

CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

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Bachelor Thesis

HOW CULTURE INFLUENCES BUSINESS: MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL
CONFLICT FROM THE CULTURAL VIEW POINT.

CASE STUDY: NIGERIA AND SWEDEN

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DECLARATION

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled “**How culture influences business- Managing organizational conflict from the cultural view point-Case study: Nigeria and Sweden**” by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis.

In Prague on 30.3.2012

Adetola opeoluwa

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Almighty God for the guidance. I would like to thank all the people that helped me to complete this project such as Adetola Akolade, Ogunfowora Olumide Taiwo and Jirka Kehar for the help they rendered in the course of this thesis work and particularly my committed supervisor Richard Selby PhD, without whom this task would have been hard for me to complete.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this Thesis to God Almighty who has been my source of strength and wisdom.

HOW CULTURE INFLUENCES BUSINESS: MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL
CONFLICT FROM THE CULTURAL VIEW POINT.
CASE STUDY: NIGERIA AND SWEDEN

JAK KULTURA OVLIVŇUJE PODNIKÁNÍ: ŘÍZENÍ ORGANIZAČNÍ KONFLIKTY Z
POHLEDU KULTURNÍHO BODU
PŘÍPADOVÁ STUDIE: NIGÉRIE a ŠVÉDSKA

ABSTRACT

Conflict and culture are inevitable in organisations. Culture plays a very huge role in business and can influence the business in different ways. This paper aims to show that in every country, there is the existence of different cultures and this is brought into the world of business. Also to show that decisions made in business are enforced and made depending on the culture the person making the decision is from and also to show the management of conflicts in organization from the cultural perspective. This study explores how culture influences business ,the nature of conflict in organisations and how it is managed.

The methodology of this thesis is based on research methodology. Research methodology can be described as the instrument used in selecting and constructing technique-a range of approaches used to gather data. It is a method used for studying a problem in order to get necessary datas.

The use of case study of two countries-Nigeria and Sweden will implement the outcome of my point of how culture can have a great impact on business and how conflict is managed in organisations from the cultural view point. Based on my knowledge in culture and findings from research done, the conclusions of this thesis was formulated

Key words: Culture, Business, Organization, Company, Nigeria, Sweden, Conflict

SOUHRN

Konflikty vznikající z různých kultur se organizacím nevyhnou. Kultura hraje významu roli v podnikání a ovlivňuje podnikání obecně. Tato práce se snaží na tohle téma poukázat, že v každé zemi kde vedle sebe existuje více kultur. Také poukazuje na to, že rozhodování v podnikání jsou prosazována a dělána v závislosti na osobě z dané kultury, a rozebírá konflikty managementu v organizaci z hlediska kultur. Tato studie zkoumá jak kultury ovlivňují podnikání, tak podstatu konfliktu a jak jej vyřešit.

Metodologie této práce je odvozena od výzkumné metodologie, ta může být popsána jako nástroj pro výběr a tvorbu technik z řady přístupů pro sběr dat. Tato metoda je používána pro studování nějakého problému za účelem získání potřebných data.

Případová studie dvou zemí Nigérie a Švédsko bude výsledkem mého pozorování jak dvě kultury mohou mít významný dopad na podnikání a jak jsou konflikty řešeny z pohledu daných kultur. Na základě mých znalostí o kulturách a výsledků z průzkumu, je popsán závěr této práce.

Klíčová slova – Kultura, Podnikání, Organizace, Společnost, Nigérie, Švédsko, Konflikt

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Fig 3-4. Source: From 'Support for a Two-Dimensional model of conflict behavior, 'by T.L. Ruble and K. Thomas in organizational behavior and human performance 1976,p. 145 23

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is focused on the management of organisational conflict from the cultural view point. The ways of managing organizational conflict are as varied as its causes, origins and contexts. The purpose of conflict management, whether undertaken by the parties in conflict or whether involving the intervention of an outside party, is to affect the entire structure of a conflict situation so as to contain the destructive components in the conflict process (e.g. hostility, use of violence) and help the parties possessing incompatible goals to find some solution to their conflict. Effective conflict management succeeds in (1) minimizing disruption stemming from the existence of a conflict, and (2) providing a solution that is satisfactory and acceptable.¹

In the world of today, culture plays a very important and significant role in the ethical attitudes of managers, employees; different cultural backgrounds may influence the reasoning of the individual. Furthermore, each culture views the world from different perspectives. As a result of this occurrence of the globalization of markets and businesses, and a huge increase in cultural conflicts faced by managers in medium and large companies around the world, it has become very imperative to know what great impact and influence culture has on the ethics, especially in the four dimensions of Hofstede's.

As said by Ikechukwu Eze (1999) the culture of the people has a strong influence on the behaviours exhibited by such people in the organizations which they work. Also from the cultural view point to see how the management of organizational conflict is resolved,

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part is focused on the theoretical overview and tries to explain the basic theories and terminology linked to managing organizational conflict from the cultural view point such as culture, different definitions of culture, conflicts, types of conflicts, managements of conflicts and how to resolve conflicts.

The second part, is focused on the research, which took place through questionnaires distributions to both countries of study-Nigeria and Sweden. This part is concluded with the results of the research.

¹ Derr C. Brooklyn, 1986 Cross-Cultural Approaches to Leadership Development

CHAPTER 2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The chapter describes the objectives of the thesis and describes the details concerning how this thesis has been carried out.

2.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To show that in every country, there is the existence of different cultures and this is brought into the world of business.

- To explore how national culture influences conflict management through a comparison between Sweden and Nigeria.

- And also to show how conflict is being resolved in these countries.

.

2.1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question from the research done is:

What are the various ways, if any, does culture influence organizational conflict and the main forms of conflict management?

2.1.2 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY.

This study is important in the following ways:-

- The study will be of great use for teaching and for further research purposes.

- It will give a better over-view of ways of understanding and managing organizational conflict in organizations in Nigeria.

- It will serve as a good means for other organizations worldwide to have a better understanding in developing strategies and decisions towards resolving organizational conflicts.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this thesis work, research methodology was used. The research methodology can be described as the tool used in selecting and constructing technique-a range of approaches used to gather data. It is a method used for studying a problem in order to get necessary data. It is also the framework for studying a defined problem in order to have a factual assessment of the problem under study in order to draw meaningful conclusions

The research methodology applied for this thesis is discussed under the following sub-headings:- Source of data collection, Methods of data collection, Population of the study, Sample of the study and Method of data analysis

CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 CULTURE.

Culture has been defined as the values, beliefs, rituals, symbols and behaviours that we share with others that help define us a group, especially in relation to other groups (Merrit and Helmreich, 1996, p. 1)² and organisational culture as a system of shared values, assumptions, belief and norms that join organisational members (Smircich 1988: Kilmann, Saxton & Serpa 1986 as cited in Bartol et al (1995, p.101)). Hayward (1997, p. 1) quotes Hofstede (1980) where he indicates culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another.³

3.1.1 DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS OF CULTURE.

At present, definitions of culture are numerous and varied. However, these definitions are not mutually restricted but rather reveal different aspects of the diffuse concepts of culture. (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, pp. 66-67) define culture as a derivative of German word 'Kultur'. 'Kultur' indicated the distinctive 'higher values of enlightenment of a society'.⁴ Also culture was defined as 'the sway of man over nature'. (Ibid. pp. 25-30).⁵ Accordingly, culture is characterized by the following aspects: (a) contains several components (enumerative-descriptive aspect); (b) from the historical point of view –it refers to social heritage and traditions; (c) comprises ideals and expected behaviors (normative aspect); (d) is based on adaptation to environmental conditions, learning and behavior (psychological aspect); (e) regulates human social life (structural definitions); and is reflected in ideas, symbols, and artifacts (result-based aspect). Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit,

² Merrit and Helmreich, 1996

³ Hofstede, G 1991, Culture and Organizations

⁴ Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, pp. 66-67

⁵ Ibid, pp 25-30

of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action (Srnlka, 2004).⁶

3.2 CONFLICT.

Wagner and Hollenbeck(2005:357) defined conflict as a process of opposition and confrontation that can occur in organisations between either individual or groups-occurs when parties exercise power in the pursuit of valued goals or objectives and obstruct the progress of other parties. Key to this definition is the idea that conflict involves the use of power confrontation, or disputes over clashing interest. Also important is the notion that conflict is a process-something that takes time to unfold, rather than an event that occurs in an instant and then disappears⁷.

⁶ Srnlka,2004

⁷ Wagner and Hollenbeck(2005:357)

CONFLICT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

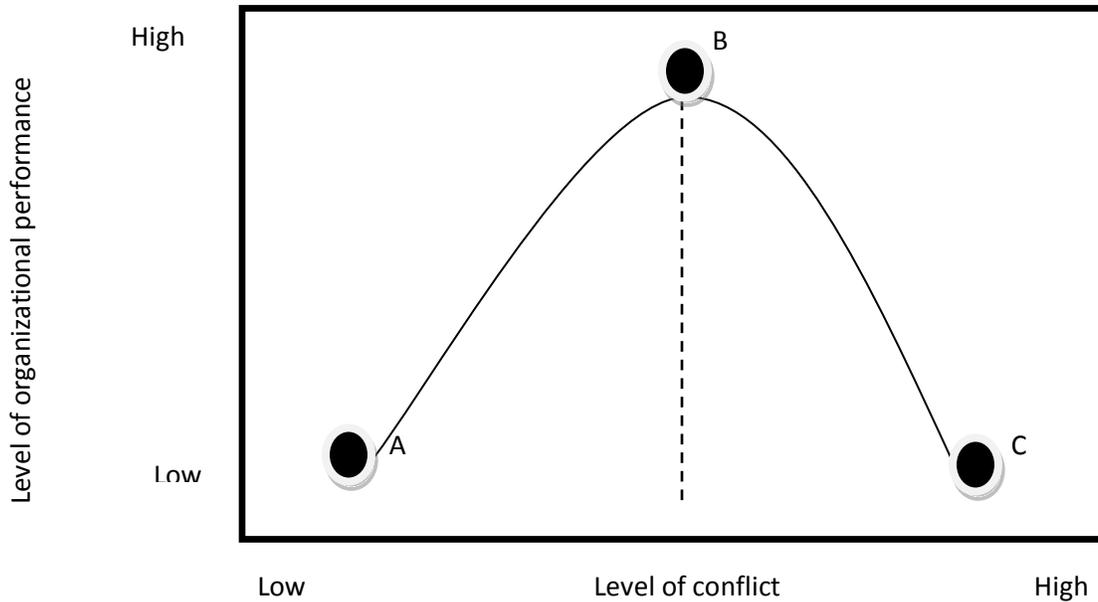


Figure 3-1: Conflict and Organisational performance Cited by Dr Warren Webber (California State Polytechnic University)⁸

3.2.1 DIFFERENT VIEWS OF CONFLICT.

Stephen P. Robbins (1998:434) did his finding and identified three views of conflict as: the human relations, the traditional, and the interactionist view.

- The Human Relations View: The human relations position argued that conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group. Since it has been said that conflict is inevitable, the human relations school supported the acceptance of conflict. Proponents

⁸ <http://www.csupomona.edu/~wcweber/301/301slide/ch16301/sld003.htm>

rationalized its existence: It cannot be eliminated, and there are even times when conflict may benefit a group's performance and says we should learn to live with it. Tolerate it!

- The Traditional view: Conflict is dysfunctional, destructive and irrational. It is viewed that all conflict is harmful and must be avoided. This view was constant with the attitudes that prevailed about group behaviour in the 1940s. Conflict was seen as an abnormal outcome caused by poor communication, distrust, lack of openness between people and the huge failure of the managers to meet the expectations of the employees and respond to their needs. Stamp it out!⁹
- The Interactionist View: They believe that conflict is not only a positive force in a group but that it is absolutely necessary for a group to perform effectively. Without conflict, we become static and non-responsive. The major contribution of the Interactionist approach, therefore, is encouraging group leaders to maintain an ongoing minimum level of conflict-enough to keep the group viable, self-critical, and creative. Encourage it!

3.3 ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT.

Organizational conflict is as an opposition to cooperation, as an open discussion between two or more groups in an organization, reflecting cases in which negative manifestations disrupt cooperation by trust destruction and close communication channels (Hatch, 1997)¹⁰

3.3.1 TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT.

A realistic view of conflict is that it has productive as well as destructive potentials. This was said by these authors (Assael, 1969; Deutsch, 1969; Jehn, 1997a; de Dreu & van de Vliert,

⁹ Stephen P. Robbins 1998:434

¹⁰ http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol10_no1_pages_22-28.pdf

1997; Introduction Kelly & Kelly, 1998; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999). The functional and dysfunctional outcomes of conflict in organizations are as follows:

- **Functional Conflict:** Conflict may arouse novelty, creativity, growth and organizational decision making may be enhanced. Also alternative solutions to a problem may be found. Conflict may lead to synergistic solutions to common problems. Individual and group performance may be enhanced. Individuals and groups may be forced to search for new approaches. Individuals and groups may be required to articulate and clarify their positions.¹¹

- **Dysfunctional Conflict:** Dysfunctional conflict is a detrimental, destructive disagreement between two or more people or groups. This kind of conflict may result to job stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction. The communication between individuals and groups may be abridged. There is an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion can be developed. Also, the relationships may be damaged. Also job performance may be reduced and resistance to change can increase. Organizational commitment and loyalty may as well be affected. Its hazard is that it takes the focus away from the work to be done and places the focus on the conflict itself and the parties involved. (Ronald R. Sims 2002:246).¹²

3.3.2 KINDS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT.

There are four kinds of organizational conflict thus:-

- **Interpersonal:** refers to the manifestation of incompatibility, disagreement, or difference between two or more interacting individuals (Gary Dessler 1982).

¹¹

http://raqi148.weebly.com/uploads/3/6/7/2/3672942/managing_conflicts_in_organizations.pdf

¹² M.Afzalur Rahim, Managing conflicts in organisation

- Intragroup: Intragroup conflict refers to the incompatibility, incongruence, or disagreement among the members of a group or its subgroups regarding goals, functions, or activities of the group. “An intragroup problem exists whenever a group member perceives a difference between what is presently occurring between him or her and the group and what he or she desires to occur” (Jarboe & Witteman1996, p. 316).

- Intergroup: conflict refers to the collective incompatibility or disagreement between two or more divisions, departments, or subsystems in connection with tasks, resources, information, and so on. Roloff (1987) has rightly indicated that, “while this form of conflict implies each member of a group is in conflict with those of another, quite often the actual dispute is carried out between representatives (e.g., department heads, or labour-management negotiators)” (p.501).¹³

- Inter-organizational: it occurs across organizations. Managers in one firm may feel another is not behaving ethically.¹⁴

¹³http://raqi148.weebly.com/uploads/3/6/7/2/3672942/managing_conflicts_in_organizations.df

¹⁴ <http://www.csupomona.edu/~wcweber/301/301slide/ch16301/sld004.htm>

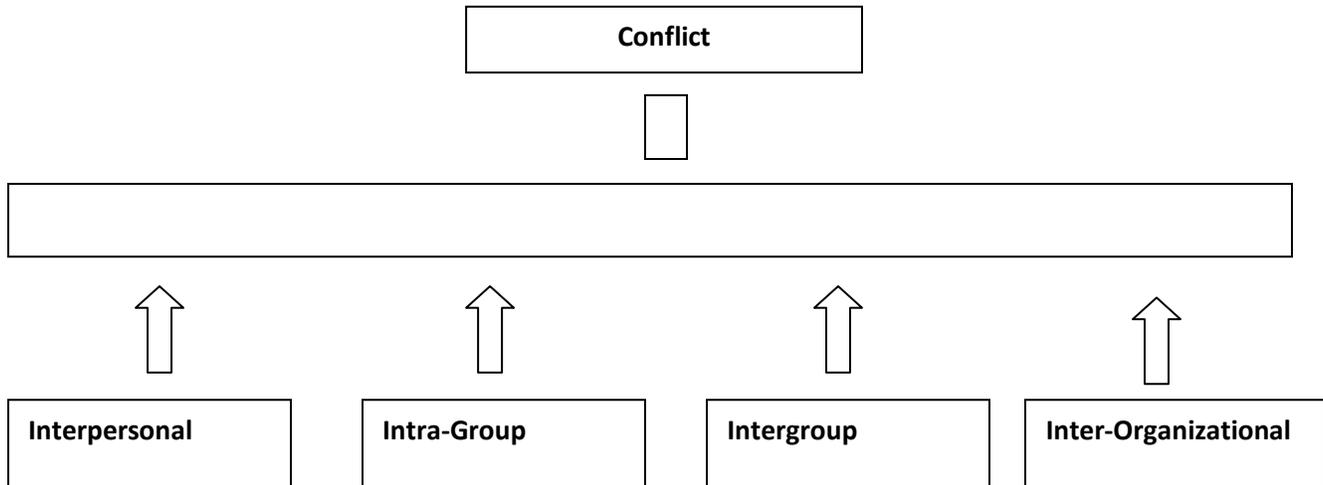


Fig3-2 Types of conflict Cited by Dr Warren Webber
(California State Polytechnic University)

3.3.3 SOURCES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT.

Fisher R,(2000), distinguished different type of conflict that might occur in the organization and the sources of conflict that have been explained by Fisher R,(2000)

Different goals and time horizons: different groups having differing goals and production focuses on efficiency, marketing on sales.

Overlapping authority: two or more managers claim authority for the same activities. This leads to conflict between the managers and workers.

Task interdependencies: one member of a group fails to finish a task that another depends on. This makes the worker that is waiting fall behind.

Incompatible evaluation or reward system: workers are evaluated for one thing, but are told to do something different. The groups are rewarded for low cost but firm needs higher service.

Scarce resources: managers can conflict over allocation of resources. When all resources are scarce, managers can fight over allocations.

Status inconsistencies: some groups have higher status than others. This leads to making managers feel others are favoured.¹⁵

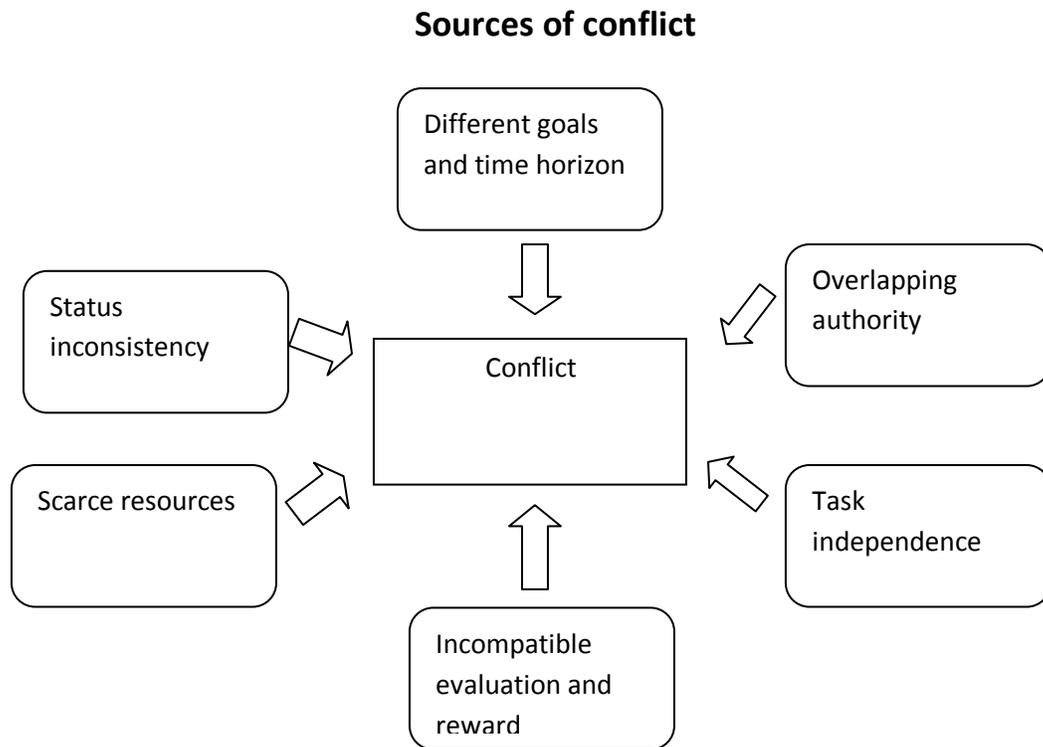


Fig3-3Sources of conflict

Cited by Dr Warren Webber (California State Polytechnic University)

3.4 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The conflict management indicates in the first instance the perspective of the so called “third party” (a mediator, conflict advisor, conflict manager, or supervisor), which is called to help,

¹⁵ Fisher R,2000

or engages itself after its own incentive, in order to assist to either conflict parties (or eventually one of them). One can speak about conflict dealing also when during the conflict both parties look for a consensual solution, without asking for an external assistance. The forms of approaching and dealing with conflicts could be of very different nature. In compliance with Riemann (2005: 7) there are consequently three forms of dealing with conflict that are to be outlined: conflict settlement, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation.¹⁶ Effective conflict management succeeds in (1) minimizing disruption stemming from the existence of a conflict, and (2) providing a solution that is satisfactory and acceptable.

3.4.1 WAYS OF MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT.

In the early days of management research and theorizing, conflict was viewed as a negative and undesirable aspect of organizational life (Robbins, 1978). Research and managerial practice focused on the avoidance of conflict and on conflict resolution (Robbins, 1978).¹⁷ More recently, it has been accepted that conflict is somewhat inevitable and is not always or necessarily bad for an organization. Conflict can lead to the development of ideas that would not otherwise be developed, it can provide stimulation and activity, and it can create internal cohesiveness among groups - 126 - (Thomas, 1976). The key for organizational success is to recognize and manage conflict for the good of the organization, rather than to simply avoid conflict or resolve it.¹⁸ However, Stephen P. Robbins (1998:444) identified nine conflict resolution techniques such as:-

- ✓ Problem solving.
- ✓ Super ordinate goals.
- ✓ Expansion of resources.
- ✓ Avoidance.
- ✓ Smoothing.

¹⁶ Riemann (2005: 7) conflict

¹⁷ Robbins, 1978

¹⁸ http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/tr_95bw.pdf

- ✓ Compromise.
- ✓ Authoritative command.
- ✓ Altering the human variable.
 - ✓ Altering the structural variables.¹⁹

Problem solving: This is a Face to face meeting of the conflicting parties for the purpose of identifying the problem and solving it through open discussion.

Super ordinate goals: It involves the creation of shared goal that cannot be attained without the cooperation of each of the conflicting parties.

Expansion of resources: When a conflict is caused by scarcity of resources-say, money, promotion opportunities, office space-expansion of the resource can create a win-win solution.

Avoidance: It is the pulling out from, or suppression of, the conflict.

Smoothing: Playing down differences while emphasizing common interests between the conflicting parties.

Compromise: This makes each part to the conflict give up something of value.

Authoritative command: Management uses its formal authority to resolve the conflict and then communicates its desires to the parties involved.

Altering the human variable: Using behavioural change techniques to such as human relations training to alter attitudes and behaviours that cause conflict.

Altering the structural variables: Changing the formal organization structure and the interaction patterns of conflicting parties through job redesign, transfers, creation of coordinating positions, and the like.

¹⁹ Robbins, S. P 1998, Organizational Behaviour

3.4.2 CONFLICT STIMULATION TECHNIQUES

Stephen P. Robbins (1998:444) also identified four conflict stimulation techniques such as:-

- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Bringing in outsiders
- ✓ Restructuring the organization
- ✓ Appointing a devil's advocate.

Communication: Using ambiguous or threatening messages to increase conflict levels.

Bringing in outsiders: Adding employees to a group whose backgrounds, values, attitudes, or managerial styles differ from those of present members.

Restructuring the organization: Realigning work groups, altering rules and regulations, increasing interdependence, and making similar structural changes to disrupt the status quo.

Appointing a devil's advocate: Designating a critic to purposely argue against the majority positions held by the group.²⁰

3.5 MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT: A CULTURAL VIEW POINT

With a combination of different cultures, diverse employees and strict company policies, it is not difficult to see why conflict in the workplace arises. "Culture" can provide us with many answers on how and why people behave differently around the globe. One explanation it surely provides is that people have very different views on "What is a good boss", or on "how teams should be led". A major challenge in developing intercultural management competence

²⁰ <http://www.andrews.edu/~schwab/b436c18.html>

is the fact that there is no "one way" to lead. This is especially relevant as all "new" and growing markets have something in common, they can be characterized as hierarchical cultures. Many companies need to face the fact that the leadership styles/guidelines they have been practising might not be suitable for these cultures(GEERT HOFSTEDE).²¹

The ability to communicate and effectively resolve conflict among various ethnic employees within an organization is a reality that management faces today. It is crucial for managers to learn how to address concerns voiced by individuals of a different background. This ensures that the organization will run smoothly and the employees' will be satisfied and confident that they are valued by the company.

The modern anthropological concept of culture has its origins in the 19th century with German anthropologist Adolf Bastian's theory²² of the "psychic unity of mankind," which, influenced by Herder and von Humboldt, challenged the identification of "culture" with the way of life of European elites, and British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor's attempt to define culture as inclusively as possible. Tylor in 1874 described culture in the following way: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."²³ Mole (1990) also in Tim Hannagan (2005) defines culture as 'the way we do things around here', recognising that people and organizations in different countries, as a result of their specific cultural backgrounds, behave differently, and that to analyse the situation any further is extremely difficult.

Whether conflict within an organization is focused as desirable or not, the fact is that conflict exists and is usually culture. As human beings interact in organizations, differing values and situations create tension relationship. Conflict is viewed as a situation in which two or more individuals operating within a unit appear to be incompatible. However, handling organizational conflict is highly costly. It consumes 20 percent of a manager's time (Thomas

²¹ Hofstede, G 1991, Cultures and Organizations

²² Adolf Bastian and the psychic unity of mankind: The foundations of anthropology in nineteenth century Germany (The University of Queensland Press scholars' library

²³ Tylor, 1874

& Schmidt, 1976), and unresolved conflict can result in antisocial behaviour, covert retaliation (Spector, 1997), and violence (Luckenbill & Doyle, 1989) also, employees experiencing frustration from being misunderstood or feeling unappreciated for their skills cost the company a lot in idle time. "If every employee wastes just 30 minutes each day in conflict with co-workers owing to problems related to cultural differences, there would definitely be adverse economic impacts" (Demers, 2002: 28).²⁴

After conflict is recognized, acknowledged and managed in a proper manner, personal and organizational benefits will accrue by the top level management. As well as effective manager uses this situation as an opportunity for growth for both the organization and individuals. Effective managers use conflict creatively to stimulate personal development, to address apparent problems, to increase critical vigilance and self-appraisal, and to examine conflicting values when making decisions (Blome, 1983, p. 4-5).²⁵ In the past, management theorists used the term "conflict avoidance", but today this phrase is increasingly replaced with the phrase (and concept) of "conflict management". Conflict management recognizes that while conflict does have associated costs, it can also bring with it great benefits. Today's managers seek reasons not to avoid, moreover to dealing with conflict within the organization (Nurmi and Darling, 1997, pp. 157-158).²⁶

Preferred styles of conflict vary depending on what culture an employee was raised in. The American culture is one of independence, an "individualistic, win-lose approach and [a culture which has a great] emphasis [on] privacy, [whereas] Arab-Americans tend to value a win-win result that preserves group harmony but often requires mediation" (Jolie, 1990: B1)²⁷.

²⁴ Demers, Julie. 2002. "Crossing the cultural divides."

²⁵ Blome, A.C. (1983). Conflict: friend or foe. Interface

²⁶ Nurmi, R.W. and Darling, J.R. (1997) International Management Leadership: The Primary Competitive Advantage. International Business Press, New York: NY

²⁷ Jolie, Solomon. 1990. "As cultural diversity of workers grows, experts urge appreciation of differences." *Wall Street Journal*: B1.

However other countries hold different beliefs on handling conflict. For example, in Hong Kong, "Chinese norms of concern for collective interests and concern for authority appeared more strongly among Hong Kong Chinese managers than among their American counterparts" (Tinsley and Brett, 2001: 360; Dong and Liu, 2010: 234).²⁸

The manager needs to recognize "the shared influence of the embedded-autonomous cultural dimensions and the hierarchical-egalitarian cultural dimensions" (Dalton and Chrobot-Mason, 2008: 343)²⁹. Employees enter the workplace with their demographics having the most affect on their identity. "The salience of this identity is maintained by contentious historical and contemporary relationships between groups in society at large. It is the responsibility of those who hold managerial roles in organizations to keep this conflict from erupting in the workplace" (Dalton and Chrobot-Mason, 2008: 352). However, if there is a difference on salient aspects of social identity, management may find it more complicated to resolve the conflict.

According to Thomas (1992) individuals or groups may choose to behave in a number of ways in handling conflict which may be described as strategies or dimensions of conflict management styles. The individual's or group's desire to satisfy his own/their group's concerns and the individual's or group's desire to satisfy other's or other groups' concerns determine the level of assertiveness and cooperation (see Fig. 3-4). Based on the level of assertiveness and cooperativeness these conflict management styles are *competing*, *collaborating*, *avoiding*, *accommodating*, and *compromising* or *sharing* (Thomas, 1992).

²⁸ Tinsley, Catherine H, and Jeanne Brett. 2001. "Managing workplace conflict in the United States and Hong Kong." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 85: 360-368.

²⁹ Dalton, Maxine, and Donna Chrobot-Mason. 2008. "A theoretical exploration of manager and employee social identity, cultral values and identity conflict management." *Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 8: 343-361

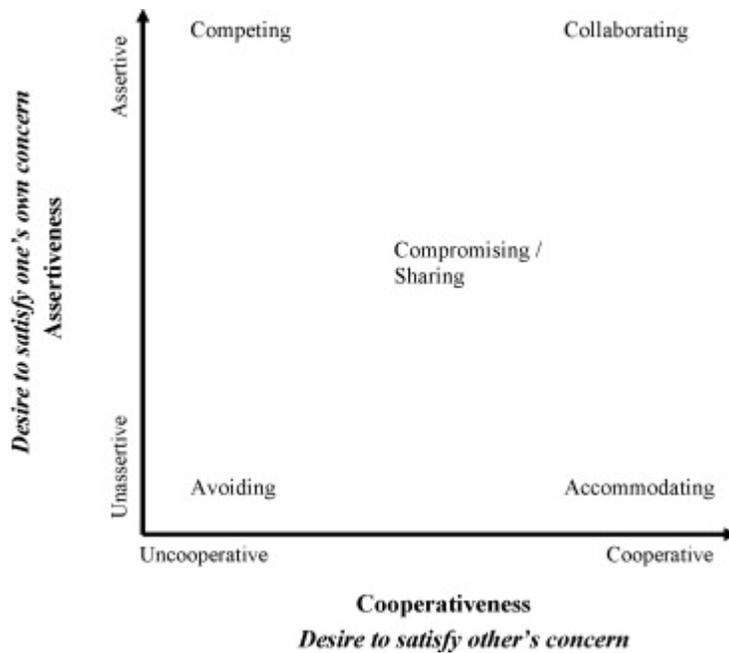


Fig 3-4. Source: From 'Support for a Two-Dimensional model of conflict behavior,' by T.L. Ruble and K. Thomas in organizational behavior and human performance 1976, p. 145

Hofstede (1991), identified some factors which should be considered while analyzing conflict management styles from the cultural approach. Among them are:

3.5.1 POWER DISTANCE

According to Hofstede (1991), power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. 'Institutions' are the basic elements of society like the family, school, and the community; 'organizations' are the places where people work.

3.5.2 INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM

Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family.

Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (Hofstede 1991).

3.5.3 MASCULINITY VERSUS FEMININITY

According to Hofstede (1991), **masculinity** pertains to societies in which social gender roles are clearly distinct (i.e., men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life); **femininity** pertains to societies in which social gender roles overlap (i.e., both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life).

3.5.4 UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

According to Hofstede (1991), uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations. This feeling is, among other things, expressed through nervous stress and in a need for predictability: a need for written and unwritten rules.

It is argued that cultural values must be taken into context when determining the influence of the differences between the manager and employee. Competency in cross cultural management is a skill that companies are beginning to recognize. In order to be effective in a cross cultural work team, the key is to pay attention to context and stay subjective (Dong and Liu, 2010: 223).³⁰ These two details are important in preventing conflict among cross cultural differences.

However, conflict is not completely preventable, it will always be a part of life, and an important issue to address is management training in cross cultural conflict, in order to successfully address these differences. It is imperative that a manager respect the right of

³⁰ Dong, Kevong, and Ying Liu. 2010. "Cross-cultural management in china."

employees to have different points of view and to exhibit this respect" (Darling and Foglassio, 1999: 383).³¹ It is also significant for management to feel comfortable dealing with cultural differences as well. Individuals exhibit fear of the unknown, so an employee of an unfamiliar background may cause apprehension in the manager to effectively deal with the conflict.

Companies should attempt to select managers with strong emotional intellect and provide cultural training "that consists not only of cultural facts but also interpersonal skills such as active listening, conflict management, and ethical reasoning, [and] utilizing sensitivity training techniques to better prepare managers for new situations" (Jassawalla, Truglia, and Garvey, 2004: 837).³²

Uniting different cultural individuals in an organization can help produce better conflict resolution in the future. Showing management and employees how to respond to cross cultural conflict can be achieved in two ways, productively or destructively. (Ayoko, 2007: 105). Aside from productive and destructive styles of conflict, management can influence conflict through physical and social settings. "For instance, the product of a particular meeting will be affected by such things as the neutrality of the meeting place, its formality or informality, time devoted to the discussion, and composition of the meeting. The situational context can affect the balance of power" (Darling and Fogliasso, 1999: 385)³³. The neutrality of the setting will help communication through cross cultural employees. "Demographic diversity is linked with increased difficulties in communication, co-ordination, conflict and poor group consequences" (Ayoko, 2007: 105). Ayoko proposes that communication candidness will have an impact on the "types and course of conflict and reactions to conflict such that communication candidness will be associated with fewer conflict events and communication openness will be associated with dynamic reactions to conflict" (Ayoko,2007:105).

³¹ Darling, John R, and Christine Fogliasso. 1999. "Effective conflict management: use of the behavioral style model."

³² Jassawalla, Avan, and Ciara Truglia, and Jennifer Garvey. 2004. "Cross-cultural conflict and expatriate manager adjustment: An exploratory study." *Management Decision*

³³ Darling, John R, and Christine Fogliasso. 1999. "Effective conflict management: use of the behavioral style model."

CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This part of this thesis work is to show and present the analysis of the data collected with the aid of tables and the use of statistical figures.

4.1 QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTIONS AND RETURN IN SWEDEN

Questionnaires were distributed to seventy (70) randomly selected Swedish employees who work in different organisations in Sweden. Out of the 70 questionnaires given out, only sixty-three (63) were answered correctly and returned. This is represented in the table below.

TABLE 4.1.1 DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Number of questionnaire distributed	Number of questionnaire returned	Percentage of questionnaire returned
70	63	90%

Source: Survey Data 2011.

4.2 DATA FROM SWEDISH RESPONDENTS - PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

TABLE 4.2.1 SEX

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
MALE	35	55.6 (%)
FEMALE	28	44.4 (%)
TOTAL	63	100 (%)

Source: Survey Data 2011.

Table 4.2.1 illustrates that 35 Swedish employees representing 55.6 % of the respondents are males while 28 employees representing 44.4 % of the respondents are females.

TABLE 4.2.2: AGE

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-30 years	25	39.7
31-40 years	19	30.2
41-50 years	14	22.2
Above 50 years	5	7.9
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey Data 2011.

Table 4.2.2 illustrates that 25 employees representing 39.7 % of the respondents are within the age of 20-30 years. 19 employees representing 30.2 % of the respondents are within the age of 31-40 years, while 14 employees representing 22.2 % of the respondents are within the age of 41-50 years. Only 5 employees representing 7.9 % of the respondents are above 50 years of age.

TABLE 4.2.3 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Secondary/Higher school certificate	12	19.0
OND/ NCE	15	23.8
B.Sc/ HND	27	42.9
MBA/M.Sc	7	11.1
Ph.D	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey Data 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.3 depicts that 12 employees representing 19.0 % of the respondents have secondary/ higher school certificate, 15 employees representing 23.8 % of the respondents are with O.N.D/ N.C.E, while 27 employees representing 42.9 % of the respondents hold B Sc/ HND. 7 employees representing 11.1 % of the respondents have MBA/ M Sc, and only 2 employees representing 3.2% of the respondents are Ph D holders.

TABLE 4.2.4: HOW CAN YOU ACCESS THE DISCUSSION WITH SUBORDINATES WHILE MAKING IMPORTANT DECISIONS IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	58	92.1
High	5	7.9
Average	-	-
Low	-	-
Very low	-	-
Not at all	-	-
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.4 depicts that 58 employees representing 92.1 % of the respondents said that subordinates are very highly consulted while making important decisions in their organizations, while 5 employees representing 7.9 % of the respondents said that subordinates are highly consulted while making important decisions in their organizations.

TABLE 4.2.5: HOW DO YOU VIEW THE GAP IN SALARY RANGE BETWEEN THE TOP PERSON AND THE BOTTOM PERSON OF YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	-	-
High	-	-
Average	-	-
Narrow	50	79.4
Very Narrow	13	20.6
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011 (Own input)

Table 4.2.5 shows that 50 employees representing 79.4 % of the respondents said that the wide in salary range between top and bottom of their organizations is narrow, while 13 employees representing 20.6 % of the respondents said that the wide in salary range between top and bottom of their organizations is very narrow.

TABLE 4.2.6: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ABOUT YOUR BOSS?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
as an ingenious democrat	60	95.2
as a generous autocrat	-	-
Somewhere in-between	3	4.8
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.6 depicts that 60 employees representing 95.2 % of the respondents said that they view their boss as a ingenious democrat, while 3 employees representing 4.8 % of the respondents said that they see their boss as being somewhere in-between a ingenious democrat and a generous autocrat.

TABLE 4.2.7: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON PRIVILEGES AND STATUS SIGNS FOR MANAGERS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I support privileges and status symbols for managers	-	-
I frown at privileges and status symbols for managers	58	92.1
Somewhere in-between	5	7.9
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.7 depicts that 58 employees representing 92.1 % of the respondents said that they frown at privileges and status symbols for managers, while 5 employees representing 7.9 % of the respondents said that in as much as they do not support privileges and status symbols for managers, but they do not entirely frown at it.

TABLE 4.2.8: WHAT DOES HIERARCHY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION MEAN?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
It shows the inequality existence between the bosses and the sub-ordinates.	-	-
It means an inequality of roles, established for convenience	63	100
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.8 shows that all the 63 employees representing 100 % of the respondents said that hierarchy in their organization means an inequality of roles established for convenience.

TABLE 4.2.9: DO YOU THINK THAT THERE IS A GREAT IMPACT OF CULTURE ON CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	57	90.5
No	6	9.5
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.9 indicates that 57 employees representing 90.5% of the respondents said that they think that culture has great impact on conflict and conflict management in organizations, while 6 employees representing 9.5% of the respondents said that they think that culture has no influence on conflict and conflict management in organizations.

TABLE 4.2.10: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF MANAGEMENT IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I see management as management of groups	-	-
I see management as management of individuals	52	82.5
Both	11	17.5
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.10 Shows that 52 employees representing 82.5 % of the respondents said that they see management in their organization as management of individuals, while 11 employees representing 17.5 % of the respondents said that they see management in their organization as management of individuals as well as management of groups.

TABLE 4.2.11: HOW DO YOU VIEW RELATIONSHIP AS COMPARED TO TASK IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Relationship prevails over task	-	-
Task prevails over relationship	58	92.1
I have no idea	5	7.9
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.11 depicts that 58 employees representing 92.1 % of the respondents said that task prevails over relationship in their organization, while 5 employees representing 7.9 % of the respondents said that they do not have an idea whether task or relationship prevails over the other.

TABLE 4.2.12: HOW ARE DECISIONS TAKEN BY MANAGERS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
They use instinct and go all-out for consensus.	63	100
They are decisive and pushy.	-	-
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.12 Shows that all the 63 employees representing 100 % of the respondents said that managers in their organizations use intuition and strive for consensus while taking decisions.

TABLE 4.2.13: WHAT ARE THE WAYS IN WHICH CONFLICTS ARE RESOLVED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
by compromise and negotiation	63	100
by fighting them out	-	-
By avoidance.	-	-
By smoothing	-	-
All of the above	-	-
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.13 shows that all the 63 employees representing 100 % of the respondents said that in their organizations conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation.

TABLE 4.2.14: WHAT IS YOUR TAKE ON BEING BUSY AND HARD WORKING?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I have the excitement for need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard.	58	92.1
I feel comfortable when lazy, or hard-working only when needed.	5	7.9
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.2.14 shows that 58 employees representing 92.1% of the respondents said that they have excitement for need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard, while 5 employees representing 7.9 % of the respondents said that they feel comfortable when lazy, or hard-working only when needed.

TABLE 4.2.15: HOW DO YOU VIEW ACCURACY AND PUNCTUALITY?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I have a natural push for accuracy and punctuality.	63	100
I try to learn being precise and punctual.	-	-
Total	63	100.0

Source: Survey 2011

Table 4.2.15 shows that all the 63 employees representing 100 % of the respondents said that they have a natural push for accuracy and punctuality,

TABLE 4.2.16: WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT ON YOURSELF ON ACCEPTING DEVIANT AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND BEHAVIOR?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	-	-
High	-	-
Average	60	95.2
Narrow	3	4.8
Very Narrow	-	-
Nil	-	-

Total	63	100.0
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Source: Survey 2011

Table 4.2.16 Shows that 60 employees representing 95.2 % of the respondents said that they have average tolerance of deviant and innovative ideas and behavior, while 3 employees representing 4.8 % of the respondents said that they have narrow tolerance of deviant and innovative ideas and behavior.³⁴

4.3 QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN IN NIGERIA

The questionnaires were distributed to sixty (70) randomly selected Nigerian employees who work in various organizations in Nigeria. Out of the sixty (70) questionnaires administered only fifty six (60) were answered correctly and returned. This is represented in the table below.

TABLE 4.3.1 DISTRIBUTION AND RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Number of questionnaire distributed	Number of questionnaire returned	Percentage of questionnaire returned
70	60	85.7%

Source: Survey Data 2011.

4.4 DATA FROM NIGERIAN RESPONDENTS - PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

TABLE 4.4.1 SEX

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
MALE	42	70.0 (%)
FEMALE	18	30.0 (%)
Total	60	100 (%)

Source: Survey Data 2011.

Table 4.4.1 shows that 42 Nigerian employees representing 70.0 % of the respondents are males while 18 employees representing 30.0% of the respondents are females.

³⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sw.html>

TABLE 4.4.2: AGE

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-30 years	25	41.7
31-40 years	20	33.3
41-50 years	10	16.7
Above 50 years	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey Data 2011

Table 4.4.2 Shows that 25 employees representing 41.7 % of the respondents are within the age of 20-30 years. 20 employees representing 33.3% of the respondents are within the age of 31-40 years, while 10 employees representing 16.7 % of the respondents are within the age of 41-50 years. Only 5 employees representing 8.3 % of the respondents are above 50 years of age.

TABLE 4.4.3 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Secondary/Higher school certificate	20	33.3
OND/ NCE	14	23.3
B.Sc/ HND	16	26.7
MBA/M.Sc	8	13.3
Ph.D	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey Data 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.3 depicts that 20 employees representing 33.3 % of the respondents have secondary/ higher school certificate, 14 employees representing 23.3 % of the respondents are with O.N.D/ N.C.E, while 16 employees representing 26.7 % of the respondents hold B.Sc/ HND. 8 employees representing 13.3 % of the respondents have MBA/ M.Sc, and only 2 employee is a Ph.D holder.

TABLE 4.4.4: HOW CAN YOU ACCESS THE DISCUSSION WITH SUBORDINATES WHILE MAKING IMPORTANT DECISIONS IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	-	-
High	-	-
Average	-	-
Low	5	8.3
Very low	55	91.7
Not at all	-	-
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.4 Shows that 5 employees representing 8.3 % of the respondents said that the rate at which subordinates are consulted while making important decisions in their organizations is low, while 55 employees representing 91.7 % of the respondents said that the rate at which subordinates are consulted while making important decisions in their organizations is very low

TABLE 4.4.5:HOW DO YOU VIEW THE GAP IN SALARY RANGE BETWEEN THE TOP PERSON AND THE BOTTOM PERSON OF YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	2	3.3
High	58	96.7
Average	-	-
Narrow	-	-
Very Narrow	-	-
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.5 reveals that 2 employees representing 3.3 % of the respondents said that the wide in salary range between top and bottom of their organizations is very high, while 58 employees representing 96.7 % of the respondents said that the wide in salary range between top and bottom of their organizations is high.

TABLE 4.4.6: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ABOUT YOUR BOSS?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
as an ingenious democrat	-	-
as a generous autocrat	55	91.7
Somewhere in-between	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.6 Shows that 55 employees representing 91.7 % of the respondents said that they see their boss as a generous autocrat, while 5 employees representing 8.3 % of the respondents said that they see their boss as being somewhere in-between a ingenious democrat and a generous autocrat.

TABLE 4.4.7: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON PRIVILEGES AND STATUS SIGNS FOR MANAGERS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I support privileges and status symbols for managers	54	90.0
I frown at privileges and status symbols for managers		
Somewhere in-between	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011

Table 4.4.7 Shows that 54 employees representing 90.0 % of the respondents said that they support privileges and status symbols for managers, while 6 employees representing 10.0% of the respondents said that in as much as they do not support privileges and status symbols for managers, but they do not entirely frown at it.

TABLE 4.4.8: WHAT DOES HIERARCHY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION MEAN?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
It shows the inequality existence between the bosses and the sub-ordinates	60	100
It means an inequality of roles, established for convenience	-	-
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.8 Shows that all the 60 employees representing 100 % of the respondents said that hierarchy in their organization reflects the inequality existence between the bosses and the sub-ordinates

TABLE 4.4.9 DO YOU THINK THAT THERE IS A GREAT IMPACT OF CULTURE ON CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
YES	51	85.0
NO	9	15.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.9 indicates that 51 employees representing 85.0 % of the respondents said that they think that culture has influence on conflict and conflict management in organizations, while 9 employees representing 15.0 % of the respondents said that they think that culture has no influence on conflict and conflict management in organizations.

TABLE 4.4.10: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF MANAGEMENT IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I see management as management of groups	56	93.3
I see management as management of individuals	-	-
Both	4	6.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.10 Shows that 56 employees representing 93.3 % of the respondents said that they see management in their organization as management of groups, while 4 employees representing 6.3 % of the respondents said that they see management in their organization as management of individuals as well as management of groups.

4.4.11: HOW DO YOU VIEW RELATIONSHIP AS COMPARED TO TASK IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Relationship prevails over task	49	81.7
Task prevails over relationship	11	18.3
I do not know	-	-
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.11 depicts that 49 employees representing 81.7 % of the respondents said that relationship prevails over task in their organization, while 11 employees representing 18.3 % of the respondents said that task prevails over relationship.

TABLE 4.4.12: HOW DO MANAGERS TAKE DECISIONS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
They use instinct and go all-out for consensus.	9	15
They are decisive and pushy.	51	85
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.12 Shows that 9 employees representing 15 % of the respondents said that managers in their organizations use instinct and go all-out for consensus in taking decisions, while 51employees representing 85 % of the respondents said that managers in their organizations are decisive and pushy.

4.4.13: WHAT ARE THE WAYS IN WHICH CONFLICTS ARE RESOLVED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
by compromise and negotiation	5	8.3
by fighting them out	10	16.7
By avoidance.	11	18.3
By smoothing	34	56.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.13 shows that 5 employees representing 8.3 % of the respondents said that in their organizations conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation, 10 employees representing 16.7% of the respondents said that in their organizations conflicts are resolved by fighting them out, 11 employees representing 18.3% of the respondents said that in their organizations conflicts are resolved by avoidance, while 34 employees representing 56.7 % of the respondents said that in their organizations conflicts are resolved by smoothing.

TABLE 4.4.14: WHAT IS YOUR TAKE ON BEING BUSY AND HARDWORKING?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I have the excitement for need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard.	18	30
I feel comfortable when lazy, or hard-working only when needed.	42	70
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.14 reveals that 18 employees representing 30 % of the respondents said that they have the excitement for need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard, while 42 employees representing 70% of the respondents said that they feel comfortable when lazy, or hard-working only when needed.

TABLE 4.4.15: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ABOUT ACCURACY AND PUNCTUALITY?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I have a natural urge for accuracy and punctuality.	20	33.3
I try to learn being accurate and punctual.	40	66.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.15 shows that 20 employees representing 33.3 % of the respondents said that they have a natural urge for precision and punctuality; while 40 employees representing 66.7% of the respondents said that they try to learn being accurate and punctual.

TABLE 4.4.16: WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT ON YOURSELF ON ACCEPTING DEVIANT AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND BEHAVIOR?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	12	20
High	48	80
Average	-	-
Narrow	-	-
Very Narrow	-	-
Nil	-	-
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey 2011(Own input)

Table 4.4.16 Shows that 12 employees representing 20 % of the respondents said that they have very high tolerance of deviant and innovative ideas and behavior, while 48 employees representing 80 % of the respondents said that they have high tolerance of deviant and innovative ideas and behaviour.³⁵

³⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

CHAPTER5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

With no doubts and arguments, conflict is part and parcel of organisational life but if it is properly managed it need not deteriorate into organisational breakdown such as industrial actions. Conflict is a process of opposition and confrontation that requires the presence of interdependence and deviation. It can be managed through negotiation and compromise.

According to Ikechukwu Eze (1999), the culture of the people has a great influence on the behaviours exhibited by such people in the organizations which they work. After much research we strongly advise that the Nigerian bosses see their subordinates as important people in the organisation by embracing compromise and negotiation in conflict management in the organisation while keeping their culture into consideration but should gradually indulge in culture rearrangement so as to significantly reduce the incidence of conflicts in their organizations.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the several findings and research made, some recommendations are made below on how to reduce and manage organizational conflicts.

Since it is inevitable and almost impossible, to manage conflicts without taking into consideration the culture in which they originated. Nigerian being a democratic country should try to ensure that the bosses in organizations are democratic by embarking on cultural transformation which should gradually fill into their organizations. This can be done by borrowing a leaf from their counterpart-Swedish. By so doing, this will thoroughly reduce the incidence of conflicts in the Nigerian organizations.

In addition, Nigerian employees/managers and bosses should continually encourage settling conflicts arising in their organizations through compromise and negotiation.

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

A student of Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic writing a Bachelor thesis on how culture influences business but focuses on the management of organizational conflict from the cultural view point. The objective of my research is to show the differences in culture and conflict management in countries –comparison of Nigeria and Sweden.

A research question formulated is what are the various ways, if any, does culture influence organizational conflict and the main forms of conflict management.

Please indicate your preference among alternative answers for each question by ticking [x] in the appropriate box.

Sex

Male

Female

Age

20-30 years

31-40 years

41-50 years

Above 50 years

Educational Qualifications

Secondary/Higher school certificate

OND/ NCE

B.Sc/ HND

MBA/M.Sc

Ph.D

How can you access the discussion with subordinates while making important decisions in your organisation?

- Very high
- High
- Average
- Low
- Very low
- Not at all

How do you view the gap in salary range between the top person and the bottom person of your organization?

- Very high
- High
- Average
- Narrow
- Very Narrow

What is your view about your boss?

- As a ingenious democrat
- As generous autocrat
- Somewhere in-between

What is your view on privileges and status signs for managers in your organization?

- I popularize privileges and status symbols for managers
- I frown at privileges and status symbols for managers
- Somewhere in-between

Do you think that there is a great impact of culture on conflict and conflict management in organizations?

Yes

No

What does hierarchy in your organization mean?

It reflects the existential inequality between higher-ups and lower-downs

It means an inequality of roles, established for convenience

How do you see management in your organization?

I see management as management of groups

I see management as management of individuals

Both

How do you view relationship as compared to task in your organization?

Relationship prevails over task

Task prevails over relationship

I do not know

How do managers take decisions in your organization?

They use instinct and go all-out for consensus.

They are decisive and pushy.

What are the ways in which conflicts are resolved in your organization?

By compromise and negotiation

By fighting them

By avoidance

By smoothing

All of the above

What is your take on being busy and hardworking?

I have the excitement for need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard.

I feel comfortable when lazy, or hard-working only when needed

What is your view about accuracy and punctuality?

I have a natural urge for accuracy and punctuality.

I try to learn being accurate and punctual.

What is your assessment on yourself on accepting deviant and innovative ideas and behavior?

Very high

High

Average

Narrow

Very Narrow

Nil

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SUPPLEMENT

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