

# Influence Of Organizational Conflict Resolution Methods On Employees Performance In Selected Floriculture Firms In Murang'a County, Kenya

Elizabeth Njoki Gathoni ,

School Of Business And Economics Department Of Management Mount Kenya University-Kenya

Dr. Nickson Lumwagi, Phd

School Of Business And Economics Department Of Management Mount Kenya University-Kenya

---

## Abstract

Conflicts are unavoidable in today's workplaces. Appropriate mechanisms to resolve arising disputes should-be utilized to allow timely resolution of the conflicts to avoid their potential significant negative effects on employees' performance. The floriculture sector contributes significantly to Kenya's economy in terms of employment opportunities and foreign exchange earnings. However, there was dearth of empirical evidence regarding the implications of entity's dispute resolution techniques on workers' productivity in the local floriculture-sector. Therefore, this empirical investigation's aim was to ascertain how firms' disputes resolution techniques affected employees' performance in a few chosen floriculture companies in Murang'a County. Precisely, we interrogated the influence of collaboration, mediation, negotiation and avoidance as methods of conflict resolution on workers' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County. Human capital, human relations and contingency theories guided this probe. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was utilized. A total of 1,600 workers of the chosen floriculture companies in Murang'a County, Kenya constituted the study population. 160 participants were sampled for the study using stratified random selection approach. A questionnaire was utilized as this empirical probe's research tool. The supervising lecturer assisted in determining the questionnaire's validity. The questionnaire was established to be reliable as it produced Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value of 0.871. Descriptive measures applied in probing obtained data comprised of means, probabilities, occurrences and normal deviations. Additionally, multiple linear regression model were applied in examining how several variables being investigated related. The results were exhibited in tables. Ethical principles observed included confidentiality of the information acquired, discreteness in handling and processing the study data, respondents' participating on their own volition, safe data storage and utilizing the study data only for research aims. Key findings of this empirical investigation were that an important favourable association existed between collaboration and employees' work output ( $\alpha=0.751$ ,  $p=.000$ ); a consequential favourable connection existed between mediation and employees' work output ( $\alpha=0.673$ ,  $p=.002$ ) and a consequential favourable connection also existed between negotiation and employees' performance ( $\alpha=0.714$ ,  $p=.000$ ). However, avoidance discords resolution method had a notable unfavourable implication on the workers' productivity ( $\alpha=-0.528$ ,  $p=.012$ ). It were inferred then that collaboration, mediation and negotiation as institutional disputes resolution approaches favourably impacted the staffs' work output while avoidance disputes resolution approach affected in an adverse manner the workers' productivity. Managers of floriculture firms in the country ought to develop mechanisms for routine monitoring and evaluation of how diverse disputes resolution approaches affected their institutions staffs' productivity. This could guide their decisions on which institutional disputes resolution methods are appropriate for resolving prevailing discords within the work place.

**Key Word:** Conflict resolution, employee's performance, Avoidance, mediation, Collaboration, negotiation

Date of Submission: 29-10-2023

Date of Acceptance: 09-11-2023

---

## I. Introduction

Conflicts at work are a natural byproduct of the nature of today's businesses, whether they are public or private, in the service or manufacturing industries. Conflicts arise due to a lack of freedom, power, and resources, structural issues like poor leadership and communication, along with variations in staff members' personalities, outlook, values, conceptions, cognition and desires (Raines, 2019). Odeleye (2021) defines workplace conflict as disagreements and strife within an organization brought on by differences in real or imagined aims, desires, principles or preferences of individual staffers, and by the frustration that results as each member tries to individually take part in the achievement of institutional objectives. Thus, workplace or organizational conflicts are pervasive in modern organizations and take many different forms, such as rivalries, contests for influence and

approval, spite, interpersonal disagreements, or other consequential manifestations like industrial action, downing tools, revolts along with legal action (Rahim, 2017; Singleton et al., 2021).

Organizational conflicts, however, can also have negative effects, particularly if they cause hatred among coworkers or teams. These effects can include untimely decisions, uncomplimented to work timelines, misery, lack of synergy, choosing to resolve issues individually instead of together with others, skepticism, subpar clients relations and assistance, interruptions during performing work, diverting workers' attention and energy away from the most pressing issues, among other things (Rubenstein, 2018). According to research by Paresashvili et al. (2020), finding solutions to employee conflicts now takes managers twice as long as it did in the past. This puts conflict management at the top of the management agenda. Given this, timely and effective management of organizational conflicts is essential to an entity's smooth operation as well as to ensuring that workers perform at their best (Devi & Dhiman, 2020).

Utilizing diverse styles along with techniques to handle disputes in groups or individuals, organizational conflict management (OCM) aims to lessen the unfavourable aspects of a disagreement while enhancing its positive aspects (Overton & Lowry, 2019). Organizational conflict management, according to Ayinde et al. (2021), entails a company determining the conflict's root cause, coming up with strategies to lessen its negative effects, and, whenever possible, resolving the conflict. Similar to this, Blank (2019) articulated the stance that disputes resolution within entities is typified through instituting effectual ways of resolving or handling disputes and seeking to maximize the favourable effects of such dispute in order to allow individual staff members succeed in executing their responsibilities. This illustrates that organizational disagreements resolution techniques are techniques or approaches used by management to settle workplace conflicts (Odeleye, 2021).

To maximize performance of employees, those in positions of influence inside the firm must consciously work to improve aspects that promote and advance employees' work output while simultaneously minimizing or eradicating aspects having a negative impression on the workers' productivity (Mihaylova, 2022). It's undeniable that an organization's ability to effectively manage, develop, and stimulate its employees' performance is a key determinant of how well the organization performs, especially in the operating environment of today, which is marked by fierce competition and fluidity (Williams, 2019).

Kenya's floriculture industry is a major player in Kenya's agro-based economy and in the global market for cut flowers. Kenya ranks as number globally in respect of cut flowers' exports, the bulk of which are sold in the European Union (EU). Kenya's horticultural industry ranks number three in reference to forex earnings, after diaspora remittances and tourism, with earnings of Kshs. 151.2 billion in 2020 of which Kshs. 108.7 billion (72%) were generated by the floriculture industry. Further, the floriculture industry is also one of the country's largest sources of employment, with over 150,000 people directly employed in the industry, a further 500,000 relying on it indirectly, hence in the overall impacting over 2 million livelihoods (KFC, 2021).

To further cement its position among the global leading exporters of cut flowers, the Kenyan floriculture industry must strive to optimize its productivity through enhanced employees' performance. However, there was paucity of local data as to how organizational conflict resolution influenced employees' performance in the industry, an area this study has elaborated on.

### **Problem Statement**

Achieving above average work output levels in industry workforce has remained a concern for the management of the flower firms despite the industry's impressive growth and advancement over the years (Korir, 2021). Employee performance in Kenya's floriculture businesses has suffered over time as a result of frequent strikes and go-slows by workers who are protesting poor working conditions, demotivating remuneration, unfair practices at the workplace, among others. This in turn occasions huge losses to the individual firms and risks destabilizing the entire industry with its attendant negative consequences on livelihoods and the overall Kenyan economy in general (Opondo, 2019). In light of the fact that workplace conflicts in floriculture firms were unavoidable because of the workforce's diversity and dynamism, as well as the industry's significant contribution to the local economy, it was essential to conduct an empirical study to determine how resolution of organizational conflicts impacted employees' performance in these firms.

Globally, empirical investigations evaluating resolution of conflicts and performance of employees by Mughal and Khan (2018), Choi and Ha (2018) and Mihaylova (2022) in South Korea, China and Bulgaria respectively reported that workplace conflicts adversely impacted employee performance unless amicably resolved in a timely manner. Similarly, studies in Nigeria by Agwu (2019), Umana (2019), Odeleye (2021) and Usendok (2022) also made the point that organizations should use appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms to ensure that conflicts were resolved as soon as possible given the significant negative effects of workplace conflicts on employees' performance.

Local studies on the study subject by Francis (2018) in the Kenya's public hospitals; Mwikali (2019) in Kenya's energy utility firm; Olang (2017) in Stima Sacco Society Limited; Kagwiria (2019) in Kenya's telecommunication industry and Mwaniki (2021) in Kenya's public universities - all concurred that effective

resolution of organizations' conflicts significantly affected workforce performance. However, none of these local empirical investigations examined how various dispute resolution methods affected workers' productivity in Kenya's floriculture businesses. Current empirical investigation aimed at addressing this notable gap.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This investigation probed the influence of organizational dispute resolution methods on employees' work output in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.

### **General Objective**

Determining the influence of institutional conflict resolution methods on workers' work output/performance in chosen floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya

### **Specific Objectives**

- i. To establish the influence of collaboration as a conflict resolution method on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.
- ii. To examine the influence of mediation as a conflict resolution method on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.
- iii. To establish the influence of negotiation as a conflict resolution method on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.
- iv. To determine the influence of avoidance as a conflict resolution method on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The tested null hypotheses were;

- H<sub>01</sub>. Collaboration as a conflict resolution technique had no significant influence on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.
- H<sub>02</sub>. Mediation as a conflict resolution technique had no significant influence on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.
- H<sub>03</sub>. Negotiation as a conflict resolution technique had no significant influence on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.
- H<sub>04</sub>. Avoidance as a conflict resolution technique had no significant influence on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **Human Relations Theory**

Mayo proposed the human relations theory in 1933. He looked at how employees' motivation, social connections, and levels of satisfaction affected their productivity. Mayo emphasized the strength of natural teams, explaining that interpersonal relationships are always more significant than organizational structures. He thinks it's crucial for managers and employees to communicate with one another in a two-way fashion. In order for employees to make the best decisions, leaders must clearly convey their work objectives to them (Currie et al., 2017).

Additionally, since the theory doesn't acknowledge discord as being a productive influence, businesses expect their employees to effectively communicate information to others, express their emotions in an open manner, infer the emotions of others, and settle disagreements amicably (Usman et al., 2020). Executives who possess these skills can uphold positive working relationships with their clients (Mughal & Khan, 2018). Some conflict management techniques are related to this theory, such as the collaboration strategy, which aims to resolve disagreements via reciprocal/mutual communication along with demonstrating consideration for oneself along with fellow workers. Conflict is similarly perceived as undesirable or problematic, much like the avoidance technique does (Sasikala, Santhiya & Swetha, 2021). The importance of the theory for this research stemmed from its emphasis on collaboration and the avoidance of conflict resolution techniques as well as how they affected worker performance.

### **Human Capital Theory**

This proposition was created by Schultz back in 1961 and expanded by Becker later on in 1964. The theory's development came after it was acknowledged that the contribution of physical capital growth to organizational performance is relatively small (Singleton et al., 2021). The term "return-on-investment" was developed by economist Theodore Schultz to analyze the costs and gains associated with educating and training one's workforce. Becker developed the concepts of entity-distinct human capital and broad-intent human-capital,

which are frequently used by human resource managers worldwide, signifying Schultz's results on gains realized from investing in human personnel (Rout & Omiko, 2017).

This model contends that by providing workers with training and education, employers can improve employee performance. The model also emphasizes that investing in education and training is an expensive endeavor that should be viewed as investing as its aim is enhancing one's earning ability. This proposition is typically applied in providing reasons behind variations in employee earnings (Raines, 2019). According to Becker, investing in the workforce in relation to aspects such as education, training along with health care cover, should be treated as an investment and therefore gains following this endeavour should be expected. Becker compares human labour to the other production aspects, including equipment along with industrial plants. In light of this, investing more in human capital as a means of production results in higher output (Dede, 2020). Therefore, the company is likely to keep trained employees with improved work output level in consequence improving the entity's productivity, a clear gain from workforce teaching and advancement initiatives (Kagwiria, 2019).

The theory has its critics because it makes the assumption that education and training are equivalent to job retention. The theory also disregards the transfer of knowledge. Employees who pursue additional training and education may not want to stay with the company and, in some cases, may leave in search of a higher paying position outside the company (Lipsky, Avgar & Lamare, 2020).

### **Contingency Theory**

Woodward created the contingency theory in 1958 as a behavioral theory. The foundation of the contingency theory is the idea that there is no one ideal strategy for running a business. The best management strategy is dependent on both internal and external factors. After taking into account the circumstances and situation the firm is in, businesses should develop the best managerial system for that time (Dede, 2020). In his 1967 classic organization in action model, Thompson identified achieving originality in an uncertain world as a significant challenge for businesses. He claims that businesses aim to achieve specific outcomes. Nevertheless, firms operate in changing contexts rife with precariousness, making it extremely challenging to develop a strategy that can be used effectively to produce the desired results. Although businesses operate in an open system, Thompson contends that they have little control over their environment, which is uncertain (Bădițoiu & Stănescu, 2018).

Application of contingency theory to settlement of institutional disputes supports the idea that discord resolution tactics chosen depends on the entity's context within which disagreements emanate (Usendok, 2022). Thus, the highlighted proposition propagates the notion that, conflict settlement strategies or mechanisms can differ significantly in lieu of the context which gave rise to existing discord. Therefore, an entity's leadership should judiciously choose the discord settlement approaches in relation to the organizational environment at the time and the preferred discord resolutions (Mauersberger, 2020). Since the theory recognizes that organizational conflict management and workforce performance were context-specific and should be viewed as such, it was pertinent to the topic of the prevailing research.

## **III. Methodology**

### **Research Design**

A descriptive cross-sectional research design was made use of. In accordance with Siedlecki (2020), this type of study approach offers a look of the prevailing situation within its context. The goal of the approach is to provide accurate information on actions, occurrences, and circumstances as they occur in real life. The design also aims to provide an estimation of the unit's percentage in a given environment as well as the true characteristics of a phenomenon or group. Determine perceptions, offer details, and assess whether there is a relationship between various variables (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). This design was preferred because it allows an objective, non-manipulative description of the current situation (Siedlecki, 2020).

### **Study Location**

This research was conducted in a few chosen floriculture corporate entities in Kenya's Murang'a County in Kenya's central region. It shares borders with several counties. To its east are Machakos, Embu and Kirinyaga; to its west is Nyandarua; to its north is Nyeri and to its south is Kiambu. It is located between longitudes 36° and 37° 27' east and latitudes 0° 34' and 107' south. The county covers 2,558.8 km<sup>2</sup> in total. The county is predominantly agricultural with coffee and tea as the leading cash crops. The county was purposefully selected as it was a leading county for floriculture farming in Kenya. The 5 selected floriculture firms from the county were leading players in Kenya's floriculture industry.

### **Target Population**

This is the total targeted group from which data is obtained. According to Pandey and Pandey (2021), a population is made up of a particular group of the research's center/focus events, elements, services, households,

things, and people. Employees of the chosen floriculture companies in Murang'a County, Kenya, made up the study population. Simbi Roses, Hanna Roses Limited, Enkasiti Roses, Lauren International Flowers, and Gatoka Farm were among the chosen floriculture businesses in Murang'a County. The five selected floriculture firms employed 1,600 people overall, according to their HR records (HR Records of the Selected Floriculture Firms, 2022). These comprised the study's intended audience. This study's population outline was as appears

### **Sample Size and Sampling Method**

Stratified random selection method was utilized for selecting study sample. This sample selection approach was useful in categorizing the workforce on-the basis of their job cadres as either supervisory or general while at the same time according every one of them similar chance to be chosen thereby ensuring no prejudice in arriving at the sample. The stratified sampling method is beneficial for non homogenous groups that need to be grouped into distinct categories or cadres for easier analysis, according to Pandey and Pandey (2021). 160 respondents, or 10% of the study population, made up the study sample. According to Yadav, Singh, and Gupta (2019), a sample equaling 10 percent of aggregate targeted participants was suitable for inference-making and statistical reporting

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The procedure for gathering data involved the researcher securing the necessary approvals for the study's conduct from the Mount Kenya University ethical board as well as from the authorities of the chosen floriculture firms. Prior to their participation, selected responders got requested to offer their informed consent. In order to allow the participants adequate time for comprehending along with responding to the queries in the tool and to guarantee a good and reasonable return rate, the principal researcher investigator made close follow up with the participants and gave them a two-week period for answering the study tool.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Data was coded and divided into groups after collection for easier probing. Quantitative data obtained through the use of closed-ended questions were scrutinized utilizing several descriptive measures comprising of probabilities, occurrences, averages along with normal variations. Multiple regression analysis was applied in-the study to check whether variables under investigation were related.

Regression analysis, according to Mweshi and Sakyi (2020), enabled the researcher to determine how the explanatory variables influenced the study's explained variable. Regression analysis' main advantage was its capacity to show how much variations in the explanatory attributes affected the explained attribute along with highlighting the kind of association (Pandey & Pandey, 2020). Data was probed utilizing SPSS v. 23. Study's outcomes were demonstrated in tables.

The multiple regression model applied was as below;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where; Y = Dependent variable (employee performance)  $X_1$  = Collaboration,  $X_2$  = Mediation,  $X_3$  = Negotiation,  $X_4$  = Avoidance,  $\beta_1 - \beta_4$  = regression-coefficients of explanatory attributes,  $\varepsilon$  = residual-term,  $\alpha$  = constant

Relevance of the regression estimators was assessed with the t statistic at 5% level of significance while the model's essence were measured utilizing the F statistic.

Principal investigator ran two diagnostic tests that included the normality and multicollinearity tests before performing the multiple regression probing. The study data's normality were ascertained utilizing Shapiro-Wilk test at an essence level of 5% with  $p \geq 0.05$  signifying normality of-the data while  $p < 0.05$  signifying that it wasn't normal. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) along with Tolerance values evaluated multicollinearity with Tolerance values of greater than 0.1 along with VIFs of  $\leq 3$  signifying attributes examined were not correlated. These two diagnostic tests were essential in evaluating that used data satisfied suppositions for performing regression analysing.

## **IV. Result**

### **Response rate**

Out of the 160 questionnaires administered, sufficient feedback was received from 134 of the targeted participants yielding a feedback level/score of 83.8%. This response rate was deemed to be representative and appropriate as it conformed with Pandey and Pandey (2021) averment that feedback rates of at least 50% are deemed satisfactory with rates of 70 percent or more regarded as exceptional.

### **Reliability Test Results**

A pilot study was performed among 16 employees of the 5 selected floriculture companies in Murang'a County, Kenya who were not participants in the main study.

### **Demographic characteristics**

From the outcomes illustrated above, of all study participants, slightly over half (52.2%, n = 70) were female while 47.8% (n = 64) were male. Majority of the respondents were aged 18 - 49 years with a third (33.6%, n = 45) aged 30 - 39 years, 31.3% (n = 42) aged 40 - 49 years and 28.4% (n = 38) aged 18 - 29 years. Most of the respondents had either Secondary education (46.3%, n = 62) or Primary education (26.1%, n = 35). Slightly over half of targeted participants had worked in their organization for 1 - 5 years (52.2%, n = 70), 23.9% (n = 32) had worked in their organization for over 10 years while 16.4% (n = 22) had served in their firm for 6 - 10 years. Further, majority (94%, n = 126) of the respondents indicated that they had seen discords where they worked. The findings therefore demonstrated that those engaged in the study were relatively young and middle aged, male and female adult staff members working in chosen floriculture companies in Murang'a County, Kenya possessing largely basic educational status, who had worked in their respective organizations for a notable duration and who had evidenced discords in their places of work. Similar demographic attributes were reported in studies by Aoun et al. (2020), Ayinde et al. (2021) and Korir (2021) in which the respondents were of both genders, in their productive years, had basic education background and had experienced/witnessed conflicts in their work place. In contrast, the respondents in studies by Agwu (2019) and Odeleye (2021) had much higher (tertiary) education level.

### **Collaboration as a Conflict Resolution Method**

The study investigated the influence of collaboration as discords resolution method on work output of workforce in chosen floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya. The study evaluated whether participants concurred with several postulations relating to collaboration as an approach to settling discord within entities they worked for utilizing a rating of 1 to 5 with 1=intensely disagreeing, 2=disagreeing, 3=neither disagreeing nor concurring, 4=concurring and 5=intensely concurring. The results reveal that employees of the selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County were in concurrence that collaboration improves employees' work output given its emphasis on the need for willingness and readiness for parties in the conflict to acknowledge each others demands fully (mean = 4.31); collaboration promotes attainment of shared ideal results in resolution of conflicts as it focuses on relations building and assimilating/blending solutions (mean = 4.17) along with that collaboration in discords settlement, makes involved parties feel understood and appreciated (mean = 4.02). The respondents further shared the view that adopting discourse in resolution of disputes contributed to favourable dispute outcomes in turn contributing to improved work output among employees (mean = 3.76) and that collaboration provides a viable approach for merging diverse perspectives to a challenge resulting to a strong commitment to the agreed solution among parties involved in a dispute (mean = 3.66). The overall score of a mean of 3.98 depicts that those who participated concurred with the various listed statements regarding collaboration as a conflict resolution method, with the overall normal variation of 0.984 denoting that the respondents' feedback did not highly vary. This demonstrated that the study participants did appreciate that collaboration served an important role in conflict resolution in their organizations.

### **Mediation as a Conflict Resolution Method**

Results illustrated that employees of-the selected floriculture firms did concur that mediation supported enhanced employees' work-performance as the ultimate decision was made by the conflicting parties and not the mediator (mean = 4.18); mediation boosts workers' performance through preservation of existing relations among the conflicting persons or groups (mean = 3.99) along with that it also improves workers' performance as it increases the likelihood that conflicts are resolved quickly hence time and money saved (mean = 3.89). They further concurred that mediation gives an opportunity for the conflicting parties to evaluate postulations, strengths and frailties of held position (mean = 3.86) as well as that through mediations, warring parties are accorded the opportunity to partake in actively resolving the conflict and to listen to each other in an amicable and confidential background (mean = 3.69). The overall score of a mean of 3.92 depicted that participating respondents concurred with the various listed statements on mediation, with the overall normal variation value of 0.965 denoting that responses offered did not vary highly. There was hence appreciation among study participants that mediation constituted an instrumental disputes resolution method which helped improve employees' work output

### **Negotiation as a Conflict Resolution Method**

Results outlined demonstrated that employees of-the selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County did concur that by allowing warring parties to be part of arriving at final accords, negotiations promote adherence and contentment with agreed settlements (mean = 4.01); negotiations also aid in elucidating and restricting matters as well as creating a setting of frankness and teamwork or partnership even-when the desired outcome is unattained (mean = 3.93) as well as that negotiations helps improve interactions among warring sides leading to preservation of relationships (mean = 3.89). The respondents further concurred that negotiations are generally riskless in that interactions are conducted with no bias and parties can seek alternative recourse, when no settlements are attained

(mean = 3.87) along with that negotiations offer a rapid, cost effective and adaptable method to settlement of conflicts (mean = 3.69). The overall score of a mean of 3.88 illustrated that most of the study participants concurred with the various listed statements on negotiation, with the overall normal variation of 0.996 denoting that their replies did not vary highly. The inference was that the study participants did recognize the value of negotiation as an approach to settlement of disputes.

**Avoidance as a Conflict Management Technique**

Results demonstrate that the study-participants did accept that failure to resolve disputes may occasion unattainment of an entity’s lasting objectives (mean = 3.71). However, the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the views that this disputes resolution strategy accords one the opportunity to ready themselves well and gather right facts before they act (mean = 3.45); avoidance dispute resolution method deleteriously affects performance of workers by permitting worsening of disputes (mean = 3.37); the avoidance approach allows one space and capacity to dwell on more pressing or consequential matters instead (mean = 3.31) and that not minding inconsequential disputes bolstered employees’ work output (mean = 3.11). The overall score of a mean of 3.39 depicts that the study participants were neutral (neither agreed nor disagreed) with the various listed statements regarding avoidance, with the overall normal divergence of 1.188 denoting that their replies were not highly variable. This showed that the surveyed individuals had varied views regarding the role of avoidance as a conflict resolution method within the entities they worked for.

**Employees’ Performance in the Selected Floriculture Firms**

Results on the employees’ performance status depict that over the 3-year period [2017-2019], the absenteeism rate among the employees of the 5 selected floriculture firms in Murang’a County, Kenya decreased from a rate of 10.36% in 2017 to a rate of 7.96% in 2019 denoting an improvement in the employees’ work attendance over the period.

Further, the results also indicated that over the 3-year period [2017-2019], the firms’ revenue per employee increased from a mean of Kshs. 82,714.29 in 2017 to a mean of Kshs. 98,063.77 in 2019 denoting a 18.56% increase in revenue per employee over the period.

Further, the results also indicated that over the 3-year period [2017-2019], the number of units produced per employee in the 5 selected floriculture firms in Murang’a County, Kenya increased from a mean of 49,773 in 2017 to a mean of 67,816 in 2019 denoting a 36.25% increase in production units per employee over the period.

The decrease in absenteeism rate coupled by increased revenue per employee and increased production units per employee in the 5 selected floriculture firms in Murang’a County, Kenya implied that employees’ performance in the firms improved over the 3-year period from 2017-2019. Improved performance in employees’ performance was also reported in studies by Kagwiria (2019) and Usendok (2022) which they attributed to increased emphasis on timely and amicable resolution of workplace conflicts. Related findings were reported by Agwu (2019) and Ayinde et al. (2021) in which employees’ performance was found to significantly improve when workplace conflicts were effectively addressed in a timely manner. Olang (2017), Umana (2019) and Odeleye (2021) also opined that effective conflict resolution contributed to improved employee performance through creating a conducive working environment which in turn enabled the workforce to deliver at greatest level possible

**Normality Tests**

The Shapiro - Wilk test was utilized in ascertaining the study data’s normality at an alpha value of 5%. For  $p \geq 0.05$ , normality of the data was assumed while divergence from normality was marked by p values less than 0.05. All the variables above 0.05 significance level level

**Regression Analysis**

Multiple regression analysis was applied for determining how the several variables under probe were related. The explanatory attributes which comprised of avoidance, collaboration, negotiation and mediation were evaluated against the explained attribute (employees’ performance). Subsequent resultant findings are outlined;

**Model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.844 <sup>a</sup>	0.712	0.703	.68383

Predictors: (Constant), collaboration, mediation, negotiation and avoidance

**Source: Survey Data, 2023**

Results illustrate that 71.2% variation in the work output of the workers of selected floriculture firms in Murang’a County could be attributed to changes in the four explanatory attributes namely collaboration, mediation, negotiation and avoidance as institutional disputes resolution methods as per the R square value. The remaining 28.8% divergence in the work output of these firms’ employees would be due to attributes that did not form part of this investigation.

**ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	152.609	4	38.15225	79.73	.0000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	61.727	129	0.47850		
	Total	214.336	133			

a. Predictors: (Constant), collaboration, mediation, negotiation and avoidance

b. Dependent Variable: Employees’ performance

**Source: Survey Data, 2023**

**Regression coefficients results**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5.026	.978		5.139	.000
Collaboration	0.751	.173	.731	4.341	.000
Mediation	0.673	.215	.645	3.130	.002
Negotiation	0.714	.181	.672	3.945	.000
Avoidance	-0.528	-.207	-.461	2.551	.012

**Source: Survey Data, 2023**

The regression model, on account of Table 4.12 contents becomes;

$$Y = 5.026 + 0.751 X + 0.673 X_2 + 0.714 X_3 + -0.528 X_4 + \ell$$

As per the above model equation, keeping the four explanatory attributes (that is, collaboration, mediation, negotiation along with avoidance) unchanged at zero, work output of employees in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang’a County would be 5.026. On the overall, the regression analysis results showed that collaboration, mediation and negotiation positively correlated with employees performance as depicted by beta coefficients values of 0.751, 0.673 and 0.714 respectively while avoidance negatively related with employee performance as denoted by a beta coefficient value of -0.528, with all having p values < 0.05.

**Test Of Hypothesis**

**H<sub>01</sub> Collaboration as a conflict resolution technique has no significant influence on employees’ performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang’a County, Kenya**

An increase in utilization of collaboration as a method for settling discords by one single unit would translate into 0.751 favourable variation in the work output of workers in assessed floriculture firms in Murang’a County. A p value of .000 signified that the association between collaboration as disputes resolution method and employees’ work output in the said firms was notable. It was therefore evident that a consequential favourable connection existed between collaboration as disputes resolution method and work output of staffs in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang’a County. Consequently, the assumed null postulation was repudiated, with its alternate proposition that collaboration as disputes resolution method did have a notable influence on employees’ work output in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang’a County, acknowledged.

**H<sub>02</sub> Mediation as a conflict resolution technique has no significant influence on employees’ performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang’a County, Kenya**

An increase in utilization of mediation as discord settlement method by one single unit would translate into 0.673 favourable variation in the work output of workers in assessed floriculture firms in Murang’a County. A p value of .002 signified that the association between mediation as disputes resolution method and employees’ work output in the said firms was notable. It was therefore evident that a consequential favourable connection was present between mediation as disputes resolution method and work output of staffs in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang’a County. Consequently, assumed null postulation was repudiated, with its alternate proposition that mediation as disputes resolution method did have a notable influence on employees’ work output in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang’a County, acknowledged.



**H<sub>03</sub> Negotiation as a conflict resolution technique has no significant influence on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya**

An increase in utilization of negotiation as a method for settling discords by one single unit would translate into 0.714 favourable variation in the work output of workers in assessed floriculture firms in Murang'a County. A p value of .000 signified that the association between negotiation as disputes resolution method and employees' work output in the said firms was notable. It was therefore evident that a consequential favourable connection existed between negotiation as disputes resolution method and work output of staffs in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

**H<sub>04</sub> Avoidance has no significant effect on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya**

An increase in utilization of avoidance as a method for settling disagreements by one single unit would translate into 0.528 unfavourable variation in the work output of workers in assessed floriculture firms in Murang'a County. A p value of .012 signified that the association between avoidance as disputes resolution method and employees' work output in the said firms was notable. It was therefore evident that a consequential adverse connection existed between avoidance as disputes resolution method and work output of staffs in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang'a County. Consequently, the assumed null postulation was repudiated, with its alternate proposition that avoidance as disputes resolution method did have a notable influence on employees' work output in the chosen floriculture firms in Murang'a County, accepted. Alajekwu (2017) and Odeleye (2021) did also report that avoidance as disputes settlement method had an unfavourable impact on employees' work output. Similar observations were similarly made by Korir (2021) and Ayinde et al. (2021) who identified avoidance as a conflict resolution technique as having an adverse influence on work output of surveyed organizational employees.

## **V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Summary**

#### **Collaboration as a Conflict Resolution Method and Employees' Performance**

First, the study probed how collaboration as a method used to resolve disputes within entities impacted the work performance of staff members within the reviewed floriculture firms in Murang'a-County. Results demonstrated that utilization of collaboration as a dispute resolution method favourably and in a notable way influenced the performance of the reviewed floriculture firms' employees as depicted by a regression coefficient value of 0.751 and  $p < 0.05$ . This suggested that utilization of collaboration dispute resolution method helped improve the work output of the reviewed floriculture firms' workers.

#### **Mediation as a Conflict Resolution Method and Employees' Performance**

Secondly, the implications of mediation as discord settlement method on employees' work output in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County, Kenya were examined. Findings established that utilization of mediation as an approach for resolving workplace disputes favourably and in a meaningful way influenced the work output of workers in the reviewed floriculture firms in Murang'a County as illustrated by regression coefficient value of 0.673 and  $p < 0.05$ . This suggested that utilization of mediation dispute resolution method helped enhance the work output of persons working within the chosen floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

#### **Negotiation as a Conflict Resolution Method and Employees' Performance**

The influence of negotiation as an approach to dispute resolution on employees' performance in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County was also examined. The study established that utilization of negotiation as an approach to dispute resolution positively and in a notable way influenced the work output of workers who worked in the reviewed floriculture firms in Murang'a County. This was as illustrated by a regression coefficient value of 0.714 and  $p < 0.05$ . This suggested that utilization of negotiation as an approach to addressing workplace disputes helped enhance the work output of staff members in the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

#### **Avoidance as a Conflict Resolution Method and Employees' Performance**

Finally, an assessment of the influence of avoidance as a method of resolving disputes on work output of workers in selected floriculture firms in Murang'a County was undertaken. Findings demonstrated that a notable unfavourable correlation existed between utilization of avoidance as an approach to settlement of conflicts and how workers performed in the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County. This was as marked by regression coefficient value of -0.528 and  $p < 0.05$ . This denoted that utilization of avoidance in dispute resolution undesirably influenced the work output of the workforce within the studied floriculture firms in Murang'a County

## **Conclusion**

Application of negotiation as an approach to settlement of conflicts favourably influenced the work output of the workforce in the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

Application of mediation as disputes resolution method positively and notably influenced the work output of the workforce in-the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

Utilization of collaboration as an approach to conflicts resolution influenced in a positive way how the workforce in-the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County performed.

Utilization of avoidance as an approach to settlement of conflicts adversely influenced the work output of workers in-the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

## **Recommendation**

Application of negotiation as an approach to settlement of conflicts favourably influenced the work output of the workforce in the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

Application of mediation as disputes resolution method positively and notably influenced the work output of the workforce in-the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

Utilization of collaboration as an approach to conflicts resolution influenced in a positive way how the workforce in-the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County performed.

Utilization of avoidance as an approach to settlement of conflicts adversely influenced the work output of workers in-the surveyed floriculture firms in Murang'a County.

## **References**

- [1]. Ayinde, A. F., Bolarinwa, K. K., Alarima, C. I., Kazeem, S. O., & Kareem, H. T. (2021). Workplace Conflict And Employees' Job Performance In Agro-Services Corporation, Ogun State, Nigeria. *Journal Of Agricultural Extension*, 25(4), 43-49.
- [2]. Bădițoiu, L. A., & Stănescu, A. (2018). A Strategic Approach To Conflict Management Systems. *Revista De Management Comparat International*, 19(5), 487-496.
- [3]. Behrens, M., Colvin, A. J., Dorigatti, L., & Pekarek, A. H. (2020). Systems For Conflict Resolution In Comparative Perspective. *ILR Review*, 73(2), 312-344.
- [4]. Blank, S. (2019). *Managing Organizational Conflict*. Mcfarland.
- [5]. Choi, Y., & Ha, J. (2018). Job Satisfaction And Work Productivity: The Role Of Conflict-Management Culture. *Social Behavior And Personality: An International Journal*, 46(7), 1101-1110.
- [6]. Culpepper, B. (2021). How To Resolve A Conflict Before It Manifests Itself: Focus On And Build Healthier Relationships Within A Workplace Team. *Plant Engineering*, 75(2), 32-34.
- [7]. Currie, D., Gormley, T., Roche, B., & Teague, P. (2017). The Management Of Workplace Conflict: Contrasting Pathways In The HRM Literature. *International Journal Of Management Reviews*, 19(4), 492-509.
- [8]. Dede, N. P. (2020). Relationship Between Conflict And Deviant Workplace Behavior In Family Business. In *Analyzing Workplace Deviance In Modern Organizations* (Pp. 159-186). IGI Global.
- [9]. Devi, S., & Dhiman, R. K. (2020). Conflict Management: An Art To Deal With Problems At Workplace. *Journal Of Strategy And Management*, 11(2), 29-36.
- [10]. Francis, J.S. (2018). *Conflict Management Styles And Employee Performance In Public Hospitals In Nyeri County, Kenya*. MBA HRM Thesis, Kenyatta University
- [11]. Korir, S. (2021). Employee Productivity Challenges In Kenya's Floriculture Industry And Their Implications. *Archives Of Business Review*, 3(1), 27-34.
- [12]. Lipsky, D. B., Avgar, A. C., & Lamare, J. R. (2020). Organizational Conflict Resolution And Strategic Choice: Evidence From A Survey Of Fortune 1000 Firms. *ILR Review*, 73(2), 431-455.
- [13]. Mauersberger, H. (2020). *The Dynamics Of Workplace Conflicts*. Springer, UK
- [14]. Mihaylova, I. (2022). Workplace Conflict: Evidence From Bulgaria. *Икономически Изследвания*, (2), 115-136.
- [15]. Mughal, M.R., & Khan, M. (2018). Impact Of Conflict And Conflict Management On Organizational Performance. *International Journal Of Modern Business-Issues On Global Market*, 1(3), 1-19.
- [16]. Odeleye, J. O. (2021). Effect Of Conflict Resolution Strategies On Employee Performance - A Study Of Selected Commercial Banks In Lagos. *Conflict Resolution And Management Journal*, 31(3), 71-78.
- [17]. Rahim, M. A. (2017). *Managing Conflict In Organizations*. London: Routledge.
- [18]. Raines, S. S. (2019). *Conflict Management For Managers: Resolving Workplace, Client, And Policy Disputes*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- [19]. Singleton, R., Toombs, L. A., Taneja, S., Larkin, C., & Pryor, M. G. (2021). Workplace Conflict: A Strategic Leadership Imperative. *International Journal Of Business & Public Administration*, 8(1), 149-163.
- [20]. Umana, E. A. (2019). Conflict Resolution Strategies And Organizational Performance: An Exploratory Analysis. *International Journal Of Economics, Commerce And Management*, 7(5), 657-670.
- [21]. Usendok, I. G. (2022). Organizational Conflict Resolution And Employee Job Performance: A Case Study Of Akwa Ibom State University. *European Journal Of Business And Innovation Research*, 10(3), 10-25.