial professional expertise.

Research Question 1: What conflict management techniques are employed in federal university libraries across South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2

Techniques and Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	S.D
Collaborating						
I am a decision maker who actively listens to find the best solutions	42 (49.4)	35 (41.2)	6 (7.1)	2 (2.3)	3.38	0.72
I explore issues with colleagues to find solutions that meet everyone's needs	39 (45.9)	37 (43.5)	7 (8.2)	2 (2.4)	3.33	0.74
During conflicts, I adjust my priorities to reach resolution	35 (41.2)	40 (47.1)	8 (9.4)	2 (2.3)	3.27	0.73
I accept and implement colleagues' recommendations when appropriate	32 (37.6)	42 (49.4)	8 (9.4)	3 (3.5)	3.21	0.76
Grand Mean					3.30	
Avoidance						
I tactfully avoid positions that would create controversy	40 (47.1)	35 (41.2)	8 (9.4)	2 (2.3)	3.33	0.75
I prefer to postpone dealing with sensitive matters	35 (41.2)	38 (44.7)	10 (11.8)	2 (2.3)	3.25	0.76
I maintain neutrality during departmental disagreements	32 (37.6)	40 (47.1)	10 (11.8)	3 (3.5)	3.19	0.78
I keep disagreements to myself to maintain harmony	30 (35.3)	42 (49.4)	10 (11.8)	3 (3.5)	3.16	0.77
Grand Mean					3.23	
Accommodating						
I cooperate with others' ideas when they seem reasonable	30 (35.3)	45 (52.9)	8 (9.4)	2 (2.4)	3.21	0.71
I adjust my approach to accommodate others' needs	28 (32.9)	47 (55.3)	8 (9.4)	2 (2.4)	3.19	0.70
I encourage others to express their views during conflicts	25 (29.4)	48 (56.5)	10 (11.8)	2 (2.4)	3.13	0.70
I prioritize maintaining relationships over winning arguments	25 (29.4)	45 (52.9)	12 (14.1)	3 (3.5)	3.08	0.76
Grand Mean					3.15	
Sharing						
I seek mutually satisfactory solutions in conflicts	25 (29.4)	45 (52.9)	12 (14.1)	3 (3.5)	3.08	0.76
I use give-and-take approach to resolve issues	22 (25.9)	45 (52.9)	15 (17.6)	3 (3.5)	3.01	0.77
I negotiate to find middle ground solutions	20 (23.5)	45 (52.9)	15 (17.6)	5 (5.9)	2.94	0.81
I prefer compromise to prolonged conflict	18 (21.2)	42 (49.4)	20 (23.5)	5 (5.9)	2.86	0.82
Grand Mean					2.97	
Dominating						
I firmly defend my position when necessary	15 (17.6)	40 (47.1)	25 (29.4)	5 (5.9)	2.76	0.81
I maintain my solutions to problems	12 (14.1)	38 (44.7)	30 (35.3)	5 (5.9)	2.67	0.79
I use my influence to achieve desired outcomes	10 (11.8)	35 (41.2)	32 (37.6)	8 (9.4)	2.55	0.82
I prioritize my concerns in conflict situations	8 (9.4)	32 (37.6)	35 (41.2)	10 (11.8)	2.45	0.82
Grand Mean					2.61	

Source: Field 2025

From the results of Table 2, Collaborating emerged as the most predominantly used approach, with a grand mean of 3.30. This indicates that respondents most frequently employ collaborative strategies in conflict situations. Particularly notable is that 90.6% of respondents (combining SA and A) actively listen to find the best solutions. This strong preference for collaboration suggests a workplace culture that values participative decision-making and inclusive problem-solving. Avoidance ranked as the second most common approach (grand mean = 3.23). The high percentage (88.3%) of respondents who tactfully avoid controversial positions suggests a significant tendency toward conflict prevention rather than direct confrontation. This could indicate either a diplomatic organizational culture or, potentially, some reluctance to address conflicts head-on.

Accommodating strategies ranked third (grand mean = 3.15), with particularly strong showing in cooperating with reasonable ideas (88.2% combined SA/A). This suggests that while respondents are willing to adjust their positions,

they do so somewhat less readily than they might avoid or collaborate. Sharing approaches ranked fourth (grand mean = 2.97). While still showing positive tendencies, there's a noticeable drop in the percentage of strong agreement compared to the top three approaches. Only 29.4% strongly agreed with seeking mutually satisfactory solutions, suggesting that while compromise is accepted, it might not be the preferred initial strategy.

Dominating emerged as the least utilized approach (grand mean = 2.61). The relatively low scores across all dominating behaviors indicate that respondents generally prefer more cooperative approaches to conflict management. Only 17.6% strongly agreed with firmly defending their position, the highest-rated dominating behavior. These findings suggest an organizational environment that strongly favors collaborative and avoiding approaches to conflict management, while being less inclined toward dominating strategies. This could indicate a mature conflict management culture, though the high avoidance scores might warrant further investigation to ensure that necessary conflicts aren't being suppressed at the expense of organizational effectiveness.

Research Question 2: What leadership styles are predominantly practiced by librarians in federal university libraries across South-South, Nigeria?

Table 3:

Leadership Styles	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	S.D
Transformational leadership style						
In my library the leadership is friendly and approachable	38 (44.7)	40 (47.1)	7 (8.2)	0 (0.0)	3.36	0.63
In my library, the leadership gives room for team work	32 (37.6)	46 (54.1)	5 (5.9)	2 (2.4)	3.27	0.67
In my library the leadership accepts new ideas from subordinates	30 (35.3)	43 (50.6)	9 (10.6)	3 (3.5)	3.18	0.75
In my library, the leader communicates well and gives good feedback	28 (32.9)	44 (51.8)	10 (11.8)	3 (3.5)	3.14	0.76
In my university, the leaders have the interest of the subordinates at heart	25 (29.4)	49 (57.6)	9 (10.6)	2 (2.4)	3.14	0.69
In my library the leadership is considerate about life outside work	20 (23.5)	51 (60.0)	11 (12.9)	3 (3.5)	3.04	0.71
In my library, the leadership does not penalize for different opinion	16 (18.8)	58 (68.2)	8 (9.4)	3 (3.5)	3.02	0.65
In my library the leadership accepts subordinates to take part in decision-making process	21 (24.7)	47 (55.3)	12 (14.1)	5 (5.9)	2.99	0.79
In my library, the leadership allows subordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own	15 (17.6)	48 (56.5)	17 (20.0)	5 (5.9)	2.86	0.77
In my library the leadership does not impose policies	14 (16.5)	43 (50.6)	21 (24.7)	7 (8.2)	2.75	0.83
Grand Mean					3.08	
Transactional leadership style						
In my library, the leadership acknowledges good performance	31 (36.5)	44 (51.8)	7 (8.2)	3 (3.5)	3.21	0.74
In my library the leadership motivates subordinates to do work well	30 (35.3)	43 (50.6)	10 (11.8)	2 (2.4)	3.19	0.73
In my library the leadership gives recognition when work is properly done	23 (27.1)	50 (58.8)	10 (11.8)	2 (2.4)	3.11	0.69
In my library the leadership shows that much is expected from subordinates	12 (14.1)	57 (67.1)	14 (16.5)	2 (2.4)	2.93	0.63
In my library the leadership knows the right time to reward	13 (15.3)	52 (61.2)	18 (21.2)	2 (2.4)	2.89	0.67
In my library, the leadership is very strict	12 (14.1)	30 (35.3)	36 (42.4)	7 (8.2)	2.55	0.84
In my library, the leadership always punishes if subordinates make mistakes	6 (7.1)	32 (37.6)	38 (44.7)	9 (10.6)	2.41	0.77
In my library the leadership does not accept new ideas from subordinates	8 (9.4)	19 (22.4)	35 (41.2)	23 (27.1)	2.14	0.93
Grand Mean					2.80	

Source: Researcher 2025

The study investigated leadership styles in university libraries, focusing on transformational and transactional approaches. The data indicates a predominant transformational leadership style in university libraries, with an overall grand mean of 3.08. Library leaders demonstrate particularly strong performance in approachability and friendliness, achieving a mean score of 3.36, with 91.8% of respondents expressing agreement. This suggests that library leadership maintains an open-door policy that facilitates staff interaction and communication. Team work facilitation emerged as another significant strength, scoring a mean of 3.27, indicating that leaders actively promote collaborative work environments. The acceptance of new ideas from subordinates (mean = 3.18) and effective communication with good feedback mechanisms (mean = 3.14) also received notable positive ratings, reflecting a leadership approach that values innovation and clear communication channels.

However, within the transformational leadership dimension, certain areas showed room for improvement. The aspect of policy implementation scored relatively lower (mean = 2.75), suggesting that leaders maintain considerable control over organizational policies. Similarly, the provision of complete freedom for problem-solving received a moderate score (mean = 2.86), indicating a balanced approach to staff autonomy rather than full empowerment.

Regarding transactional leadership characteristics, the findings revealed a slightly lower overall presence, with a grand mean of 2.80. The strongest aspects of transactional leadership centered around performance recognition and motivation. Leaders showed particular effectiveness in acknowledging good performance (mean = 3.21) and motivating staff (mean = 3.19). The recognition of properly executed work also received positive feedback (mean = 3.11), suggesting that library leaders effectively utilize positive reinforcement strategies.

The study revealed interesting patterns in disciplinary approaches within the transactional framework.

Hypothesis Testing

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses; tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H01: Leadership style has no significant influence on conflict management

Table 4: Model Summary

Model R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.724	.524	.513
			.4876

Punitive measures for mistakes received notably low scores (mean = 2.41), indicating that leaders rarely employ punishment as a management tool. This aligns with contemporary management practices that favor positive reinforcement over punitive measures. The data also showed that strict leadership approaches are relatively uncommon (mean = 2.55), suggesting a more flexible and accommodating management style. The standard deviations across both leadership styles ranged from 0.63 to 0.93, indicating reasonable consistency in respondent perceptions. Higher variability was noted in areas concerning policy implementation (S.D. = 0.83) and acceptance of new ideas (S.D. = 0.93), suggesting diverse experiences or perceptions in these aspects of leadership.

These findings have significant implications for library management practices. The strong presence of transformational leadership characteristics, particularly in areas of approachability and team work facilitation, suggests that university libraries are adopting modern, employee-centered management approaches. The balance between transformational and transactional elements indicates a hybrid leadership model that combines supportive leadership with structured performance management.

The data suggests several areas for potential development in library leadership. While leaders maintain strong interpersonal relationships and communication channels, there may be opportunities to enhance staff autonomy in problem-solving while maintaining necessary oversight. The current balance between policy control and staff input could be optimized to promote more participative decision-making while ensuring organizational stability. The findings also highlight the effectiveness of positive reinforcement strategies in library management. The high scores in both transformational aspects (interest in subordinates) and transactional elements (performance acknowledgment) demonstrate that library leaders successfully combine supportive leadership with clear performance expectations. This dual approach appears to create an environment that promotes both staff development and operational efficiency.

Table 5: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	21.842	2	10.921	45.983	.000
Residual	19.478	82	.237		
Total	41.320	84			

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.124	.246			4.569	.000
Transformational Leadership	.486	.078	.524		6.231	.000
Transactional Leadership	.312	.071	.369		4.394	.000

Source: Researcher 2025

Table 4 indicates that The R-value of .724 showed a strong positive correlation between leadership styles and conflict management. The R Square value of .524 suggests that leadership styles explain 52.4% of the variance in conflict management effectiveness. The Adjusted R Square of .513 provides a slightly more conservative estimate of the model's explanatory power. The F-statistic (45.983) with a significance level of .000 ($p < .05$) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. This suggests that leadership styles, as a whole, have a significant influence on conflict management.

The regression equation can be expressed as: Conflict Management = 1.124 + 0.486(Transformational) + 0.312(Transactional). This analysis suggests that for every unit increase in transformational leadership, conflict management effectiveness increases by 0.486 units. For every unit increase in transactional leadership, conflict management effectiveness increases by 0.312 units. The constant of 1.124 represents the baseline conflict management level when no leadership influence is present. The results demonstrates that both leadership styles play important roles in effective conflict management, with transformational leadership showing a stronger influence. This suggests that library administrators should focus on developing both leadership styles, with particular emphasis on transformational leadership approaches.

Both leadership styles contribute significantly to conflict management, with transformational leadership having a stronger impact. Given that $p < .05$ for both leadership styles and the overall model. Based on this, the null hypothesis positing that there is no significant influence between leadership style and conflict management is therefore rejected and hereby restated: leadership style has significant influence on conflict management of librarians in Edo State.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of leadership styles on conflict management among librarians in Edo State, with specific focus on transformational and transactional leadership approaches. The findings reveal that leadership styles significantly influence how conflicts are managed in university libraries. Transformational leadership emerged as the predominant style, with library leaders showing particular strength in approachability, team work facilitation, and openness to new ideas. The research demonstrated that leaders who exhibit transformational characteristics are more effective at managing conflicts, as evidenced by the strong positive correlation ($r = .724$) between leadership styles and conflict management outcomes.

The study also found that while transformational leadership had a stronger impact ($\beta = .524$), transactional leadership also played a significant role ($\beta = .369$) in effective conflict management. Library leaders demonstrated proficiency in acknowledging good performance and motivating staff, while maintaining a balance between positive reinforcement and necessary oversight. The combined influence of both leadership styles explained 52.4% of the variance in conflict management effectiveness, indicating that leadership approach is a crucial factor in maintaining harmony and resolving disputes within library settings. The research further revealed that library leaders have successfully created environments that promote open communication and collaborative problem-solving. However, there remains room for improvement in areas such as policy implementation and delegation of problem-solving authority to staff members. The findings suggest that a hybrid approach, incorporating both transformational and transactional leadership elements, is most effective for managing conflicts in academic libraries.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Library administrators should invest in leadership development programs that specifically focus on enhancing transformational leadership skills. These programs should emphasize emotional intelligence, active listening, and collaborative decision-making techniques to strengthen leaders' ability to manage conflicts effectively.

Universities should establish formal mentoring programs where experienced library leaders can guide newer managers in developing balanced leadership approaches that incorporate both transformational and transactional elements. This will help create a more comprehensive leadership pipeline within the library system.

Library management should implement regular feedback mechanisms that allow staff to provide input on leadership effectiveness and conflict resolution processes. This could include anonymous surveys, suggestion boxes, or regular town hall meetings to ensure continuous improvement in leadership practices.

These recommendations aim to enhance the quality of leadership and conflict management in university libraries, ultimately contributing to more effective and harmonious work environments. Implementation should be approached systematically, with regular evaluation of outcomes to ensure continued improvement in leadership effectiveness and conflict management capabilities.

References

Abdulraheem, I. (2020). A qualitative analysis of conflict management style and employees' performance of organisations in Northern region of Ghana. *International Journal of Technology and Management*, 5(2), 1-21.

Adeyemi, T. O., & Ademilua, S. O. (2012). Conflict management strategies and administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 3(3), 368-375.

Adomi, E. E., & Anie, S. O. (2006). Conflict management in Nigerian university libraries. *Library Management*, 27(8), 520-530. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435120610686098>

Akpan, C. P., & Ekpoh, U. I. (2015). Leadership approaches and their influence on conflict

management in university administration. *Journal of Educational Management*, 4(2), 56-69.

Akparobore, D. O., & Omosekejimi, A. F. (2020). Leadership qualities and style: A panacea for job productivity and effective service delivery among library staff in academic libraries in South South, Nigeria. *Library Management*, 41(8/9), 677-687.

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Chandolia, E., & Anastasiou, S. (2020). Leadership and conflict management style are associated with the effectiveness of school conflict management in the Region of Epirus, NW Greece. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 10(1), 455-468.

Fossung, L. V. (2023). Principals' conflict management styles in effective schools in Kumba I, Kumba II and Kumba III Sub-Divisions of Meme Division Cameroon. *American Journal of Science and Learning for Development*, 2(2), 78-111.

Grubaugh, M. L., & Flynn, L. (2018). Relationships among nurse manager leadership skills, conflict management, and unit teamwork. *JONA: The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 48(7/8), 383-388.

Ilgan, A. (2020). Examining principals' conflict management styles: A study of Turkish administrators. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 42(1), 1-16.

Khanaki, H., & Hassanzadeh, N. (2010). Conflict Management Styles: The Iranian general preference compared to the Swedish. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 1(4), 419-426.

Mohammed, U. K., & Ibrahim, S. (2020). Leadership styles and conflict resolution in Nigerian higher institutions. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 8(4), 112-126.

Ogunandu, M. A., & Ibieme, J. (2019). Contemporary issues in university management: The Nigerian perspective. *African Journal of Higher Education Studies*, 7(1), 45-58.

Okolie, U. C., & Okoye, P. I. (2021). Leadership and organizational conflict: A study of selected federal universities in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 9(3), 178-192.

Olanrewaju, O. I., & Okorie, V. N. (2019). Exploring the qualities of a good leader using principal component analysis. *Journal of Engineering, Project, and Production Management*, 9(2),

- 142-150. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jepmm-2019-0016>
- Pembi, S., Usman, F. I., Kwajaff, B. F., & Amatefe, M. (2022). Leadership styles and leadership qualities for organizational success: A review of literature. *Nigerian Journal of Management Sciences*, 23(2), 312-323.
- Perera, P., Witharana, T., & Withanage, P. (2021). A review of leadership: Different leadership theories and styles relevant to education leadership. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 19(1), 18-26. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2021/v19i130453>
- Rahim, M. (2010). *Managing conflict in organisation*. Transaction.
- Reed, B. N., Klutts, A. M., & Mattingly, T. J. (2019). A systematic review of leadership definitions, competencies, and assessment methods in pharmacy education. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 83(9), Article 7520. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7520>
- Saliu, U. A., Wankasi, A. J., Eromosele, G. O., & Olukade, A. O. (2018). Leadership styles and motivation on job performance of library personnel in public university libraries in Northcentral Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 1-25.