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## **Influence of Conflict Resolution Strategies among the Educational Organs on the Administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria**

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### **Abstract:**

*The study investigated the influence of conflict resolution strategies among educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria. The study found out how communication, negotiation, mediation, motivation, dialogue, and diplomacy influenced administration of Secondary Schools. Two objectives, which were translated to two research questions and two hypotheses, guided the study. Survey research design was adopted where a self-constructed questionnaire titled, "Influence of Conflict Resolution Strategies among the Educational Organs on Administration of Secondary Schools (ICRS-AEOASS)" with reliability coefficient of 0.94, which was established for the study. The target population for the study was one thousand, two hundred (750 Principals and 450 Senior Staff). Two hundred and ninety-five (295) respondents were sampled using multistage technique. The data were collected by the researcher and this was subjected to descriptive (% , N,  $\bar{x}$ , and SD) and inferential ( $\chi^2$ ) statistics at  $\alpha = .05$ . The result of the findings revealed that conflict resolution strategies have significant influence on the administration of secondary schools. Based on the findings of the result, it was concluded that conflict could be avoided or managed effectively if the parties involved engage in a variety of approaches at terminating it. It was recommended among others that there should be a cordial relationship in the area of communication and other variables between educational organs and managers of Secondary Schools to promote peace and stability.*

**Keywords:** Conflict resolution, educational organs and administration

### **1. Background of the Study**

Every organization is made up of persons who come with different dispositions and frustrations of different dimensions. Because of these differences in people's dispositions and desires and their different ways of getting these needs and desires, conflict and its resolution set in (Okure, 2004). Conflict occurs between major social institutions such as among educational organs, the Church and States, business and schools. It occurs between organizations as in the case of firms competing in a given market. It also occurs within organizations as when departments compete for jurisdiction/domain. It also occurs between principals and teachers, teachers and students, and among individuals. The occurrence of conflict in school organizations has some effect on the smooth operation of the school. Conflict in operational term means a state of emotional stress with a person or group of persons arising from the collision of different interests within a given time or situation (Eyikwaye, 2014).

Conflict is also seen as a type of behaviour or feeling, which takes place when an individual or a group of staff faces a choice problem. It involves a clash between two persons or people in opposition to each other. It takes place when one anticipates prospects of relative deprivation arising from the action of choosing from set alternatives (Albert, 2001). Conflict is viewed by Best (2006) as the pursuit of incomparable interests and goals by different groups. Coser in Schrud (2000) defines conflict as the struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources in which the aims of the groups or individuals involved are to not only obtain the desired value but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals. Dzurgba (2006) sees human nature as being the cause of disagreement, quarrel, and conflict. Idoko (2014) views conflict as a social problem in which two or more persons, families, districts, communities, states or nations are at war with each other. Therefore, conflict is a disagreement characterized by quarrel, fighting, severe anger, aggression, bloodshed, tension, bitterness, and hatred. When conflict occurs, there is the need to seek for strategies to resolve such conflict.

Resolution is an act of finding a solution to a problem or a conflict. Conflict resolution strategy according to Miller (2003) is a "variety of approaches arrived at terminating conflicts through the use of constructive ideas for solving of problems." Conflict resolution on the other hand may be defined as strategies that enable organizations handle conflict

peacefully and cooperatively out of the traditional disciplinary procedure (Johnson in Eyikwaye, 2014). This study views conflict resolution strategy as a method devised to develop peaceful means of amicably ending a state of conflict. It is a situation where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved as it is in this study among the educational organs in charge of the administration of secondary schools in North Central Nigeria.

Educational organs in this study refer to Ministry of Education (MOE), Teaching Service Board (TSB), School Committees or Boards, and Principals of Secondary Schools. The Public Education Edict (1970) clearly specifies the functions of the educational organs in relation to secondary schools' administration ranging from the Ministry of Education (MOE) down to the Principals. The purpose of the Public Education Edict (1970) promulgated by the Federal Government was to secure cordial and integrated system of education, which is to guarantee "uniform standards and fair distribution of educational facilities and reduce the cost of running the schools" (Uzoamaka, 2000). This noble intention of the Government seems to be abused by some in the hierarchy due to the positions they occupy, thereby, resulting to conflict. The researcher has observed that the higher echelons like the Ministry of Education and the State Teaching Service Board (or school committees) use their position to exercise the authority on their subjects. This undoubtedly generates conflict in the school system.

The use of authority was manifested in 2010 when the Teaching Service Board in Benue State particularly posted and transferred principals to schools, which was later cancelled by the Ministry of Education, which felt that being the proprietor of schools, it was their responsibility to post and transfer principals. Idoko (2010) stresses that the transfers were suspended for months and this raised a lot of dust and created tensions among the educational organs. There are allegations and counter-allegations of encroachment by one organ in the functions of the other. There are also disagreement and misunderstanding in respect of recruitment, placement of pupils in schools, postings and transfer of teachers, and coordination of examinations. Furthermore, the conflict situation seems to have resulted to laxity in the system according to Best (2000). This can be seen in the delays in the payment of teachers' salaries and other benefits meant for them; lateness and absenteeism among the teaching and Administrative Staff in secondary school system are on the increase, and in addition, adequate facilities for effective instructions are in short supply. Conflict affects the accomplishment of organizational goals due to their attendant stress, hostilities, and other undesirable factors when poorly managed (Okotoni, 2002). The consequences of conflict on the school organization and even government have been regrettable. Part of the repercussion on schools is disruption on academic programmes, inadequate staffing as a result of unplanned transfer, hostility, suspension, and withdrawal from active participation in school activities. When conflicts occur, there is need to use appropriate measures to resolve such conflicts.

Communication is the bedrock of any organization. When there is a gap in communication, it makes it impossible to carry out any activities of an organization. Most of the conflicts in schools are largely due to communication breakdown or misinterpretation of information. Communication can be described as a process of transferring information, ideas, thought, and message, which makes the two individuals or group to understand themselves for peaceful settlement. Peretomode (2006) defines communication as the transfer of information, feelings, or messages from a source to a receiver. Communication, therefore, is the process of transmitting meaning from sender to receiver. Conflict arises when there is a breakdown of communication between two parties as in the case of Principals and Educational Administrators from the Ministry of Education or Officers from the Teaching Service Board. Sometimes, Principals may misinterpret information from the Board and this leads to conflict (Idoko, 2014). Negotiation can also be used to resolve conflict.

Negotiation is a process whereby the parties within the conflict seek to settle or resolve their conflict. Negotiation is a structured process or dialogue between conflicting parties about issues in which their opinions differ (Jega, 2004). Negotiation is direct process of dialogue and discussion taking place between at least two parties who are faced with a conflict situation or dispute. If there is a conflict between a Principal and the Director of secondary school at the Teaching Service Board, they could seek for negotiation for peaceful settlement. If both parties embrace negotiation, there will be peace, but lack of negotiation on the part of the conflicting parties will make hostilities to linger and this will negatively affect the administration. Motivation is another important variable in the resolution of conflict.

The use of motivation as a device is a solution to many problems in schools. Motivation is a reported urge or tension to move in a given direction or to achieve a certain goal (Edem, 2006). Motivation can also be defined as the encouragement, willingness, and persistence to put in extra efforts towards the achievement of organizational objectives and the satisfaction of personal needs. In a school system, motivation can be some simple reward or thanks for a job well done. People feel good and work harder when they are recognized and appreciated. Motivation can also be prompt payment of salaries and allowances or promotion to higher responsibility. It reduces conflict and makes way for teamwork and higher academic excellence. When staff are adequately motivated, they put in their best and this enhances performance. Mediation is useful in resolving conflict between parties.

Mediation is the intervention of a third party. Miller (2002) sees mediation as the intervention of a third party. Iwara (2006) notes that mediation is a process in which a neutral third party, the mediator, assists two or more parties in order to help them negotiate an agreement as a matter of common interest. If the Executive Secretary of the Teaching Service Board is in conflict with any Principal and the problem lingers, it could be solved by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education. The objective of mediation is to help parties to resolve their conflicts among the educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools. Parties in conflict need to use diplomacy in settling themselves.

Diplomacy is another strategy used to settle problems. Best (2006) describes diplomacy as the instrument of achieving permanent peace and accommodation among disputants. If a conflict involves the Executive Secretary of the

Teaching Service Board and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, diplomacy is required to settle such conflict among the educational organs controlling the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria. Dialogue is a discussion between two persons, families, communities, states, or nations (Dzurgba, 2006). Dialogue highlights the causes, nature, and the consequences of the conflict on one hand and the benefits of peace on the other hand. Miller (2003) contends that dialogue has been used to settle a lot of conflicts in the school system, also among the educational organs controlling the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria.

A lot of existing literature and research work such as Okolo (2000) and Abanya (2001) tend to focus on the effect of conflict on Principals' effectiveness and students' performance but not much is known of the influence of conflict resolution strategies among the organs of secondary schools in North Central Nigeria. Moreover, the conventional strategies such as the School Disciplinary Committees and the Board of Governors are no longer sufficient to resolve these conflicts (Okotoni, 2002). The researcher intends to carry out this study to find out the influence of conflict resolution strategies among the educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in the study area, so as to fill the gap.

People seem to be worried about the sources of these conflicts, which seem to affect the efficient functioning of the education organs charged with secondary school administration in the North Central Nigeria. There appears to be general feeling of dissatisfaction and disgust over what goes on in the secondary schools in the study area. Some feel that it may be due to role conflict emanating from lack of proper specification of the limits of the functions of each of those charged with secondary school administration (Orjime, 2006). Others like Akosu (2006) tend to attribute it to personality clash among the chief actors in the various education sectors. However, Idoko (2010) sees it as over-centralization of authority among some organs of education. The focus of this study, therefore, is to investigate the influence of conflict resolution strategies among the educational organs on the administration of secondary schools in North Central Nigeria.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

The Public Education Edict (1970) has clearly specified the functions of all the education organs in relation to secondary school administration. Such organs are the Ministry of Education, Teaching Service Board, Principals of Secondary Schools. However, observations have shown that those who control the organs such as the Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Board sometimes use their positions to exercise their power on their subordinates, which may lead to conflict. Conflict appears to arise in the area of employment of teachers, placement of pupils in schools, promotion, and transfer of principals and teachers. There are also allegations and counter-allegations of encroachment by the organs on the functions of each other and allegation of misappropriation of school fees by Principals.

Conflicts also arise from inadequate employment of teachers, administrative incompetence, personality clashes, role conflict, non-involvement of students in school administration, decision-making, inappropriate delegation of duties and conflict among educational organs, which prompted the researcher into the study. Previous studies focused on the effect of conflict on students' academic performance. However, this study is focused on the influence of conflict resolution strategies among the educational organs on the administration of secondary schools in North Central Nigeria.

### *2.1. Objective of the Study*

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of conflict resolution strategies among the educational organs on the administration of secondary schools in North Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study intends to:

- Find out the influence of communication as a resolution strategy among educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria.
- Examine the influence of negotiation as a resolution strategy among educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria.

### *2.2. Research Questions*

The following research questions will guide the study, viz:

- What is the influence of communication as a conflict resolution strategy among educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria?
- What is the influence of negotiation as a conflict resolution strategy among educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria?

### *2.3. Statement of Hypotheses*

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Communication as a conflict resolution strategy among educational organs has no significant influence on school administration in North Central Nigeria.
- Negotiation as a conflict resolution strategy among educational organs has no significant influence on the administration of Secondary Schools in North Central Nigeria.

### 3. Methodology

This chapter is organized under the following sub-headings, research design, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of data collection, and data analysis techniques.

#### 3.1. Research Design

This study adopts the survey design. Survey design aims at collecting data and describing them in a systematic way, the features and characteristics of a given population. It is to provide the opinion of the respondents on influence of conflicts resolution strategies among the education organs controlling the administration of secondary schools in North Central Nigeria. The design is considered appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a sample that is true representative of the population in a systematic manner. It also permits the collection of data from respondents in the natural setting. It is a survey design because it does not require experimentation on the respondents; rather they express their opinion by filling the questionnaire given.

#### 3.2. The Study Area

This study is conducted in North Central Nigeria, which are Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa, and FCT, among others. The area of study is situated geographically in the Middle-Belt Region of the country, spanning from the West, around the confluence of the River Niger and the River Benue. The region itself is rich in natural land features, and boasts some of Nigeria's most exciting scenery. The region is also home to many historical and colonial relics. Benue has a population of about 4,253,641 (National Population Commission, 2006). It is inhabited predominantly by Tiv and Idoma people, who speak the Tiv and Idoma languages respectively. There are also other ethnic groups. Makurdi is the capital of Benue State. The State has a total of 150 Government Secondary Schools (Statistics Section of Teaching Service Board). Lokoja is the capital of Kogi State. The State has a population of 160 Government Secondary Schools (Ministry of Education Statistics). Nasarawa State has a population of 2,040,097 (NPC, 2006). The State has different ethnic groups each with its own distinct local languages but Hausa is common among the people. They all have a common history and share social and cultural ideologies. Lafia is the capital of Nasarawa State. Nasarawa produces a large proportion of the salt consumed in the country. It has a population of 140 secondary schools (Ministry of Education Statistics).

FCT has a population of about 1,405,201 (NPC, 2006). It is inhabited by all tribes in Nigeria being the seat of Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It has a total of 300 Government Secondary Schools (Ministry of Education Statistics, FCT). Languages predominantly spoken include English, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Tiv, Gwari, Nupe, among others. The choice of the area is informed by the fact that most schools are immersed in different conflicts in the States. There is need to evolve a study on conflict resolution as a technique to enhance effective management of the conflicts among the educational organs on the administration of Secondary Schools in the area of study.

#### 3.3. Population of the Study

The total population for the study is 1,200 comprising of 750 Principals from 750 Secondary Schools in Kogi, Benue, Nasarawa, and FCT. (Benue has 150 principals, Kogi has 160 principals, Nasarawa has 140 principals, while FCT has 300 principals) and 450 Senior Civil Servants from the study areas. The Senior Civil Servants that were used were between grade levels 13 – 15 Officers. One hundred and forty (140) Senior Civil Servants from Benue State Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Board, one hundred and twenty (120) Senior Civil Servants from Nasarawa State Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Board and 190 Senior Civil Servants from FCT Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Board (Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Board). The choice of the Principals and Senior Civil Servants is based on the fact that they are in the best position to proffer solution to the endemic conflicts in schools since they are the decision-makers and decision implementers. Their responses will be more reliable than that of the Junior Civil Servants and even the teachers.

#### 3.4. Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of two hundred and ninety-five (295) respondents were used as sample for the study. This sample represents 25% of the population, which is one thousand, two hundred (1,200). This is in line with Olayiwola (2007), who asserts that any sample size that is up to 25% of the population is a fair representation. This is to ensure a true representation of the population. The study eventually used two hundred and ninety-five (295) respondents who returned their instrument. Multistage sampling, which involves different sampling at different stages, was used for the selection of the sample. The first stage of selection was selection of States, which involved random and purposive sampling. Purposive sampling method was used to select Kogi State, which is the researcher's area of living and random sampling was used to select Nasarawa, Benue State, and the FCT. The method was used because it gives each State of the population equal opportunity to be chosen.

The second stage of selection was the selection of Local Government Areas in which proportionate sampling technique was used where Local Government Areas were selected based on the number of local government area in each State. The number of each Local Government Area to be selected in each State was selected using random sampling technique, which gives every Local Government Area equal opportunity to be selected. All the Teaching Service Boards in each State were purposively selected because a State has only one Teaching service Board and all the Officers of grade level 13 – 15 were also

purposely selected due to their few numbers. Also, all the State Ministry of Education (MOE) in the sampled State were purposely selected due to the same reason given to the selection of Teaching Service Board and their Staff. The Principals were proportionately and randomly selected based on the number of Principals in each State and Local Government Area.

### *3.5. Instrument for Data Collection*

The instrument for data collection was self-constructed questionnaire titled, "Influence of Conflict Resolution Strategies among the Educational Organs on the Administration of Secondary Schools (ICRSAEOASS) Questionnaire," (See Appendix 'A,' Page 78). The Questionnaire is divided into six clusters based on the variables of the study – Cluster A sought information on the influence of communication on school administration. It has five items; cluster B sought information on influence of negotiation and has five items; cluster C sought information on the influence of motivation on the administration of secondary schools with five items. Cluster D sought information on the influence of mediation. It has five items; cluster E sought information on the influence of diplomacy. It has five items, while cluster F sought information on the influence of dialogue on the resolution of conflict in secondary schools. It has five items, making a total of thirty (30) items on the instrument. The instrument is modeled on a four-point rating scale with a response of High Influence (HI) = 3.50–4.00, Moderate Influence (MI) = 2.50–3.49, Low Influence (LI) = 1.50–2.49, and No Influence (NI) = 1.50–2.49, respectively. Any item that yielded a mean of above 3.50 was regarded as High Influence, items yielding a mean of 2.50 were regarded as Moderate Influence, and any mean below 2.50 was regarded as Low Influence and NI means No Influence.

### *3.6. Validation of the Instrument*

The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three (3) experts – two from Measurement and Evaluation and three from Educational Administration and Planning from College of Agricultural and Science Education, University of Agriculture, Makurdi. The Validates were given a copy of the Questionnaire each to make suggestions as regards the content and coverage and some of the items were modified. Their comments, suggestions, and corrections were used to modify the instrument producing the final draft with 30 items in the questionnaire, though the initial items were thirty-five.

### *3.7. Reliability of the Instrument*

To establish the reliability of the instrument for the study, the validated instrument was administered to thirty (30) respondents comprising of fifteen (15) principals and fifteen (15) senior civil servants in the Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Board in Enugu State outside the study area but has similar characteristics. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was used to compute the reliability co-efficient in order to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The analysis revealed that influence of communication as a resolution strategy = 0.92, influence of negotiation as a resolution strategy = 0.85, influence of motivation as a resolution strategy = 0.90, influence of mediation as a conflict resolution strategy = 0.79, influence of diplomacy as a resolution strategy = 0.88, while influence of dialogue as a resolution strategy = 0.87, and on the whole, the instrument yielded a Cronbach Alpha co-efficient of 0.94 for the instrument, which shows that the instrument is reliable to be used for the study (See Appendix 'C,' Page 86).

### *3.8. Method of Data Collection*

In view of the large geographical location of the population, the researcher engaged the service of three research assistants: one covered Kogi and Benue State (Principals and Senior Civil Servants), another covered Nasarawa State, and the third person covered FCT, while the researcher himself coordinates. The research assistants were instructed on some technical terms used in the Questionnaire so as to assist the researcher in the collection of responses to minimize instrument mortality.

### *3.9. Data Analysis Techniques*

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using chi-square statistics. The mean cut off of 2.5 was used to determine influence, while mean of less than 2.5 was not having influence. Also, mean of 0–2.49 means no influence, 2.50 means low influence, while mean of 2.51 – 2.99 means moderate influence. Mean of 3.0 – 4.0 means high influence.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

This chapter presents the analysis of data and discussion of findings. Presentation of data was carried out in two stages. The first stage covered the descriptive aspect involving frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores while the second stage covered the testing of hypotheses earlier postulated in the study using chi-square statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Discussions of the findings were presented at the end of the analysis.

No.	Item	HI	MI	LI	NI	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Clear communication has effective influence on the administration of schools	175 (59.3%)	60 (20.3%)	28 (9.5%)	32 (10.8%)	3.28	1.02	High Influence
2.	Establishing communication network among groups to reduce tension	125 (42.4%)	120 (40.7%)	30 (10.2%)	20 (6.8%)	3.18	0.87	High Influence
3.	Administrator who knows the channel of communication in the administration of the school can influence the Staff for effective administration	150 (50.8%)	75 (25.4%)	40 (13.6%)	30 (10.2%)	3.16	1.01	High Influence
4.	Person-to-person communication plays a vital role in the administration of the schools	190 (64.4%)	60 (20.3%)	25 (8.5%)	20 (6.8%)	3.42	0.90	High Influence
5.	Communication policy of government sometimes plays good role in the administration of schools	140 (47.5%)	100 (33.9%)	25 (8.5%)	30 (10.2%)	3.18	.96	High Influence
	Average	156 (52.8%)	83 (28.1%)	29.6 (10.2%)	26.4 (8.9%)	3.24	0.95	High Influence

Table 1: Frequency Counts, Percentages, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Influence of Communication on School Administration

The Table revealed that all the items on influence of communication have mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) ranges from 3.16 to 3.42 and SD 0.87 to 1.02. The cluster mean of 3.24 and SD 0.95 shows that communication has high influence as a resolution strategy among educational organs on school administration.

#### 4.1. Research Question Two

What is the influence of negotiation among educational organs on school administration?

No.	Item	HI	MI	LI	NI	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Promoting negotiation among powerful sub-group	50 (16.9%)	40 (13.6%)	150 (50.8%)	55 (18.6%)	2.28	0.95	No Influence
2.	Good negotiation can influence the administration of schools	130 (44.1%)	120 (40.7%)	20 (6.8%)	25 (8.5%)	3.20	0.89	High Influence
3.	A Principal who uses negotiation strategy can help in resolving conflict in the administration of schools	140 (47.5%)	95 (32.2%)	35 (11.9%)	25 (8.5%)	3.18	0.94	High Influence
4.	Timely negotiation can create conducive and harmonious environment in the administration of schools	130 (44.1%)	100 (33.9%)	37 (12.5%)	28 (9.5%)	3.12	0.96	High Influence
5.	A Principal with good quality of negotiation can influence school administration	125 (42.4%)	90 (30.5%)	50 (16.9%)	30 (10.2%)	3.05	1.00	High Influence
	Average	115 (39.1%)	89 (30.1%)	58.4 (19.7%)	32.6 (11.0%)	2.96	0.94	Moderate Influence

Table 2: Frequency Counts, Percentages, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Influence of Negotiation on Administration of Secondary Schools

Table 2 and Figure 2 reveals the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) of the influence of negotiation on school administration with the mean of each items and SD ranges from 2.28 to 3.20 and 0.89 to 1.0. The result indicating that negotiation influence school administration moderately with cluster mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.96 and SD 0.94

#### 4.2. Hypotheses Testing

- $H_{01}$ : Communication as a conflict resolution strategy among educational organs does not significantly influence school administration

	Df	P	Sig. Level	Decision
Chi-Square	13	0.00	0.05	Rejected
No. of Valid Cases				

Table 3: Chi-Square Analysis of Influence of Communication on Administration of Secondary Schools  
 $P < 0.05$

Table 3 shows that the P-(Sig.) 0.00 is less than alpha-value of 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ) at df 13. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that communication does not significantly influence school administration is rejected.

- $H_{02}$ : Negotiation as a conflict resolution strategy among educational organs does not significantly influence school administration

	Df	P	Sig. Level	Decision
Chi-Square	13	0.02	0.05	Rejected
No. of Valid Cases				

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis of Influence of Negotiation on Administration of Secondary Schools  
 $P < 0.05$

Table 4 shows that the P-(Sig.) 0.02 is less than alpha-value of 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ) at df = 13. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that negotiation does not significantly influence school administration is rejected.

#### 5. Discussion of Findings

Research question one revealed that there was an influence of communication in school administration with mean of 3.24 which was buttressed by the results of hypothesis one, which showed that  $P < 0.05$  at df of 13. This result is in consonance with the findings of Pruitt (2006), Okpara (2010), Best (2006) who found out that communication influences administration of organization positively or negatively. They agree that lack of communication disrupt the activities of an organization thereby resulting to poor work performance by the staff. Okpara (2010) was of the opinion that the best strategy in solving conflict is communication and diplomacy. Okpara suggested that Staff should take part in decision-making and that Principals should develop good communication skills to link information between the staff and there should be delegation of power in the school. This also goes to the present study. There should be a good flow of communication between the educational organization and the management of the school administration.

Also, the findings support Hall in Best (2006) who suggests free communication strategy among the Managers and their Staff, which Best stressed that this is vital for establishing cordial relationship because communication implies sharing ideas, facts, or impressions in ways that each person gains a common understanding of the main intent of the message. The result negates the findings of Uzoamaka (2000) who found out that there is a lack of effective communication among the educational organs, exchange of information between the Ministry of Education, Teaching Service Board, and the Principal, which is communication to the staff and other managers of school administration.

Analysis of question two in Table two revealed that there is moderate influence of negotiation on the administration of schools with the mean of 2.96. The result was also revealed on Table 4, which indicated a significant influence of negotiation on schools' administration where  $P < 0.05$  at df = 13. The finding supports the work of Obi (2002) and Akpama (2000) who pointed out a significant influence of negotiation on conflict in secondary schools. They suggested that school administrators should always adopt the use of negotiation in resolving their differences, and that the responsibility for managing conflict rests with the Management's effectiveness of the Principals, which is one of the educational ways. The good of negotiation is to agree through joint decision-making between parties, which are educational organs and school managers. This result may be due to practice reservoir by the Management whereby managers and staff use collective bargaining in resolving their differences. Also, Principals negotiate with their teachers as well as Principals in their ANCOP meeting negotiate with the educational organs and administrators.

#### 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that conflict could be avoided or managed effectively if the parties involved engaged in a variety of approaches at terminating the issues. These strategies enable organizations such as schools and educational organs to handle conflict peacefully and cooperatively without hurting any of the parties.

#### 7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

- There should be a cordial relationship between the educational organs and Principals of schools because this will enhance effective resolution of conflict.

- There should be a flow of communication link between the parties involved for the avoidance of conflict.

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