Inevitability Of Conflict And Business Organizations

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ABSTRACT
This paper looks at the inevitability of conflict in organizations and how if judiciously utilized can have effectual result on the organization. There are some certain factors that can lead to a conflict situation due to individual differences. The subject of conflict usually cannot be avoided hence; individual with different preferences and cultural brought up cannot be together without some levels of misunderstanding. In human life, conflict is inevitable among individuals, organizations and even nations. Conflict is a "necessary evil". Several factors such as leadership style, paucity of resources that are commonly used competition for supremacy, poor productivity and ineffective service delivery cannot be avoided if conflict is not properly and timely managed. However, if it is well managed positive result can be produced as against negative outcome. It is hereby advised that the causes of conflict if observed should be attended to as urgently as possible. To avoid conflict situation from escalating this paper concludes that the warring parties should be made to negotiate in order to resolve such misunderstanding. The arbitration by a third party should be done on a fair and objective manner to overcome further grievances. In no way should forceful approach be used as it would aggravate the existing problem.
Keywords: Inevitability, Conflict, Effectiveness, Organization, Causes, Concept, Resolution.

1. INTRODUCTION
Due to the all encompassing nature of conflict it has assumed several dimensions in terms of its meaning, presentation, importance and ability to control it. In every day whether personal, interpersonal, organizations or between countries a conflict atmosphere is inevitable. In every environment, there are contrasting interests of parties that result to the opposition of one another which exactly is the concept of conflict. A conflict situation is anywhere there is antagonism in the bid to interact in terms of cognitions, competition, goals incompatibility and also emotional feelings.
Luthans (1998) has observed that conflict is a common phenomenal in all settings which is not necessarily of a negative nature. Normally, if conflicts are resolved, it brings about constructive solutions to problems. Conflict is neutral in itself, but what determines whether it is positive or negative in its consequence on any relationship, is on how it is duly managed. Due to the fact that teams do work together in organizations the avoidance of conflict is not possible, hence, it is an inevitable aspect of team work. It flows from the behavior of the individuals. Human life cannot do without it. Interaction produces conflict. It depicts the display of being hostile, being antagonistic, attitudes that shows negativism misunderstanding, rivalry and aggression.

2.0 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Conflict

Borisoff and Victor (1998), said it 2.0is very difficult to define conflict hence, it is not easy to come to a consensus about its definition. However, they said the easiest way to understand the term conflict is to have it theorized into situational, interactive and functional. These divide has it that the situational views conflict as an expression under certain situations. The second view of interactive asks the question "how is there conflict? What methods and mechanisms are used to express it?" The functional as the third view sees conflict as "why is there conflict? What purpose does it serve?" Furthermore, Leung (2010), had said that there is no one practical definition of conflict. Each person has an individual way of thinking and behaves differently from others in a similar situation, and so it could be said that conflict can affect everyone to a varying extent.

According to Leung (2009), a representative of the situational theory school defines conflict as a "situation which generates incorruptible goals or values among different parties". As opined by him, the situation determines conflict that arises from diverse conditions for example, the influence of a person and exogenous factors.

The interactive school as defined by Folger (1993) is that "the interaction of independent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving goals". The theory has two critical words interdependence and perception. Interdependence is seen as such a situations whereby one party's future actions is dependent on another party's actions.

For the functionalist school, the representative was George Simmel, a sociologist in Germany in 1995, defined conflict as designed to resolve divergent views. This creates unity even if it requires one of the conflicting parties to bow. He further opined that, conflict serves a social aim and that reconciliation is achieved even at the detriment of one of the parties.

In a similar development, Tillett (1991) had said that conflict does not only come as a result of incompatibility of values or needs or when it shows up in action rather, it could be exhibited by the perception of one of the parties of its existence.

According to Beck (1979), conflict is defined, as the "difference between and among individuals". The differences are formed by the conflict itself such as discontentment in goals, reasons, ideas, values and motives. As observed by Hocker and Wilmot (1985), conflict is defined as an expressed struggle between at least two independent parties who perceive that goals, scarce resources or rewards are incompatible. In another view, Borisoff and Victor (1998) as well as Thomas (2005) defined conflict as a disagreement in opinions between people or groups due to difference in attitudes, beliefs, values or needs. Still looking at conflict from different perspectives; Appelbaum, Abdallah and Shapiro (1999) states that, conflict is a process of social interaction which involves a struggle over claims to resources, power and status, beliefs, preferences and desires.

Darling and Walker (2001), corroborated this belief by the organization in which he said, conflict is a natural phenomenon in a social relationship, it can nevertheless be managed within an organization.

However, different views are being held about conflict. Durkheim (cited in Sipova, 1989) considered conflict as an abnormal phenomenon as he used the term anomie or pathology in describing the nature of conflict.

In an unrelated development, many scholars have their views to the contrary. Part and Burgess (1921) and Simmel (1995) cited in Burton (1987) says every interaction or association, in their view is that conflict stands for solving and averting complete fission in order to build unified whole. However, Schellenberg (1996) had said that conflict is neither bad nor good, but that it is one of the essentials in the social life of human beings.

Organizational Conflict

Organizational conflict can be defined as according to Lewis, French and Steane (1997) to mean, the consequence of boundaries arising within any organizational structure thereby, creating separate groups that would rather compete for the available scarce resources. They further asserted that conflict within an organization is inevitable.

As observed by Rayeski and Bryant (1994), conflict is driven by pressure and confusion that creates stressful situation for a team and its members.

From the foregoing, the explanation of the concept of conflict can be said that truly, the different sources of references are almost saying the same thing though, from different perspectives.

Theory Of Conflict

According to Darling & Walker (2001), theory of conflict was founded by C. Wright Mills who is known as the father of modern conflict theory. He went further to admit that social structures are created through conflict between people with different interest and resources. The individual and resources are then influenced by these structures that has been created and also by inequality in power and resources distribution in society.

CONFLICT VIEWS

According to Robbins (2005), conflict is seen as a natural phenomenal since it is a reality in everyone life and it does arise inevitably. Conflict exerts thoughts and action that are necessary for innovations.

According to Rahim (1986), in human life, conflict is an integral part in all ramification of life endeavor. They further asserted that by reason of history, views on conflict are as outlined below:

a. **Traditional Views:** Within the period of 1930 – 1940 as observed by Robbins (2005), this school of thought believes that conflict should and must be avoided in totality. Hence, it breeds bad blood within a group. Again, it is seen to be negative in nature and it always goes along with violence, confusion and wastage of resources. It emanates from lack of proper communication and an absence of confidence among people or parties. They believe, conflict can only be managed at the top management level. This school also stands on the ground that conflict should not be entertained and as such, adequate cognizance should be giving to the causes of conflict so as to resolving such for a proper group interaction that can create room for a better performance in an organization. They opined, that conflict is synonymous with negative feelings that can result to destructive tendencies. However, Rahim (1986) concluded that the strategies used in handling conflict are what determines its effect whether good or bad.

b. **Interactionism View**

According to Robbins (2003), this view has it that, it is both positive and important for individuals or groups to perform excellently. In this, the ability to challenge normal processes and procedures to enable individuals to increase productivity by bringing in systems of innovations constitute a conflict situation. He observed that though, not all conflicts are bad, but it could be necessary for effective performance. This view, has pointed types of conflict to include, **relationship conflict** that relate to interpersonal relations, **task conflict** that comes from the content and goals of the duties to be performed. Another type is on how the work gets done known as the **process conflict**.

In a related development, as other types of conflicts, Kinicki and Kreitner (2008) had pointed out two types.

i. **Functional or Constructive Conflict**

In corroboration with Robbins who said that not all conflicts are good, is in line with Kinicki and Kreitner is view of the functional or constructive conflicts. On this basis, it is believed that conflict can bring about normal competition within groups which would usually lead to working hard for a better productivity. This is therefore, seen as two views, parties and goals that can lead to a better performance by either individuals or organizations.

Constructive conflict has an advantage of allowing its members the avenue of ascertaining the inherent problems and the possible opportunities. Secondly, new ideas, learning and growth by the individuals can be developed.