



# Strategies for Managing Conflicts on Construction Sites in Abuja-Nigeria

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**Abstract:** Construction industry universally demands the contributions of various individuals, with each person bringing forward its expertise required to successfully bring the project to completion. Although they have different interest but a common objective of project execution. However, when individuals of varying background come together, conflict is certainly not absent, as the members within the project have different interests, which would induced conflicts. The situation has adverse effects on the project delivery, especially when it is not well managed. Therefore, this paper aimed to assess the strategies for managing conflicts on active construction sites in Abuja through the self-administration of structured questionnaires. Findings revealed that inadequate communication among project teams with a mean score of 3.52 which could be deemed as high extent is among the causes of conflict on construction sites. In a related development, strategy such as jointly work with others to come up with consensual approach to with mean score of 4.34 is often used by the respondents in collaborating strategy. The paper concluded that the least favoured strategies adopted by the respondents were competing style as compared to collaborating style, compromising style, avoiding style and accommodating style. The paper recommended that a system should be implement to facilitate and to enhance a smooth transmittance of information from one individual to another within the project team like team meeting discussions, site review meetings, and project status reporting.

**Keywords:** Abuja-Nigeria; Adversarial relationship; Conflict management; Construction sites; Strategies

## 1. Introduction

In current times, the complicity of construction projects has increased tremendously. The construction industry is often focused as a project-based industry that is assigned by the unique characteristics of each project and the involvement of the various parties within the project life cycle. Construction project itself is intricate, conflicts easily occur among the parties due, to the diversity of the industry and the involvement of various parties, conflicts, and disputes occur (Jaffar et al., 2011). There is a need to take prominent action to resolve these negative issues on sites.

Conflict is a serious disagreement between parties due to various reasons such as extension of time, payment, quality of technical specification, unavailability of information, administration and management, unrealistic client expectations and determination. Conflict may develop as a result of limited resources such as not enough time, money, labour, materials or equipment (Kathleen, 2003).

As indicated by Cheung and Suen (2002), if conflict is not properly managed, it may cause delay of project, undermine team spirit, increase project cost and above all, damaged business relationships. Conflicts in construction sites affect the performance of all stakeholders, such as owners, design and supervision of the consultant team, contractors and subcontractors. Thus, it is not surprising that many construction stakeholders still overwhelmingly view conflict as negative and should be avoided, managed or resolved as soon as possible. Conflict is one of the causes that lead to construction project failure or longevity of a project. Conflict can cause project delay, project cost overrun, productivity decrease, profit loss or impact in business relationship (Jaffar et al., 2011). In addition, it is time consuming to manage the conflict than build the project (Shin, 2002). There is a need to take prominent action to resolve the negative issues in the project in order to avoid future problems.

As outlined by Femi (2014), conflict is "...as indispensable as peace, since the only reason for seeking peace is because there exists conflict, which is inevitable in the construction industry as in any other human endeavour", conflict is an inborn element of social human relations and step should be taken to ensure the conflicts do not degenerate into dysfunctional conflict. In the mind of Borvan (2011), there is no project that can be protected from conflict, such conflicts may result in financial damage.

Therefore, the success of most construction project depends on how these unavoidable conflicts are managed and resolved. Thus, the research seeks to identify the factors that led to conflict in construction sites, the effects of the conflict and the ways to manage and resolve conflicts to the barest minimum on construction sites.

A well-organized project is a project which has been properly designed, appropriately planned, and accordingly built to specification, cost and within the scheduled time (Harmon, 2003). Conflict occurs inevitably, but preparing to deal with it in a rational, positive manner can save from further disruption. Conflict occurs when people have different opinions, lack of respect for each other or misunderstand the intentions of one another.

Conflict management in the construction industry has been highly technical, exceptionally complex, systematically driven, and legally controlled in which create rescindment of contract and incomplete projects (Shapiro, 2005). Managing and resolving conflict involves effective communication and reaching a concession. Ignoring conflict eventually takes a toll both mentally and physically. The need to manage conflict in construction sites results in better long-term team dynamics.

## **2. Concept of Conflict on Construction Sites**

The construction sector consists of various participants and experts that interrelate to the end of a project. In the situation where members of the project team working together during the course of their work, there are potentials for conflict and conflict conditions to arise. One of the key factors that predict danger or threaten construction on site is conflict between project team members or participants (Emmitt, 2003). This is mostly as a result of their different background, training, skills, norms to work and member's standpoint (Mba, 2013). Conflict remains a challenge in the construction industry (Kassab et al., 2010) till today.

In a struggle to safeguard teamwork among construction team participants, there are often variances of view with respect to the ideal manner of accomplishing the team's shared objectives. Individuals within the group pursue their personal concerns and impede outside controls, dreading discordance in view of these contradictory positions. Often conflict is seen as disquieting, and may deteriorate or decline into a mishap or tragedy. The increasing situation would involve people, additional time, and higher costs (Peansupap et al., 2013). Therefore, it is more often than not shunned and went silent. On the other hand, when the conflicts are properly managed, hale and hearty interactions induced and permit further novelty and efficiency (Uline et al., 2003).

### **Managing Construction Conflict**

Thomas-Kilmann (2010) offers five (5) modes for conflict management namely compromising, competing, collaborating, accommodating and avoiding. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Management Mode Instrument (TKI) "...measures a person's attitude in conflict situations, that is, in situation where the concerns of two individuals are incompatible". They describe individual's behaviour in two basic dimensions; assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness measures the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy his or her own concerns, whereas Cooperativeness. Competition has been called the "zero-sum game" where one person wins and the other loses. The individuals in conflict situation tend to be extremely assertive and very concern for self or dominating than the others. Lu and Leung (2001) referred to competing mode as win-lose style. An individual dominating often uses threat, power position, aggression, manipulation, and protection of assumed positions (Lee, 2008).

The obsession with winning under competing mode according to Zikmann (2002) results in the opposing party withdrawing cooperation and taking a position to defend his or her adopted stand. Blake and Mouton (2001) describe the competing mode as direct and uncooperative. However, it is effective, decisive action is crucial in organisational contexts. This mode has been criticised for its social inappropriateness as well as the likelihood in worsening response to conflict because it demotes the concerns of other individuals.

The avoiding style is neither cooperative nor assertive. It offers no priority or preference to both concerns relative to the parties; it is regarded as lose-lose style (Lu and Leung, 2001). To Thomas-Kilmann (2010), a party may be aware of a conflict within a project team but may diplomatically sidestep or postpone the issues. It may according to Thomas-Kilmann (2010) also mean withdrawing entirely from a threatening situation. They stated that this style is normally useful when the cost of tackling a conflict far outweighs the benefits of its settlement. Lee (2008) in support also referred to this style as a side-stepping and a buck pass of the issues in conflict. He articulates that the Avoiding style is the most useful when the issues in conflict are trivial or has a tendency of becoming destructive.

The accommodating style is unassertive and cooperative, and is also labelled as lose-win style of managing conflict. Individuals who choose this mode of managing conflict are referred to as conflict absorbers. They tend to sidestep their own concerns in favour of the opposing party's interest or concern. Individuals who choose this mode of conflict management according to Lu and Leung (2001) will rather maintain a relationship than to have their way.

There is an altruistic attitude or self-sacrifice in this mode of conflict management. It may be used when one wants to develop social credit as a strategy for later issues that may be of paramount interest to the individual. Especially when it is equally important to preserve harmony and to protect the project from disruptions (Thomas-Kilmann, 2010).

Collaborating style is both assertive and cooperative in equal magnitude, that is, high on assertiveness and high on cooperativeness. Collaborating is one and the same as integrating. The individuals who are highly concerned for self and highly concern for others in the same measure. Most literature refers to this style as a win-win style. In collaboration, the individual works in tandem with the other party to find a common solution that fully answers the concerns of both parties. Collaborating between two individuals according to Thomas-Kilmann (2010) might take the process of exploring disagreements to mug up from each other's intuitions, resolving concerns that would otherwise have them competing. The individuals are willing to settle the difficulty by making modest different between them by sacrificing part of their assertiveness to gain on cooperativeness. The parties often deliberate until an acceptable decision is reached between them. Collaboration upsurges individual and team effectiveness, as typified by greater satisfaction and feelings of self-efficacy among conflicting parties, and more solutions that are beneficial reduce the likelihood of future conflict (Kiani et al., 2012). This style is more appropriate when you want to merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem and when you wish to gain others commitment by fitting in their concerns in the final decision.

Compromise mode is a style that declares neither a loser nor winner. For the French, the compromise mode is a "lose-lose" decision, something that should not be encouraged, and when individuals can be contented that their desires can in time be met, it will be far more probable that they will be willing to amend their adopted positions. Compromise according to Thomas-Kilmann (2010) might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position. Thomas-Kilmann (2010) adds that compromise is appropriate when two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals, example, labour-management bargaining. However, over reliance or an overuse of this mode generate a cynical environment of gamesmanship which refers to an individual's willingness to satisfy the other person's concerns.

### 3. Research Methodology

Questionnaire survey was adopted through the self-administration of well-structured questionnaire in 50 active (on-going) construction sites in Abuja. Survey design according to Creswell (2009) gave a quantitative description of phenomenon such as trends, attitudes, or opinion of population. Based on the results obtained, generalisation to the population is possible. Collis and Hussey (2003) described a survey as a positivistic methodology that draws a sample from a larger population in order to draw conclusions about the population. Babbie and Mouton (2005) stated that survey research is one of the best methods used in collecting data where the objective is to reach a larger portion of the society that would have been difficult to observe directly or the use of other methods.

The measurement of items was form from existing literature and the writings of Thomas-Kilmann (2010) and Yiu and Cheung (2006). Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel were used in analysing the collected data. The SPSS was used to determine the Kurtosis and Skewness values, mean values and standard deviations.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The results of the data are presented below which formed the basis for the conclusion reached and the recommendations made.

#### 4.1 Demographic information of respondents

Table 1 shows that 12% for those with frequency of 16 are civil engineers and quantity surveyors, 20% were builders, 32% were civil engineers and 24% are the respondents from others. From the above analysis it shows that civil engineers are the largest respondents. From the information, 6% are those with Ordinary National Diploma (O.N.D), 24% are those with Higher National Diploma (H.N.D), Bachelor of Science (BSc)/Bachelor of Technology (BTech) and Master of Science (MSc)/Master of Technology (MTech), 2% represents those with Doctor of Philosophy (PhD),

and finally, the remaining 20% of the total respondents represents others. The table indicates that 22% represents those with less than 5 years' experience, 36% represents respondents with 5-10 years, 22% represents respondents with 10-15 years, 14% represents respondents with 15-20 years' experience, 6% represents respondents have 20 years and above experience. Hence, it is shown that those with 5-10 years' experience have the highest percentage. The table shows that 48% represents firms with workers ranging from 1-49, 34% represents firms with workers ranging from 50-249 and finally 18% represents those with workers above 250. This is an indication that the small sized construction firms constituted the largest percentage followed by the medium sized construction firms.

**Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents**

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage%	Total
Educational qualification	Ordinary National Diploma	3	6	
	Higher National Diploma	12	24	
	BSc/BTech	12	24	
	MSc/MTech	12	24	
	PhD	1	2	
	Others	10	20	50
Years of experience	Less than 5 years	11	22	
	5-10 years	18	36	
	10-15 years	11	22	
	15-20 years	7	14	
	20 years and above	3	6	50
Profession	Architect	6	12	
	Builder	10	20	
	Civil Engineer	16	32	
	Quantity Surveyor	6	12	
	Others	12	24	50
Number of staff	1-49	24	48	
	50-249	17	34	
	Above 250	9	18	50

#### 4.2 Causes of Conflicts on Construction Sites in Abuja

The mean values that evolved are as follows; mean value of  $\geq 4.50$  corresponds to "Very high extent", 3.50-4.49 corresponds to "High extent", 2.50-3.49 corresponds to "Moderate extent", 1.50-2.49 corresponds to "Little extent" and 1.00-1.49 corresponds to "No extent".

Based on Table 2, it shows the skewness and kurtosis value, Bright (2008) suggests that data are considered to be in excellent form when the skewness range is fewer than 2 and kurtosis fewer than 7, since the skewness and kurtosis values of the data collected based on the causes of conflict on construction sites in Abuja, it is observed that the skewness values are fewer than 2 and the kurtosis values are fewer 7, therefore the data is accurate.

Data collected was analysed based on the responses of the participants, and for each item listed the mean value and standard deviation for each item were ranked to identify the highest cause of conflict on construction sites in the study area. According to the results in Table 4.5a, ranked and compared the mean scores of professional respondents and site operatives' the most frequently embraced among the parameters listed on project sites according to overall mean were: inadequate communication among project teams, inaccurate design information and indefinite and contradicting instructions. Inadequate communication among project teams with the highest mean value of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 0.97, this mean that inadequate communication is the highest causative item of conflict on construction sites in Abuja. In fact, communication performs a very crucial role in all the stages of construction like in design, organization, production and management. The role of communication cannot be exaggerated or overstressed as various professionals or site operatives in the construction industry need to communicate effectively in any particular project for it to be successful. A poorly organized communication as confirmed by the responses does not only lead to misunderstanding and eventual conflict but also design and construction errors, demotivated labour force, general slowdown and failure in production (Tipili et al., 2014). The second major source of conflict is "Inaccurate design

information” with a mean value of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 0.97, design inaccuracy is inevitable in constructions projects and as such may lead to rework or delays in project completion. Furthermore, “Indefinite and contradicting instructions” with a mean value of 3.46 and a standard deviation of 0.99 is the third major cause of conflict, it is not surprising that indefinite and contradicting instructions follow on the heels of inadequate communication, because the two items hinge on the absence of harmonious working environment. Indefinite instructions may come in a form of design, written or oral. It often creates disagreements as a result of the differing interpretations to the issued instruction and its true meaning. Disagreements between working drawings and specifications are classical examples of indefinite and contradicting instructions. These contradictions in working documents results in conflicts between contractors and consultants, nominated contractors and main contractors.

Table 2 shows that the item with the least mean value is the item “Contract is ambiguous and unfeasible” with a mean value of 2.60 and a standard deviation of 1.34 following after the item “Contract does not fully address materials requirement” having a mean value of 2.80 and a standard deviation of 1.11. The mean values of the items at the bottom of the items that causes general conflict means that, the two items per the responses of the participants are the least causative items among the list of causes of conflict as group under the causes of conflict.

**Table 2: Causes of Conflict on Construction Sites**

	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Decision
Inadequate communication among project teams.	3.52	0.14	0.97	-0.54	0.34	High Extent
Inaccurate design information.	3.46	0.18	1.27	-0.25	-1.07	Moderate Extent
Indefinite and contradicting instructions.	3.46	0.14	0.99	-0.01	-1.01	Moderate Extent
Different perception of work quality.	3.40	0.12	0.83	0.00	0.64	Moderate Extent
Unassigned risks associated with the project.	3.38	0.11	0.81	-0.57	0.52	Moderate Extent
Delayed client response (decisions).	3.32	0.14	0.98	-0.01	-0.48	Moderate Extent
Mismatched project risk allocation between stakeholders.	3.32	0.13	0.89	-0.15	-0.04	Moderate Extent
Project participants reluctant to deal promptly with changes and unexpected conditions - price escalation index.	3.26	0.14	1.01	-0.43	-0.63	Moderate Extent
Inadequate site investigations.	3.24	0.16	1.12	-0.04	-0.92	Moderate Extent
Slow progress and performance Contractor.	3.22	0.15	1.04	0.00	-0.47	Moderate Extent
Contractor submits unrealistically low bid to win the project.	3.20	0.16	1.11	-0.32	-0.55	Moderate Extent
Changes in contract due to site and environmental condition.	3.16	0.14	0.96	-0.33	-0.54	Moderate Extent
Delays in payments or (such as mobilization, part payment).	3.16	0.13	0.89	-0.51	-0.21	Moderate Extent
The use of substandard materials for construction.	3.14	0.20	1.41	-0.08	-1.27	Moderate Extent
Inadequate construction time or duration.	3.02	0.14	1.02	-0.28	-0.55	Moderate Extent
Poorly developed project plan and scheduling.	2.92	0.20	1.40	-0.04	-1.19	Moderate Extent

Contract does not fully address materials requirement.	2.80	0.16	1.11	0.13	-1.07	Moderate Extent
Contract is ambiguous and unfeasible.	2.60	0.19	1.34	0.68	-0.70	Moderate Extent

### 4.3 Conflict Management Strategies on Construction Sites

Respondents were asked to share which of the conflict management style he or she would use when confronted with a conflict Using a 5-point Likert scale 5- “Always” with mean value of  $\geq 4.50$ , 4- “Often” with mean value of 3.50-4.49, 3- “Sometimes” with a mean value 2.50-3.49, 2- “Rarely” mean value of 1.50-2.49, 1- “Never” having a mean value of 1.00-1.49.

#### 4.3.1 Competing Style

Competing occurs when one party goes all out to win its position while ignoring the needs and concerns of the other party. As the intensity of a conflict increases, the tendency for a forced conflict is more likely. This result in a win-lose situation where one party wins at the expense of the other party (Ohelendorf, 2001). According to site participants’ views on competing style of managing conflict on Table 3 and by ranking “I use my expertise to drive home my adopted position or make decision in my favour” is ranked first having a mean value of 3.04 and a standard deviation of 1.38, and “I use my influence to make my views accepted” is ranked second with a mean value of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 1.32, these options are more preferred by the site participants to “I use my influence to make my views accepted” which is ranked last with a mean value of 2.74 and a standard deviation of 1.37.

**Table 3: Competing Style**

	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Decision
I use my expertise to drive home my adopted position or make decision in my favour.	3.04	0.20	1.38	-0.22	-1.15	Sometimes
I use my influence to make my views accepted.	3.02	0.19	1.32	-0.32	-0.96	Sometimes
I use my authority to make a decision in my favour.	2.76	0.18	1.27	-0.15	-1.35	Sometimes
I observe my views much higher than the views of others.	2.74	0.21	1.47	0.07	-1.50	Sometimes
I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation.	2.74	0.19	1.37	0.04	-1.27	Sometimes

#### 4.3.2 Collaborating Style

Collaborating involves conflicting parties coming together to meet face-to-face in order to reach an agreement. It involves open and direct communication among team members who should lead to a way of solving conflict. According to the results in Table 4, “Jointly work with others to come up with consensual approach to work” with a mean value of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.69, and “I explore the issue with others to find a solution agreeable to us” having a mean value of 4.24 and a standard deviation of 0.80 are preferred to “I combine my ideas with that of others to arrive at a shared decision” with a mean value of 4.12, and a standard deviation of 0.80.

**Table 4: Collaborating Style**

	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Decision
Jointly work with others to come up with consensual approach to work.	4.34	0.10	0.69	-0.95	1.34	Often

I explore the issue with others to find a solution agreeable to us.	4.24	0.11	0.80	-0.72	-0.25	Often
All concerns are openly tabled and resolved in a best possible way.	4.22	0.1	0.74	-0.38	-1.05	Often
I combine my ideas with that of others to arrive at a shared decision.	4.12	0.11	0.80	-0.72	0.29	Often

### 4.3.3 Compromising Style

Compromise involves the technique of give and take. Conflicting parties' bargain to reach a mutually acceptable solution. Both parties give up something in order to reach an agreement. Based on the survey, it was observed in Table 5 that "Parties examined the basis for disagreement an attempt to ensure that all concerns and interests are taken care off" with a mean value of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.73 was ranked highest and the second ranked was "In solving problem, both parties distinguish between real needs from desires" having a mean value of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.84. However, "I try to ensure that the interests of both parties are taken-on board in solving the problem" was ranked lowest with a mean value of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 0.75 before "Conflict is decided by a give-take agreement" has a mean value of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 0.76.

**Table 5: Compromising Style**

	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Decision
Parties examined the basis for disagreement an attempt to ensure that all concerns and interests are taken care off	4.20	0.1	0.73	-0.33	-1.02	Often
In solving problem, both parties distinguish between real needs from desires	3.98	0.12	0.84	-0.38	-0.57	Often
The conflict is decided cordially on mutual agreement	3.96	0.09	0.67	0.05	-0.67	Often
I try to ensure that the interests of both parties are taken-on board in solving the problem	3.92	0.11	0.75	0.13	-1.18	Often
Conflict is decided by a give-take agreement	3.90	0.11	0.76	-0.12	-0.58	Often

### 4.3.4 Avoiding Style

Avoiding is a conflict management style that involves ignoring or postponing an issue for later or withdrawing from the situation completely, it is just a temporary solution because the conflict and the problems will keep on reoccurring unless dealt with. In Table 6, it was observed that the highest ranked was "I ignore the problem when it can lead to destruction" with a mean value of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.89, the second highest being "I ignore the issue when the cost of confronting it far outweighs the benefits" with a mean value of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.92.

The lowest ranked being "I ignore the issue when it is tangential or symptomatic of other issues" with a mean value of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 1.02 after "I ignore the situation in other to protect an establish relationship" with a mean value of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 0.90.

**Table 6: Avoiding Style**

	Mean Statistics	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Decision
I ignore the problem when it can lead to destruction	4.10	0.13	0.89	-0.93	1.33	Often
I ignore the issue when the cost of confronting it far outweighs the benefits	4.04	0.13	0.92	-0.57	-0.64	Often
No adopted position is taken when solving a problem.	3.92	0.12	0.83	-0.97	2.10	Often
I ignore the situation in order to protect an established relationship	3.74	0.13	0.90	-0.15	0.10	Often
I ignore the issue when it is tangential or symptomatic of other issues	3.70	0.14	1.02	-0.57	0.31	Often

#### 4.3.5 Accommodating Style

The accommodating style is unassertive and cooperative, it involves individuals who want to sidestep their own concerns in favour of the opposing party's interest or concern and is also known as lose-win style of managing conflict. According to the ranking in Table 7, "Proposals and opinions of other individuals are well considered when deciding on a problem" was ranked the highest with a mean value of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.81 followed by "Concerns or desires of other individuals are of much concern or prioritized" with a mean value of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.93 and "I excuse others to forestall peace" with mean value 3.88 and standard deviation of 0.90 as the least ranked. Based on the data obtained from the field survey on the different conflict management strategies, the skewness and kurtosis values show the accuracy of the data from the field survey due to the fact that the skewness values are fewer than 2 and the kurtosis values are fewer than 7. It is observed that competing is the least used to manage conflict while compromising, collaborating, avoiding and accommodating are the most favourable conflict management strategies used on construction sites in Abuja.

**Table 7: Accommodating Style**

	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Decision
Proposals and opinions of other individuals are well considered when deciding on a problem.	4.00	0.11	0.81	-0.24	-0.81	Often
Concerns or desires of other individuals are of much concern or prioritized.	3.94	0.13	0.93	-0.81	0.75	Often
I excuse others to forestall peace.	3.88	0.13	0.90	-0.64	0.76	Often
I submit to outcomes when it is even against my concern.	3.88	0.12	0.82	-1.59	4.56	Often
I excuse others to forestall peace.	3.88	0.13	0.90	-0.64	0.76	Often



## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

As inevitable as change, so is the issue of conflict in construction. At any site where construction team members work together in the course of completing their work and obligations, there exist always an obvious possibility of conflict. Indeed, it is absolutely and completely impossible to have people of different experience, training and upbringing work together, decide on issues and work towards project objectives and goals without conflict. Plethora of literature have put forward several causes of conflict as pertained in construction sites and industry at large. To ascertain the cause of construction-related conflicts in Abuja, a number of items were selected and employed. The study recognizes inadequate communication as a major cause of conflict and this is in agreement with claim that poor communication often results in project delays, cost overruns and project abandonments. In addition, the study identifies ambiguous and contradicting instructions as one of the causes of construction conflicts. In between the different management styles of managing conflict in construction found in literature, collaborating, compromising, avoiding and accommodating styles are the most favoured conflict management style used by players on construction sites in Abuja per the study.

The following recommendations are suggested to mitigate the causes and the effects it has on construction sites in Abuja firstly, every project starts and ends with communication, therefore communication is important in all construction sites, it is critical that a system is put in place to facilitate and to enhance a smooth transmittance of information from one individual to another within the project team like; Team Meeting Discussions, Site Review Meetings, and Project Status Reporting. These will enable and help members within the team to apprise themselves fully of the happenings around the project, and the problem of inadequacy of communication is reduced to its barest minimum; Secondly, design teams on construction sites should painstakingly check and recheck their design works before sending it out as a finished drawing for implementation at site. Junior design team members should not be left unsupervised on final works of designs to avoid excessive change orders. Again, detailed and much attention should be given to site investigation work prior to the start of the design works, in order not to miss any fact that may eventually result in excessive change orders. Thirdly, Payment of contractors should be done timeously to avoid project abandonment and where there exists disagreement in respect of works executed, certificate value should be paid while the disputed extra works are being looked at as well as, Site workers or participants should jointly work with each other to come up with a consensual approach to work and should work together to find a solution agreeable to them when matters arise instead of waiting for it to escalate which may result to conflict.

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