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Task and Relationship Conflicts, Employee Agility, and Perceived Job Performance

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Abstract

The investigation into the impact of conflict on the modern approach of employee agility as well as employees' perceived job performance seems to be a critical topic that has not relatively been touched on yet. The present study aims to look at the influence of conflict on employees' agility and employee's perceived job performance. This research divides conflict into two separate dimensions as task and relationship conflict to investigate the impact of each on agility and job performance. The data is collected by employing a self-structured questionnaire using 23 items and a 5-point Likert scale from the employees of a hygiene and sanitation company in Cameroon. The proposed model is examined via PLS-SEM. Overall, the study reveals that there is a negative coefficient in the relationship between relationship conflict and employee's agility; a significant positive relationship between task conflict and employee agility; and a positive significant relationship between employee's agility and employee perceived job performance. The generated results validate that task conflict is vital and welcome to workers; thus, managers are expected not to blindly avoid conflicts. The consequence of a constructive conflict can be employee agility which in itself will lead to a high level of job performance.

Keywords: task conflict; relationship conflict; employee agility; perceived job performance

Introduction

Today, firms function in a highly competitive environment defined as the global market. Operating in unstable conditions in which the volume of technological development, the rate of market fragmentation, and the levels of customer expectation toward different products are increasingly soaring, has resulted in unmanageable turbulence and dramatic changes in the business environment (Swafford et al., 2006). Among the advice on how to face the uncertainty and unpredictability of the environment, the notion of agility has particular importance. To benefit from potential future opportunities presented by the ever-changing

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market environment, enterprises are expected to foster their employees' agility (EA) and breed individuals who are able to carefully adapt and flexibly respond to market changes (Alavi & Wahab, [2013](#); Cai et al., [2018](#)). Agility is a modern approach that provides a new insight into management and manufacturing that is entirely different from planned mass production (Dove, [2001](#); Gallagher, [2020](#)). In other words, agility represents the degree to which an employee is swift to sense and accurate to respond when confronted with external changes in different forms of gaining, processing, and utilizing relevant information (Alavi et al., [2014](#); Talat, [2020](#)). It has been widely acknowledged that the benefit of EA is that it can improve client service, service quality, and organizational learning (Sherehiy et al., [2007](#)). Nevertheless, there is a clear scarcity of research on how such agility can be boosted in the literature (Ikeda, [2005](#); Sherehiy, [2008](#); Hosein & Yousefi, [2012](#); Rajan et al., [2012](#); Cai et al., [2018](#)). A review of the literature reveals that agility's impact on the nature of job performance is undeniable.

With respect to the striking importance of agility, as mentioned earlier, conflict is a key element for all organizations that can enhance EA through an efficient information process (De Dreu et al., [2003](#)). Perception of workplace conflict as well as managers' perception of this phenomenon has evolved over the last two decades. For years, conflict at work was commonly viewed—of course under the shadow of collective industrialism as being equivalent to the arrival of bad weather, which despite being unwelcomed was inescapable and frustrating. In an attempt to radically restructure the professional identity of employees in the workplace, this study's original purpose is to examine workplace conflict from a fundamentally different cognitive lens (Metcalf & Milner, [1991](#)). The main factor that inspired the authors to carry out this research is that numerous previous studies have focused excessively on the effect of leadership styles on the approach to conflict resolution (Yang, [2012](#), [2014](#); Zhang et al., [2011](#)), without clearly distinguishing between types of conflict. While the former is an important and admirable effort, clarification on whether the conflict is beneficial or problematic to business organizations is still required. Furthermore, the impact of conflict on EA and employees' perceived job performance (PJP) seems to be a critical topic that has received minimal focus thus far (Qin & Nembhard [2010](#); Cao et al., [2021](#)), which therefore highlights the need for practical research on the means of achieving successful workforce agility to resolve this deficiency. The present research represents a significant step forward in achieving this goal.

Overall, the present research will comprehensively study the impact of different types of conflict on EA and perceived job performance (PJP) respectively aiming to clarify this crucial yet largely ambiguous issue. The study poses a searching question to articulate the relationship among conflict, agility, and PJP. In this respect, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the literature on the desired variables - namely task conflict (TC) and relationship conflict (RC),

agility, and perceived job performance (PJP), develops hypotheses in accordance with the literature, tests these hypotheses via proper analyses, and finally draws a scientific conclusion while also providing various practical implications.

Literature Review

Workplace Conflict

Conflict, in general, involves disagreements about the problems, solutions, or decisions regarding specific working issues (Danielsson et al., [2015](#)). The root causes that can potentially trigger conflict are resource constraints, disparate preferences, different attitudes, opposing values and beliefs, and diverse skills (Rahim, [2011](#)). Interestingly, in recent research, the potential benefits rather than costs of conflict have become the topic of interest (Tindale et al., [2005](#)). For instance, conflict could be an efficient deterrent against the premature agreement and jumping to conclusions without examining all aspects of an issue (Stasser & Birchmeier, [2003](#)).

Conflict is an inevitable consequence of human interactions commonly seen at the workplace. In this regard, workplace conflict appears when one party, either an individual or a group, perceives its counterparts' values and mindset to be opposite to its own (Adomie & Anie, [2005](#)). Several authors have defined workplace conflict thus far. Obi ([2012](#)), for example, described workplace conflict as an act of quarrel and dispute through which one party exerts pressure on the other to make counterparts accept the first party's ideas. This description is in line with the definition of workplace conflict proposed by Henry ([2009](#)), and Ajala and Oghenekohwo ([2002](#)), whereby workplace disputes also emerge when the thoughts of different people or groups on how to accomplish work tasks mismatch with each other in organizations. Statistics show that 49 percent of employees in the US have experienced workplace conflict, while Danish employees reported a higher rate of 63 percent (Ufitinema & Sausa, [2016](#)). As such, due to the constant clash of common values within organizations, workplace conflict is inevitably bound to occur and seems to be never-ending.

Workplace conflict has formerly been investigated by scholars (Jehn & Mannix, [2001](#)). Accordingly, the effect of conflict can be constructive or destructive, which is determined by the type of conflict and the specific framework within which it occurs (Woodard et al., [2016](#)). Conflict, on the positive side, can lead to learning, creativity, and innovation, which in itself can transform the performance of employees and enhance the process of decision-making (De Dreu, [2008](#)). The opposing view is that conflict can result in a disturbance to employee performance and disruption in the normal course of events of a given task (De Dreu & Weingart, [2003](#)).

Classification of Workplace Conflict

Although some researchers have considered conflict as a unidimensional element (Currie et al., 2017), numerous studies have also ascertained that conflict is divided into two dimensions: Relationship conflict (RC) and Task conflict (TC) (Shaukat et al., 2017; Jimmieson et al., 2017; You et al., 2019). Scholars posit that the distinction between these two types of conflict is crucial for either managerial prescription or theory development (Choi & Cho, 2011; Rispens, 2012). The literature demonstrates that RC consistently has a destructive impact on PJP and it just adds costs, whereas the impact of TC could be both destructive (Mulki et al., 2015; De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017) and constructive (Todorova et al., 2013; Bai et al., 2015). In the scope of the current research, TC and RC are distinguished from each other, and the study intends to clarify the doubts on how both influence employee performances.

Task Conflict

TC concerns the contrary views and perspectives of employees on working issues, including resource distribution, work procedures, policies, and so on (Desivilya et al., 2010; Yang & Mossholder, 2004). If there is no consensus among team members on how to do a certain type of a task, TC arises. This disagreement, as mentioned earlier, could originate from discrepancies in attitudes, viewpoints, and ideas. Theoretically, task-related conflicts are expected to have positive consequences for individual performance quality and also boost team effectiveness (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Many scholars agree that task-related conflicts possess positive consequences for individual performance quality and boost team effectiveness (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). According to them, as TC increases, employees' satisfaction rises proportionately (Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). They argue that TC can enhance employees' learning processes and the accomplishment of tasks (De Dreu, 2006).

Relationship Conflict

On the other hand, RC is more personalized than TC which includes some negative emotions such as distrust, fear, anger, and disappointment (e.g., Jehn & Mannix, 2001). RC stems from interpersonal incompatibilities and clashes in terms of personality, personal values, taste, and stances against different issues (Desivilya et al., 2010). A large body of human resource studies have documented that RC may mislead employees into solving personal conflicts, and as a result, deviation from the main path of the work would be the possible scenario (Jehn et al., 2008; Rispens et al., 2007). According to Jehn (1994, 1995) and Amason (1996), the quality of group decision-making, creativity and innovation would be damaged in the case of person-related conflicts. Further, as per the study by Jehn (1994), the outcome of RC for employees and organizations would be nothing else

than a reduction in team effectiveness and team member satisfaction. This is consistent with the findings of the study by De Dreu and Weingart (2003).

Employee Agility

EA is a useful benchmark for measuring an employee's ability to swiftly and appropriately respond to unanticipated changes and even use those changes for their own benefit (Alavi et al., 2014; Cai et al., 2018). In other words, EA is the representation of an employee's capability to encounter organizational uncertainty through sensing and reacting to environmental changes (Muduli, 2017). In this regard, sufficient sources of information is a major determinant and the extent to which an employee is able to process such information is significantly important. According to the findings of the literature review, EA will be developed provided the organizational structure is sufficiently flexible to allow the latest relevant information to be disseminated throughout the organization and the required knowledge is smoothly exchanged among employees (Alavi et al., 2014; Claver-Cortes et al., 2007). Therefore, the development of EA lies in gaining various information on unpredictable occurrences (Marschak & Reichelstein, 1998).

Employee Perceived Job Performance

It goes without saying that individual-level performance includes the tasks that employees have to do in their job and it is measured as the extent to which required tasks are completed by every single member of staff. Naturally, the overall performance of individuals within a firm constructs the accumulated end result of the whole organization's activities. Hence, a high level of organizational performance will not be achieved unless the employees' individual performance levels are not improved (Mullins, 2010). Perceived organizational performance, by definition, refers to the employees' individual perceptions of the organization's output affiliated with human resources management practices that directly impact the employees' attitudes towards the organization (Mullins, 2010). In the same manner, Giauque et al. (2013) defined individual organizational performance as the individual perception of organizational efficiency by employees.

Hypotheses Development

Based on the aforementioned theoretical and empirical literature, a set of hypotheses has been formulated in the following sections and subsequently tested in this research to investigate the casual relationship between task conflict and employee agility, relationship conflict and employee agility, as well as employee agility and employee perceived job performance.

Task Conflict and Employee Agility

It is reasoned that once TC takes place, employees will be more motivated to exchange information with their colleagues and will also be more likely to remain

involved in solving problems and accomplishing tasks in partnership with colleagues. Several studies have confirmed the idea that TC aids employees to gain a wide range of information via the interaction with their colleagues, which in turn helps them follow the market changes and react as quickly as possible (De Dreu, 2007; Parayitam & Dooley, 2009; Schulz-Hardt et al., 2002). Therefore, it implies that TC is advantageous in the sense of upgrading EA and accelerating the individuals' performance.

A previous study by Ravindran et al. (2020) also corroborated the theory that TC is beneficial for employees' agility such that a high level of TC can enhance employees' capacity to sense and respond to the demands and changes (Carnevale & Probst, 1998; De Dreu, 2006). In other words, when employees face TC, they have to inevitably gather and process large amounts of information, which can subsequently enhance their ability to interchange information, accomplish tasks, and respond to external changes (De Dreu, 2006). In the prior research by Talat (2020), it was also indicated that TC assists employees in being mentally active and interactive with others rather than mere physically present. ZareRavasan (2021) found that TC enables employees to incorporate multiple lines of thinking and align their collective goals; therefore, he concluded that in developing employee EA, TC is beneficial. In accordance with the above insights, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Task conflict and Employee Agility are positively related to each other in the workplace.

Relationship Conflict and Employee Agility

Relationship conflict pushes employees to devote their energy and time to resolving personal issues instead of brainstorming for the accomplishment of a work tasks (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). That is, the more personalized the conflicts, the lower access to work-related information is. Some researchers such as de Wit et al. (2013) and Parayitam and Dooley (2009) have recently shed light on this issue and revealed that RC impedes employees' progress in acquiring and analyzing information due to human and personal relationships among employees, which in turn creates rigidity in reacting to external changes.

Along these lines, as per the study by Gallagher (2020), this type of conflict conveys disrespect and encompasses different states of interpersonal tension and rejection, which can lead to disinterest in jobs; accordingly, RC is a threat to self-esteem and is thus demotivating and stressful. Subsequently, according to Cao et al. (2021), the anxiety arising from such conflicts can significantly wear out the employees. If such a situation persists, PJP is lowered as employees spend additional time on unrelated issues in the workplace; thus, employees may become dissatisfied with their work as a result of the unproductive interactions embedded

in this type of conflict, and therefore fail to perform successfully. Taken together, we develop the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Relationship conflict and employee agility are negatively related to each other in the workplace.

Employee Agility and Employee Perceived Job Performance

Dubey et al. (2018) stated that the level of EA plays a key role in determining PJP. In other words, the ability to respond to unanticipated changes and the capability to encounter organizational uncertainty, which are all representations of EA, are correlated with the quality of job accomplishment. Additionally, Aslam et al. (2018) emphasized that agility in information sharing and responding to unexpected changes is crucial for developing individual dynamics, practices, and performance.

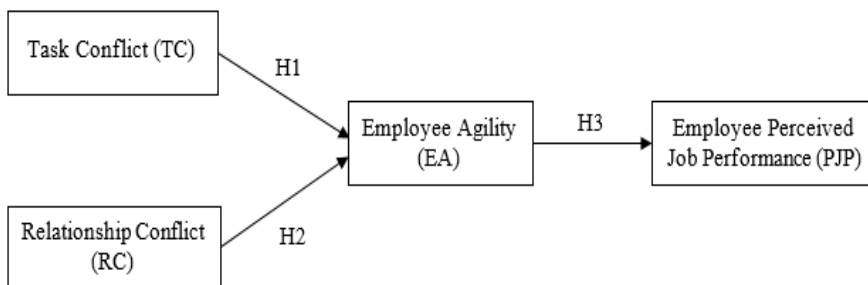
It is also argued that employees who possess a deep understanding of their tasks through EA will be able to do their jobs exceedingly well while also making the most favorable decisions that are neatly aligned with their duties and organizational goals. In doing so, employees are required to obtain as much useful information as possible via TC so that they can exhibit high performance in their work (Hastig & Sodhi 2020). Therefore, the majority of the findings of earlier research have ascertained that there is a positive association between EA and PJP (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Employee agility is positively related to employee perceived job performance.

In order to visualize the theorized relationship among the variables, by making use of the four identified major variables for the study as an indication of how each variable is associated with the others, a schematic diagram of the model is illustrated as follows:

Figure 1

Hypothesized Model



Research Methodology

Measurement

This study made use of a survey to examine the influence of RC and TC on EA and consequently PJP. Data collection was carried out by employing a self-administrated questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire comprised of two sections. The primary section was structured to obtain socio-demographic info (e.g., sex, age, literacy level, conjugal or marital status, employment form, years of working, daily working hours). In the second section of the survey, respondents rated their overall perception or cognitive interpretation on 23 items according to the conflict constructs and their belief towards EA and PJP on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Table 1 presents a summary of items and where they are derived from (sources).

Table 1

Summary of Items and Sources

Variables	Research variables	No. of items	Sources
Socio-demographic variables	gender, age, level of education, marital status, employment form, years of working, working hours every day	7	
Independent / Dependent variables	Relationship conflict	3	Ye et al. (2019); Pitafi et al. (2018).
	Task conflict	3	Ye et al. (2019); Pitafi et al. (2018).
	Employee's agility (Proactivity, Adaptability, Resilience)	12	Pitafi et al. (2018).
Dependent variable	Employee perceived job performance	5	Ye et al. (2019); Manzoor et al., (2019).

The research used the average score of every construct (i.e., RC, TC, EA, and PJP). The overall score grade was calculated by summing the answers of the respondents to the items and dividing them by the total number of items. The validity of the items was explored and checked by academicians within the fields of organization and management. The reliability of the questionnaire was checked

by reliability statistics (Cronbach's alpha). The reliability results of the questionnaire were $\alpha = 0.784$ for RC, $\alpha = 0.783$ for TC, $\alpha = 0.878$ for EA, and $\alpha = 0.820$ for PJP. Since a Cronbach's value of 0.7 and indicates an acceptable level of internal consistency (Bowling, [2014](#)), the construct values were satisfactorily high to proceed with the research.

Sampling

The study participants were employees of a Hygiene and Sanitation Company from the South West Region of Cameroon. Because of the limited access to suitable respondents during the COVID-19 pandemic period in Cameroon and the subsequent risks of the lack of generalizability of the results, this company was suitable for our research because it is a very important company in the country in general and the region in particular, which works in partnership with the councils to achieve the maintenance of healthy life in the community. The company aids in preventing devastating effects like the destruction of the ecosystem through activities such as improper waste management; may also affect the activities like businesses, education, etc. Also, based on the ability to access relevant information for the research it is important to examine the concept of conflict, agility and performance of employees within the company.

According to the number of items in the questionnaire, a sample size of around 150 respondents represents an appropriate sample of the population and represents good reliability and validity for research of this nature and type (Teimouri et al., [2018](#) ; Alarsali & Aghaei [2022](#))

On the other hand, as the PLS algorithm was applied in the analysis of the database, the smaller sample size was not a concern (Hair et al., [2013](#); Henseler et al., [2015](#)).

Convenient sampling was used to select the respondents who would complete the questionnaire from the list of staff in the company. Approximately 203 employees were asked to voluntarily take part in the research survey; no reward or incentives were given. Ultimately, 182 employees participated and returned their questionnaires; however, only 175 responded by completing their questionnaires correctly, making the response rate 86%.

Results

Profile of Respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents including gender, age, level of education, marital status, employment form, years of working, and daily working hours are reported in Table 2 below:

Table 2*Summary of Respondents' Socio-Demographic Profiles (n = 175)*

Sociodemographic variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	98	56.0
	Female	77	44.0
Age	≤ 30 years	77	44.0
	31- 40 years	73	41.7
	41- 50 years	23	13.1
	51- 60 years	2	1.1
Level of education	< Bachelor	58	33.1
	Bachelor	88	50.3
	≥ Master	29	16.6
Marital status	Single	96	54.9
	Married	79	45.1
Employment form	Full-time employee	105	60.0
	Part-time employee	70	40.0
Years of working	< 1 year	39	22.3
	1 – 4 years	59	33.7
	5 – 10 years	52	29.7
	11 – 20 years	25	14.3
Working hours every day	Less than 8 hours	26	14.9
	8 - 10 hours	139	79.4
	More than 10 hours	10	5.7

In terms of the respondents' gender, there were more male respondents with 98 (56%) than female respondents with a total of 77 (44%). According to the ages of the respondents, 77 were 30 years or below (44%), 73 were between 31-40 years of age (41.7%), 23 were between 41-50 years of age (13.1%) and only 2 were between 51-60 years of age (1.1 %). Analysis of the education level of the participants indicates that 88 of the respondents had a bachelor's degree (50.3%), while 58 had an education level lower than a bachelor's degree (33.1%) and 29 had a master's degree or above (16.6%). With regard to the marital status variable, the majority of the respondents were single (54.9%), whereas 79 were married (45.1%). For the employment form, the majority of participants were full-timers with 105 (60%) with 70 working part-time (40%). The data relating to the years of working shows that 59 of the respondents had 1-4 years of job experience (33.7%) compared with 52 who had 5-10 years (29.7%), 20 who had less than 1 year (22.3%), and 25 who had 11-20 years (14.3%). Lastly, in terms of daily working hours, 139 of the respondents worked 8-10 hours per day (79.4%), 26 worked less than 8 hours per day (14.9%) and 10 worked more than 10 hours (5.7%).

Descriptive Statistics

The four latent mean values ranged from 2.080 to 3.832 with the standard deviation ranging from 0.719 to 0.939 on a 5-point Likert scale. PJP had the highest mean of 3.832, while RC had the lowest mean score of 2.080. The dispersion numbers reported via standard deviation indicate that TC had the highest value 0.939, and EA had the lowest value of 0.719. Table 3 shows the results of the descriptive analysis. Based on the mean scores in Table 3, the respondents mostly disagreed with the statements in the questionnaire about RC (2.080), while their general attitudes towards the statements of TC (3.558), EA (3.653), and employee PJP (3.832) were all positive.

Table 3

Correlation, Collinearity, and Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Pearson Correlation Coefficient				Mean	Standard deviation	VIF
	EA	PJP	RC	TC			
EA	1				3.653	0.719	1.073
PJP	0.667**	1			3.832	0.759	2.348
RC	-0.450**	-0.540**	1		2.080	0.767	1.406
TC	0.593**	0.438**	-0.184**	1	3.558	0.939	1.129

In addition, there is no multicollinearity when the variance inflation factor (VIF) is below five. Furthermore, the results in Table 3 demonstrate that there are no high correlation coefficients (> 0.8) among all the variables in this study (Arasli et al., 2017).

Assessment Measurement of Model

The research proposed model has been tested through the PLS algorithm using SmartPLS 3.0 software. Partial least squares-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is a variance-based approach that makes use of total variance to estimate the parameters (Hair et al., 2013). Due to the robustness of PLS-SEM, it is a preferred and widely used method of study (Ringle et al., 2015). The structural equation model (SEM) is taken into consideration along with the PLS method to attain the study aims and analyze the structural model and measurement.

First, we examined the convergent validity. This involves loadings of the factors plus average variance extracted (AVE), as well as composite reliability (CR). Based on the results shown in Table 4.3, factor loadings for all items exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.6 proposed by Hair et al. (2009) except four items (EA1, EA2, EA6, EA7) that were removed because they have factor loadings

lower than 0.6. AVE values were within the range of 0.511 and 0.700, which were higher than the suggested value of 0.50, and also the CR ranged from 0.870 to 0.884, which passed the suggested threshold of 0.7 proposed by Hair et al. (2009). Table 4 displays the results of the model measurement.

Table 4

The Results of Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Items	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Relationship Conflict (RC)	RC1	0.823	0.700	0.875
	RC2	0.851		
	RC3	0.835		
Task Conflict (TC)	TC1	0.864	0.694	0.870
	TC2	0.912		
	TC3	0.708		
Employee's Agility (EA)	EA1	Item deleted	0.511	0.884
	EA2	Item deleted		
	EA3	0.673		
	EA4	0.645		
	EA5	0.620		
	EA6	Item deleted		
	EA7	Item deleted		
	EA8	0.624		
	EA9	0.770		
	EA10	0.749		
	EA11	0.704		
	EA12	0.797		
Employee Perceived Job Performance (PJP)	PJP1	0.697	0.587	0.876
	PJP2	0.760		
	PJP3	0.828		
	PJP4	0.699		
	PJP5	0.835		

After the convergent validity, the discriminant validity was tested. Discriminant validity (DV) can be considered as the degree to which all constructs utilized throughout this model are differentiated from each other (Hair et al., 2019). DV was evaluated via two approaches; firstly, the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion by examining the association amid the constructs, and secondly, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). As shown in Table 5, the roots of AVEs appeared to be higher for the whole instances than the off-diagonal factors

in their matching row and column, showing that the desired discriminant validity was gained.

Table 5

Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Construct	EA	PJP	RC	TC
EA	0.714			
PJP	0.667	0.766		
RC	-0.450	-0.54	0.837	
TC	0.593	0.438	-0.184	0.833

Note: Bold figures of diagonal show the square root of AVE and the rest of figures show the correlations.

Source: PLS-SEM generated results

Again, the HTMT ratio, which can determine the cut-off value of HTMT, was utilized in the boundary of 0.85 (Henseler, et al., 2015), for the HTMT; a value over 0.85 means absence of DV (Hair et al., 2017). The outcomes for the HTMT are all below 0.85 as proven in Table 6. It can be understood from the value of HTMT that the all the assumptions of DV are satisfied.

Table 6

Discriminant Validity (Heterotait- Monotrait Ratio)

Construct	EA	PJP	RC	TC
EA				
PJP	0.885			
RC	0.542	0.666		
TC	0.715	0.546	0.259	

Source: PLS-SEM generated results

Overall, the model measurement revealed suitable discriminant validity as well as convergent validity.

Assessment of Structural Model

For the structural model, the R^2 calculates the coefficient of determination and also the degree of importance of the path coefficients (beta values) (Hair et al., 2013). The results of the current study indicate that the R^2 value for EA is 0.472,

indicating that 47.2% of the variation in EA will be explained by the RC and TC factors, while the R^2 value for PJP is 0.589, indicating that 58.9% of the variance in PJP is explained by the EA construct. The structural model of the path coefficients is calculated and the bootstrapping technique (resampling = 1000) is employed to evaluate the statistical importance of the coefficient path (Table 4.6).

The result reveals that, between these elements, there is a positive relationship between TC and EA, while RC has a significant relationship with EA with the results of $\beta = 0.529$, t-value = 9.432, and $\beta = -0.353$, t-value = 5.858 respectively. The relationship between EA and PJP is significant and positive with $\beta = 0.767$, t = 24.909. Therefore, the results of H1, H2, and H3 are shown in Table 7 below:

Table 7

The Results of Structural Model

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	T-value	Decision
H1	TC → EA	0.529**	9.432	Supported
H2	RC → EA	-0.353**	5.858	Supported
H3	EA → PJP	0.767**	24.909	Supported

** $p < .01$.

The technique of predictive sample reuse, commonly called Stone-Geisser's Q^2 , is potentially adopted in the form of a method with the aim of predictive relevance besides of the R^2 (Henseler et al., 2009). Hence, we used this method to evaluate and predict the capacity of the research models. Based on the blindfolding procedure, Q^2 assesses the predictive validity of the model through PLS. Q^2 values greater than zero (0) show that the exogenous constructs possess predictive relevance with the endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2013). The Q^2 of EA (cross validated redundancy = 0.224) and PJP (cross validated redundancy = 0.323) signify that the research model has strong predictive relevance.

Discussion

This research was conducted with the main objective of examining the association between RC, TC, EA, and PJP. The proposed study model was analyzed by using the PLS-SEM approach and three hypotheses were tested. The study's noteworthy conclusions are fourfold compiled as follows:

Overall, the study reveals that there is a significant positive relationship among RC and TC, EA, and PJP. Furthermore, our findings show that there is a significant

negative coefficient in the relationship between RC and EA. This suggests that a high level of RC will negatively affect employee proactivity, adaptability and resilience (employees' agility). This finding is in line with relevant previous literature (Donkor et al., [2015](#)).

As discussed by Hastig and Sodhi ([2020](#)), managing the conflict among employees could be one of the major roles and challenging tasks for managers. However, the outcomes of our study imply that this is an investment which can be advantageous and help employees complete their jobs; the benefits of TC surface once employees appraise conflicts in a positive way and relate them to their working issues. The findings of our research are closely aligned with the study by Ravindran et al. ([2020](#)), who found that managers should efficiently support conflict to reach high PJP. To do so, creating a welcoming atmosphere for brainstorming, sharing ideas, team-working environments, and being open to constructive criticism from superiors, peers, and subordinates could be some of the fundamental necessities. The key, of course, is to primarily establish the culture of the company upon the pillars of tolerance towards different opinions, values, and cultural diversity (Demerouti & Cropanzano, [2010](#)).

Moreover, the findings reinforce the fact that TC has a significant positive relationship with EA. Our finding echoes the empirical argument that a constructive relationship exists between TC and EA, as stated by the overwhelming majority of previous literature (De Dreu, [2007](#); Parayitam & Dooley, [2009](#); Schulz-Hardt et al., [2002](#)).

Last but not least, our results highlight that there is a positive significant relationship between EA and PJP. This outcome has many parallels with former studies in which EA has been presented as a powerful medium for fulfilling the level of PJP.

Practical Implications

The study presents some forward-looking implications in terms of policy-making. For example, although existing conflicts among workers are some of the largest burdens faced by company leaders (Bradley et al., [2012](#)), our results connote that the advantages of TC manifest themselves when workers welcome conflict in a positive direction. In line with this research, managers of organizations or companies are expected to not blindly avoid conflicts. Instead, they should carefully differentiate between constructive and destructive conflicts and give adequate support to effective communication and information processing to maximize EA.

Furthermore, the generated results validate that conflict is vital to workers in terms of ideas sharing, brainstorming, and high-quality decision-making regardless of seniority and adopt a suitable method to maintain a specific level of conflict to

attain EA. If, of course, it is coupled with adequate support from leaders of companies for effective communication and information processing, the maximization of EA will not be unattainable.

Additionally, the research supports the positive effect of EA on PJP. Therefore, it is firmly recommended that managers establish a system within the organization through which the information is easily circulated in order to expedite employee acquisition and dissemination of information as well as to expand their capacity to respond to changes quickly, which can in turn ultimately lead to a high level of PJP.

The results also offer an insight into the influence of RC on EA. In this regard, RC's impact on EA is not advantageous but damaging. Hence, this kind of conflict can badly affect group coherence and cohesion, managers are strongly advised to encourage employees to avoid such conflicts.

The outcomes of this research signal a fresh outlook that managers should render appropriate methods to practitioners so that they can sustain a certain level of conflict and subsequently high EA. In this regard, managers are strongly advised to set challenging tasks to focus employees' minds and energy on task completion rather than interpersonal differences.

Furthermore, while little was formerly known about the differentiation between TC and RC, this research is an outstanding contribution that reminds practitioners to differentiate between these two elements and approach them with appropriate strategies. The research further suggests that employees should not hesitate to engage in conflicts with peers that are related to task completion to be able to gain as many additional resources and information as they need.

Recommendations for Future Research

Firstly, regarding the fact that this study was conducted in Cameroon (Hygiene and Sanitation Company), we recommend that future researchers perform similar studies on other sectors like education, banking, and other organizations for more appropriate results. Secondly, all major variables during this research work were evaluated based on the perception of individual respondents, which is purely personalized. While the sample size of this work suits the research purpose, making use of a larger sample could generate a better statistical data set. For this reason, we recommend that future researchers use objective data or collect information from various sources. Thirdly, viewing the variables of this study from different visual horizons can be taken into consideration. For example, research examining the relationship among EA, adaptability, proactivity, resilience, and PJP can be pursued in future studies. Lastly, a study that explores the effect of TC and RC effect on EA and PJP at both individual and group levels interpreting the results in comparison is recommended.

The authors faced some limitations while conducting this research, mainly in relation to the data collection process. The primary shortcoming observed during this research was the difficulty in gathering data due to COVID-19 pandemic constraints. In addition, the reluctance of the respondents to fill in the questionnaires due to the concern that the responses would be exposed was another major challenge.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Relationship Conflict

- 1 Your work group has got too much relationship tension.
- 2 Individuals usually feel angry as working in your group.
- 3 Your work group has got too much emotional conflict.

Task Conflict

- 4 Your work group has got too much conflict of ideas.
- 5 You usually disagree with your group members on different task of the projects that you work on.
- 6 Individuals within your work group often have opposing ideas on your working project.

Employee's Agility (Proactivity, Adaptability, Resilience)

- 7 I am in search of a chance to improve myself at work.
- 8 I always strive to find more efficient ways to carry out my job.
- 9 I set time for the duties that I want to do.
- 10 At work, I actively follow what I am expected to do.
- 11 At work, I am able to adapt myself with new work settings.
- 12 At work, I am able to understand how to utilize new equipment.
- 13 At work, I have the ability to keep myself up-to-date.
- 14 At work, I have the ability to shift my focus from one duty to another.
- 15 I can fulfill my job effectively in situations that have difficulty and stress.
- 16 I have the ability to do my job well while facing a high load of work or heavy.
- 17 Once an unfamiliar situation happens, my reaction is to solve the problem.
- 18 I take everything away and choose an alternate action to handle a sudden problem.

Employee Perceived Job Performance

- 19 I (employee) always finalize the tasks mentioned in my job description.
- 20 I (employee) always meet the performance standards of the job.

Employee Perceived Job Performance

- 21 I (employee) always perform all tasks necessary in my job.
 - 22 I (employee) always accomplish my obligations to carry out in my job.
 - 23 I (employee) usually fail to fulfill crucial tasks.
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