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CAUSES OF ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICT IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN GHANA: A STUDY IN TAMALE HIGH COURT

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ABSTRACT

Organizational conflicts are generally inevitable in public institutions. However, there seems to be paucity of studies on the causes of organisational conflict in public institutions in Ghana in general and Tamale High Court in particular. This article seeks to bridge this knowledge gap by determining the causal factors of organizational conflicts in the Tamale High Court. The research gathered data from both primary and secondary sources and used the case study approach. The key instruments used for the data collection were interview guides. A total of fifteen (15) participants; eight (8) senior staff and seven (7) junior staff who took part in this study were purposively selected. The study found out that ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, tribalism, incompatible goals, poor communication, distribution of duties, lack of benefits, varying views on accountability, poor relations between senior and junior staff, disagreement between employees and employers, clashing of one's role, selfishness among employers and employees, politics and difference in educational background, personal experiences, religion and gender are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court. It is recommended that the staff of Tamale High Court should be cordial and work harmoniously towards the administration of Justice in Ghana. It is further recommended that the management

of Judicial Service in the Northern Region of Ghana apart from the Complaint Unit design a system where grievances can be tackled easily when there are conflicts.

Keywords: Causes, Organizational Conflict, Public Institutions, Tamale High Court, Northern Region, Ghana.

INTRODUCTION

Owusu-Mensah (2009) asserted that conflicts are inevitable. Conflicts occur regularly in each organisation. Conflicts have come to the fore in terms of their importance in an organisation. In a recent survey, managers of organisations indicated that they spend vast portions of their time dealing with conflict in order to boost organisational effectiveness. According to Buss (2009) conflict is an essential part of organisational life. Indeed, Frimpong (2004) put it succinctly by concluding that conflict is an aid, rather than an obstacle to cooperation. Conflicts have been recognized to have two diametric sides, a destructive and unhealthy component and a problem-solving base where stakeholders are willing to set aside personal differences, dialogue in an open and candid manner, supporting each other to arrive at a common ground. The latter is helpful while the former defeats cooperation (Frimpong, 2014).

According to Rahim (2010), conflict management creates a cooperative atmosphere for promoting opportunities and movement towards non-violence and reconciliation. However, no matter one's perspective on conflict, it is important to realize that conflict is one of the most effective ways in the world of improving unsatisfactory conditions. In fact, there are sometimes no real disputes, but there may be a need for greater understanding, teamwork, and cooperation to promote harmony and a good work environment for teaching and learning. Therefore, conflict should not always be seen as something undesirable but rather as a necessary outcome that can bring positive consequences if properly managed. It is against this background that it becomes pertinent to examine the causes of organisational conflict in public institutions in Ghana.

Etim and Okey (2013) noted that conflict emerges in an organisation when an individual perceives that his goals are threatened or hindered by the activities of another person. Most conflicts in public institutions in Ghana arise from the inability of the company to fulfil its collective agreement with its employees resulting in employees embarking on industrial action which may be a work-to-rule or total strike. Some researchers and scholars are of the view that conflict posed a big threat to organisational staff performance (Mughal & Khan 2013, George, Miroga & Omweri 2013, Mba 2013, and Aminu & Marfo, 2010) while others are of the view that it is capable of increasing organisational performance (Etim & Okey 2013). However, Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul-Azeez, and Ajemunigbohun (2010) stated that the effect of conflict depends on how it is handled. In view of these, it has been considered necessary to determine causal factors of conflicts in public institutions in Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Conflict

Generally, conflict as a concept has been variously defined by different scholars and researchers. Despite these divergent views on the term, there are several common ideas underlying most definitions. According to Rother (2009) conflict begins when one party perceives another party has affected or is about to affect something the first party cares about

negatively. Similarly, Tseveendorj (2008) describes conflict as a state of serious disagreement or argument about something that at least one of the parties perceives to be important. This definition is similar to that of Ford (2007) wherein conflict is defined as a disagreement between at least two parties with incompatible concerns. Conflict exists whenever one party's action is perceived as likely to prevent or interfere with the goals, needs or aspirations of another party. Conflict, therefore, can be regarded as a managerial reality in that it influences organisational behaviour and is related to power and politics.

Rahim's (2004) definition of conflict toes the aspiration destruction line by labelling conflict as behaviour that obstructs another person's ability to achieve their goals. This definition bases conflict on the incompatibility of goals arising from opposing behaviours. Conflict can occur on diverse levels; the individual, group, or organisational, and can arise over multiple experiences –incompatible goals, differences in the interpretation of facts, negative feelings, differences in values and philosophies, and disputes over common resources.

Wise (2000) put an interesting spin on the debate by regarding conflict as “two pieces of matter trying to occupy the same space at the same time”. That is, a conflict may occur between two people in their effort to dominate a subject from unequal positions. Again, Owusu-Mensah (2009) described conflict as “an escalated natural competition between two or more parties about scarce resources, power, and prestige”. These parties, in order to assert their position in an incompatible goals environment, may neutralize, seek advantage, and injure (or destroy) one another. This definition does not accurately reflect workplace conflicts. That is, at the workplace, employees are required to work together (they are not interdependent) whether or not they are experiencing conflicts towards achieving organisational goals (Rahim, 2010). From the above, two things are clear; conflicts exist whenever one party's action is perceived as preventing or interfering with another's efforts to achieve their goals, needs, or aspirations. Consequently, conflict is an issue of perception – conflicting parties must perceive conflicting interests and positions for conflict to exist.

Concept of Organisational Conflict

Many authors have attempted defining organisational conflict. For example, Etim (2013) defined organisational conflict as an act of displeasure and dispute which both employers and employees use to put pressure each other into acquiescing to their demands. This view is consistent with Dekler (2007) and George, Miroga and Omweri (2013) descriptions of organisational conflict as a dispute that occurs when individuals or groups have incompatible interests and goals in an organisations. Based on this, workplace conflict is practically inevitable due to clash of interests – disputes resulting from these are of varying intensity. Thus, in the absence of common values in organisations, conflict is bound to occur.

Causes of Conflict

According to Mathew (2014) conflict is inevitable in life. However, by viewing the process of conflict resolution as an opportunity for growth and change in a work environment, one increases the potential for a positive outcome on an individual level. Similarly, an institution's overall ability to resolve problems through collaborative efforts has a strong impact on the organisation's bottom line and overall success. The cause of conflict in an organisation has become a remarkable issue which has encouraged most researchers to come out with several elements of these definitions that warrant additional comment to causes of conflict (Mba, 2013). The cause of organisational conflict is often misunderstood and blamed on personalities and

misbehaviour, but in reality, many organisational conflict is systemic and endemic to the workplace environment (Mughal, 2013).

An ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, incompatible goals, scarce resources, and poor communication can all contribute to conflict in an organization. Organisational conflict causes loss of productivity, distractions, employees' disadvantages and can bring violence if it is not properly managed. There is a need to find the causes of conflict and solutions to rectify these anomalies in an organisation (Obasan, 2011). There are several organisational causes of conflict. Those relating to hierarchy and the inability to resolve conflicting interests are quite predominant in most workplaces. Labour or management and supervisor/employee tensions are heightened by power differences. Differences in supervisory styles between departments can be a cause of conflict. Also, there can be work style clashes, seniority or juniority and pay equity conflict (Obasan, 2011). Conflict can arise over resource allocation, the distribution of duties, workload and benefits, different levels of tolerance for risk-taking, and varying views on accountability. In addition, conflict can arise where there are perceived or actual differences in treatment between departments or groups of employees (Rother, 2009).

According to Rother (2009), personality and personal factors such as substance abuse, childcare issues, and family problems can all cause organisational conflict. At the organisational level, factors such as leadership, management, budget, and disagreement about core values can also contribute. The issue of "personality clashes" is controversial. According to Sobia (2012), conflict may arise in an organisation due to the amount or type of work that the employees are required to perform. This is an increasingly common problem in many institutions in Ghana. At some point, employees either will feel underappreciated or overworked, or they will burn out. Both situations create an environment in which the employees may clash with management and one another. Public displays of affection can make co-workers uncomfortable and accusations of favouritism may occur, especially if it is a supervisor-subordinate relationship.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

The location for this study is Tamale High Court in the Northern Region of Ghana. One of the most common challenges to be addressed in Tamale High Court is the issue of conflict and its effects on staff performance. Even some researchers argue that conflict is a tool for increasing staff performance in an organization. However, it has not been given the necessary attention in the Tamale High Court which warrants a research. This justifies the need for this study.

Research Design

The research design allows the researcher to meet the purpose of the research. Thus, the research design refers to the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research question(s) (Ampofo, 2020). This study is a qualitative research as such a case study research method was used for the study. Case study research method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. In most cases, a case study method selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects of study (Ampofo, 2020). Case studies, in their true essence, explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships (Ampofo, 2020).

Creswell (2013) defines a case study research method “as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”. For the purpose of this study, an in-depth examination of a single case or event is used. The examination provides a systematic way of observing the events, collecting data, analysing information, and reporting the results over a long period of time. Data collected through observations are recorded to ascertain the time the conflict came about. Case study research is carried out in a very small geographical area or number of subjects of interest that are examined in detail. Unlike quantitative analysis which observes patterns in data at the macro level on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of the phenomena being observed, case studies observe the data at the micro level. Only qualitative data collection method was used. Data was captured using focused group discussion, observation and Key Informants Interview (KII) guides with key stakeholders. For the purpose of this study, data will be collected using focused group discussion, observation and Key Informants Interview (KII) guides with key stakeholders at the Tamale High Court. Specific key stakeholders were asked questions that are relevant to this study.

Population and Sampling Frame

The target population for this study was the staff of Tamale High Court in the Northern Region of Ghana. Tamale High Court has a staff of twenty (20). Table 1 shows the population distribution for this study.

Table 1

Staff of Tamale High Court Technical Total Population Distribution for 2021

Tamale Technical University	Total Number
Senior Staff	9
Junior Staff	11
TOTAL	20

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Creswell (2013) refers to sampling as the process of selecting units (Example; people, organization) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample one may fairly generalize results back to the population in which they were chosen. According to Kusi (2012), it is prudent to obtain the set of subjects the researcher is most interested in. However, the state affairs would depend on the objective of the research and the kind of questions that the question seeks to address. Based on this the study targeted all the staff of Tamale High Court hence a census study was done. All the twenty (20) staff of Tamale High Court was selected for the study because they are much acquainted with the phenomenon under studying. They were purposively selected. This approach provides a fair representation of both males and females staff at Tamale High Court.

Purposive Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling was used in order to include experts and people who have in depth knowledge on the subject matter under investigation. The purposive sampling technique enables the researcher to include smaller population whom otherwise would have been left out if a specific sampling method was used. This sampling method was employed because of its suitability for limited number of people that have expertise in the research area. This technique

was most appropriate or relevant for the study as it gave the researchers the opportunity to solicit first hand information from key technical people who work in the Tamale High Court. The purposive technique was used to purposively select all the twenty (20) staff of Tamale High Court.

Sources of Data Collection

The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data.

Secondary Data

Secondary data from journals, articles and academia letters on factors causing conflict in public institutions was assessed. Also, documentary evidence on conflict issues in institutions was assessed. This helped the researchers to make inferences.

Primary Data

The primary data were the information that was taken solely from the field as first-hand data and these were gathered using the following methods, tools and techniques:

- Interviews (Face to Face approach)
- Focused Group Discussion
- Observation

Methods of Data Collection

Data for this study were collected using qualitative research approach and it includes observation, interviews, and focus group discussions. The qualitative research method was used for the study. In this case, the research will get a deeper understanding of the real situation and also the researchers were able to access respondent's experiences on the factors causing conflict in the Tamale High Court. Through interviews and focus group discussions the researchers were able to obtain the stakeholders awareness level, opinions, points of view, values, feelings, attitudes and perceptions on the factors causing conflict in the Tamale High Court.

In-depth Interviews

The interviews used in this study were guided by mainly open-ended questions arranged by thematic order: for example, what are the factors causing conflict in the Tamale High Court? All the interview sessions were recorded using an electronic voice recorder. The researchers conducted interviews with four (4) key informants. The researchers adopted this method because it enabled him to come across new ideas.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The group consisted of two (2) heads of department comprising of males and females and this involved some kind of collective activity. This enabled the researchers to know more about the opinions of each group.

Data Analysis and Management

According to Ampofo (2020), data analysis is a critical examination of materials in order to understand its parts and its relationships and to discover its trend. The data collected were qualitative data. After the data was collected from the field, it was sorted out, edited and analysed in themes. After this, interpretations were made before making conclusions.

Validity of Instrument

The face validity of the data collection instruments was established with the help of an expert in conflict management. The expert helped correct all typographical errors and elements of ambiguity in the instruments before it was used in the pilot test. This was deemed suitable for

gathering information on respondent's views on causes of organizational conflict in the Tamale High Court.

Content validity of the instrument was determined with the help of the researchers' academic advisor who is an expert in the field of research. The examination of the instruments by the academic advisor and other research experts', changes were affected as a result of comments and suggestions from them. This helped to improve the content validity of the instrument, because their collective judgments were used to establish congruence between all of them.

Reliability of Instrument

With regards to the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test of the instrument was carried out with five (5) staff in the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly who shares similar characteristics with the study group. Thus, those that were chosen was not part of the main study. This helped the researchers to avoid contamination of the sample for the study and hence the results.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter analyses the qualitative data gathered from the field and also discusses the results of the data in thematic area according to the purpose of the study. Based on my field experience, the presentation of the findings is organized in relation to the purpose of the study and placed under causal factors of conflict in the Tamale High Court. The task of this chapter was to simply describe and define the data collected without assigning values or figures, and charts.

Analysis of Demographics of Respondents

As explained earlier in the research methodology, the study captured the views of the staff of Tamale High Court in the Northern Region of Ghana concerning the conflict in the Tamale High Court. The staff of Tamale High Court were numbered twenty (20). Majority of the staff were females 14 representing 70% while 6 representing 30% were males.

Causal factors of conflict in the Tamale High Court

Twenty (20) respondents (staff of Tamale High Court) took part in this study. The participants were purposely selected. The respondents were asked to express their views and opinions on some of the causal factors of conflicts in the Tamale High Court and their responses are shown below. One aspect of the interview was to find out the awareness of the respondents on organisational conflict and the responses of the participants are presented in Figure 1. Majority of the respondents 16 out of 20 representing 80% indicated that they are aware of organisational conflict while 4 out of the 20 respondents representing 20% indicated that they are not aware of organisational conflict. The implication of this results means that majority of the respondents who took part in the study working at the Tamale High Court are aware of organisational conflict.

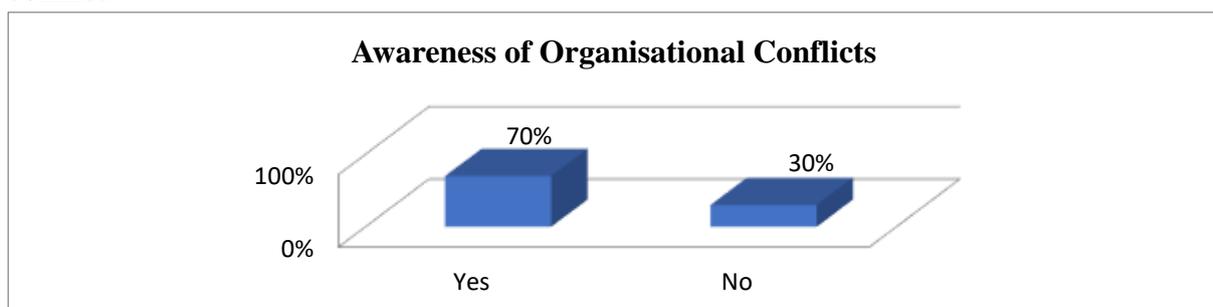


Figure 1: Respondents Awareness of Conflict at Tamale High Court
Source: Field Survey (2021)

Again, one aspect of the interview sought to find out the views of respondents (staff of Tamale High Court) on their experience of conflict in Tamale High Court and their responses are presented in Figure 2. Majority of the respondents 14 out of 20 representing 70% indicated that they have experienced conflict at Tamale High Court while 6 out of the 20 respondents representing 30% indicated that they have not experienced conflicts at Tamale High Court. The implication of this result means that issues of conflict have been occurring at Tamale High Court.

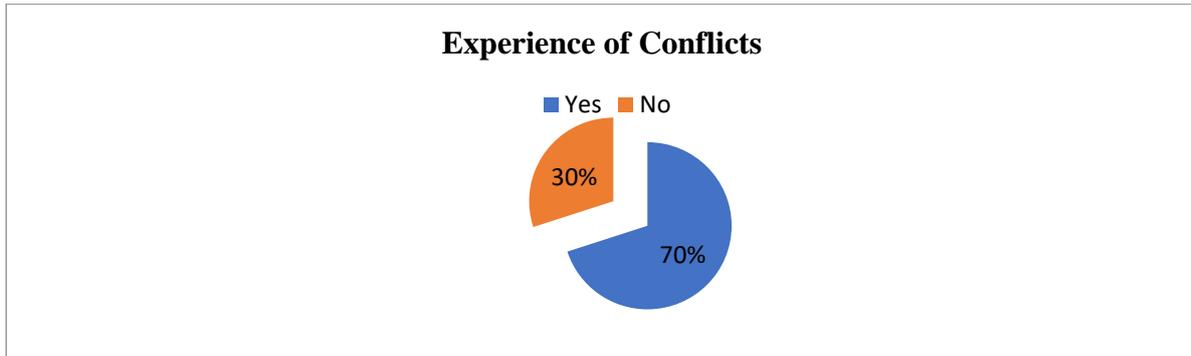


Figure 2: Respondents experienced of Conflict at Tamale High Court
Source: Field Survey (2021)

The respondents were further asked to tell the time conflict has occurred in Tamale High Court and their responses are presented in Figure 3. Majority of the respondents 12 out of 20 representing 60% indicated that conflict occurred monthly at Tamale High Court, this was followed by 6 out of 20 respondents representing 30% who indicated that conflict occurred every six months at Tamale High Court while 2 out of the 20 respondents representing 10% indicated that conflict occurred yearly at Tamale High Court. The implication of this result means that conflict have been occurring at Tamale High Court.

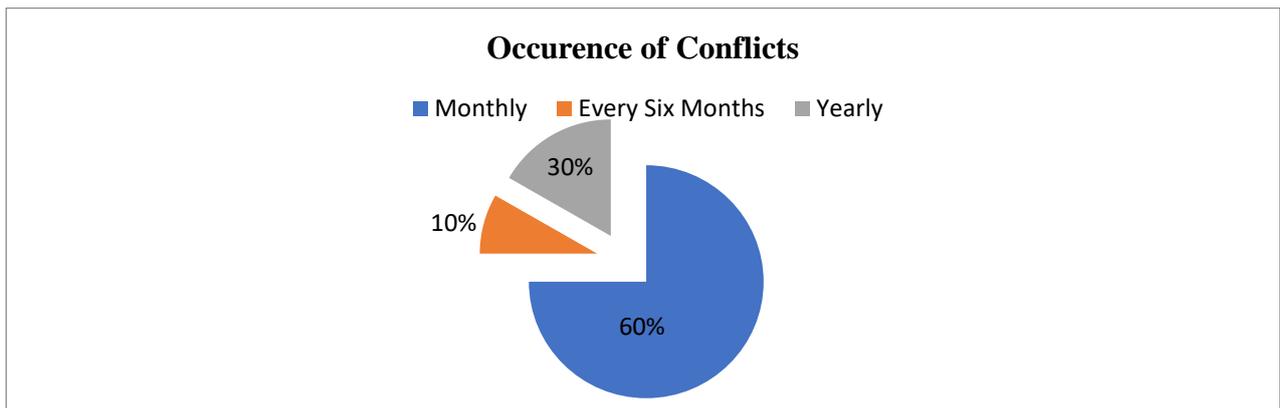


Figure 3: Occurrence of Conflict at Tamale High Court
Source: Field Survey (2021)

The respondents were asked to express their views on the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court and their responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Factors causing conflict in Tamale High Court

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Ineffective organisational system	20	100%
Tribalism	20	100%
Poor communication	20	100%
Politics	20	100%
Lack of benefits	20	100%
Clashing of one's role	20	100%
Disagreement between employees and employers	20	100%
Differences in supervisory styles between departments	20	100%
Poor human relations between management and workers	20	100%
Total	20	100%

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 2 shows the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court. From Table 2, all the respondents 20 representing 100% respectively each indicated that ineffective organisational system, politics, poor human relations between management and workers, tribalism, poor communication, lack of benefits, clashing of one's role, disagreement between employees and employers, are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.

From the focus group discussion all the respondents expressed that;

“ineffective organisational system, tribalism, scare/limited resources, poor communication, difference in supervisory style between departments, poor resource allocation, lack of benefits, poor human relations between management and workers, politics, distribution of duties, selfishness among employees, disagreement between employers and employees are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.”

Also, all the respondents clearly expressed that there are several factors that caused conflict at Tamale High Court. For instance, one junior staff noted that;

“ineffective organisational system, tribalism, scare/limited resources, politics, discrimination and disagreement are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.”

Again, from the focus discussion group that was conducted, majority of the participants noted that;

“varying views on accountability, cutting of position of employees, poor human relations between management and workers, disagreement between employees and employers, lashing of one's role, selfishness among employers and employees, politics and difference in educational background, personal experiences, religion and gender are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.”

This result agrees to the study by Knapp (1994) who asserted that the power elites of the American society, (that is, the military – industrial complex) “emerged from the fusion of the cooperate elite, the pentagon and the executive branch of government”. Buss (2009) argues that the interests of these elites were opposed to those of the people. He theorized that the policies of the power elites would result in “increased escalation of conflict of weapons of mass destruction, and possibly the annihilation of human race.”

The respondents were therefore asked to explain how the factors they expressed caused conflict in Tamale High Court and their responses are presented below.

From the interviews that were conducted, on the issue of tribalism all the key informants expressed that;

“tribalism based on appointment is serious because those employed cannot do the work but based on tribalism they are picked and this generate conflict between management and employees because assigned duties to employees by their management cannot be achieved.”

Also, on the issue of poor communication, all the respondents noted that;

“in an organization where there is no proper communication between employers and employees conflict arises. Thus, if there is no communication between employers and employees on issues relating to the organization and management takes decisions which favor only them whiles their employees suffer this causes conflict.”

In a focused group discussion, all the respondents shared on the view that;

‘poor communication is a causal factor of conflict at Tamale High Court. For example, poor communication from supervisor to subordinate, instead of early preparation for a program, supervisors will not communicate at the right time but blamed subordinates if they failed to attend the program on time but knowing to the fact that proper communication to the time was not followed.’

The results of this study confirm the study by Etim and Okey (2013) who assert that conflict often arises because of poor communication between the parties involved. Often, people will agree to something but misunderstand what they have agreed to. As a result, the parties involved become unhappy with each other, each believing the others have failed to live up to their responsibilities. Again, on the issue of lack of resource as a causal factor of conflict at Tamale High Court, all the respondents noted that time resources are not fairly distributed in Tamale High Court. The respondents further noted that conflict arose at Tamale High Court one day where the staff at the general office fought on affidavit. The result of this study agrees with the study by Hotepo et al (2010) who posited that competition in the organisation arises over people fighting for resources, such as money.

Moreover, on the issue of lack of benefit as a causal factor of conflict at Tamale High Court, all the respondents noted that any time employees who deserve to be motivated are denied such a persons become angry and this leads to conflict.

From the Focused Group Discussion all the respondents noted that;

“there is small benefit to junior staff of Judicial Service regarding allowances.”

According to Buss (2009) conflict can also be broken out when one party avoids the goal achievement of the other one. According to Ford (2007) societies are defined by inequality that produces conflict, rather than order and consensus. This conflict based on inequality can only be overcome through a fundamental transformation of the existing relations in the society, and is productive of new social relations. George, Miroga and Omweri,'(2013) further noted that the disadvantaged have structural interests that run counter to the status quo, which, once they are assumed, will lead to social change. Thus, they are viewed as agents of change rather than objects one should feel sympathy for.

Moreover, on the issue of poor human relation as a causal factor of conflict at Tamale High Court, all the respondents noted that when employees deserved to be promoted or honored and they are denied such opportunity it causes conflict. The respondents further noted that when employees are not recognised by their leaders in whatever they do it also causes conflict.

Again, on the issue of disagreement as a causal factor of conflict at Tamale High Court, all the respondents noted that;

“disagreement between executives of Judicial Service Association of Ghana and their members are causing conflict at Tamale High Court. Thus, Judicial Service Association of Ghana executives in Northern Region do not allow staff to contribute to any decision but take hast decision or wrong decision for their selfish interest.”

The respondents were further asked to express their views on other factors that caused conflict at Tamale High Court and all the respondents expressed that leadership style, disobedient to rules and regulations, discrimination at the workplace, nepotism, favoritism, improper communication, difference in educational background, personal experiences, religion and gender are some of the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court. From the transcript of the Key Informants and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) it is clear that there are several factors that caused conflict in Tamale High Court. It can therefore be deduced that ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, tribalism, incompatible goals, scarce/limited resource, poor communication, differences in supervisory styles between departments, perceived or actual differences in treatment between departments or groups of employees, poor resource allocation, distribution of duties, lack of benefits, varying views on accountability, poor human relations between management and workers, disagreement between employees and employers, clashing of ones role, selfishness among employers and employees, politics and difference in educational background, personal experiences, religion and gender are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.

According to Obasan (2011) ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, incompatible goals, scarce resource, and poor communication can all contribute to conflict in an organization. The above results confirm to the study by Mba (2013) who postulated that a causes of conflict in organisations has become a remarkable issue which has encouraged most researchers to come out with several elements of these definitions that warrant additional comment to causes of conflict. This is why Mughal (2013) asserted that the cause of organisational conflict is often misunderstood and blamed on personalities and misbehavior, but in reality, much organisation conflict is systemic and endemic to workplace environment.

The results confirm to the study by Obasan (2011) who asserted that ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, incompatible goals, scarce resources, and poor communication can all contribute to conflict in an organisation. Obasan (2011) further noted that conflict can

arise over resource allocation, the distribution of duties, workload and benefits, different levels of tolerance for risk taking, and varying views on accountability. Obasan (2011) identified unacceptable terms of employment, poor human relations between management and workers, non-consultation with employees before making key decisions affecting them, anti-union posture of management and lack of effective mechanism for prevention of conflict as multiple causal factors of workplace conflict.

The results of this study also confirm to the study by Rother (2009) who asserted that conflict can arise where there are perceived or actual differences in treatment between departments or groups of employees. According to Rother (2009) asserted that causes of organisational conflict can be personality or and personal problems such as substance abuse, childcare issues, and family problems. Organisational factors such as leadership, management, budget, and disagreement about core values can also contribute. The issue of “personality clashes” is controversial.

The results of this study also confirms the study by Sobia (2012) who postulates that conflict may arise in an organisation due to the amount or type of work that the employees are required to perform. The results of this study also confirms the study Robbins (2003) who has asserted that conflict can make co-workers uncomfortable and accusations of favoritism may occur, especially if it is a supervisor-subordinate relationship. This is why Umar (2000) posited that if the relationship goes awry, one party may seek to exact revenge on the other.

The results of this study also confirms the study by Mathew (2014) who found lack of resources, different expectation, competition, lack of cooperation, interdependence and communication problems as factors that have caused conflicts in most developing countries. The results of this study is confirmed by the study of Lee (2011) who asserted that conflict is smaller in highly dependent relationships because in general, the dependent party conforms itself that it cannot alter the situation and accepts the leader’s power. According to Sobia (2012), organisational conflict is a common experience for both management and employees. In a workplace full of people, all of whom have different goals, preference and ideas; conflict is bound to appear occasionally, particularly when this range of personalities is mixed with a high-stress work environment.

Summary of Key Findings

The purpose of the study was to determine causal factors of conflict in the Tamale High Court. The research adopted a qualitative study strategy focusing on one twenty (20) participants. The use of interviews and focus group discussions were employed to obtain the relevant information for this work.

According to the findings of this study, ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, tribalism, incompatible goals, scarce/limited resource, poor communication, perceived or actual differences in treatment between departments or groups of employees, poor resource allocation, distribution of duties, lack of benefits, varying views on accountability, cutting of position of employees, poor human relations between management and workers, disagreement between employees and employers, clashing of one’s role, selfishness among employers and employees, politics and difference in educational background, personal experiences, religion and gender are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that ineffective organisational system, unpredictable policies, tribalism, incompatible goals, scarce/limited resource, poor communication, perceived or actual differences in treatment between departments or groups of employees, poor resource allocation, distribution of duties, lack of benefits, varying views on accountability, cutting of position of employees, poor human relations between management and workers, disagreement between employees and employers, clashing of one's role, selfishness among employers and employees, politics and difference in educational background, personal experiences, religion and gender are the factors causing conflict at Tamale High Court.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

In the events of any organizational conflict at Tamale High Court, the researchers recommend that the management of Judicial Service in the Northern Region should find out if staff appointed by the Judicial Service of Ghana in the Tamale High Court are committed to executing their role towards the administration of justice in Ghana. This is because an uncommitted staff will heavily affect the general performance of the Judicial Service in the administration of justice in Ghana.

The study also recommends to the management of Judicial Service of Ghana in the Northern Region to establish different channels of communication apart from the Complaint Unit and open discussions of conflict in work relations must be encouraged with an attempt to avoid confrontation, competition and domination as conflict management strategies.

Moreover, the study recommends to the management of the Judicial Service of Ghana in the Northern Region that whenever reported cases of conflict between staff of Tamale High Court are brought before them, they should be handled immediately with care.

Finally, the study recommends to the management of the Judicial Service of Ghana (Northern Region Administration) to adopt inclusive and collaborative strategies in conflict management and at the same time involve both senior and junior staff representation in vital decisions that affect the workforce. Both senior and junior staff at Tamale High Court must work together amicably by formulating potent strategies and sustaining acceptable policies as an effective machinery for managing conflict continuously in Tamale High Court.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

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