CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES OF THE ROAD TRANSPORT EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS IN ABEOKUTA OGUN STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

he road transport industry in Nigeria plays a critical role in the country's economy and social evelopment, accounting for a significant portion of both passenger and freight movement. owever, the industry is often plagued with conflicts and disputes, involving transport employers, orkers, unions, regulatory authorities and commuters. This study therefore, examined Conflict andling Styles (CHS) among road transport employers and workers union in Abeokuta, Ogun ate. Two-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select 245 respondents from the two registered ıion: Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) and National Union of Road ansport Workers (NURTW). A structured questionnaire and focus group discussions were used obtain data on the respondents' demographic characteristics, types and frequency of conflict perienced, factors contributing to conflict, conflict resolution mechanisms and effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms. Data were analysed using descriptive (frequency counts, centages, mean, weighted mean average (WMA), standard deviation) and inferential Chi-square , Pearsons Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), student-t test and Analysis of Variance NOVA) statistics. Results revealed that 99.6% of the respondents are male, 75.2% are married, 8% were between 40 and 50years, 56.5% had secondary education and 59.6% had household of 4-6persons. Furthermore, 37.8% of the respondents are union executives, 46.5% had over years of experience in union activities, 73.5% used buses for transport while 81.7% ply inter- routes. The most common types of conflicts prevalent in the study area were based on route parking space ($\bar{x}w$= 288.0), government regulation and polices ($\bar{x}w$= 283.4), leadership licts ($\bar{x}$ = 279.2), power tussles ($\bar{x}w$= 238.7) and conflict with traffic authorities ($\bar{x}w$= 223.3). internal factors identified by the respondents as contributing to conflict include route petition, elongation of terms, and fear of job loss among members while change in government ies and imposition of union leaders by politicians were external factors contributing to conflict. most frequently used CHSs by the respondents were collaboration (89.0%), avoidance (88.3%) hird-party mediation (79.6%). Overall, 62.0% of the respondents utilize favourable conflict

esolution techniques. During the FGD, participants opined that intervention of third party and aders' mediation from the national headquarters in the conflict with the resolutions binding on all arties makes the CHSs very effective. Chi-square test shows a significant ($p<0.05$) association etween marital status ($\chi 2 = 12.40$; df=4), job role ($\chi 2 = 13.94$; df=4), household size ($\chi 2 = 25.51$; f=2), types of transport services ($\chi 2 = 7.08$; df=1) and CRMs respectively. PPMC shows a gnificant ($p<0.05$) relationship between the power tussle ($r=0.186$), traffic authorities ($r=0.198$) id CHSs. Student-t test indicates a significant ($p<0.05$) difference between the CHHs employed National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and Road Transport Employers ssociation of Nigeria (RTEAN) {$t=0.123$}. The study concluded that the conflict resolution echanisms used by road transport unions is very effective especially the collaborative and joint-oblem solving mechanisms mostly used by union members. Therefore, there is need for regular inings for union executives on conflict resolution strategies, emphasising collaboration while omoting fairness, transparency in leadership decisions, building trust and accountability to reduce putes among union members.