AN EXAMINATION OF SOME DETERMINANTS OF INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT IN EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIP.

BY

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ABSTRACT

Industrial conflicts in organisations are inevitable. For employers to perform their crucial roles effectively and efficiently there must exist a strong cordial relationship between the employees and employers in the organisation. This paper examines the role of industrial conflict on the relationship that exist between the employees and their employers in the petroleum sector of the economy. Subjects of this study were two hundred and three members of Chevron Plc. Three hypotheses were tested and the findings of the study revealed that industrial conflict impacts negatively on employee-employer relationship. The result of the study also showed that disparity in the distribution of and access to economic power impacts negatively on employee-employer relationship. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that employers should ensure that all forms of industrial conflict should be nibbed in the bud to prevent aggravation and also that employers should not allow dubious assumptions interfere with their successful pursuit of desirable outcomes.

KEYWORDS:
Industrial conflict, industrial relations, employee-employer relationship, labour union, collective bargaining, negotiation.

TRACK: Collective Bargaining and Workplace Relations

INTRODUCTION

Employees occupy a very strategic place in an organization because of their centrality to the production process. They contribute a very indefinable role both in the achievement of various organization goals and objectives as well as the government economic programme. However, for employees to perform their crucial role effectively and efficiently there must exist a strong cordial relationship between the employer and employee of such organizations. Although conflict in an organization is inevitable, it must however be noted that friction between employer and the employee must be reduced through a vibrant collective bargaining process to ensure smooth operation in the business of the organization. Conflicts are inevitable in every organization. There will always be conflicts and disagreements.
between employers and employees, either on wages or on the general condition of service of the workers. Conflict in Nigerian industries has become perennial and disturbing so much that it has hampered the growth of some organizations in Nigeria. In many organizations in Nigeria today, internal (intrapersonal) and interpersonal conflicts are consuming so much organizational time and attention that organizations are starting to look as though conflict is their primary business (Ojielo, 2002).

This development is largely due to the inability of leaders in Nigerian work organizations to view the management of conflict as systematically as they view information, human resources, and financial management systems. Instead, conflict is viewed and handled in piecemeal and is considered as local events. The inability to view and manage workplace conflicts systematically has therefore rendered conflict dysfunctional in some organizations. This is evidenced by the high frequency of strike action, unhealthy rivalry between and among sub-units and individuals within an organization, sabotage at workplace, slow work, labour turnover, absenteeism, lack of productivity, general inefficiency, high rate of industrial accident, low moral, withholding of vital knowledge and a host of others that are being perpetrated by workers in workplaces.

Managing conflict is critical for sustaining organizational efficiency and effectiveness (McCain & Galbriath, 1981). Growth in multinational companies and international alliances (Kanter & Corn, 1994), as well as increased diversity within a country's workforce (Jackson, Stone, & Alvarez, 1992), suggest that individuals from diverse backgrounds will be working together in organizations. An increase in diversity is often associated with an increase in conflict (e.g., Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999).

Industrial relations deals with the problem of employment, conditions of work, pay, security of employment and other issues such as labour grievances, trade disputes and their resolution within the frame work of rules and regulations, mutually to by employer and its employees. In the words of Marshall (1996), Industrial relations, (also known as labour relations) is the interdisciplinary and somewhat diffuse study of the institutions and rule-fixing processes of the labour. It's core
subject-mater has always been collective bargaining between trade unions or analogous organisations on the other hand. The term "employee relation" found increasingly in management writing, was once a synonym for industrial relations.

The unpleasant side of industrial relation and on which the public often associate industrial union is strike. The strike shows a breakdown of cordial relationship between the employee represented by the labour union and employer or management. Strike are the most overt and significant aspect of industrial conflict. But they are unfortunately only a part of the phenomenon of conflict. Most strikes involved attempts by either the union or management to change the bargaining power of the other party. When a strike is adequately used for the demand of the employees, it can force employers to concede to the demands of the employees. It can impose exorbitant costs and thereby induce them to reach agreement. A strike may be used to effect a change in the structure of bargaining and to win substantive demand by workers.

Collective bargaining can therefore be described as the industrial machinery for determining wages and conditions of employment with a view to improving the quality of work life of the employees. It encourages the power of the union to enter contract with management to determine the terms and conditions of service of its members as well as establish the procedure for handling disputes.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

What is Industrial Relations?

Industrial relations is the process and institution through which employment is managed, such as trade union and employers associations (Kuper and Kuper 1996). Cordova (1980) defines industrial relations as "the process of interest accommodation by which conditions of work are fixed; relations are regulated and power is shared in the field of labour". Yesufu (1984), on his part sees industrial relations as "the whole web of human interactions at work which is predicted upon and arises out of the employment contract". Both definitions recognized that industrial relations is concerned with the systems, rules and procedures used by union and employers to determine the reward for effort and other conditions of employment, to protect the interest of the employed and their employers and to regulate the ways in which employers treat their employees. Mgbe (1993) emphasized that the term industrial relations is relevant in and applies to the context within which modern society organises its various economic and production services.
Con
cept of conflict and industrial conflict

Unions and management tend to have opposite views because of the divergence between the expectations of management and labour in organizations which often leads to conflicts. Conflict by nature is a constant phenomenon in any human organization. It is so ubiquitous in social life that it has been isolated by some as the basic unit for understanding social existence (Ajala, 2003; Alimba, 2010). The endemic nature of conflict in human grouping has been traced to the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals and/or groups in defined social and physical environment (Otite, 2001). Thus, conflict remains the most permanent feature that makes humanity convinced that growth and development are predicated on conflicts. Though conflict is generally perceived as something devastating, abnormal, dysfunctional and detestable, yet it could be a precursor of positive change if constructively handled (Edwards, 2002; Hammed & Ayantunji, 2002). As a concept, conflict has been subjected to diverse definitions by various scholars based on the context and their understanding of the concept. For example, Lederach (1995) described conflict as an ongoing situation that is based on deep seated differences of values, ideologies, and goals. In support of this definition, Fisher et al (2004) defined conflict as a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) who have or think they have incompatible goals. It therefore implies that conflict is a continuous interaction that span through lifetime of man and not just a one-off relationship.

Also, one of the most quoted traditional definitions of conflict describes it as ‘struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals (Coser, 1956:8). This description of conflict explains the reasons why workers are often ready to ground all economic or productive activities via strike in a bid to get their demands met. In corroboration with Coser’s definition of conflict, Constantino et’al (1995) described conflict as the process of expressing dissatisfaction, disagreement or unmet expectations with any organizational interchange. But in his contribution, Otite (2001) conceptualized conflict as a way of settling problems originating from opposing interests and from the continuity of society. Ajala (2003) succinctly summarises the discourse on conflict when he said conflict is the mechanism which keeps society going.
Industrial conflicts, on the other hand are viewed as the clash of interest and resulting disputes of varying intensity between individuals, groups and organizations in the industrial relations system (Akanji, 2005). Fajana (2000) sees industrial conflict as the inability of these parties either between employers and employees or within their groups to reach agreement connected with the object of employer-employees interaction, whether or not this inability results in strikes or lockout or other forms of protestation. Another definition that seems to be the most acceptable sociological definition of industrial conflict is that of Kornhauser, Dubin and Ross(1954:7), which viewed conflict as "the total range of behaviour and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientations between individual owners and managers on the one hand, and working people and their organizations on the other’.

Related to the above definition is that of Onyeonoru (2005) who holistically defined industrial conflict as all expressions of dissatisfaction within the employment relationship especially those pertaining to the employment contract and effort bargain. He expatiated further that it includes formal expressions of conflict, organized along the lines of trade unions and employers associations as well as the informal conflict that lack systematic organizations such as covert grievances that may be expressed in the form of industrial sabotage, absenteeism, or lateness. Smyth (1977) defined it as "the inability of two conflicting bodies to reach agreement on any issue connected with object of industrial interaction, whether or not, this conflict results into a strike, lock-out or other forms of protestation".

Hinds support the analysis of Otobo (2000) who said that the fact that there is no sign of overt conflict in a given period does not mean other forms of industrial conflicts are not occurring. Dahrandorf (1959) said that "conflict of interest is inevitable between employer and employee because an authority relationship in the aim of the two parties will at least lead to conflicts". Dahrandorf holds the view that there will always be conflicts between those in authority and those without authority, that is, the governing and the governed, because of divergent views on the basic employment relationship, which seems to make some degree of conflict inevitable at the work place. He observed that while the government wants to impose on the governed, the governed want to have a say in the imposition upon them. It is the absence of having a say that usually breu conflict. Yesufu (1984) said, "Conflict is a normal and inevitable part of everyday life. As it is destructive, so also, it is beneficial depending on the situation, circumstance and the issue at stake."
Usually conflict result in wasteful use of human and material resources leading to low productivity, retrenchment, dismissal, and alienation. Conflict can manifest itself in the form of unrest, work stoppage (strikes), sabotage, absenteeism, work to rule, lock out, and so on. The most common of the manifestation of conflict is strike. This implies that conflict as a phenomenon can manifest in diverse ways such as strike, absenteeism sabotage, labour turnover, pilfering, restriction of output, lockout and a host of others. Ubeku (1983) opined that most conflicts are caused by motivational factors. He stated that ‘an employee who feels aggrieved against a manager, a supervisor or against the company as a whole is unhappy employee and an unhappy employee cannot work effectively. The employee becomes very low; satisfaction at work in terms of all the circumstances that surround the job is the key to high morale. It does not matter how well paid and interesting a job may be unless the individual performing the job feels that he is being fairly treated his morale will be adversely affected.

Folarin (1988) stated that individuals, group and organization or institution are naturally not in the state of harmony or equilibrium and that conflict is a natural and inevitable occurrence in human condition. He stated further that conflict is not invariably synonymous with a breakdown in communication but rather, it is a different type of communication, which may in fact be the ideal mode of expressing ideas. The most liable treatment is often conflict management rather than conflict resolution. He also pointed out that not all conflict is detrimental to the individual, group or organization. He stated that it is generally recognized that there can be no change without conflict and without change there can be no progress or development whether personal, social or scientific.

Conclusively, conflict is defined within the context of work relationship as inevitable disagreements between and within any or all of the actors in the work place. The views of various writers on the concept of conflict and industrial conflicts have established that conflict is inevitable and that it is not inherently dysfunctional rather its outcome depends on how it is handled or responded to by the parties involved. Whether conflict is seen as central or ancillary to the employment relationship, however, depends upon one’s conceptualization or larger view of the origins, function and structure of this relationship. From one perspective, historically and contemporaneously reflected in the work of industrial relations scholars, the employment relationship is a pluralist, mixed motive relationship featuring two
parties, labor and management, with opposing interests; hence, conflict is inevitable in this relationship.

**SOURCES OF CONFLICT**

Conflicts arise in organizations in two ways namely, internal and external.

A. INTERNAL SOURCE

This comprise of disagreements arising within the organisation. Conflict orientations within a work setting centres basically on the opposed nature of the interest of the employers and workers. The employer is seeking the greatest possible output at the least cost. The employer is constantly seeking to lower the wage rate, to lengthen the hours of work, to speed up the workers, to layoff and to discharge workers whenever it is temporarily economical. On the other hand, the union which represents the workgroup is seeking continuous employment for its members at the highest possible conditions in respect of hours of work, security and continuity, safety, comfort, sanitation, esteem and so on.

In this relation, both the employers and the employees want the largest cut of the industrial cake that they both cannot get. Moreover, conflict arises because the needs of all three actors of industrial relations often conflict with one another. Therefore, according to Otobo (2000), internal sources of conflict would include:

i. Style of management  
ii. Nature of physical environment of the work place  
iii. Orientation or social consciousness of workers  
iv. Other conditions of service  
v. Efficacy or otherwise of the promotion system and  
vi. Cumbersomeness of grievance and disputes procedure.

B) EXTERNAL SOURCE

These include government industrial and economic policies, the nature of labor legislation, unpatriotic and unethical behaviour of the political and economic classes, national economic mismanagement and general distribution of wealth and power in the society.

The important thing to note about these factors is that both workers and management respond to them. Some of the external causes of conflict may however not directly instigate industrial conflict, but they do influence general social expectation.
Ojeli (1977) stated that the causes of industrial conflict in Nigeria is due to the lukewarm attitude of employers and government in responding to the demands of the workers or treating their demand with levity, and also, non recognition of the Nigerian Labour Congress [NLC] as an organ for harmonizing possible conflict between the employers of labor and employees. He also argued that most union leaders are politically motivated by making a big case out of nothing in order to obtain cheap popularity. More often than not, they cause confusion in their organization when they capitalize on trivial matters to blow their trumpets.

However, there is a consensus that conflict is inevitable in all interactions of human beings. Organizations exemplify this by the way it is structured, because there are different individuals and groups, various departments, divisions, units, etc. These various groupings struggle to maintain their identities, missions and roles in carrying out their different functions which harbor abundant opportunities of conflict.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict theory

Karl Marx (1818-1883), the great German theorist and political activist, is credited with sowing the seeds for the several theories that emphasize social conflict. Marx’s conflict theory emphasizes a materialist interpretation of history, dialectical method of analysis (dialectical materialism), a critical stance towards existing social arrangements and political programme of revolution or, at least reform.

Marx began his assumption that economic organization, especially the ownership of property, determines the organization of the rest of the society. In other words, the most important determination of social life is the work people are doing, especially work that result in provision of the basic necessities of life, food, clothing and shelter. Marx thought that the way work is socially organized and the technology used in production have a strong impact on every other aspect of society. He maintained that every thing of value in society results from human labour. The central institution of capitalist society according to Marx is private property, a system by which capital is controlled by a small minority of the population. This arrangement leads to two opposed classes, the owners of capital (the bourgeoisie) and the workers (the proletariat) whose only property is their own labour time, which they have to sell to the capitalists. Owners are seen as making profits by paying workers less than their work is worth, thus exploiting them. Herein lies the core of industrial conflict.
Other conflict theorists like Ralf Dahrendorf in his “class and class conflict in industrial society” (1959), Lewis Coser (1956), Randall Collins, etc; have made divergent contributions about the functionality of conflict.

Similarly, according to Solomon (1994), the Marxist believes that:

a. Class conflict is the source of organizational change.

b. Class conflict arises primarily from the disparity in the distribution of and access to economic power in the organization.

c. Conflict in whatever firm is merely an expression underlying economic conflict within the organizations.

The Marxist analysis assumed that organizational change is universal within societies and that class conflict is the catalytic source of such change. The conflict that takes place in industrial relations between employer and employee is seen as a permanent power feature of capitalism which merely reflects the predominant power base of the bourgeois and class relations. The Marxist perceives political and class conflict as synonymous.

**NATURE AND FORMS OF STRIKE**

Majority of strikes are non-violent because of restraint on both sides. Otobo (2000) stated that a reason for such caution is the realization that a strike is a temporary stoppage of work. High level of aggression during a strike may negatively affect bargaining relationships which are crucial for day-to-day labor-management relations.

Kornhauser (1983), has argued that the general object of the study is not the labor dispute, the strike or lock outs but the total range of behaviours and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientations between industrial owners and managers on the one hand and working people and their union on the other hand. He listed a number of manifestations of industrial conflict and classified them into two groups. One covers organized conflict that is essentially group behaviour, usually between union and management, while the other covers unorganized and individual conflicts. Examples include strikes and lockouts, output restriction, removal of plant, conflict in contract negotiations, labor turnover, autocratic supervision, unnecessary firing and unofficial speed-ups for unorganized conflict.

Gouldner (1969) also commented that a strike is a social phenomenon of enormous complexity, which in its totality is susceptible to complete explanation. Strikes are of many varieties, it may involve all the workers or only the key ones. It
may take the form of refusal to work overtime or to perform a certain process. It may even involve such rigid adherence to the rules that output is stifled.

**TYPES OF STRIKES**

Poole (1980) stated the following commonest forms of strike;

i. **WILDCAT STRIKE**: This form of strike is in violation of contract and not authorized by the union because no reason or notice is given to employer before embarking on it.

ii. **SIT-DOWN STRIKE**: This is type of strike involve workers being present at work but literally not working.

iii. **CONSTITUTIONAL STRIKE**: This refers to actions that conform to the due procedure of the collective agreement. The agreement usually specifies the time and the procedure for conducting a strike by the workers.

iv. **UNCONSTITUTIONAL STRIKES**: This is a strike action that does not conform to the provisions of the collective agreements or the relevant public policies.

v. **UNOFFICIAL STRIKE**: This type of strike is usually unauthorized by the union leadership. This happens because the memberships have lost confidence in the leaders and are therefore willing to exert direct pressure on the employer without the authorization of leaders.

vi. **OFFICIAL STRIKE**: These are strikes that are usually authorized by the leadership of the union.

**EFFECTS OF THE STRIKE**

Fajana (2000) is of the view that the significance of the strikes as an industrial relations phenomenon is illustrated in its effects on all three actors in any system of industrial relations. He further stated that it is pointless to examine the party who is most affected by the strike because there are costs and benefits to all the parties.

(i) **IMPACT ON THE WORKERS AND IT'S UNION**

To the individual striker, Fajana (2000) says, it represents the exercise of his fundamental right to withdraw his services. Strike is a very visible weapon and can be very powerful if the strikes represent irreplaceable labor or if the production loss incurred by the employer during the strike is very significant. Strike improves the economic well being of members of the trade union; it also makes the management to take the union seriously in future negotiations. Thus, successful strikes enhance the bargaining position of the union in the next negotiation and may account for the deployment of such strategy in future.
The strike could be dubious because its success depends not only on correct tactics against opponents but also on the striker’s ability to maintain a united stand throughout the period of the strike. If the union membership is divided or looses confidence, then the credibility of the strike as a powerful weapon can vanish overnight.

(ii). IMPACT ON THE EMPLOYER.

Fajana stated further that the most visible effect of the strike on the employer is the loss of production, loss of output, inability to meet customer’s demand, inability to supply custom orders on schedule, loss of profits, and many others. Of course, these are the effects that are sought for going on strike in the first place. Therefore, these effects on the employer give strikes the power that is employed by workers.

It should be noted that whether the strike is successful or not, these damages have already been done. However, there are other costs. Imberman (1979) identified four categories of cost arising from the shortfall in expected earnings. These are pre-strike cost, cost during the strike, long-term cost and uncommon cost. The strikes make management to prepare better for next negotiations assuming that the current strike is successful. It tends to rupture good relationship between managers and trade union leaders. Thus, the cost of the strikes to the employer is so great that it should be enough consideration to warrant the adoption of timely treatment of conflicts before the strike action is involved.

(iii) IMPACT ON THE STATE AND SOCIETY

The government as the coordinator of the several activities of the state has explicit objectives in industrial relations. For instance, the state objectives in industrial relations include the maximization of social benefits, and the minimization of social cost. The ultimate effect is the maximization of economic growth and development for the nation.

The strike disrupts the achievement of some of these objectives. The most important of which are the loss of national output as a result of the loss of output in the industry affected. The direct impact is the decelerations in the Gross National Product [GNP]. The effects also cause political agitations on the ordinary citizens. In an extremely horizontally integrated industry such as oil with exploration, prospecting, mining, refining, and marketing sectors. Strike at any of these stages of production is likely to lead to disruption in the forward linked stages.
Moreover, where the industries concerned are strategic like the oil industry or the electricity or other essential services. Strikes in only one industry would set off a ripple effect in other sectors of the economy.

Conclusively, the effect of strike on the three actors in industrial relations system is that strikes and other forms of industrial action have both cost and benefits. It would appear however that whether the costs outweigh the benefits depends on which side of industry is making such an evaluation.

**RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

1. Good remuneration and working conditions will have a significant positive impact on employee-employer relationship.
2. Unfavourable perception of collective bargaining will have a significant negative impact on employee-employer relationship.
3. There will be a significant difference in the employee-employer relationship between males and females in the organisation.

**METHOD**

**Research Design**

The design of this research is survey. The independent variables are industrial conflict factors and the dependent variable is employee-employer relationship.

**Sample**

The research samples for this study were 203 employees of Chevron Oil Plc who were selected purposively for the study. 53.7% were males, 46.3% were married, and their age ranged between 20 and above 50.

**Instruments**

A questionnaire was used for data collection. It is a twenty four (24) item questionnaire divided into four sections A, B, C and D. Section A assessed the demographic variables. Section B has eight (8) items which measures remuneration and working conditions, section C has five (5) items which measures negotiation and collective bargaining while section D has eleven (11) items which measures employee-employer relationship. The questionnaire used a Likert scale scoring format ranging from 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = undecided, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree. The reliability coefficients for the scales were: remuneration and working condition 0.78; negotiation and collective bargaining 0.81; and employee-employer relationship 0.84.
Statistical Analyses

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were analysed using Pearson’s correlation and hypothesis 3 was analysed using independent t-test.

RESULTS

Hypothesis One:

There will be a significant positive relationship between remuneration and employee-employer relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers Remuneration</td>
<td>44.5961</td>
<td>9.2562</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-employer relationship</td>
<td>33.7241</td>
<td>3.9730</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result showed that there was significant relationship between employee-employer relationship and workers remuneration and working conditions ($r = .222$; N=203, p<.05). The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Hypothesis Two

There will be a significant negative relationship between unfavorable perception of collective bargaining and employee-employer relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collective bargaining</td>
<td>44.60</td>
<td>9.23</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>.545</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer-employee relationship</td>
<td>19.59</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result above showed there was a significant relationship between employee-employer relationship and collective bargaining. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

**Hypothesis Three**

There will be a significant difference in the employee-employer relationship between males and females in the organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee-employer relationship</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Dev.</th>
<th>Crit-t.</th>
<th>Cal-t.</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>43.28</td>
<td>9.72</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>46.12</td>
<td>8.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result above showed that there was a significant difference in the employee-employer relationship between males and females (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = 2.20; P <.05). However, the females exhibit a higher mean score of 46.12 than their male counterparts with a mean score of 43.28 respectively. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

**Demographic variables**

**Table 1: Distribution of the respondent by Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 showed that 94(46.3%) of the respondents are of the age range 20-29 years, 47(22%) of age range are between 30-39 years, 34(16.7%) are between 40-49 years age range while those above 50 years are 28(13.8%) respectively.

**Table 2: Distribution of the respondent by sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

14
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>109</th>
<th>53.7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 2, the male respondents are 109(53.7%) while their female counterparts are 94(46.3%).

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 3, respondents who are single are 90(53.7), the married are 94(46.3%) others are 19(9.4%) respectively.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents by Educational Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Qualification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCE/OND</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND, BSc.</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

76(37.4%) of the respondents hold NCE, OND certificates, 88(43.3%) of the hold HND/BSc certificates while 39(19.2%) of the hold the postgraduate certificates.

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents by length of service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10years</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20years</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30years</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In table 5 above, 126 (62.1%) of the respondents had served 1-10 years, 55 (27.1%) had served 11-20 years while 22 (10.8%) had served 21-30 years respectively.

**DISCUSSION**

The result of hypothesis one showed that there was significant relationship between employee-employer relationship and workers remuneration and working conditions.

The result of hypothesis two showed there was a significant relationship between employee-employer relationship and collective bargaining.

The result of hypothesis three showed that there was a significant difference in the employee-employer relationship between males and females.

**CONCLUSION**

The result of the study showed that there was a significant relationship between industrial conflict and employee-employer relationship. A good number of manpower is always lost during industrial conflict. Production is paralyzed and sale adversely affected while a portion of profit that is paid to employees at the end of the fiscal year eludes them.

This study pointed out that poor salaries and working conditions of service affect workers productivity and efficiency. Also, absence of collective bargaining practices leads to industrial conflict.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the results of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Organizations must always be prepared for the occurrences of conflict and be able to tolerate and contain them with reasonable bounds.
2. A proactive industrial relations policy should be put in place by employers to always anticipate and respond to economic changes that affect the welfare of workers.
3. Employers should desist from infringing upon the rights of employee. In the same vein, unions must respect managerial or employer’s prerogatives.

**REFERENCES**


