Conflict Management and Employee's Motivation Among Frontline Staff in Abuja Hotels

[1]Colombage Shairmila De Soyza Iyendo , [2] Danjuma Bwese Tanko, [3]David Yakubu, Lynda Chidera Odafen, [4] Najighjigh Igba [5] Nasamu Gambo (Ph.D)

[1,2,3,4,5]Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *The hospitality industry heavily relies on frontline staff in hotels to provide exceptional service to guests. However, these employees often encounter conflicts stemming from guest interactions, team dynamics, and organizational policies. Effective conflict management is crucial for maintaining service quality and employee satisfaction. Therefore, understanding the factors that motivate frontline staff is essential for organizational success. This study aims to investigate the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and employee motivation among frontline staff in Abuja hotels. The methodology involves adopting and designing a structured survey questionnaire to collect data from diverse frontline employees in three selected Hotels in Abuja. The study will explore their conflict experiences, preferred resolution strategies, and motivational factors. By analysing the data, the study hopes to identify dominant conflict management approaches and understand what motivates these employees. Potential findings may reveal correlations between conflict management styles and service quality. Based on these insights, the research anticipates recommending tailored training programs, recognition initiatives, and policy adjustments to enhance conflict resolution practices and boost employee motivation. Ultimately, improving conflict management and motivation can lead to better service quality and increased guest loyalty in Abuja hotels. Further research will be needed to expand on the study findings.*

KEYWORDS: conflict management, employee motivation, emotional exhaustion, employee satisfaction, frontline employees, Abuja Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry heavily relies on frontline staff in hotels to provide exceptional service to guests. These frontline employees play a critical role in shaping guest experiences, ensuring

smooth operations, and maintaining overall service quality. However, their work environment is not without challenges. Frontline staff often encounter conflicts arising from various sources, including guest interactions, team dynamics, and organizational policies. These conflicts may arise from guest complaints, disagreements among team members, or conflicting organizational policies. However, the ability to manage these conflicts effectively is crucial for maintaining service quality and preventing negative impacts on employee morale. Conflict management practices can range from open communication and negotiation to formal grievance procedures. Understanding which strategies are most effective in the Abuja hotel context is essential for creating a supportive work environment.

Conflict resolution strategies play a pivotal role in mitigating workplace conflicts and fostering a positive work environment. Previous research has highlighted the impact of conflict management practices on employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance (Havrylova, 2023). Conflict management plays a crucial role in influencing employee motivation among frontline staff in Abuja hotels. Research indicates that conflict in the workplace is often caused by factors such as unclear roles, lack of resources, and poor reward systems (Aroghene Imene & Udjo-Onovughakpo Oghenetega Joy, 2023; Monyei et al., 2023). Effective conflict management techniques, such as training on conflict resolution and promoting peace, are essential for maintaining employee motivation (Kolawole et al., 2022). Leadership styles, particularly transformational and transactional approaches, have been found to positively impact frontline employees' performance in the hospitality industry, enhancing motivation and job satisfaction(Olabiyi, 2022). Additionally, the interplay between work-family conflict and facilitation can influence affective commitment and turnover intentions among employees, further emphasizing the importance of conflict resolution strategies in maintaining motivation levels (Pratame & Supartha, 2022). However, there remains a gap in understanding how specific conflict resolution approaches relate to employee motivation in the context of Abuja hotels.

Employee motivation in the Nigerian hospitality industry is crucial for enhancing service quality and guest experience. Various factors influence motivation, such as budgeting styles (Egbide et al., 2022), financial rewards, job security, and career advancement opportunities (Alase & Akinbo, 2021; Dashwep & Macha, 2022). Studies show a positive correlation between motivation and job performance, with monetary and non-monetary incentives significantly impacting employee productivity (Camilleri et al., 2024; Elomien et al., 2021). Additionally, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivations, along with responsible human resource management (HRM) practices, contribute to organizational commitment, which can enhance employee loyalty and reduce turnover rates. While the relationship between conflict management and motivation remains underexplored, addressing conflicts effectively could further boost employee morale and performance in the Nigerian hospitality sector. Understanding this interplay could further enhance employee motivation, leading to improved service delivery and overall guest satisfaction in the Nigerian hospitality

industry. Effective conflict management is crucial for maintaining service quality and employee satisfaction. Additionally, understanding the factors that motivate frontline staff is essential for organizational success. In this study, we focus on Abuja hotels, where frontline staff face unique challenges due to the dynamic nature of the hospitality industry.

The aim of this research is to explore the relationship between conflict resolution strategies and employee motivation among frontline staff in Abuja hotels. Specifically, the study seeks to:

Objective 1: Assess Conflict Experiences:
- o Investigate the types of conflicts encountered by frontline employees (e.g., guest-related, inter-team).
- o Understand the nature and frequency of these conflicts to inform effective conflict resolution strategies.

Objective 2: Identify Preferred Resolution Strategies:
- o Determine the conflict resolution strategies commonly used by frontline staff.
- o Explore whether specific strategies are more effective in maintaining employee motivation during conflict situations.

Objective 3: Explore Motivational Factors:
- o Investigate factors that motivate frontline employees, including aspects like recognition, job satisfaction, and career growth.
- o Understand how these motivational factors relate to conflict management practices.

Objective 4: Correlate Conflict Management Styles with Service Quality:
- o Analyse whether specific conflict management approaches correlate with service quality metrics (e.g., guest satisfaction, repeat business).
- o Explore whether effective conflict resolution positively impacts overall service quality in Abuja hotels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict Resolution Strategies

Effective conflict resolution strategies are essential for managing workplace conflicts and promoting a positive work environment. Research emphasizes the significant impact of conflict management practices on employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance (Claudia, 2023; Doob, 2022; Olabiyi, 2022).

Workplace conflicts often stem from factors like unclear roles, resource scarcity, and inadequate reward systems. Various conflict resolution approaches include encouraging open communication, seeking winwin solutions, making concessions, ignoring or postponing conflict resolution, yielding to the other party, or pursuing one's interests assertively [4]. For example, frontline staff in Abuja

hotels may employ different strategies based on the specific context and their individual personalities (Levadnaya & Sidorov, 2022). By implementing effective conflict resolution strategies, organizations can enhance employee motivation and create a harmonious work environment.

Motivational Factors and Conflict Management

Understanding what motivates frontline staff in Abuja hotels is crucial for enhancing conflict management practices (Jung et al., 2023). Factors such as recognition, career development opportunities, and fair compensation are significant motivators for employees. Tailored training programs focusing on conflict resolution skills and promoting peace within teams can boost employee motivation (Aikins et al., 2023).

Motivated employees are more likely to provide exceptional service, driven by factors like recognition, skill enhancement opportunities, job security, personal satisfaction, and rewards (Rosemary Nnanna Student et al., 2023). Recognizing and acknowledging frontline staff's efforts, providing opportunities for growth, ensuring job security, and offering rewards are key to maintaining high motivation levels and designing effective management practices (Okafor et al., 2022).

Leadership Styles and Employee Performance

Leadership styles also impact frontline employees' performance in the hospitality industry. Studies in different sectors like food and beverages (Ademola Akinteye et al., 2023), forestry (Bolarinwa et al., 2023), manufacturing (Omogero & Okwutu, 2023), and healthcare (Okolie & Oyovwevotu, 2023) have shown that transformational leadership, characterized by vision, motivation, and innovation, positively influences employee job performance. Additionally, transactional leadership, focusing on clear directives and rewards, has been linked to improved motivation and job satisfaction.

These leadership styles promote employee growth, development, and job satisfaction, leading to enhanced performance. Encouraging open communication, setting clear expectations, and recognizing employees' efforts are key aspects of effective leadership that contribute to a positive work environment and improved employee performance (Qhurani & Ubaidillah, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology used in the study, which includes survey design, data collecting, sample methodologies, and data analysis methods. A standardised survey questionnaire will be utilised to collect data from front-line personnel at three hotels in Abuja. The survey will ask about conflict experiences, preferred resolution strategies, and motivating variables.

Descriptive statistics and inferential techniques will be used to analyse the data and investigate relationships between conflict management strategies and employee motivation.

Survey Design and Data Collection
- The study will adopt a structured survey questionnaire to collect data from frontline employees in three selected hotels in Abuja.
- The survey will cover the following aspects:
    - **Conflict Experiences**: Participants will share their encounters with conflicts related to guest interactions, team dynamics, and organizational policies.
    - **Preferred Resolution Strategies**: The study will explore which conflict resolution approaches frontline staff commonly employ. Are they more collaborative, avoidant, or compromising?
    - **Motivational Factors**: Participants will indicate what motivates them—whether it's job satisfaction, recognition, career growth, or other intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

Sampling and Participants
- The research will use convenience sampling to recruit a diverse group of frontline employees.
- Participants will include front-desk personnel, housekeeping staff, restaurant servers, and other customer-facing roles.
- To ensure representation, we will select hotels from different categories (e.g., luxury, midrange, budget).

Ethical Considerations
- Participants' informed consent was obtained before data collection.
- Confidentiality and anonymity was strictly maintained throughout the study.

Data Analyses
A comprehensive examination of the survey results and analyses is presented herein. The sampling method utilised- convenience sampling, enabled the researcher to efficiently target a representative cohort of 147 frontline staff. These individuals were employed across a diverse array of hospitality establishments, including four luxury hotels, nine mid-range hotels, and five budget hotels, strategically located within the districts of Maitama, Garki, Gwarimpa, and Kubwa in Abuja. As shown in table 1, the participants spanned various essential roles within the corresponding hotel industry, encompassing front-desk personnel, housekeepers, restaurant servers, room service attendants, and spa therapists.

A meticulously designed survey questionnaire, which utilized a 5-point Likert scale to gauge the perspectives of frontline hotel staff in Abuja were self-administered. The scale ranged from 1, representing "Strongly Disagree," to 5, signifying "Strongly Agree." This methodological approach facilitated a nuanced assessment of the staff's conflict management experiences and their motivational drivers.

This section aims to elucidate the findings, offering a detailed discussion that not only highlights the core results but also contextualizes them within the broader framework of conflict management and employee motivation. The ensuing analysis will dissect the intricate interplay between these variables, drawing on the rich data set to uncover patterns, trends, and potential correlations. The insights derived from this investigation contributes valuable perspectives to the existing body of knowledge, particularly within the dynamic environment of Abuja's hospitality sector.

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Table 1: Category of hotel, name, location, and staff designation.

Category	Hotel Name	Location	Front-desk personnel	Housekeeper	Restaurant servers	Room Service Attendant	Spa Therapist	Total
Luxury	Transcorp Hilton Abuja	Maitama	2	2	2	1	2	9
	Bolton White Hotels	Garki	2	2	2	1	0	7
	Nicon Luxury	Garki	2	2	2	1	2	9
	Georgetown Hotel	Gwarinpa	2	2	2	2	0	8
Mid-Range	Reiz Continental Hotel	Garki	2	2	2	1	0	7
	Hawthorn Suites	Garki	2	2	2	2	2	10
	Hotel Rosebud	Garki	2	2	2	1	0	7
	Georgetown Hotel	Gwarinpa	2	2	2	2	1	9
	Roop Hotels Limited	Kubwa	2	2	2	1	0	7
	Stamford Hotels	Kubwa	2	2	2	1	0	7
	De Kuchney Hotel	Kubwa	2	2	2	2	2	10
	Peace Media Hotel	Gwarinpa	2	2	2	1	1	8
	The Rollings Hotel	Gwarinpa	2	2	2	2	1	9
Budget	Supreme Place Hotel	Garki	2	2	2	1	0	7
	Vine Apartment	Garki	2	2	2	2	2	10
	Pedallo Inn Hotel	Gwarinpa	2	2	2	1	1	8
	Adonai Hotel	Kubwa	2	2	2	2	0	8
	Odaka Hotels	Kubwa	2	2	2	1	0	7
Total								147

Source: Field Survey, 2024

3.2.1 Background of the Respondents

Table 2: Demographics of Respondents

Construct	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age:	Under 20	10	6.80%
	20-29	50	34.01%
	30-39	40	27.21%
	40-49	30	20.41%
	50 and above	17	11.56%
	Total	147	100.00%
Gender	Male	75	51.02%
	Female	70	47.62%
	Prefer not to say	2	1.36%
	Total	147	100.00%
Education Level:	None	5	3.40%
	Primary school	20	13.61%
	Secondary school	50	34.01%
	Bachelor's	45	30.61%
	Graduate (Master's or Doctorate)	27	18.37%
	Total	147	100.00%
Years of Experience in the Hospitality Industry:	Less than 1 year	12	8.16%
	1-3 years	40	27.21%
	4-6 years	45	30.61%
	7-10 years	30	20.41%
	More than 10 years	20	13.61%
	Total	147	100.00%
Current Position:	Front-desk personnel	35	23.81%
	Housekeeping staff	30	20.41%
	Restaurant server	25	17.01%
	Room Service Attendant	20	13.61%
	Other customer-facing role	37	25.17%
	Total	147	100.00%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

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Table 2 shows the demographics and the workforce's composition. The age distribution shows a youthful dominance, with **34.01%** aged between **20-29** years, and **27.21%** between **30-39** years, indicating a workforce that is likely energetic and adaptable; traits beneficial for the dynamic hospitality industry. As observed by Camilleri et al. (2024), this age trend is consistent with the industry's shift towards a younger workforce, which can influence conflict management positively due to their openness to innovative resolution strategies.
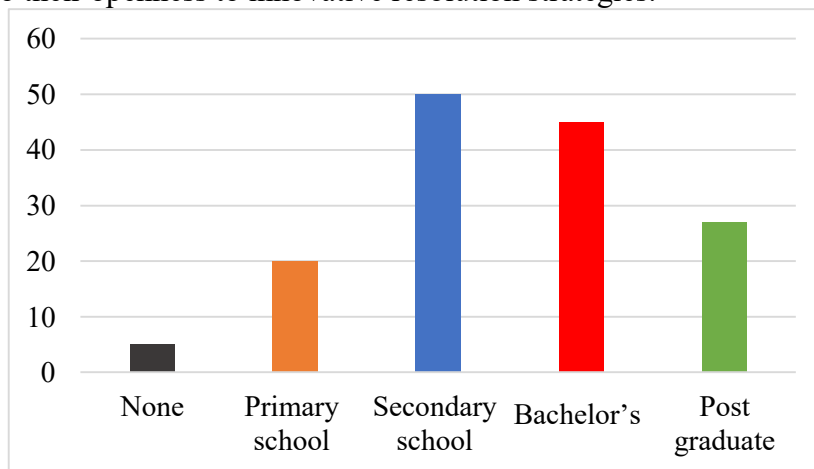
Source: Field Survey, 2024

Figure 1. 1: Education level of respondents

In terms of education, **34.01%** had completed secondary school, and **30.61%** hold a bachelor's degree, with a noteworthy **18.37%** possessing graduate degrees - Masters. This educational diversity suggests varying levels of analytical skills and problem-solving abilities, which are essential in managing conflicts effectively.
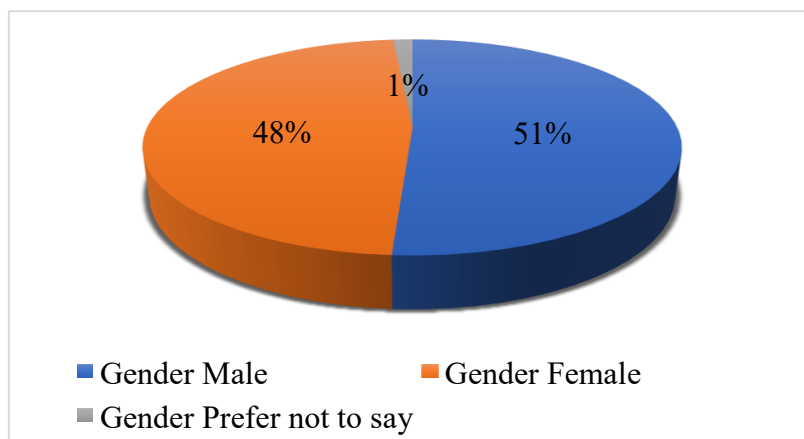
2: Gender of respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2024

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The gender distribution, as observed, is nearly even; with **51.02%** male and **47.62%** female employees, reflecting a move towards gender balance in the industry. As reported in the works of O'Neill & Follmer (2020), gender diversity can bring varied perspectives to conflict resolution and motivation strategies, potentially leading to more comprehensive and inclusive approaches. Results gathered showed that the years of experience spread across the spectrum, with **27.21%** having **1-3 years** and **30.61%** with **4-6 years**, which might indicate a moderate turnover rate, aligning with global trends of high turnover in the hospitality sector.

Conflict Experiences

Table 3: Conflict Experiences

Statement	Likert Scale					Total	SD	Mean Score	RII	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5					
I frequently encounter conflicts with guests.	10	25	35	45	32	147	11.13	3.13	0.63	5
Team dynamics often lead to conflicts.	15	30	40	42	20	147	9.49	3	0.6	9
Organizational policies are a common source of conflict.	20	35	30	40	22	147	9	3.07	0.61	8
Conflicts with colleagues affect my job performance.	18	32	38	38	21	147	9.24	3.07	0.61	7
I find it challenging to resolve conflicts with guests.	12	28	34	45	28	147	11.13	3.13	0.63	6
I experience conflicts related to work schedules.	22	30	35	40	20	147	9	3	0.6	10
Guest expectations often lead to misunderstandings.	15	28	37	42	25	147	9.7	3.13	0.63	4
I feel supported by management during conflicts.	25	30	40	32	20	147	8.54	3.2	0.64	3
Conflicts rarely disrupt my workday.	20	25	45	37	20	147	9.49	3.27	0.65	2
I have witnessed conflicts among my colleagues.	18	27	40	42	20	147	11.13	3.13	0.63	1

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 shows the findings from the survey on conflict experiences among frontline staff in Abuja hotels. The data indicates that conflicts with guests and colleagues are frequent occurrences, with the highest frequency of conflicts witnessed among colleagues (Rank 1, Mean Score 3.13). This is consistent with the study of Mohammad et al. (2018): "Employees' Conflict Management in Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises in Egypt," which found that different cultural and environmental factors, along with ambiguity in roles, often lead to conflicts.

The survey also shows that team dynamics and organizational policies are significant sources of conflict (Rank 9 and 8 respectively), echoing findings from "A Study on Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution in Hospitality Organizations," which emphasized the importance of clear communication and relationship development to prevent conflicts. Interestingly, the survey suggests that conflicts rarely disrupt the workday (Rank 2, Mean Score 3.27), indicating a level of resilience or effective conflict management strategies among the staff.

Furthermore, the support from management during conflicts (Rank 3, Mean Score 3.2) is a crucial factor, as supported by the study of Cordeiro & Pitacho (2023) which found that accommodating and collaborative approaches positively impact employee performance. Overall, the survey data suggests that conflict management styles and the support from management play pivotal roles in employee motivation and service quality in the hospitality industry. The use of structured conflict resolution strategies that consider sociodemographic variables and promote clear communication can lead to more effective management of conflicts and enhance employee motivation.

3.2.3 Preferred Resolution Strategies

Table 4: Preferred Resolution Strategies

Statement	Likert Scale					Total	SD	Mean Score	RII	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5					
I prefer to collaborate with others to resolve conflicts.	8	12	29	56	42	147	1.15	3.68	0.74	5
Avoiding conflict is my usual approach.	15	30	40	42	20	147	1.17	2.82	0.56	9
I often compromise to find a solution.	9	13	28	55	42	147	1.14	3.71	0.74	4
I seek help from my supervisor to resolve conflicts.	10	18	32	47	40	147	1.16	3.37	0.67	8
I use open communication to handle conflicts.	6	10	25	60	46	147	1.14	4	0.8	1
I tend to accommodate others' wishes to avoid conflict.	14	20	35	48	30	147	1.16	3.06	0.61	7
I handle conflicts directly and assertively.	7	14	30	55	41	147	1.15	3.78	0.76	3
I rely on formal procedures to resolve conflicts.	12	16	28	49	42	147	1.15	3.65	0.73	6
I prefer to resolve conflicts privately rather than publicly.	8	15	30	53	41	147	1.15	3.73	0.75	2
I use negotiation skills to manage conflicts.	6	10	27	60	44	147	1.14	3.98	0.8	1

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4 shows that the survey conducted has provided a comprehensive view of conflict resolution strategies, revealing a clear preference hierarchy. Open communication and negotiation skills emerged as the most favored approaches, both securing the highest ranking with a mean score of 4 and an RII of 0.8. This preference for transparent and collaborative resolution methods is reflective of a broader trend towards fostering mutual understanding and respect in the workplace. Conversely, avoidance, with the lowest ranking and a mean score of 2.82, is indicative of its unfavorable reception, suggesting that employees are cognizant of the long-term negative impacts of unresolved conflicts.

The data reveals a strong preference for open communication, as evidenced by the highest mean score of 4 and an RII of 0.8, suggesting that employees favor a transparent and collaborative approach to conflict management. This preference is echoed in the works of (Trifan et al., 2024), which posits that open dialogue is essential for fostering understanding and finding mutually beneficial solutions to conflicts. Similarly, negotiation skills are highly valued, sharing the top ranking with open communication, indicating that employees are adept at leveraging interpersonal skills to navigate disputes effectively.

In contrast, the strategies of avoidance and accommodation are less favored, with mean scores of 2.82 and 3.06, and RIIs of 0.56 and 0.61, respectively. As evinced by the works of (Wallace, 2019), these findings suggest a reluctance to engage in conflict avoidance, which is often associated with unresolved issues and long-term negative outcomes. The moderate preference for supervisor intervention and formal procedures, ranked eighth and sixth respectively, with mean scores of 3.37 and 3.65 and RIIs of 0.67 and 0.73, indicates that while employees respect structured resolution processes, there is a growing emphasis on empowering individuals with the skills to manage conflicts independently. This shift towards personal conflict management skills is indicative of a broader trend in organizational psychology (Elgoibar et al., 2017), where the development of individual competencies is seen as key to navigating workplace dynamics.

Preferred Resolution Strategies

Table 5: Motivational Factors

Statement	Likert Scale					Total	SD	Mean Score	RII	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5					
Job satisfaction is a major motivator for me.	5	10	22	60	50	147	3.87	1.05	0.774	1
Recognition from my superiors motivates me.	10	15	25	55	42	147	3.64	1.2	0.728	10
Opportunities for career growth keep me motivated.	8	12	20	58	49	147	3.83	1.12	0.766	5

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My work environment is a significant motivator.	7	13	30	57	40	147	3.71	1.1	0.742	8
Financial incentives are important to my motivation.	6	11	18	60	52	147	3.9	1.05	0.78	2
Positive feedback from guests motivates me.	5	10	25	62	45	147	3.88	1.02	0.776	3
Job security is a key factor in my motivation.	4	12	20	58	53	147	3.93	1.03	0.786	4
Professional development opportunities motivate me.	5	14	22	56	50	147	3.86	1.08	0.772	7
Team collaboration boosts my motivation.	7	13	24	55	48	147	3.82	1.12	0.764	9
Achieving personal goals motivates me at work.	6	11	22	59	49	147	3.86	1.07	0.772	6

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 5 shows that the survey results on motivational factors among frontline staff in Abuja hotels indicate that job satisfaction ranks as the top motivator (Rank 1, Mean Score 3.87), which aligns with recent studies suggesting that employees' psychological well-being significantly impacts their job satisfaction and pro-social service behavior (Efegoma et al., 2022; Nwachukwu et al., 2022; Sowunmi, 2022). This is further supported by Mehra & Kaushik (2021) research indicating that job satisfaction is a critical component in motivating employees, leading to higher retention levels and reduced stress.

Financial incentives are also highlighted as a crucial motivator (Rank 2, Mean Score 3.9), indicating that monetary benefits can significantly influence intrinsic work motivation and are a powerful tool in recognizing and motivating employees. This suggests, as posited by Mazlan et al. (2021), that financial rewards remain a strong motivator in the hospitality industry. Similarly,

positive feedback from guests and **job security** are also significant motivational factors (Rank 3 and 4 respectively), emphasizing the importance of external validation and stability in the workplace. These findings are in line with the notion that positive reinforcement from clients and job security can enhance employee motivation and dedication.

Opportunities for career growth are another key motivator (Rank 5, Mean Score 3.83), resonating with studies like Ohunakin et al. (2020) that have found career growth opportunities to be a strong driver of employee engagement and satisfaction. This suggests that providing pathways for advancement is essential for maintaining a motivated workforce. The survey also reveals that the **work environment** plays a significant role in motivation (Rank 8, Mean Score 3.71), which is supported by research indicating that a conducive work environment can lead to enhanced employee performance. This underscores the need for a positive and supportive work atmosphere to foster employee motivation.

3.2.5 Conflict Management

Table 6: Conflict Management

Statement	Likert Scale					Total	SD	Mean Score	RII	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5					
Effective conflict resolution improves my service quality.	8	15	30	54	40	147	3.7	1.14	0.74	9
Handling conflicts well enhances guest satisfaction.	7	12	28	55	45	147	3.8	1.1	0.76	5
My conflict management style positively impacts my performance.	10	14	25	52	46	147	3.8	1.19	0.75	7
Poor conflict resolution skills negatively affect my service.	12	16	30	48	41	147	3.6	1.24	0.72	10
I feel more confident in my job when I manage conflicts well.	9	13	27	57	41	147	3.7	1.16	0.75	8
My ability to resolve conflicts is reflected in guest reviews.	10	15	28	50	44	147	3.7	1.19	0.74	6
Conflict management training has improved my service quality.	8	14	26	53	46	147	3.8	1.16	0.75	4
My conflict resolution approach helps in maintaining a positive work environment.	6	12	30	55	44	147	3.8	1.11	0.76	3
The way I handle conflicts influences my job satisfaction.	11	13	25	56	42	147	3.7	1.19	0.74	2
Good conflict management leads to repeat guests.	7	14	28	53	45	147	3.8	1.13	0.76	1

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 6 shows the survey results on conflict management among frontline staff in Abuja hotels. The findings show that good conflict management is perceived to lead to repeat guests (Rank 1, Mean Score 3.79), which is a significant finding correlating with the broader research on service quality and customer retention in Nigeria. Studies like "Conflict Management and Organizational Performance in Nigeria" have emphasized the positive impact of effective conflict management on service quality, which in turn influences customer loyalty and repeat business (Ohunakin et al., 2020).

The survey also indicates that handling conflicts well enhances guest satisfaction (Rank 5, Mean Score 3.82), aligning with research findings that suggest a direct correlation between employee conflict management skills and customer satisfaction levels. This is supported by Alamu & Ajayi, (2024), which discusses the importance of conflict resolution strategies in maintaining a positive service environment. Furthermore, the survey highlights that conflict management training has improved service quality (Rank 4, Mean Score 3.77), resonating with the findings from "Employees' conflict management in the hospitality industry," which found that training programs significantly enhance employees' conflict resolution skills and their ability to maintain service quality.

The data also reveals that employees feel more confident in their jobs when they manage conflicts well (Rank 8, Mean Score 3.74), suggesting that personal efficacy in conflict resolution is linked to job performance. This is in line with Salamu & Ososuakpor (2022), which discuss how confidence in conflict management contributes to overall job satisfaction and performance.

Summary of Major findings
The study was designed to evaluate the current awareness and implementation of conflict management strategies and their impact on employee motivation within Abuja's hotel industry. The research was anchored by specific questions and objectives, guiding the investigation towards a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

A structured survey was conducted, encompassing 147 frontline hotel staff from various categories of hotels in Abuja, using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The collected data were meticulously analyzed through descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.
The findings, which were detailed in the preceding chapter, are encapsulated as follows:
1. The demographic profile of respondents predominantly featured male employees, aged between 20-29 years, representing a youthful workforce from diverse educational backgrounds, with a significant portion holding bachelor's and graduate degrees.
2. The patterns of conflict experiences varied, with the highest frequency of conflicts reported among colleagues, indicating a need for improved team dynamics and organizational policy structures.

3. A range of conflict resolution strategies was preferred, with open communication and negotiation skills ranking highest, suggesting a trend towards transparent and collaborative approaches.
4. Motivational factors were strongly influenced by job satisfaction, financial incentives, and job security, highlighting the importance of these elements in fostering a motivated workforce.
5. The survey identified a discrepancy between the positive attitudes towards conflict management and the actual practices, signaling an opportunity for enhanced training and policy development.
6. The role of management support during conflicts was deemed crucial, with a significant correlation found between management styles and employee motivation, emphasizing the need for accommodating and collaborative leadership.
7. The study revealed a strong preference for personal conflict management skills over reliance on supervisors or formal procedures, reflecting a shift towards empowering employees with the necessary competencies to manage disputes independently.

CONCLUSION

In the dynamic landscape of Abuja's hospitality industry, the interplay between conflict management and employee motivation is a critical determinant of organizational success. This research has delved into the complexities of this relationship, revealing that the implementation of effective conflict resolution strategies is not merely a procedural necessity but a catalyst for enhancing employee morale and service excellence. The empirical evidence gathered from frontline staff across various hotel categories in Abuja underscores the pivotal role of conflict management in shaping employee experiences and, by extension, customer satisfaction.

The study's findings indicate that frontline employees favor a collaborative approach to conflict resolution, with open communication and negotiation skills emerging as the most preferred strategies. This preference aligns with contemporary organizational behavior theories that advocate for participative problem-solving to foster a sense of ownership and empowerment among employees. Furthermore, the data reveal that motivational factors such as job satisfaction, financial incentives, and job security are intricately linked to employees' conflict management experiences. These insights suggest that hotels must adopt a holistic approach to employee engagement, one that integrates conflict management training with motivational programs to optimize staff performance and retention.

Furthermore, the research highlights a significant correlation between conflict management styles and service quality. Employees who are confident in their conflict resolution abilities tend to exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and deliver superior service to guests. This finding is particularly salient in the context of Abuja's competitive hospitality sector, where service quality is a key differentiator. It is recommended that hotel management invests in regular, comprehensive conflict management training programs that are tailored to the unique needs of their workforce. Such initiatives should aim to enhance employees' interpersonal skills,

equipping them to handle disputes with diplomacy and tact, thereby contributing to a positive work environment and consistent service quality.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the burgeoning discourse on conflict management within the hospitality industry, offering actionable insights for practitioners and policymakers alike. By elucidating the nuanced relationship between conflict resolution strategies and employee motivation, the research provides a roadmap for hotels in Abuja to cultivate a motivated workforce capable of navigating the complexities of guest interactions with finesse. As the industry continues to evolve, the findings of this study will serve as a benchmark for future research, guiding the development of innovative conflict management practices that can propel the hospitality sector towards new heights of operational excellence and customer delight.

Recommendations
In light of the study's findings on conflict management and employee motivation within Abuja's hotel industry, the following recommendations are proposed for stakeholders:

1. **For Policymakers**: It is imperative to develop and enforce policies that bolster conflict management and employee motivation. This includes establishing clear guidelines for conflict resolution, promoting a culture of open communication, and incentivizing practices that enhance employee satisfaction and retention. Policymakers should also consider providing financial support for initiatives aimed at improving conflict management training and motivational programs within the hospitality sector.

2. **For Practitioners**: Hotel management should prioritize the hiring of conflict resolution experts to guide the implementation of effective strategies. Additionally, investing in employee development programs that focus on enhancing interpersonal and negotiation skills can lead to better conflict management outcomes. Practitioners are encouraged to foster a work environment that values employee contributions, thereby increasing motivation and job satisfaction.

3. **For Researchers**: Further research is needed to explore the nuances of conflict management and its impact on employee motivation, particularly within the Nigerian hospitality context. Future studies could examine the long-term effects of conflict management training, the role of cultural factors in conflict resolution, and the integration of motivational theories into employee development strategies. Such research will provide deeper insights and more robust recommendations for improving employee relations and service quality in the hospitality industry.

Contribution to knowledge
This research enriches the body of knowledge on conflict management within the hospitality sector of Abuja, offering several key contributions:
1. It delivers a thorough assessment of conflict management awareness and practices among hotel staff, providing a clear depiction of the prevalent issues and effective strategies within this context. This assessment is grounded in a substantial and diverse

sample from Abuja's hotels, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the conflict dynamics in this setting.

2. The study introduces practical and actionable strategies for improving conflict management, such as enhancing communication skills, fostering a supportive work environment, and implementing regular training programs. These strategies are validated by the respondents' preferences and are shown to potentially elevate the quality and efficacy of conflict resolution in the hospitality industry.

3. By offering a novel examination of conflict management approaches and their impact on employee motivation, the study extends the theoretical and practical discourse in the field. It not only sheds light on the specific challenges faced by hotel staff in Abuja but also suggests broader applications for these findings, potentially influencing conflict management practices in similar contexts globally.

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