

## Gender Difference and Conflict Management Strategy Preference among Managers in Public Organizations in South-Western Nigeria

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**Abstract :** This study investigated the moderating influence of gender difference and conflict resolution strategy preference on managers' efficiency in managing industrial conflict in work organizations in South-Western Nigeria. This was for the purpose of ascertaining the relevance of gender difference and conflict resolution strategy preference to managerial efficiency towards ensuring sustainable industrial peace and harmonious labour-management relations at workplaces in Nigeria. Descriptive ex-post-facto research design was adopted for the study. A total of 185 respondents were selected for the study using purposive stratified sampling technique. A set of questionnaire titled 'Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory' (ROCI) and Managerial Conflict Efficiency Scale (MCES) were adopted for the study. The three generated hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test statistical methods. The findings of the study revealed that: A significant relationship exists between gender difference and conflict management preference of the managers ( $r = 0.644$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). It was also found that there was no significant difference between male and female managers' conflict management strategy preference ( $t(181) = 11.08$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). The finding reveals that there is no significant difference between female and male managers' conflict management efficiency on the basis of conflict management preference of the managers ( $t(181) = 10.23$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that collective bargaining strategy should be encouraged as conflict resolution strategy in order to guarantee effective management of industrial conflict and harmonious labour-management relations. Also, both male and female managers should be empowered to be appointed to managerial positions and should avoid the use of coercion, competition, aggressiveness and pro-task in the course of managing industrial conflict. Rather, persuasion, compromising, relational, lobbying and participatory approaches should be employed during collective bargaining process in order to foster effective management of conflict at workplaces.

**Keywords :** conflict management, gender difference, managerial studies, public organization and managers, strategy preference

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