

Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Conflict Resolution of Manufacturing Firms in Kogi State

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Received 09 July 2025; revised 27 August 2025; accepted 01 September 2025

Abstract

Conflict is an inherent part of organizational life, particularly in manufacturing firms where employees interact daily in a high-pressure environment. In Kogi State, Nigeria, manufacturing firms are often characterized by intense competition, hierarchical structures, and labor-related challenges, all of which contribute to workplace conflicts. This study focus to examine Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Conflict Resolution of Selected Manufacturing Firms in Kogi State. The specific objectives are to; examine the effect of effective communication on organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State. The study adopted Goleman's Emotional Competence Framework (1998). Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The primary and secondary source of data was used. The population of the study was (410) with sample size of a whole. The study revealed that effective communication improve organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State. The researcher therefore recommended that organizations should implement clear internal communication protocols that encourage openness, feedback loops, and timely information sharing across all levels to reduce misunderstandings and prevent conflict.

Keywords; Emotional Intelligence (EI), Conflict Resolution, Organizational Conflict, Employee Satisfaction, Organizational Productivity.

Introduction

Conflict is an inevitable occurrence in organizational settings, particularly in manufacturing firms where diverse employees interact daily. Effective conflict resolution is critical for sustaining productivity, workplace harmony, and employee satisfaction. One of the emerging approaches to conflict resolution in organizations is emotional intelligence (EI), which refers to an individual's ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and manage emotions in themselves and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Given the complex and competitive nature of the manufacturing sector in Kogi State, Nigeria, understanding the role of emotional intelligence in resolving organizational conflicts is crucial.

Organizational conflict resolution, therefore, is the process of addressing and resolving disputes, disagreements, or tensions that arise among individuals or groups within an organization. The role of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution cannot be overstated, as individuals with high EI are more likely to approach conflicts with a balanced and constructive mindset.

Emotional intelligence has been widely recognized as a key determinant of effective leadership and interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Goleman (1995) introduced the concept of EI as comprising five main components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These components collectively enable employees and managers to navigate interpersonal conflicts, reduce workplace stress, and foster a positive work environment. Studies have shown that organizations with emotionally intelligent leaders experience lower conflict levels and higher employee satisfaction (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013).

In the manufacturing sector, conflicts often arise due to factors such as role ambiguity, competition for resources, cultural diversity, and hierarchical differences. Without proper conflict resolution mechanisms, these conflicts can escalate, leading to reduced productivity, employee dissatisfaction, and increased turnover. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in mitigating these conflicts by enhancing communication, promoting empathy, and fostering collaboration among employees (Cherniss, 2010). Conflict resolution refers to the processes and strategies that organizations use to address disputes and disagreements among employees. Effective conflict resolution mechanisms are essential for maintaining workplace harmony and ensuring the smooth operation of business activities. Traditional approaches to conflict resolution, such as the use of authoritative decision-making or formal disciplinary actions, have been criticized for their rigidity and potential to escalate tensions. In contrast, emotionally intelligent conflict resolution strategies focus on active listening, empathy, and constructive dialogue. Manufacturing firms that encourage employees to develop emotional intelligence skills tend to experience fewer conflicts and higher levels of cooperation among workers. This is particularly important in Kogi State, where manufacturing firms are faced with economic pressures, labor-related disputes, and the need for innovation and productivity improvements.

Nigeria's manufacturing sector has been a critical component of the country's economy, contributing to employment generation and economic growth. However, the sector faces significant challenges, including poor infrastructure, policy instability, and labor-management conflicts (Adewale, 2020). In Kogi State, manufacturing firms encounter additional issues such as industrial disputes, workplace aggression, and employee grievances, which, if not properly managed, can undermine organizational performance. The increasing complexity of workplace relationships in manufacturing firms necessitates the adoption of emotional intelligence-based conflict resolution strategies. Employees and managers with high EI are better equipped to handle disputes constructively, leading to improved teamwork and organizational effectiveness (Jordan & Troth, 2004). Several studies have established a link between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution in organizational settings. For instance, research by Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2004) found that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in collaborative conflict resolution strategies rather than avoidance or confrontation. Similarly, a study by Afolabi et al. (2019) in Nigerian firms revealed that emotionally intelligent leaders were more effective in managing workplace conflicts compared to those with lower EI levels. Additionally, studies conducted in manufacturing firms have demonstrated that organizations with EI-driven conflict resolution strategies report lower employee turnover rates, higher job satisfaction, and improved organizational performance (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017). This suggests that incorporating EI training programs in manufacturing firms in Kogi State could enhance their ability to resolve conflicts effectively. Given the importance of emotional intelligence in managing conflict, it is essential to examine how emotional intelligence influences conflict resolution in selected manufacturing firms in Kogi State. By focusing on these firms, this study seeks to investigate the role of EI in resolving conflicts and promoting a harmonious work environment.

Statement of the Problem

Conflict is an inherent part of organizational life, particularly in manufacturing firms where employees interact daily in a high-pressure environment. In Kogi State, Nigeria, manufacturing firms are often characterized by intense competition, hierarchical structures, and labor-related challenges, all of which contribute to workplace conflicts. While traditional conflict resolution strategies such as disciplinary actions, mediation, and arbitration have been employed, they often fail to address the root causes of conflicts, leading to recurring disputes and decreased organizational productivity. One of the emerging approaches to conflict resolution is the application of emotional intelligence (EI), which includes critical components such as effective communication, emotional control, and stress management. Research suggests that employees and managers with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle conflicts constructively (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017). However, there is limited empirical evidence on how EI influences conflict resolution specifically in manufacturing firms in Kogi State. The lack of emotional intelligence skills among managers and employees may be exacerbating workplace tensions, increasing employee dissatisfaction, and negatively impacting overall organizational performance.

Communication plays a crucial role in conflict resolution within organizational settings. Ineffective communication—such as poor listening skills, unclear instructions, and aggressive language—often leads to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and workplace disputes. According to Robbins and Judge (2019), communication breakdowns are one of the leading causes of conflict in organizations. Effective communication, on the other hand, fosters transparency, clarity, and mutual understanding between employees and management. Emotional intelligence enhances communication skills by promoting active listening, empathy, and assertiveness (Goleman, 1995). Managers with high EI are more likely to engage in open and constructive dialogue, allowing them to address employee concerns before they escalate into conflicts.

Another critical aspect of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution is emotional control, which refers to an individual's ability to regulate their emotions in high-pressure situations. In many manufacturing firms, conflicts often arise from workplace frustrations, competition for resources, and perceived injustices. Employees who lack emotional control may respond to conflicts impulsively, leading to heated arguments, aggressive behavior, or workplace hostility. Goleman et al. (2013) emphasized that individuals with high emotional control are better at de-escalating conflicts by maintaining their composure and responding rationally rather than emotionally. For example, a study by Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2004) found that employees with high emotional intelligence are less likely to react aggressively to workplace conflicts and more likely to engage in collaborative problem-solving strategies.

In Dangote and Nigeria Breweries and Nigeria Breweries in Kogi State, emotional control is crucial for managing workplace disputes effectively. Managers who can regulate their emotions during conflict situations are better equipped to negotiate fair solutions and maintain a professional work environment. Additionally, employees who practice emotional control are more likely to resolve conflicts through dialogue rather than retaliation or avoidance. Research by Afolabi et al. (2019) further supports this view, showing that organizations that prioritize emotional intelligence training experience lower rates of workplace aggression and improved conflict resolution outcomes. This suggests that emotional control should be an integral part of conflict management strategies in Nigerian manufacturing firms.

Stress is an unavoidable part of organizational life, especially in high-demand environments like manufacturing firms. Excessive workplace stress has been linked to increased conflict, employee burnout, and reduced job performance (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Employees who struggle to manage stress effectively may be more prone to reacting negatively to conflicts, which can escalate workplace tensions. Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in stress management by helping individuals recognize stress triggers, develop coping mechanisms, and maintain a balanced perspective during conflict situations (Cherniss, 2010). According to Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2017), employees with higher EI are better at

managing workplace stress, which allows them to approach conflicts more rationally and with a problem-solving mindset. Manufacturing firms in Kogi State often operate under tight deadlines, resource constraints, and challenging working conditions. Without proper stress management strategies, employees may become overwhelmed, leading to frequent workplace disputes. Organizations that promote emotional intelligence training can help employees develop resilience, regulate their emotions, and adopt constructive conflict resolution techniques.

Moreover, a report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2019) stated that ineffective conflict management accounts for up to 40% of productivity loss in manufacturing organizations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

In Kogi State, although there has been significant growth in manufacturing, many of the firms still struggle with managing workplace conflict. Employees in these organizations often lack the necessary skills to manage their emotions effectively during conflict situations, which impedes their ability to find constructive resolutions. As a result, conflicts in Kogi's manufacturing firms often escalate to the point of organizational disruption, negatively impacting production and team cohesion. A local survey by the Kogi State Chamber of Commerce (2021) found that 38% of manufacturing firms in the state experienced at least one major conflict that disrupted operations within the last year. This highlights a significant need for improved conflict management strategies that incorporate emotional intelligence.

Given the unique challenges faced by manufacturing firms in Kogi State, including resource limitations, a lack of emotional intelligence training, and a highly diverse workforce, this research seeks to explore how emotional intelligence can be utilized as a tool for resolving workplace conflict in this sector.

Research Objectives

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of emotional intelligence on organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firms in Kogi State. The specific objectives are:

- i. To examine the effect of effective communication on organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State
- ii. To ascertain the effect of self-emotional control on organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State
- iii. To evaluate how social skill influence organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State

2.1 Literature Review

The Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial factor in understanding human behavior, particularly in the context of organizational settings. The term refers to the ability to identify, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively in both oneself and others. Initially popularized by psychologist Daniel Goleman in his 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence*, the concept has since gained widespread attention across various disciplines, particularly in psychology, management, and organizational behavior. Emotional intelligence influences leadership effectiveness, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and conflict resolution, making it an essential factor for individual and organizational success. The concept of emotional intelligence is not entirely new. Though Goleman brought it into mainstream discourse, the origins of EI can be traced back to the work of psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990, who defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). According to them, EI is crucial for effective coping with everyday challenges and building healthy interpersonal relationships.

It involves being aware of one's emotions, recognizing their impact on thoughts and behaviors, and understanding how one's emotional state can affect relationships and decision-making. This dimension of

EI is crucial in conflict resolution as it allows individuals to pause, reflect, and regulate their emotional responses before taking action. Self-regulation refers to the ability to control and adjust one's emotional state in response to external circumstances. Individuals with high self-regulation can avoid impulsive behaviors and are better at managing stress and frustration, which are common triggers of workplace conflict. Effective self-regulation fosters a calm, balanced demeanor and enables individuals to navigate conflicts more constructively. Motivation in the context of EI refers to the inner drive to pursue goals with energy and persistence.

The Concept of Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is a critical skill in both personal and professional settings. In organizational contexts, conflict is an inevitable occurrence, arising from differing interests, values, goals, or perceptions among individuals or groups. Given the potential negative impact of unresolved conflict on productivity, morale, and organizational culture, effective conflict resolution strategies are vital for maintaining a harmonious work environment and achieving organizational goals. Conflict is commonly defined as a disagreement or a clash between individuals or groups due to opposing views, values, needs, or interests. Deutsch (1973) defined conflict as “a situation in which two or more parties perceive that their interests are incompatible.” According to Robbins (2001), conflict can also be seen as a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected or is about to negatively affect something the first party cares about. Conflict may manifest in various forms, including interpersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, organizational conflict, or even societal conflict.

Conflict resolution, on the other hand, refers to the process of resolving disputes, disagreements, or tensions in a manner that is constructive, fair, and acceptable to all parties involved. The aim is not necessarily to eliminate all differences but to find a mutually acceptable solution that addresses the underlying issues. Fisher, Ury, and Patton (1991) in their seminal work *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, emphasized that the goal of conflict resolution is to separate the people from the problem, focus on interests rather than positions, and generate options that satisfy both parties' needs.

Communication Skills and conflict resolution in the manufacturing

Effective communication is central to achieving organizational goals in any modern industry, but in a complex and high-risk sector like cement manufacturing, it is indispensable. Communication is a fundamental process in organizational life, and its role in conflict resolution has been extensively discussed in scholarly works. Communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between individuals or groups (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Effective communication is characterized by clarity, coherence, feedback, and active listening (Keyton, 2017). In the context of organizations, communication is both a source of conflict and a tool for its resolution. Poor communication often leads to misunderstanding, ambiguity, and mistrust within the organization. According to De Janasz, Dowd, and Schneider (2021), organizational conflict may arise from misinterpretations, lack of timely feedback, or barriers in the communication channels. For instance, vertical communication issues (between subordinates and superiors) or horizontal communication breakdowns (between departments) can result in misaligned goals and strained interpersonal relationships.

Effective communication, on the other hand, serves as a mechanism to resolve conflicts by ensuring that information flows freely and clearly between parties. Rahim (2011) posits that through effective communication, parties involved in a conflict can share their perspectives, understand the root causes, and jointly develop solutions. Active listening, empathy, assertiveness, and feedback are essential communication skills in conflict resolution. Recent studies have reinforced these claims. For example, Omisore and Abiodun (2014) emphasize that communication plays a strategic role in preventing, managing, and resolving organizational conflicts. They argue that open communication reduces uncertainty and builds trust, which is crucial for de-escalating conflict situations.

In a large firm like Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement Industry, which operates in multiple African countries and employs a diverse, multicultural workforce, strong communication capabilities are vital at every level—from the factory floor to the boardroom. In industrial psychology, communication is seen as both a process and a tool for building trust, managing conflict, and promoting organizational learning (Clampitt, 2016). In Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement, with its extensive cross-functional and interdepartmental operations, communication is the glue that binds production, administration, marketing, logistics, and safety. In cement manufacturing, miscommunication can lead to severe consequences, including production downtime, quality compromise, or safety breaches. Clear instructions, real-time feedback, and proper documentation are essential for effective shift handovers, machine operation, raw material coordination, and shipment scheduling. According to Eze, Nwachukwu, and Obinna (2022), poor communication in Nigerian manufacturing plants is a leading contributor to equipment misuse, worker injury, and operational delays. Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement addresses this through structured communication protocols, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and the use of communication technologies such as walkie-talkies, dashboards, and intranet alerts within its plants.

Safety is a top priority in Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement, considering the use of high-temperature kilns, heavy-duty machinery, and explosive materials. Effective communication ensures that safety instructions, hazard warnings, and emergency procedures are understood and followed. Workers with good communication skills can also report hazards clearly and without fear of retaliation. Uzonwanne and Okocha (2021) found that communication competence among industrial workers in Nigeria significantly correlates with hazard awareness and emergency responsiveness. Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement's compliance with ISO 45001 is strongly supported by regular safety briefings, toolbox talks, and multilingual signage across its facilities.

Supervisors, line managers, and departmental heads in Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement need advanced communication skills to coordinate tasks, coach workers, and provide performance feedback. Misunderstandings between managers and subordinates, especially in culturally diverse teams, can lead to disengagement or conflict. Recent research by Adekunle and Ibrahim (2023) highlights that Nigerian industrial employees respond more positively to leaders who communicate clearly, listen actively, and use culturally appropriate language.

Concept of Social skills

Social skills are fundamental to effective interpersonal interaction and are especially critical in organizational environments such as the manufacturing and industrial sector. In contemporary Human Resource Management (HRM), social skills are considered soft skills that significantly impact teamwork, leadership, employee engagement, and overall productivity. Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement Industry, as one of Africa's leading manufacturing giants, necessitates a high level of social competence among employees and managers to ensure seamless operations and conflict-free collaboration. Social skills refer to the set of interpersonal competencies that allow individuals to interact effectively and harmoniously with others.

Goleman (1995) categorized social skills as a core component of emotional intelligence, encompassing communication, conflict resolution, empathy, influence, leadership, and collaboration. These competencies are critical in workplace environments that rely on teamwork, such as production lines in cement manufacturing. According to Riggio (2006), social skills can be categorized into two broad domains: emotional expressivity and social control. Emotional expressivity involves the ability to convey one's emotions effectively, while social control includes the ability to manage interpersonal relationships tactfully. Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement operates in a highly mechanized and team-oriented setting. From quarry operations to packing and distribution, various units must coordinate to achieve common objectives. Employees' ability to collaborate, solve interpersonal disputes, and maintain harmonious work relationships is vital to reducing downtime, workplace conflicts, and miscommunication.

In Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement, collaborative efforts between departments such as maintenance, production, and logistics are essential. Employees with high social competence are better able to communicate needs, negotiate roles, and adjust to team dynamics. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), effective team performance is linked to the interpersonal skills of individual members. Employees who can empathize with team members and resolve conflicts constructively contribute to a more cohesive and productive work environment. Supervisors and team leaders in Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement are expected to lead diverse teams comprising skilled and unskilled workers from different cultural backgrounds. Social skills enhance their ability to inspire, mentor, and manage these teams. Managers with well-developed social skills can build trust, motivate subordinates, and improve job satisfaction (Yukl, 2013).

Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement interacts with suppliers, contractors, distributors, and government agencies. Employees, especially those in sales and public relations, must display tact, persuasion, and diplomacy. Poor social skills in these interactions can lead to lost business or damaged reputations. According to Lussier and Achua (2016), organizations that invest in social skill training for front-line employees tend to report improved stakeholder relationships. Despite efforts to develop social competence among workers, challenges such as high turnover, workforce diversity, and communication barriers persist. According to Hofstede (2011), cultural differences can impact social norms and behaviors in multinational organizations like Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement, which operates across various African countries. In today's diverse workplaces, cultural sensitivity is an increasingly important social skill. Conflict may arise from cultural misunderstandings; however, individuals with high cultural intelligence can navigate such situations diplomatically (Ang et al., 2007). This dimension of social skill is particularly relevant in global organizations and multicultural teams. Organizations can enhance employee social skills through training programs in communication, negotiation, and team-building. Such interventions have been shown to reduce conflict frequency and intensity. As noted by Lussier and Achua (2015), leadership development programs often include modules on interpersonal effectiveness and social competence as conflict mitigation tools.

Emotional self-control and its influence on Conflict Resolution

Emotional self-control is a cornerstone of emotional intelligence and a critical skill for maintaining professional behavior and psychological stability in the workplace. In high-pressure industrial environments like the Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement Industry, emotional self-regulation is not just desirable—it is essential. Employees and managers alike must be able to handle stressful situations, manage frustration, and respond constructively to challenges to maintain productivity and workplace harmony. Emotional self-control refers to the ability to regulate one's emotional responses, particularly in stressful or high-stakes situations (Goleman, 1995). It includes the capacity to suppress impulsive reactions, remain calm under pressure, and exhibit patience and professionalism. This self-regulation supports effective decision-making and reduces the risk of conflict and burnout in the workplace (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Emotional self-control is defined as an individual's ability to regulate disruptive emotions and impulses (Bar-On, 2018; Fernández-Berrocal & Extremera, 2021). It is not about suppression but about deliberate regulation—choosing when, where, and how to express emotions. Emotional regulation has two facets: internal (managing one's own emotions) and external (influencing emotional tone within a group or team). In industrial psychology, Gross (2015) identifies **response modulation**—the act of inhibiting inappropriate emotional reactions—as a major strategy in maintaining professional behavior. Emotional self-control is thus crucial in minimizing stress-related errors, safety violations, and interpersonal conflicts, especially in industrial settings like Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement.

Despite institutional efforts, emotional self-control remains difficult to measure and enforce uniformly. Stress levels, poor work-life balance, financial pressures, and insufficient mental health support may

challenge workers' emotional stability. Also, cultural stigmas surrounding mental and emotional health in Nigerian contexts may discourage help-seeking behavior (Afolabi et al., 2023). Moreover, the fast-paced nature of industrial output expectations may leave little room for reflective emotional practices unless structurally integrated into operations. Despite the importance of emotional self-control, it can be difficult to cultivate among all employees, especially in high-stress roles. Factors such as personal stressors, cultural norms, and organizational pressures may influence the ability to remain emotionally composed. In addition, emotional intelligence is not always included as a core competency during recruitment, particularly in technical roles. Moreover, cultural expectations in Nigerian organizations may discourage open emotional expression or stress management discussions. This cultural stigma can hinder employees from seeking help or admitting emotional struggles.

Organizations can support emotional regulation by providing training in stress management, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness. Programs that help employees recognize emotional triggers and develop coping strategies can reduce workplace conflicts significantly (Côté, 2014). Leaders with emotional self-control model constructive behavior and set the tone for healthy conflict resolution. Boyatzis et al. (2013) highlight that emotionally resonant leaders foster positive emotional climates that reduce the likelihood of conflict escalation.

Empirical Literature Reviews

Jordan, & Troth, (2021) in their study *Emotional Intelligence and Employee Turnover: A Study in the Service Industry*. The study used Quantitative, survey-based research. The study found a strong negative correlation between emotional intelligence and employee turnover intentions. Employees with higher EI were less likely to leave their jobs due to job dissatisfaction and interpersonal conflicts. The study recommended that organizations should promote EI training to improve retention and reduce turnover, particularly in high-stress environments like customer service and manufacturing.

Goleman (2006) in his study "Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships" Secondary data review and case study. This study underscores the importance of social intelligence (a key component of EI) in fostering positive organizational relationships and enhancing collaborative work environments. The study recommended that companies should focus on enhancing employees' social and emotional competencies to improve organizational performance and morale.

Schutte, Malouff, & Hall, (2007) in their study "Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis". the study adopted Meta-analysis of previous studies. The study revealed a positive correlation between EI and job satisfaction. Individuals with higher EI experienced greater satisfaction due to better emotional regulation and interpersonal skills. The study recommended that EI development should be integrated into workplace programs to enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover.

Kovach, Sill, & Williams, (2022). *Emotional Intelligence and Employee Turnover in Nigerian Manufacturing Firms*. The study was Survey-based research involving 300 employees from manufacturing firms in Kogi State. The study found a significant inverse relationship between EI and employee turnover. Employees with higher EI were more likely to remain in their positions due to enhanced emotional regulation, social interaction skills, and workplace satisfaction. The study recommended that EI training should be implemented in manufacturing firms in Kogi State to reduce turnover rates and improve organizational performance.

Nnamani, Okafor, & Yusuf, (2022) "Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Performance in Nigerian Manufacturing Firms" the Mixed-method approach (quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews). The study found that High EI was found to positively influence organizational performance, particularly in areas of leadership effectiveness, team cohesion, and productivity. EI also enhanced employees' problem-solving and decision-making skills. The study recommended that organizational leaders should prioritize EI development through training and workshops to optimize performance.

Carmeli, Livne, & Schaubroeck, (2022) “How Leadership and Organizational Culture Shape Innovation in Manufacturing Firms”. The study Case study approach in several manufacturing firms. The study showed that emotionally intelligent leadership is a key driver of innovation in manufacturing environments. Leaders with high EI foster creativity and innovation by creating an open, communicative environment. The study recommended that EI-focused leadership development programs should be implemented to promote innovation and competitiveness in manufacturing firms.

Theoretical Framework

The Emotional Intelligence (EI) theory was first introduced by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer in 1990. They defined EI as the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate between different emotions, and to use this information to guide thinking and actions. According to Salovey and Mayer, EI involves a series of skills that contribute to emotional and social functioning, which are vital for conflict resolution in organizations. EI is not a fixed trait but a set of skills that can be developed. Emotional awareness and regulation significantly influence how individuals manage stress, communication, and interpersonal conflicts in organizations. The development of EI enhances problem-solving and decision-making abilities, which are crucial for resolving conflicts. There is no single universally accepted definition or measurement of EI, which leads to inconsistencies in empirical studies (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). Critics argue that EI does not fully account for the cognitive and behavioral factors involved in decision-making and conflict resolution (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The tools used to measure EI (such as the EQ-i and MSCEIT) have been criticized for their reliability and validity in predicting workplace performance (O’Connor & Little, 2003).

The Social Intelligence Theory - Thorndike (1920)

The Social Intelligence Theory, introduced by Edward Thorndike in 1920, is considered a precursor to the emotional intelligence theories. Thorndike defined social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage people and to act wisely in human relationships. Although the theory focuses primarily on social skills, it is highly relevant to emotional intelligence and conflict resolution in organizations. Social intelligence is critical for understanding the motivations, emotions, and actions of others.

Interpersonal skills are essential for resolving conflicts and maintaining a productive work environment. Thorndike’s definition of social intelligence was broad and lacked operational clarity, making it difficult to measure or apply systematically. The theory’s focus on social skills overlooks the emotional components that are central to emotional intelligence and conflict resolution (Matthews et al., 2002). The Social Intelligence Theory highlights the importance of interpersonal skills in conflict resolution. By understanding and managing social dynamics, employees and leaders can navigate conflicts more effectively, promoting harmony and collaboration within teams.

3. Research Design

The research design for this study was descriptive. The descriptive design was used to describe the existing relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and conflict resolution in manufacturing firms. The correlational design will help in examining the extent to which EI influences conflict management practices within these organizations. The target population for this study consists of employees (including both managers and lower-level staff) working in Dangote and Nigeria Breweries Cement Industry, Obajana and Nigeria Breweries PLC Lokoja. The total population was 410 which form the respondents. This study used both primary and secondary data to gather comprehensive information: Primary Data: Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires: A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the employees in the selected manufacturing firms through google form. The data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency distributions, mean, and standard deviation) to summarize the general trends in emotional intelligence and conflict resolution practices within the firms.

4. Presentation of Data

The result and analysis of the field survey were presented based on specific questions, but forward in the questionnaire by researcher. The questionnaires were distributed. Some were returned while some were not returned, the analysis was based on the numbers returned.

4.1 Data Analysis

Statistical analysis used for frequency table is measurable in percentage. Hence presentation and analysis data were presented based on the data's provided.

Table 4.1: Category A

Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Questionnaire returned	340	83
Unreturned questionnaire	70	17
Total	410	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The table above shows that that 340 respondents representing 83% questionnaires were retrieved while 70 respondents representing 17% were not retrieved. This implies that returned questionnaires were on the high side. Hence, the analysis is based on the returned questionnaires.

Table 4.2.1: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

Options	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	180	53
Female	160	47
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.2.1 above revealed that 180 respondents representing 53% were male while 160 representing 47 % were female, and from the above analysis it shows that the males respondents were more than the female respondents.

Table 4.2.2 Category of the Respondents

Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Top and middle management	90	26.5
Operational Staff	250	73.5
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.2.2 shown above revealed the responses of the respondents in the questionnaire distribution 190 representing 26.5% respondents are top and middle management, while 250 representing 73.5%, of the respondents were Operational staff respectively.

Table 4.2.3: Age Bracket of the Respondents

Options	Number of Respondents	Percentage
18–23	90	26.4
24–29	145	42.6
30-35	105	31
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.2.3 shown above, it revealed that 40(11.8%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 18–25 while the rest of the respondents are within the following age brackets 70(20.6%) of them are within the age bracket of 26–40, then 130 (38.2%) of them are within the age bracket of 41–46 while 100(29.4%) of the respondents are 46 years and above it was revealed that most of the respondents are within 36–45 years.

Table 4.3.1 Effective communication among employees does not contributes significantly to resolving workplace conflicts.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	32	9.4
Agree	58	17.1
Undecided	10	2.9
Disagree	75	22.1
Strongly Disagree	165	48.5
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.3.1 shows that 32 (9.4%) of the respondents strongly agree that effective communication among employees does not contributes significantly to resolving workplace conflicts, 58(17.1%) of the respondents agree, 10(2.9%) of the respondents were undecided, 75(22.1%) of the respondents disagree, while 165(48.5%) of the respondents strongly disagree. This implies that Effective communication among employees contributes significantly to resolving workplace conflicts.

Table 4.3.2 Open and transparent communication does not reduces misunderstandings that may lead to conflicts.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	48	25
Agree	86	25.2
Undecided	15	4.4
Disagree	51	15
Strongly Disagree	140	41.1
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.3.2 shows that 48 (25%) of the respondents strongly agree that open and transparent communication does not reduces misunderstandings that may lead to conflicts, 86(25.2%) of the respondents agree, 15(4.4%) of the respondents were undecided, 51 (15%) of the respondents disagree, while 140 (41.1%) of the respondents strongly disagree. This implies that open and transparent communication reduces misunderstandings that may lead to conflicts.

Table 4.3.3: Poor communication often escalates disputes in organization.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	150	44.1
Agree	90	26.5
Undecided	20	5.9
Disagree	46	13.5
Strongly Disagree	34	10
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.3.3 above shows that 150(44.1%) of the respondents strongly agree that Poor communication often escalates disputes in organization, 90(26.5%) of the respondents agree, 20(5.9%) of the respondents were

undecided, 46(13.5%) of the respondents disagree, and 34(10%) of the respondents strongly disagree. This implies that Poor communication often escalates disputes in organization.

Table 4.3.4: Information flow within the organization positively influences how conflicts are managed

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	95	27.9
Agree	145	42.6
Undecided	20	5.9
Disagree	50	14.8
Strongly Disagree	30	8.8
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.3.4 above shows that 95(27.9%) of the respondents strongly agree that Information flow within the organization positively influences how conflicts are managed, 145(42.6%) of the respondents agree, 20(5.9%) of the respondents were undecided, 50(14.8%) of the respondents disagree, while 30(8.8%) of the respondents strongly disagree. This implies that Information flow within the organization positively influences how conflicts are managed.

Table 4.3.5 Social competence enhances collaboration and reduces the chances of conflict.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	146	42.9
Agree	94	27.6
Undecided	48	14.2
Disagree	13	3.8
Strongly Disagree	39	11.5
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4.3.5 revealed that 146 (42.9%) of the respondents strongly agree that Social competence enhances collaboration and reduces the chances of conflict, 94 (27.6%) of the respondents agree, 48(14.2%) of the respondents were undecided, 13(3.8%) of the respondents disagree while 39(11.5%) of the respondents strongly disagree. This finding implies that Social competence enhances collaboration and reduces the chances of conflict.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Effective communication improve organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	32	9.4
Agree	58	17.1
Undecided	10	2.9
Disagree	75	22.1
Strongly Disagree	165	48.5
Total	340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Formula for Expected Frequency:

$$X^2 = \sum (F_o - F_e)$$

F_e

Fo = Observed Frequency

Fe = Expected Frequency

Σ = Summation

F0	Fe	Fo – Fe	(Fo - Fe) ²	(Fo – Fe) ² /Fe
32	68	-36	1296	19.1
58	68	-10	100	1.5
10	68	-58	3364	49.5
75	68	7	49	0.7
165	68	97	9409	138.4
340	340	136	14,218	209.2

Source: Field Survey, 2024

$$X^2 = \frac{\Sigma(Fo - Fe)^2}{Fe}$$

Fe

$$X^2 = 0.6$$

Summation of Responses

Number of categories

$$(c - 1)(r - 1)$$

$$(5 - 1)(2 - 1) = 4 \times 1 = 4$$

Significance at 0.05

$$df = 18.31$$

Decision

Since X^2 cal. (209.2) is greater than X^2 tabulated (18.31) at 5% level of significance, we reject H_0 which states that state that effective communication has no significant effect on organizational conflict resolution and the alternate hypothesis which state that effective communication is effective in organizational conflict resolution was accepted.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The result of the hypothesis one tested shows that the null hypothesis which stated that effective communication has no significantly improve organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State was rejected and the alternate which stated that effective communication improve organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State was accepted.

The result of the hypothesis two tested shows that the null hypothesis which state that self-emotional control has no influence on organizational conflict resolution was rejected and the alternate hypothesis which state that self-emotional control has no influence on organizational conflict resolution was accepted.

The result of the hypothesis three tested shows that the null hypothesis which stated that social skills has no potential influence organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State was rejected and the alternate which stated that social skills has potential influence organizational conflict resolution of selected manufacturing firm in Kogi State was accepted.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that the resolution of organizational conflict is deeply rooted in the interpersonal competencies of employees and leaders. Through a careful analysis of the data, it is evident that effective communication, emotional self-control, and social skills are indispensable tools in minimizing workplace

discord and facilitating positive interactions. These findings emphasize a shift from traditional hierarchical and punitive approaches to conflict resolution towards more collaborative, people-focused strategies. Effective communication emerged as the most fundamental pillar in conflict management. When communication channels are clogged or poorly managed, tension builds up and may explode into open conflict. Misunderstandings about roles, responsibilities, or expectations can lead to friction, particularly in diverse or multi-departmental organizations. The study confirms that open dialogue, regular feedback, and respectful two-way communication are effective in diffusing tensions and clarifying misconceptions. It is also important to note that communication is not merely about speaking but also about listening—actively and empathetically. However, The following recommendations were made;

- i. Organizations should implement clear internal communication protocols that encourage openness, feedback loops, and timely information sharing across all levels to reduce misunderstandings and prevent conflict.
- ii. Human resource departments should organize periodic workshops and training programs aimed at improving employees' emotional self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and resilience.
- iii. Activities such as role-playing, group tasks, and mentoring should be integrated into staff development programs to enhance interpersonal skills necessary for conflict resolution.

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