



**ASSESSMENT OF WORKPLACE CONFLICT IN ETHIOPIAN
ELECTRIC POWER OFFICE**

**A thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce as Partial Fulfillment
of Degree of Masters in Human Resource Management**

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that, this Research report is my original work and has not been presented in any other University, and all the materials used for this study have been duly acknowledged.

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Daniel Mebratu Gebeyehu, entitled : Assessment of workplace conflict in Ethiopian Electric Power: which is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the masters of Human Resource degree complies with the regulation of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Statement of Certification

This research project has been submitted to Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce, Department of Business Administration and Information Systems for examination with my approval as an advisor.

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is an inevitable part of life that occurs when the things individuals care about appear incompatible. It may arise from a misunderstanding between co-workers or poor communication within a department. No matter the cause, you can deal effectively with conflict in the workplace in a proper way. The study employs explanatory research design to investigate the causes and outcomes of workplace conflict. The main objective of the study is to identify the different types, causes and outcomes of workplace conflict in Ethiopian Electric Power, head office. The primary data was collected using close ended questionnaire. The secondary data included books, article, journals and other published materials. The questionnaires were distributed to the sample respondents of 167 Ethiopian Electric Power employees, which are selected using stratified random sampling. The Data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The results obtained from the analysis showed that; Interpersonal and Intergroup conflict are the major types of conflict in the organization, it also revealed that communication factor as the major source of conflict.. With regard to outcomes of conflict it shows that; conflict has an impact on the employee's performance as well as on their tenure. Finally the researcher recommended that to minimize conflicts caused by these different factors its better if the organization improves its activities regarding employee's relation with colleagues and management, communication system and overall reward system. Furthermore the researcher also suggested that proper management skills should be taken by all managers in order to constructively manage conflicts to the benefit of the company and its members.

Key words: *Conflict, Types and Outcomes, Ethiopian Electric Power*

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Conflict is an inseparable part of people's life. Wherever there is social interaction between individuals or groups, conflict will often exist. The conflict-free company has never existed and never will exist. Antagonisms, tensions, aggressions, stereotypes, negative attitudes and the frustrations will always be an integral part of any organization where men have to live and work together. Since organization is a one place where social interaction happen it cannot be immune to conflicts. Conflict is inherent in all organizations (Lynch cited in Palazzo, 2007). In present corporate environment conflict has become very common phenomenon (Kondalkar, 2007: 160).

According to Henery (2009:17) organizational conflict can be regarded as a dispute that occurs when interests, goals or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible with each other. It emerges as an outcome of interdependencies and interactions between and among people. Different scholars have defined the term conflict in different ways. But the most commonly used definition that all can agree upon is: Conflict is the situation in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party which is in the same group, in another group, in the same organization or in another organization (Mulatu, 2007: 1).

Since conflict is seemingly unavoidable, it is obviously necessary for managers to be able to recognize the sources of conflict, to view its constructive as well as destructive potential, to learn how to manage conflict, and to implement conflict resolution techniques in a practical way (Fleetwood, 1987). Managing conflicts within organizations can be defined as the art of appropriate intervention to achieve conflict settlement Nye (in Mayer and Boness 2010: 34). In 1977 Huseman viewed conflict management as "distinguishing between useful conflicts and conflicts that should be eliminated". Huseman stated that conflict management should involve the ability to develop the abilities to work under stress and continue to be productive. In 1964 Kahn and Boulding identified the objective of conflict management as "the objective of conflict management should be to see that conflict remains on the creative and useful side

of an invisible but critically important line that separates the good or natural conflict from that which is bad or unnatural". In 1971 Thomas gave a short and clear definition of conflict management: "A process of cooperative confrontation" (Fleetwood, 1987). Almusdy (2007: 2) believes that 'Conflict has a negative outcome on the individual and the organization, unless properly managed'.

Conflict has both positive and negative outcome in the parties involved and in the organization in general. Robbins (1996: 504), argues that not all conflict is bad. Some conflicts support the goals of the group and improve its performance; these are functional, or constructive, forms of conflict. Additionally, there are conflicts that hinder group performances; these are dysfunctional, or destructive, forms of conflict.

However, if managers ignore clash between co-workers, these clashes convert into personal and emotional conflict between them and in the long run, these clashes damage the organizational culture, worker moral and overall reduction of organization performance. Conflicts continue to spoil an organization when they are ignored. Conflicts follow employees until they face and resolve them. People respond to conflicts based on their perceptions of the situation, and often they don't have the objective review of the facts. Perceptions depend on a person's life experience, culture, values, and beliefs. Conflicts lead to strong emotions. If a person is not comfortable with his emotions, can't manage them in a stressful situation, he will not be able to resolve conflict successfully. All this issues need to be addressed by management. Unless conflicts are effectively managed in organizations, they are likely to have more adverse effects on employees' psychological contracts, performance and commitment. Organizations need to understand the factors that affect employees' performance because such insight will help them make decisions that will inculcate improved performance from the employee and to an extension overall performance of the organization.

Even though most managers address different conflicts everyday there is inadequate empirical information that can guide their efforts to clearly identify sources of conflicts, its pattern and effect on the overall organization. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify prevalent conflicts in EEP and discuss causes and outcomes of these conflicts in the workplace and to suggest ways that managers can use to address this conflicts in a way that will benefit the employees as well as the organization.

1.2 Background of the organization

Electric Power was introduced to Ethiopia in the late 19th Century, during the regime of Emperor Minilik II. The first generator was said given to Emperor Minilik II around the Year 1898 to light the palace. In addition to the use of generators ,Emperor Minilik II got constructed the first Hydro Power Plant on Akaki River in the year 1912 in order to supply power to small factories that had been limited to small factories and the palace was extended to public places and major roads in the vicinity of the palace.

However, the effort of the government to extend the power supply to the public was hindered by the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in the years 1936,during this temporary occupation, the Italian company called Coneil overtook the generation and distribution of electric power. The company installed generators at different places and extended the power supply to the then major towns. After the Italians were driven out from Ethiopia in the year 1941 An organization called Enemy property Administration was established and took over along with other activities the generation and distribution of power to the public.

In the year 1948, an organization that had been vested with the power to administer the enemy property was evolved to an organization called Shewa Electric Power. The new organization Shewa although with limited capacity, managed to increase the power supply not only in shewa but also other administrative regions. In light of its function, its name was changed to “Ethiopian Electric light and Power “in the year 1955.Soon after its establishment, the supervision and management of the organization was vested in the Board of Directors appointed by the government.

After eight months of its establishment, the Ethiopian Electric Light and Power was transformed to the “Ethiopian Electric Light and Power Authority” (Charter of the Ethiopian Electric Light and Power).The newly established Authority was conferred with the powers and duties of the previous Ethiopian Electric Light and Power. The purpose of the Ethiopian Electric Light and Power Authority was to engage in the business of production,transmitting ,disturbing and selling of electric energy to the public of Ethiopia and carry on any other lawful business incidental or appropriate hereto which is calculated directly or indirectly to promote the interest of the authority or to enhance the value of its properties. At the time of its establishment, the capital of

the authority was ten million Ethiopian dollars divided into one thousand shares of per value of ten thousand Ethiopian dollars each. It was also determined that the Board of Directors appointed by the government shall exercise all the power of the authority. In addition to this, it was also determined that the Head Office of the Authority would be in Addis Ababa ,with branch offices at different places as necessary. At that time the annual electricity production capacity of the authority was 35 GWH while the number of customers was 12,500. In light of the socio economic development of the country the authority continued to increase then scope of its operation in order to accommodate new changes .After being in operation for about 55 years in this manner major changes in the objective and structural set up of the organization took place relative to the changes in the socio-economic condition of the country. In this regard, one of the major changes in the economic sector was the transformation of the centralized command economy to the free market driven economy in the year 1987.

In order to accommodate the new changes in the environment, the Ethiopian Electric light and Power Authority was transformed to the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation by reorganizing its functions on the basis of the principles of commercialization and decentralization. Accordingly, the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation as public enterprise was established for indefinite duration by regulation No. 18/1997, and conferred with the powers and duties of the previous Ethiopian Electric Light and Power Authority. The purpose of the corporation is to engage in the business of producing, transmitting, distributing and selling electrical energy(in accordance with economic and social development policies and priorities of the government) and to carry on any other related activities that would enables it achieve its purpose. At the time of establishment, the authorized capital of the corporation was 6.1 billion Birr of which 2.67 Billion Birr was paid up in cash and kind. It was determined by the establishment regulation that the corporation shall have its Head Office in Addis Ababa and may have branch offices else where, as may be necessary. Currently, the annual electricity production capacity of the corporation is about 4980 GWH and the number of customers is about 1.1million.Although the corporation has been increasing the number of customers by more than 15% annually, but this does not mean that the corporation has met the demand for electric power .Hence ,the corporation is required to think and work strategically to meet then power supply need of the socio-economic development of the country.

Earlier, the corporation is reported to have been undergoing a research aimed at improving the quality of its service delivery. As a result the company has been divided into the Ethiopian Electric Power Office (EEPO), which the paper deals with and the Ethiopian Electric Services Office (EESO) in 2014.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

.Managers are not able to handle conflicts due to lack of knowledge in the field, pure negligence or wrong assumptions that conflicts don't have impact on employee's performance. But this is not the case, according to Lang, 2009,: 240 conflict significantly affects employee morale, turnover, and litigation, which affects the prosperity of a company, either constructively or destructively.

Unresolved conflict represents the largest deducible cost in many businesses, yet it remains largely unrecognized (Dana, 1999: 44). Lots of managerial time is consumed while dealing with conflict. According to Watson and Hoffman (1996: 84) ,42% of a managers' time is spent addressing conflict in the workplace.

Most of the times managers rush in providing resolution measures without knowing what the root cause for the conflict is. In order to resolve conflict, individuals or group resort to conflict management instruments without first determining what causes of conflict are, a key element in developing appropriate conflict resolution strategy (Havenga 2004: 88). Mayer (2008: 8) argue that if the causes of conflict are known and understood, a conflict map can be developed, which could guide conflict resolution process. (Jordaan in Tonder, Havenga and Visagie, 2008: 374) states that, 'it is useful to note that the cause of conflict can be linked and collectively regarded as prerequisite for conflict management'.

In Ethiopian Electric Power Office, head office, there are numerous conflicts between workers and management (EEP Discipline Committee Archive). This is evidenced in the number of conflicts entertained by the Employee Discipline Committee since the split of the organization into two. According to the head of the discipline committee more than 500 conflicts were entertained in the year 2014. Such conflicts hinder the effectiveness of the departments and the organization as a whole. On the other hand most of the manager's times

that could have been allocated to deal with other pressing issues are consumed in trying to pacify conflicts.

In line with the above idea the researcher tries to examine the most prevalent conflict , source and outcome of these conflict in the organization and tries to provide the management with a clear picture of the trends of conflict in the organization. Furthermore the study also tries to pinpoint the outcomes of the conflict in the organization.

1.4 Basic research questions

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. What types of conflicts are prevalent in Ethiopian Electric Power Office?
2. What are the causes of these conflicts?
3. What are the major outcomes of these conflicts in the organization?
4. What strategies can be suggested to increase the effectiveness of the conflict management process in Ethiopian Electric Power Office?

1.5 Objective of the Study

1.5.1 General Objective

The general purpose of this study is to identify the causes, types and outcomes of workplace conflict in the organization.

1.4.2 Specific Objective

1. To indentify most prevailing conflicts in the organization.
2. To examine underlying causes of these conflicts in the organization.
3. To identify the outcome of these conflicts.
4. To recommend possible strategies that the management can use to address conflicts in a constructive manner.

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Conceptual Scope

The study only focuses on organizational conflict. Different types of organizational conflicts are examined by the researcher. Other related areas of conflict such as trade union conflicts and conflicts between the organization and other outside organizations are beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, other factors such as employee commitment, psychological contracts that can be affected by conflict are not also discussed in the paper.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study is only limited to the Ethiopian Electric Power Office, head office. The company's head office is currently located in Addis Ababa. The purpose of the EEP is to engage in the business of producing, transmitting, distributing and selling electrical energy in accordance with economic and social development policies and priorities of the government and to carry out any other related activities that would enable it achieve its purpose. According to the information collected from the office, it has a total of twelve thousand one hundred and seventy two employees. Out of this, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen work in the head office. The head office is selected because it fosters representative amount of employees which are adequate for the study.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study will be a significant endeavor in handling conflict in work environment and keeping harmony of workplace in general. This study will also be beneficial to the employees and managers in different organizations, when they employ effective conflict handling strategies which benefits stakeholders. By understanding the causes of conflicts managers will be able to create a conducive environment that enables departments and organizations maximize their potentials. Moreover, this research will provide recommendations on how to address different kinds of conflicts.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The study was conducted to show the causes and outcomes of conflict in Ethiopian Electric Power Office, as a result of this, the study is limited to generalize about the situation for all types of organizations.

The study tries to assess workplace conflicts. The causes of conflict identified in the research are not exhaustive and further researches can be made on causes which are not listed in the research. The same is true for outcomes of conflicts.

Lack of research conducted by other researchers on this specific topic in the county's context in which this study is undertaken may have helped the researcher to widen the scope. This was another limitation noted in the study

1.9 Organization of the Study

This research report has five major chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter which consists of background of the study, background of the organization, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, and organization of the study. The second chapter reviews literature that is related to this study. The third chapter incorporates the methodology of the study which deals about what methods and materials were used. The Analysis, presentation and summary of the data collected from respondents constitutes the fourth chapter. The last chapter incorporates conclusion and recommendation. Other supplementary parts of the research report are included before and after these five chapters.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter covers a critical review of both theoretical and empirical literatures related to the variable being studied. The chapter contains two major parts. While the first part of the literature review deals with theoretical literature the second one deals with empirical reviews. Under the theoretical literature views of conflict, sources of conflict, types of conflict, outcomes of conflict and conflict management strategies are discussed in depth. In the empirical part different articles related to the study are summarized.

2.1 Theoretical Literature

2.1.1 Definition of Conflict

A lot has been said regarding conflict by different scholars in different times. According to Pink (1968: 413-414), there has been no shortage of definitions of conflict. Despite the differing meanings the term has acquired, several common themes underlie most definitions. Additional commonalities in the definitions are opposition or incompatibility and some form of interaction. These factors set the conditions that determine the beginning point of the conflict process.

Robbins (1996:505) defines conflict, as ‘a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect something that the first party cares’.According to Jhon et al., (2002: 127), ‘conflict occurs whenever disagreements exist in a social situation over issues of substance or whenever emotional antagonisms create frictions between individuals or groups’.

Conflict is also defined by Rashid andArcher (1985: 177), as; ‘The pursuit by two different persons of goals that are incompatible so that gains by one person must inevitably come about at the expense of the other’. Conflict must be perceived by the parties to it; whether or not conflict exists is a perception issue. If no one is aware of conflict, then it’s generally agreed no conflict exists. (Robbins, 1996: 504)

According to Jeffrey et al., (1994: 7), it is defined as a 'perceived divergence of interest, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously'. Disputes, on the other hand, are manifest disagreements, often following legal or quasi-legal or otherwise confrontational procedures (such as complaints, charges, grievances, and lawsuits). Conflict embraces all the differences between persons, whether or not they become disputes.

This definition is deliberately broad. It describes that point in any ongoing activity when an interaction "crosses over" to become conflict. It includes the wide range of conflicts that people experience in groups and organizations such as; incompatibility of goals, differences over interpretations of facts, disagreements based on behavioral expectations, and the like (Robbins, 1996: 505).

2.1.2 Views of Conflict

It is entirely appropriate to say that there has been "conflict" over the role of work in groups and organizations. One school of thought has argued that conflict must be avoided, that it indicates a malfunctioning within the group. We call this the traditional view. Another school of thought, the human relations view, argues that conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group and that it need not be evil, but rather has the potential to be a positive force in determining group performance. The third, and most recent, perspective proposes; not only that conflict can be a positive force in a group but explicitly argues that some conflict is absolutely necessary for a group to perform effectively. We label this third school the interactionist approach. Let's take a closer look at each of these views.

The Traditional View

The traditional view was consistent with the attitudes that prevailed about group behavior in the 1930s and 1940s. Conflict was seen as a dysfunctional outcome resulting from poor communication, a lack of openness and trust between people, and the failure of managers to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of their employees (Robbins, 1996: 506).

The early approach to conflict assumed that all conflict was bad. Conflict was viewed negatively, and it was used synonymously with such terms as violence, destruction, and irrationality to reinforce its negative connotation. They believe that conflict, by definition,

was harmful and was to be avoided. Conflict is dysfunctional, destructive and irrational usually caused by poor communication, a lack of trust, or a failure to be responsible to the needs of others. Mullins (2002: 813) claims that Peter Drucker, the renowned Austrian management theorist, was a leading proponent of this view, which holds that ‘conflict is seen as a dysfunction outcome and can be explained, for example, by poor communications, personality clashes or the work of agitators’.

The traditional view of conflict, as a problematic condition always requiring reduction or elimination and whose conditions or outcomes can be predicted, is incompatible with a complex adaptive systems view of organizations.

Conflict is frequently viewed as a problematic condition usually between two people or groups that needs to be reduced, eliminated, or overcome (Rahim, 2002: 210), so that organizational stability is not threatened (Pondy, 1967: 301)

The view that all conflict is bad certainly offers a simple approach to looking at the behavior of people who create conflict. Since all conflict is to be avoided, we need merely direct our attention to the causes of conflict and correct these malfunctioning in order to improve group and organizational performance. Although research studies now provide strong evidence to dispute that this approach to conflict reduction results in high group performance, many of us still evaluate conflict situations utilizing this outmoded standard (Schermerhorn et al., 2010: 233).

The Human Relations View

Since the late 1970s a new perspective has emerged which is the human relations (Ducker, 2007: 1). The human relation argued that conflict was a natural occurrence in all groups and organizations (Robbins, 1996: 506). This perspective is, more properly, an interdisciplinary series of views which oppose the traditional one (Ducker, 2007: 1).

Since conflict was inevitable, the human relations school advocated acceptance of conflict. Proponents rationalized its existence: It cannot be eliminated, and there are even times when conflict may benefit a group's performance. The human relations view dominated conflict theory from the late 1940s through the mid-1970s (Robbins, 1996: 506). Ducker (2007:

1) argues that conflict is either neutral (rather than intrinsically bad) or can be manipulated to be either good or bad. According to this reasoning, “conflict in itself is neither good nor bad, right nor wrong, it is the way we react to conflict” that is the issue (Palmer 1990: 6).

The Interactionist View

While the human relations approach accepted conflict, the interactionist approach encourages conflict on the grounds that a harmonious, peaceful, tranquil, and cooperative group is prone to becoming static, apathetic, and nonresponsive to needs for change and innovation. 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 (Robbins, 1996: 506). Under this new view, some go further to argue that conflict performs a positive function, for example Avis (1992: 120) claim that conflict is ‘not only inescapable, but indispensable’ and Townsend (in Mullins 2002: 814) argues that ‘conflict is the sign of a healthy, not dysfunctional in organizations’.

According to Robbins (1996: 506) to know whether a conflict is good or bad depends on the type of conflict. Specifically, it's necessary to differentiate between functional and dysfunctional conflicts.

2.1.3 Functional and Dysfunctional Conflict

Conflict in organizations can be upsetting both to the individuals directly involved and to others affected by its occurrence (Jhon et al., 2002: 128). There are two kinds of conflict. The first is functional which are constructive by nature that supports the goal of the group and improves its performance. According to Jhon et al., (2002:128), functional conflict results in positive benefit to the group. The other is dysfunctional or distractive conflict that minimizes or hinders group performance. It works to the individuals, groups, or organization's disadvantage. It diverts energies, hurts group cohesion, promotes interpersonal hostilities, and overall creates a negative environment for workers (Jhon et al., 2002: 129).

Robbins (1996: 507) argues that conflict can be valuable for the group. The demarcation between functional and dysfunctional is neither clear nor precise. He believes that no one level of conflict can be adopted acceptable or unacceptable under all conditions. The type and

level of conflict that create healthy and positive involvement towards one group's goal today may, in another group or in the same group at another time, be highly dysfunctional.

Functional Conflict

When conflict is functional, it is generally task oriented and focused on judgmental differences about how best to achieve common objectives Brehmer; Cosier & Rose; Jehn; Priem & Price; Riecken; Torrance (in Amason, 1996: 129). This type of conflict is called cognitive conflict (Amason & Schweiger, 1994: 342). Cognitive conflict is inevitable in top management teams because 'different positions see different environments' (Mitroff, 1982: 375). However functional conflict should not adversely affect group goal and performance rather it should enhance group commitment and understanding.

Dysfunctional Conflict

When conflict is dysfunctional, it tends to be emotional and focused on personal incompatibilities or disputes Brehmer; Cosier & Rose; Jehn; Priem & Price; Riecken; Torrance (in Amason, 1996: 129). This type of conflict is called affective conflict (Amason & Schweiger, 1994: 247). Affective conflict seems to emerge in top management team when cognitive disagreement is perceived as personal criticism (Amason 1996: 123-148). Brehmer (1976: 986) argues that such misinterpretation can cause "purely cognitive disagreement to turn into full-scale emotional conflict". It is likely that the criticism and debate necessary for cognitive conflict could be interpreted as political gamesmanship, where one team member tries to gain influence at the expense of another (Finkelstein, 1992: 517).

2.1.4 Sources (Causes) of Conflict

Different scholars mention different sources that will lead to conflict. According to Jones & George (in Obasan, 2011: 45), there are many sources of organizational conflicts categories with each category having its unique characteristics.



FIGURE 1: CAUSES OF CONFLICT (OBASAN, 2011)

According to Robbins (1996: 508), sources of conflict are categorized in three major divisions the first one is a personal factor, the second is structural factors and the last one is communicational factors. Nelson and Quick (2001: 425-428) categorizes source of conflict as personal factor, those that develop from within the organization and originates from the manner in which work is organized, and secondly personal factors, which emerges as a result of individual differences among employees. Communicational factors can also be considered as a potential cause for a conflict even though much attention is not given to this factor. (Ritzer 1972: 53; Robbins 1998: 247; Vecchio 2000: 177) argue that communication is infrequently considered as a source of conflict.

In general, these authors suggest that causes of conflict can be classified under 3 main categories these are, structural factors, personal factors and communicational factors.

Structural Factors

The very nature of organizations as hierarchical systems provides a basis for conflict as individuals and teams work within the authority structure (Schermerhorn et al., 2010: 237). Vertical conflict occurs between levels and commonly involves supervisor, subordinate and team leader. Team member disagreements over resources, goals and performance system. Horizontal conflict occurs between persons or groups working at the same hierarchical level.

These disputes commonly involve goal incompatibilities, resource scarcities, or purely interpersonal factors. And, line–staff conflict involves disagreements between line and staff personnel over who has authority and control over decisions on matters such as budgets, technology, and human resource practices (Schermerhorn et al., 2010: 238; Nelson and Quick, 2001: 427).

There are eight structural aspects of an organization that are recognized as the causes of conflict: specialization, common resources, goal differences, interdependence, authority relationships, status differences, jurisdictional ambiguities, and roles and expectations.

Personal Factors

Personal factors are also among one of the potential source of conflict. They include each person's individual value system and the personality characteristics that account for individual idiosyncrasies and differences. Certain personality type, for example, individuals who are highly authoritarian and dogmatic, and who demonstrate low self esteem lead to potential conflict. Most important, and probably the most overlooked variable in the study of social conflict, is differing value system. Value difference for example, are the best explanation of such diverse issue as prejudice, disagreements over one's contribution to the group and the reward one deserves. (Robbins, 1998: 509). As Azamosa (2004: 13), observed conflict involves the total range of behavior and attitudes that is in opposition between owners/managers and working.

In a professional workplace setting, bad attitude can affect everyone and cause conflict among employees (Brehmer, 1976: 988). Business owners looking for ways to improve worker productivity can start by evaluating the attitude their employees bring to the job each day. A positive or negative attitude affects how workers approach their jobs, and attitudes can have a ripple effect on those around them. In some cases attitude problems are able to be ignored by the majority of employees and a productive employee with a slight attitude problem is not a distraction (Mayer and Boness, 2010: 37). A manager needs to learn how to identify escalating attitude problems in the workplace to prevent them from becoming a distraction (Roseman, Wiest and Swartz, 1994: 209).

Over the past ten years, increasing attention has been given to how workers express emotion in a variety of work settings (Sutton, 1991: 249-50; Wharton and Erickson, 1993: 485). Middleton (1989: 188) has defined the conflict between emotions genuinely felt and emotion to be displayed in organization as “emotional dissonance”. Workers may experience emotional dissonance when the emotions required by the organization clashes with their inner or real feelings. Sutton (1991: 250) believes that to individuals who are highly emotional are more likely to enter in to conflict.

Personal factors that can lead to organizational conflict are skills and abilities, personality conflicts, perceptions, diversity, and personal problems.

Communication Factor

Communication can be source of conflict. It represents those opposing forces that arise from semantic differences, misunderstanding and noise in the communication channel. One of the myths that most carry around is that poor communication is the reason for conflict: “if we could just communicate with each other, we could eliminate our differences.” Such a conclusion is not unreasonable, given the amount of time each of us spends communicating. Lenore and Arthur (1977: 541) found that communication skills play an important role in determining a happy relationship among individuals. But, of course, poor communication is certainly not the source of all conflicts, although the problem in the communication process acts to retard collaboration and stimulates misunderstanding.

Semantic difference, insufficient exchange of information and noise in the communication channel are all barriers to communication and potential antecedent conditions to conflict (Robbins, 1998: 509-10). Specially, semantic differences arises as a result of difference in training, selective perception and inadequate information about others. Conflict can arise when having to little or too much communication. An increase in communication is functional up to a point, whereupon it is possible to over communication, with a resultant increase in the potential for conflict. So, too much information as well as too little can lay the foundation for conflict (Robbins, 1998: 510) (Nelson and Quick, 2001: 430).

Further, the channel chosen for communicating can have an influence on stimulating opposition. The filtering process that occurs as information is passed between members and the divergence of communications from formal or previously established channels offer potential opportunities for conflict to arise (Robbins, 1998: 510).

Filtering, selective perception, information overload, language and comprehension apprehension are common barriers that often lead to communication breakdowns.

Reward Factors

Reward systems can be a source of grievance and conflict. The organizations reward systems contribute to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of employees at large. Transparency is the utmost importance when dealing with reward systems.

2.1.5 Types of Conflict

As man developed himself into a hunting society, there are proofs of feuds among tribes for cattle, precious stones and women. Feuds also existed within the tribe, between clans. Over several thousand years man evolved into agrarian society where the feuds took place for land and water. In Indian epics there are several instances quoted of having conflict especially in Ramayana and Mahabharatha. In modern industrial society, in organizations we come across several kinds of conflicts sprouting out of number of sources (School of Art and Management, 2008: 75).

There are different types of conflict based on the parties involved in it. The following classification is the commonly accepted ones.

Intrapersonal Conflict

At one time or another, every employee experiences conflict within himself or herself. A person may have conflicting goals. He or she may lack the required ability for a particular job. His or her path may be blocked by other people, lack of facilities, rules and regulations, etc. Regardless of the source, these conflicts can cause a person frustrations, tension and anxiety.

There is in fact no such thing as “the perfect job” there is no job which provides total satisfaction. All jobs entail some degree of stress and in fact, some tension may be considered desirable. However, if the tension, anxiety and frustration are too great, serious personal harm may follow.

According to Jhon et al., (2002: 128), intrapersonal conflict occurs within the individual because of actual or perceived pressures from incompatible goals or expectations.

Interpersonal Conflict

The second basic type of conflict that we consider is that which occurs between one individual and another or between an individual and the group to which he or she belongs. Jhon et al., (2002:128), argues that, interpersonal conflict occurs between two or more individuals who are in opposition to one another. Most employees are concerned about their position, status, power, etc., within the organization and resent any encroachment of them. Also, they are often competing with each other for recognition, approval, and promotion. Quite often, interpersonal conflicts are also interdepartmental for example, between a manager of one department and a manager of another, or between one department and another. Many people find interpersonal conflict stimulating and challenging. But not all do, particularly the losers. Sometimes, to promote his or her own interests, or through foolishness, an individual will break the norms of the group to which he or she belongs. For example, a person may work too hard, ignore a strike call, or informal on a colleague. This will invite hostility and retaliation from the rest of the group and so interpersonal conflict comes into existence.

Research findings indicate that the anxiety produced by interpersonal animosity may inhibit cognitive functioning (Roseman et al., 1994: 215) and also distract team members from the task, causing them to work less effectively and produce suboptimal products (Wilson et al., 1986: 311)

Intergroup Conflict

Intergroup conflict exists when one group attempts to achieve its goals at the expense of the goal attainment of another group in the organization. Thus, conflict is the opposite of the desired cooperation and coordination between groups in an organization. Unfortunately, it is all too common. To complete the definition of conflict, managers need to recognize that intergroup conflict is a cyclical process involving four repeated steps: frustration, conceptualization, behavior, and outcome.

Intragroup Conflict

Intra group conflict is a type of conflict which is created between parties within a given group. This type of conflict happen because of various reasons pertaining to personal, group or organization as a whole.

2.1.6 Outcomes of Conflict

Conflict is defined as a difference of wants, needs, or expectations. The workplace is filled with people who have differences of wants, needs, and expectations. So, of course, conflicts will occur. These conflicts can be an asset to the organization. They may be opportunities for creativity, collaboration, and improvement (Robbins, 1998: 518).

But conflict can also be costly to an organization. The trouble isn't necessarily the fact that conflict exists, it's how we deal with those conflicts or what happens when they aren't resolved. The impact of conflict in the workplace can be devastating - to the parties involved, to colleagues and teams, to clients, and to the business as a whole. Some of the results of unresolved conflict in the workplace include (Robbins, 1998: 519).

As it has been said, if conflict occurs in the workplace it can have far-reaching and disruptive consequences. When relationships break down between colleagues, then individuals, whether they are management, team leaders or team members, may experience feelings of disorientation, distress and disconnection from colleagues (Kondalkar, 2007: 166).

Often others not directly involved in the conflict will also be affected; the impact of this can be seen in: Poor workplace morale, miscommunication resulting from confusion or refusal to cooperate, increased stress among employees, reduced creative collaboration, decreased motivation within the organization, health issues such as stress and depression, affecting attendance and performance, poor performance and reduced output, missed deadlines or delays, increased staff turnover, problems in recruiting staff and damage to the reputation of the organization, are some of the major effect of conflict in the organization (Opotow, 2000: 87) (Nelson and Quick, 2001: 437)

If a dispute culminate in a tribunal hearing, not only are there financial costs, in terms of legal fees and time spent preparing the case (for organizations, the majority of this is directors' and senior managers' time), individuals also have to deal with the stress of going through the process and their anxieties about the outcome (Schermerhorn et al., 2010: 243).

2.2 Conflict Management

Conflict management does not necessarily imply avoidance, reduction, or termination of conflict. It involves designing effective strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict in order to enhance learning and effectiveness of an organization. The most important element of conflict management strategy is the early recognition of the conflict and keeping attention to the conflicting parties. These elements are important when a manager deals with functional or dysfunctional conflicts. It should be early identification of the conflict, early evaluation of the impact of it on performance of employees, and it is necessary to make a plan for encouraging functional conflict or managing dysfunctional conflict.

Studies have shown that members of work groups often resort to passive forms of conflict management such as avoidance (Ayoko et al., cited in Nair (2008). Pareek cited in Nair (2008) refers to the approach and avoidance mode of conflict management. The approach mode is thought to include strategies such as confrontation, compromise, arbitration and negotiation, while avoidance modes or styles could include resignation, withdrawal, buying time or appeasement. As part of negotiation he refers to the affective method of conflict resolution through the establishment of positive feelings by each party and minimizing feelings of anger, threat or defensiveness by depersonalizing the problem. This is an important cue for the use of

emotions in the conflict management stage. Kolb and Putnam cited in Nair (2008) summarize the basic forms of conflict management as “self-help (force, vengeance), avoidance (withdrawing from the relationship), lumping it (tolerating the situation without public comment), negotiation and the involvement of third party mediators, arbitrators, and/or adjudicators.”

2.3 Empirical Literature

A research paper was submitted to Addis Ababa University by Mulatu (2007) was reviewed. The objectives of the paper included assessing the major sources of conflict in Admas University College, resolution practices, and attitudes that an employees of the organization have towards conflict and forwarding possible solutions for the problems identified from the collected and analyzed data. It used both primary and secondary sources of information in collecting the data. It distributed 100 Questionnaires to the institution’s academic, non academic and administrative staff members.

According to the analysis made, there is a wide range of conflict in the organization; caused by three broadly classified sources of conflict. The first one is personal factors which include emotions of the individual, values and ethics of the person, attitudes and perceptions, skills and responsibility diversity of the person and jealousy. The second source of conflict is structural factors; such as goal differences, scarcity of resources, interdependence, unclear job boundary, and relationship among authorities. Among the available structural factors, majority of the respondents replied that all of these structural factors mentioned above are source of conflict in an organization. Specially, availability of limited resource in the organization and unclear job boundary got the highest rank. The third source of conflict is a communication factors. The major communication factors includes: distorted message, Information overload, lack of communications skill, use of Jargon, information late delivery, and error in perception.

Regarding the effect (outcome) of conflict the researcher found that; among the effects experienced; employee turnover, customer dissatisfaction and distorted group cooperation are the major effects in the university. Increased job dissatisfaction, resource wastage, diversion of energy form work, creation of negative climate are also effects of conflict.

To avoid the above problems; the researcher recommended that the organization should prepare several occasions in which the employees can develop the relationship between them, a special training and orientation program should be prepared in order to create better grasping on conflict related issues.

Other research conducted by Tonder et al., (2008),. explored the perceived sources of conflict in two South African organizations operating in different economic sectors.

The result from the inferential output reveals four major factors are the major causes of conflict; this are racially-informed management practices, inadequate and ineffective resources, work demands associated with change in technology and management practice, and unjust layoffs/ rationalization. It also shows that conflict has an effect on employee's physical, emotional, and mental well-being and a pronounced effect on social and interpersonal relationship among employees.

A study conducted by Tseveendorj O. (2008) in the banks of Baguio city which analyzed conflict resolution as a bases for effective conflict management using questionnaire that incorporates respondents demographic characteristics, respondents variable's, the level of implementation of the conflict resolution approaches and the degree of seriousness. To augment the data, the documents provided by Baguio Benguets bankers association were also examined; several officers and employees were likewise interviewed.

To analyses the data both descriptive and inferential statistics were usedThe analyzed data reveals that, the seriousness of communication, perception, values and cultural difference in creating conflict in the employees of bank of Baguio. It also shows the bank employees seldom implement the dominating approach, often implement problem solving approach and sometimes implement accommodation.

The researcher recommends that, in order for the bank employees to deal with conflict properly, it may be necessary for the bank officers to disseminate information or give orders clearly by formally instructing their employees on the use of written guidelines and procedures to prevent miscommunication, so that bank staffs will have a clear understanding and correct interpretation of all information and instruction.

A research conducted by Henery O. (2009) with a title of organizational conflict and its effect on organizational performance in Gaborone that aim to find out the causes, types, effect and strategies on how to manage conflicts in organizations and effectively to enhance organizational performance. Therefore, it is the prime responsibility of management to put in place appropriate strategies on how to minimize conflict.

To achieve the objective of the study, survey research design was adopted and the focus of the study was cross-sectional. Using convenience sampling, a sample of one hundred and thirty managers was selected for the study from government department, parastatals and privet companies were selected.

To analyze the data it uses quantitative approach. Using the analyzed data he concluded that the major cause of organizational conflict is limited resource and interdependency. The result also shows that poor performance, lack of cooperation, wasting of resource and productivity are the effect of workplace conflict.

Other study conducted by Hotepo et al., (2010) that aim on examining the Effect of Conflict on Organizational Performance, that was carried out by investigating the causes, types, reason and strategies for managing conflicts in some selected service organizations in Nigeria, with a view of coming out with ways of improving their performance and productivity revealed that; limited resources is the major cause of conflict; and that conflicts have both negative and positive effects on organization, but when managed properly, the positive effects can be used to encourage organizational innovativeness and build cooperation among the employees.

The study find out that the major causes of conflict are lack of resource and communication problem. Other important causes of conflicts in organization are: competition, lack of cooperation, different expectation and interdependence. It also shows that salary comparison is the item that generated least conflicts. Regarding the type of conflict the study shows that interpersonal conflict ranked highest as the type of conflict experienced by the respondents in their organizations.

Regarding the effect of conflict; the study indicates that conflicts have both positive and negative effects to the organization. If conflict is not resolved properly might affect the

organization adversely in terms of poor performance, lack of cooperation, wasting of resources and productivity. In addition, conflict has positive effect to the organization especially in building cooperation among the employees, encourages organizational innovativeness and improves quality decisions in resolving conflicts.

The researcher recommended that, Proper communication procedures should be put in place to resolve conflict. He also recommended that the management should organize seminars/workshops on organizational conflict management from time to time for the employees. Lastly he mentioned that Efforts should be made by the managers to occasionally stimulate conflict by encouraging divergent views and rewarding staff and unit/department for outstanding performance

A research conducted by Obasan (2011), which studies the impact of conflict management on corporate productivity of First Bank of Nigeria Plc.,(Lagos Branch). By using a student 't' distribution to test the significance of response and purposive sampling technique to administer a self-design questionnaires to 50 respondents cutting across all cadres of staff of First Bank of Nigeria Plc.,(Lagos Branch), revealed that the main sources of conflict in the organization relate to perception and value problems. The specific issues bother on employee compensation and welfare while managers prefer the compromise, problem solving and dominating strategies to minimizing the incidence of organizational conflicts.

Based on the findings of the study, Obasan recommended that strategies which promote industrial democracy should be chosen by management as the preferred option in dispute resolution. In addition, in order for bank employees to deal with conflict properly, it may be necessary for the bank officers to disseminate information or give orders clearly by formally instructing their employees on the use of written guidelines (e.g. memos, circular etc.) and procedures to prevent communication gap, so that bank staffs will have a clear understanding and correct interpretation of all information and instructions.

He also finds out that the ideal level of conflict resolution required to attain optimum performance for every organization is unique and situational hence managers are duty bound to establish the best maintainable by the organization.

Finally, the researcher recommended that conflict situations should be promptly confronted and addressed whenever they occur rather than being avoided.

It is seen in above listed researches a number of factors have been identified as a cause for conflicts in the organization. It is also seen conflicts have both positive and negative effects in the organization. In addition, different ourcomes of conflicts are identified and disuccsed in the the different researches. In line with this the researcher tires to investigate conflicts in the Ethiopian context.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This part of the study shows the materials and methods used to conduct this study. In order to find the determinant factors that cause conflict in the organization this study makes use of research methodology. Research methodology is all about underlining how the needed information is gathered and processed. The study uses research methodology in order to identify the factors that lead to conflict, types of conflict and their effect on the organization. This process involves several activities such as research design, questionnaire design, data collection, sampling procedures, visiting of relevant centers, selection of participants, test of validity, data collection and analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to effectively address the research problem as unambiguously as possible. In social sciences research, obtaining evidence relevant to the research problem generally entails specifying the type of evidence needed to test a theory, to evaluate a program, or to accurately describe a phenomenon. Research design ensures that the study would be relevant to the problem and that it used the appropriate procedures relevant to the study. A quantitative approach was employed in the study. A quantitative approach is one in which the researcher primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge that is cause and effect relationship between known variables of interest or it employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data (Creswell, 2003). A survey which incorporates a structured questionnaire was used to take samples from the general population. The method is known for fast response in terms of data collection and being economical.

3.2 Questionnaire Design

The primary data was collected using self-administered 5 points likert-scale questionnaires anchored by strongly agree to strongly disagree. The questionnaire has five sections. The first section contains questions associated with the general demographic characteristics of the sample respondents. The second section deals with questions related to causes of conflicts. Part three

encompasses questions associated with types of conflicts. Part four of the questionnaire contains questions regarding management of conflicts. The last part of the questionnaire is dedicated to find out the cause of dysfunctional conflict on the overall status of the organization, however, the respondent might suggest otherwise.

For the sake of making the questionnaire clear and easily understandable it was translated to Amharic for those people working on entry level jobs. The questionnaires that are developed in accordance to the related literature were distributed to all sample respondents to get their written feedback about the cause, type and effects of conflict in their workplace.

As stated in the above paragraph, to measure the variables of the study questionnaire was developed. These questionnaires were taken from the literature review and modified by the researcher. The choice of variables for inclusion in section 2, 3 and 5, the causes, types and potential causes of conflict, were hampered by the many different viewpoints on what variables should be regarded as types and causes of conflict. As point of departure, four types of conflict and four major seemingly more prominent sources of conflict were identified from the literature. The sources of conflict indicated are: structural, communication, personal and reward factors. All the sources under each category were separated and indicated on the questionnaire.

The outcomes of these conflicts is indicated in part five, which are Decline in performance, hostility towards colleagues, decline in cooperation, depression and lower job motivation, considering a job change, diversion of energy from work, and developing health problem. These variables were taken from the study of Tonder, Havenga and Visagie(2008) who considered these variables to identify the manifests of conflict in South Africa Public and Private sectors. Again, before the inclusion of this variables as output of conflict the views of Folger(1993), Nelson and Quick(2001) and Opatow(2000) were considered.

3.3 Data Collection

The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data collection. In order to realize the objective the study used a well designed questionnaire as best instrument. This was completed by employees of the selected organization. In addition, secondary data was collected from files, pamphlets, circulars and different policy papers were used to provide additional

information when the need arises. Journals, thesis papers, books and newsletters were also to reach the objective of the research.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

The size of sample should neither be excessively large, nor too small. It should be optimum (Kothari, 2004: 56). In order to select representative employees of the organization, stratified random sampling was used in which employees from different departments were taken as strata so as to give equal chance to each of the department. From each stratum, samples were selected using simple random sampling since each stratum have similar characteristics and operate under similar environment. According to Janet(2006:94), this step increases the probability that the final sample will be representative in terms of the stratified groups.

To overcome the problem of uncollected and incomplete questionnaires the researcher has distributed 5 % of the sample size as a contingencies. This has increase the representativeness of the research by avoiding and filling incomplete and uncollected questionnaires

To select the sample, Malhorat Naresh, Marketing Research :an applied approach ,2007 were used. Hence, in the next table the population size which is 1817 is categorized in the sixth row and the samples to be used in this category are lowest(50),medium (125), and the highest (200). However, in order to be representative the researcher chose the highest sample size which is (200) employees. Furthermore, an additional ten questionnaires was distributed as mentioned above. Therefore a total of two hundred ten questionnaire were prepared and distributed to the employee of the organization.

Table 1: Sample Size

Population Size	Sample Size		
	Low	Medium	High
51-90	5	13	20
91-150	8	20	32
151-280	13	32	50
281-500	20	50	80
501-1200	32	80	125
1201-3200	50	125	200
3201-10000	80	200	315
10001-35000	125	315	500
35001-15000	200	500	800

Source: Malhorat Naresh, Marketing Research :An Applied Approach,2007

After determining the size of the sample, employees were selected from each of the departments (strata) based on proportion allocation as shown in the following table. As indicated above stratified random sampling was used to gather responses from respondents. Since the study targeted all employees respondents were selected from each stratum to give equal chance of selection.

TABLE 2: DEPARTMENTS OF ETHIOPIAN ELECTRIC POWER

Departments	Number of Employee in each Department	Proportionate sample size from stratum	Sample size from each department (approximated)
Human Resources and Services	95	11	$(95/1817) \times 210 = 11$
Performance Measurement Office	402	47	$(402/1817) \times 210 = 47$
Technical System Center	469	54	$(469/1817) \times 210 = 54$
Finance	105	12	$(105/1817) \times 210 = 12$
Universal Electric AccessProject	746	86	$(746/1817) \times 210 = 86$
Total	1,817	210	

3.5 Data Processing and Analyzing

The processing and analyzing was done using computerized as well as manual systems. First, the collected data was first entered and cleaned for inconsistencies, missing value and outliers. All responses were checked for errors and omissions to make sure the questions were answered in accurate and uniform manner. After this all the filtered data was arranged into classes or groups on the basis of common characteristics. Data having common features were summarized together to make the data entry easy and manageable. Every questionnaire was given a unique code to make sure the data in the questionnaire and data entered in the computer was consistent. Second, the data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science, (SPSS) 20.0 statistical software. While analyzing the data the focus was put on Frequencies and descriptive analysis.

The findings are presented in the form of charts, tables and graphs based on their types and appropriateness for presentation. For the descriptive statistic, tables, charts and graphs are used.

3.6 Test of Validity and Reliability

Validity is concerned with the idea that the research instrument measures the constructs of the study while Reliability is about consistency of the research scale items (White, 2002). Before conducting the study, the validity of the questionnaire was tested to know whether or not the questionnaire measures what it claims to measure. The content validity was compared with other similar researches. Items which are identified as being vague to conduct the study, or flawed in any other way, were revised. Apart from the content validity, the face validity was also measured by sending the questionnaires for senior individuals who have ample experience in the research field. They were requested to forward their opinion whether or not the questionnaire is measuring what it is intends to measure. By considering their opinion certain modifications were made.

Before continuing with the analysis, the reliability of questionnaire for cause of conflict, which are separated into four different groups i.e. Structural Factors, Personal Factors, Communication factors and Reward Factors were also tested separately to see whether the questions chosen are consistent with one another. The reliability was checked by conducting a

pilot study on random employees. A total of 16 (10% of the total sample) questionnaires were distributed to these employees. The reliabilities of the variables (data) were checked against the Nunnally's recommended standards (Cronbach's alpha ≥ 0.70) mainly to ensure that they are reliable indicators of the constructs (Nunnally's, 1967). As the table below shows, the Cronbach's alpha calculated for all items in the four categories were, 0.738 for structural conflicts, 0.735 for personal factors, 0.763 for communication conflicts and 0.821 for conflicts arising from reward factors. This result confirms that the items identified in each category are cohesive enough to adequately represent a single concept.

TABLE 3: CRONBACH ALPHA VALUE

No	Categories	Number of items	Cronbach alpha value
1	Structural Factors	8	0.738
2	Personal Factors	13	0.735
3	Communication Factors	6	0.763
4	Reward Factors	3	0.821

Source, Own Survey, 2015

3.7 Ethical Considerations

While conducting the study, ethical issues were primarily considered. Before conducting the data collection all the necessary information about the study was provided to the sample respondents, i.e. who is conducting the study, for what purpose, and the like, this has helped them to decide whether or not to participate in this study. They were also notified that their participation in the study is voluntary, that they have the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without any unfavorable consequences, and they are not harmed as a result of their participation or non-participation in the project. They were also aware that anonymity and confidentiality of their response are fully guaranteed throughout the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data which has been obtained by questionnaire. It analyzes the demographic characteristics, types, causes and output of workplace conflict on the organization. It contains five sections. The first section describes the questionnaire distribution and response rate. The second section deals with demographic characteristics of sample respondents. The third section analyzes the cause of conflict that exists in the organization based on the Likert scale questions. The fourth section deals with analyzing the types of conflict. The sixth part of the chapter deals with the management of conflicts. Finally, the last section provides an insight on the effect of conflict on the organization.

4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

Out of the 210 questionnaires distributed to the respondents a total of 191 were collected which accounted for 90.95% response rate. However, out of the collected questionnaires major errors that can affect the study were noted on 24 (11.42%) of the questionnaires. Thus these questionnaires were not considered during the study.

Among the questionnaires distributed, 19 (9.05%) of the respondents fail to return the questionnaire whereas 24(11.42%) of them returned incomplete or erroneously filled questionnaires. Only 167 questionnaires were used in the study which will account to 79.52% response rate. It can be clearly seen here that the contingency questionnaires has contributed to the increasing number of respondents, thus increasing the representativeness of the sample.

Table 4: Questionnaire Distribution

Departments	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Erroneous Questionnaires	Response Rate (%)
Human Resources	11	11	1	100
Portfolio Management Office	47	43	5	91
Technical SC	54	51	6	94
Finance	12	9	3	75

Universal Electric Access Project	86	77	9	90
Total	210	191	24	80

Source, Own Survey, 2015

4.2 Analysis of Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

The first part of the questionnaire solicited respondents about their general demographic data (gender, age, level of education, year of experience and position at the company). Accordingly the response of the respondents is depicted in table 5.

Table 5: Gender and Age Distribution

Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	110	65.9	65.9
	Female	57	34.1	100.0
	Total	167	100.0	
Age	18-25	17	10.2	10.2
	26-35	26	15.6	25.7
	36-45	71	42.5	68.3
	45 and above	53	31.7	100.0
	Total	167	100.0	

(Source, Own Survey, 2015)

From the above table it can be concluded that from the 167 respondents, 65.9% of them are males whereas the remaining 34.1 are females. Randomly, this indicates that there is male dormancy within the respondents from the study under consideration.

Regarding with the age of the respondents, out of the total respondents, 17 (10.2%) of them are between the age of 18-25, 26 (15.6%) of them are between 26-35 years, 71 (42.5%) of the

respondents lies between the age of 36-45, and the rest 53 (31.7%) of the respondents are aged above 45. From this result we can easily infer that most of the respondents are aged above between 36 and 45. As the company is one of the oldest renowned companies in the city it is not a surprise that majority of its employees are above 36.

Table 6: Level of Education

Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Level of Education	Below Grade 12	1	.6	.6
	High School Complete	2	1.2	1.8
	Certificate	31	18.6	20.4
	Diploma (Level IV or V)	31	18.6	38.9
	Bachelor Degree	72	43.1	82.0
	Masters Degree	26	15.6	97.6
	Phd	4	2.4	100.0
	Total	167	100.0	

(Source, Own Survey, 2015)

The results in the Table 6 shows that the majority of the respondents were Bachelor Degree holders 72 (43.1%) while the minority was below Grade 12, which is only 1 (.6 %). masters degree holders, accounted for 26 (15.6%) of the total respondents, while it was noted that, the diploma holders are 31 (18.6%) of the total sample size. It was further noted that Phd respondents were 4(2.4%), while certificate holders and high school completes consisted of 31(18.6%) and 2(1.2%) of the respondents respectively.

Table 7: Experience Summary

Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
	Below one Year	22	13.2	13.2
	One to Five Year	34	20.4	33.5

Experience	Six to ten Years	57	34.1	67.7
	Eleven to Fifteen Years	24	14.4	82.0
	Above Fifteen Years	30	18.0	100.0
	Total	167	100.0	

(Source, Own Survey, 2015)

Level of experience can contribute a lot towards the way a person thinks, the method he/she performs on his/hers duty and other factors. To this end, it is believed that the more an individual stays on an organization, the more he/she can acquire an experience of how to deal with several problems including conflict in the workplace, which in turn leads to minimization of conflict management problems. With this regard the data collected from the respondents resembles that majority of the respondents 57(34.1%) have an experience 6 to 10 years followed by 34(20.4%) with an experience of 1 up to 5 years. 30(18.1%) of them have an experience of 15 years and above while rest is included in employees who have less than a year of experience.

Table 8: Position Summary

Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Position	Managerial	25	15.0	15.0
	Non-Managerial	142	85.0	100.0
	Total	167	100.0	

(Source, Own Survey, 2015)

From the above table it can be observed that most of the respondents, 142(85%) are working in a non managerial while the rest which accounts to 25(15%) working in different managerial positions in different departments.

4.3 Analysis of Causes of Conflicts

This part of the analysis will discuss the causes of conflicts that exist in the organization. To identify the major causes of conflicts that are included in the questionnaire, several researches

and books have been referred. The wide range of source of conflict was a indeed a problem to choose from, however the researcher believes that the four causes are practical in the context of the country and the organization. Each question is analyzed in a table format to clearly establish a ground for identifying the root cause of the conflicts. All the four factors which are structural, personal, communication and rewards factors are discussed below.

Structural Factors

As discussed in the literature review, the very nature of organizations as hierarchical systems provides a basis for conflict as individuals and teams work within the authority structure. A number of earlier studies found multiple lines of authority to be associated with role conflict and loss of organizational effectiveness (Evan, 1962; Kaplan, 1959; LaPorte, 1965). There are eight structural aspects of an organization that are recognized as the causes of conflict: specialization, common resources, goal differences, interdependence, authority relationships, status differences, jurisdictional ambiguities, and roles and expectations. All these aspects are changed to a question form and stated in the questionnaire. The results are discussed in the following table.

Table 9: Structural Factors as a Cause of Conflict

<u>Structural Factors</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Q.1 I have little knowledge of others peoples job roles and responsibilities.	Frequency	8	54	29	63	13	167
	%	4.8	32.1	17.3	37.5	7.7	100
Q.2 There is no/limited enough resources to perform my job.	Frequency	81	46	17	12	11	167
	%	48.2	27.4	10.1	7.1	6.5	100
Q.3 There is a goal conflict between my department and other departments.	Frequency	21	77	43	26	0	23
	%	12.5	46.1	25.7	15.5	13	100
	Frequency	17	67	42	38	3	23

Q.4 There is a goal conflict between me and my colleagues.	%	10.2	40.1	25.1	22.8	1.8	100
Q.5 I depend on another person to complete my responsibility.	Frequency	12	12	17	11	115	167
	%	7.2	7.2	10.2	6.6	69	100
Q.6 There is an underlying tension between my supervisor and me.	Frequency	21	77	43	26	0	167
	%	12.6	46.1	25.7	15.6	0	100
Q.7 Other's responsibilities are passed to me because there is no clear line of responsibility.	Frequency	21	26	43	70	7	167
	%	13	16	26	42	4	100
Q.8 I am uncertain about my role and expectation.	Frequency	19	43	46	46	13	167
	%	11.4	25.7	27.5	27.5	7.8	100

Source, Own Survey, 2015

- Having little knowledge of other peoples job roles may lead to conflict as it increases the chance of having little knowledge of other's job responsibilities. As the survey indicates, the higher portion of respondents 63(37.5%) believe that they don't have the proper knowledge of roles and responsibilities of other coworkers. However, another significant amount of the respondents 54 (32.1%) believe that they have adequate knowledge of responsibilities of others. This variation may indicate a great variance between departments within the organization. The neutrality of 29(17.3) is also another indicator that there is no strong linkage between inter departments.
- Generally, it is argued that the scarcer the resource in the organization, especially common resources, the greater the chance of conflict. However, this is not the case in EEP, since a considerable high number of respondents 81(48.2%) stronglydisagreed of having no/limited resources to perform their jobs. This can be backed by the high structuring of the organization after the split of EEPKO in 2014. 12(7.1%) and 11(6.5%) show lower level agreement to the fact that there is scarce resource in the organization.
- Goal conflict arises when there is a difference or incompatibility between department goals. The significant amount of respondents 77(46.1%) disagreed having a goal conflict with other departments. A less significant respondents, 26(15.5%) were positive of

having goal conflicts between departments. This shows that there is less goal conflict between the five departments of EEP not ousting the need to continuously monitor incompatibilities between work units. Department head should take the lions share in aligning the goal of one department with other units in the organization so as to maintain coherence.

- A goal conflict is also a common phenomenon between people working under the same unit. The disagreement may occur for a number of reasons, but most significantly it may be due to promotion opportunities, education opportunities, or other reward faults which instills competition as opposed to collaboration within departments. Contrary to this evidence, 67(40.1%) of respondents agreed negatively to having goal incompatibilities within departments. 42(25.1%) chose to stay neutral while 38(22.8%) attested of having conflicts within departments. As an organization, EEP must oversee its rules and regulations in regards to reward systems, education opportunities so that they don't have an adverse effect on the employee.
- Possibility of conflict usually has a tendency to increase with the level of task interdependence. It can be easily noted each of the five departments in EEP rely on each other to meet the overall goal. Again each personnel in each department rely on other coworker's task to successfully complete a task. EEP is not an exception and this is evident in the significant response, 115(69%) of the total sample strongly agreeing to the same. Less number of respondents 12(7.2%) disagreed on dependability. Therefore, as stated in the beginning conflicts are deemed to occur as team members highly interact in the process of work and at times receive outcomes which depend on the performance of others.
- Even if the tension between supervisors and employees can be attributed to a number of causes, however most scholars agree that it has a lot to do with how supervisor treat their employees and how fair they are compared to another worker at the same level. At EEP, as the survey indicates 77(46.1%) of the respondents feel they work in harmony with their each other. On the other hand 26(15.6%) agreed having an underlying tension among them. The null response for strongly agreeing to not having underlying tension here is worth noting. This could be one possible indicator that the company is clearly

addressing issues in relation to power and status which is usually manifested in tensions between a supervisor and employee.

- Employees have a tendency to pass unwanted responsibilities to another person when responsibilities are not clearly stated. A 70(42%) of the respondents agreed they are burdened with another employee’s responsibility in addition to their own while 43(26%) of the respondents chose to stay neutral on the case. Other significant amounts of respondents do feel there is a line of responsibility creating separations. However, the organization should refine job descriptions to eliminate jurisdictional ambiguities and as a result to avoid conflicts.
- Every employee, regardless of their level has one or more roles in the organization. Manager-subordinate conflict can result when the subordinate’s role is not clearly determined and each party has a different understanding of that role(Whetten&Cameron 2012). The presence of 46(27.5%) respondents agreeing to the same can be an indicator that something has to be done in clarifying the roles and expectation of each employees. On the contrary, 43(25.7%) disagreeing to the fact shows the problem is not throughout the organization.

Personal Factors

Organizational conflicts may arise from personal factors such as skills and abilities, personal conflicts, perceptions, diversity and personal problems. The next section deals with personal factors.

Table 10: Personal Factors as a Cause of Conflict

<u>Personal Factors</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Q.9 My colleagues have different skill ability, and experience.	Frequency	10	40	48	61	8	167
	%	6	24	28.7	36.5	4.8	100
Q.10 My colleagues have different personalities, attitudes and beliefs.	Frequency	5	26	52	79	5	167
		3.0	15.6	31.1	47.3	3.0	100

	%						
Q.11 I believe I have high level of organizational citizenship	Frequency	7	32	54	57	17	167
	%	4.2	19.2	32.3	34.1	10.2	100
Q.12 I often disagree with my colleagues.	Frequency	13	57	49	36	12	167
	%	7.8	34.1	29.3	21.6	7.2	100
Q.13 I am usually calm, less hostile when dealing with co-workers.	Frequency	13	33	10	56	55	167
	%	7.8	19.8	6.0	33.5	32.9	100
Q.14 I am open and eager to learn new experiences and new ideas.	Frequency	10	40	48	61	8	167
	%	6.0	24.0	28.7	36.5	4.8	100
Q.15 I am sociable and outgoing when the need arises.	Frequency	6	33	47	69	12	167
	%	3.6	19.8	28.1	41.3	7.2	100
Q.16 My colleagues are different from in terms of cultural background, ethics and values.	Frequency	21	41	36	52	17	167
	%	12.6	24.6	21.6	31.1	10.2	100
Q.17 I get harassed because of personal factors.	Frequency	57	56	40	13	1	167
	%	34.1	33.5	24.0	7.8	0.6	100
Q.18 I was treated less favorably because of personal factors.	Frequency	76	41	36	4	1	23
	%	46	24.6	21.6	2	0.6	100
Q.19 My personal problems affect my relation with coworkers.	Frequency	5	8	70	53	31	167
	%	3.0	4.8	41.9	31.7	18.6	100
Q.20 I feel frustrated at work.	Frequency	10	69	20	56	12	167
	%	6.0	41.3	12.0	33.5	7.2	100
Q.21 I am dissatisfied with the facility, rule and regulations the organization follow.	Frequency	10	61	43	52	1	167
	%	6.0	36.5	25.7	31.1	0.6	100

Source, Own Survey, 2015

- Two entities may become inconsistent when they have different attitudes, values, beliefs and skills (Thompson 1984:4). . As seen in the survey most of the people working in the employee have experiences ranging from six years to ten years and above. This is one indicator that experience conflicts may occur. This is supported by 61(36.5%) respondents agreeing to have an inconsistency with the aspects discussed above, without ousting conflicts that arise from skills and abilities.
- Some people do not get along or don not view things similarly or just have different perceptions of situation (Whetten & Camron, 2012). Again here we can see that 79(47.3%) of the respondents have agreed to having different personality with the rest of their colleagues. A far lesser number 26(15.6) and 5(3.0%) have tested disagreed to the fact. This can inferred as a strong indicator that the company should come up with methods to narrow the personality differences among its employees.
- Employees with high level of organizational citizenship provide a good customer service. They are generally careful, dependable, more organized and responsible. In the opposite people with level of organizational citizenship may not care as much to provide the necessary level of performance. This may result in conflict among employees. The fact that the greater number of employees 57(34.1) of the respondents believing that they have a high organizational citizenship is a good news for the company. However it should be clearly watched as these employees may run into conflict with 32(19.2) or with 7(4.2%) of the respondents who feel less strong about the organizational citizenship.
- Agreeableness related to being courteous, good natured, emphatic and caring. 57(34.1) of the people believe they are. A lesser amount of respondents, (36) 21.6 believe the opposite. Still once can oust the chance of conflict completely based on this data.
- A strong level of agreeableness with a total of 56(33.5%) agreeing and 55(32.9%) strongly agreeing is noted from the survey regarding being less hostile and calm when dealing with coworkers. In this case it is believed that the workers are not prone to conflicts since they deal with matters in a professional way.
- People with low level of openness to experience are usually resistant to change and less open to new ideas. Since 61(36.5%) of the respondents agreed to the fact that they are open is a positive response. However, in addition to 10(6.0%) to the 40(24.0) percent of respondents felt otherwise and this should be a red alert for EEP.

- Sociability and being extroversion can be helpful to the company as it strengthens the companies team work, thus enhancing the harmony of workers. 69 (41.3%) believe they are, and this can be regarded as a good sign for the company. In addition another 12(7.2%) of the respondents strongly agrees to fact while 33(19.8%) and 6(3.6 %) disagreed to being sociable even when the need arises
- Diversity, applies to the set of individual differences that make people different from and similar to each other. Employees can come from different shapes, sizes and colors. 52(31.1%) of the employees believe there is a difference with additional 17(10.2) strongly agreeing to the same. Others which account for 41(24.6) and 21(12.6) acknowledged there is a difference. These differences in culture, ethnicity, gender and other factors may be a cause to conflict and should be addressed accordingly.
- Harassment, racial disharmony, personal attacks are all negative reactions that can lead to an affective conflict. The conflict causes member to be negative, irritable, suspicious and resentful (Jehn, 1977a, pp,531-532). 13(7.8%) and 1(0.6%) affirmed to existence of harassment. However, compared to the significant number of respondents who attested to the absence of the harassment shows he organization has implement good mechanisms to eliminate such unwanted behaviors.
- Treating employees less favorably, either directly through regulations or indirectly through working conditions creates resentment which later can be manifested through conflict. Again here we see a strong disagreement with 76(46%) of the respondents and additional disagreement with 41(24.6%) of the respondents. This in fact, a good indicator that discrimination is not happening at EEP, which in turn reveals that a good procedures are in place. One indicator of such good practice is the grievance handling mechanism followed by the company during recruitment and job allocation.
- It is observed that employees with a bad mood and problems can argue with co-workers more(Whetten & Cameron,2012). The majority of the respondents, 70(41.9%) chose to stay neutral in the case. Lesser number of respondents which accounted for 53(31.7%) of the total sample agreed they are affected at work because of their personal problems. Another 31(18.6%) strongly believe they are affected by personal problems. This has a huge impact on the level of performance. This can also be a ground for conflicts to arise. The data is a

good indicator that the company should work towards helping employees to balance life and job.

- Frustration due to different reason is usually manifested by argument and conflict. Even though the majority of the respondents which accounted for 41.3 percent of the total sample disagreed to the fact the presence is evident since 33.5 percent (56) of the respondent agreed they feel frustrated at work. Another 12 or 7.2 percent of the respondents also strongly agree to the frustration at work.
- Employees who feel dissatisfied to rules and regulations of the organization are more prone conflicts. This doesn't seem the case in EEP, as 61(36.5%) of the respondents disagreed to the case, with an additional of 10(6.0%) strongly disagreeing to the same. A lesser number of respondents which accounted for the 31.1 percent of the sample actually agreed to being dissatisfied with the rules and regulations.

Communication Factors

As discussed in the literature communication-based barriers may be the result of differences in speaking styles, writing styles, and nonverbal communication styles. Conflict is closely related to communication. Hocker and Wilmot (1985) say that “communication is the central element in all interpersonal conflict”. The next section deals with possible communication factors that may result in conflict.

Table 11: Communication Factors as a Cause of Conflict

Communication Factors		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Q.22 I am often misunderstood by my colleagues.	Frequency	8	30	41	69	19	167
	%	4.8	18.0	24.6	41.3	11.4	100
Q.23 I don't have the ability to logically reason to collaborate and express thoughts to workers.	Frequency	51	44	47	17	8	167
	%	30.5	26.3	28.1	10.2	4.8	100
Q.24 I am often overloaded with	Frequency	7	28	39	68	25	167

information to the extent that I forget to deliver important information.	%	4.2	16.8	23	40.7	15.0	100
Q.25 I convey information regardless of the receiver's mood.	Frequency	8	25	21	67	46	167
	%	4.8	15.0	12.6	40.1	27.5	100
Q.26 I prefer to communicate in a selected medium since I feel less confident in using other channels of communication	Frequency	7	24	43	81	12	167
	%	4.2	14.4	25.7	45.8	7.2	100
Q.27 My coworkers fail to use sincere, clear, concise and clear words during communication.	Frequency	40	21	24	76	6	167
	%	24.0	12.6	14.4	45.5	3.6	100

Source, Own Survey, 2015

- 69(41.3%) of the respondent agree that they are misunderstood while conveying an information to a fellow worker. This can be associated with the wordings, clarity in expressing ideas and other similar factors. Another 11.4 percent of the respondents also strongly agree to the fact which signals for attention.
- Here the majority of the respondents, 51(30.5 %) of the sample size strongly disagreed to the substance of the question. One can also see that another significant amount of employees which accounted for 26.3% of the total sample disagreed to the fact. Less number of respondents confirmed having a communication problem in relation to collaborating and expressing thoughts.
- Sometimes an employee receives too much information and it exceeds his /her processing capacity. The result can be loss of information and less effective communication which can lead to conflict situations. Here it is noted that 40.7 percent of the employees agree with information over load, while a less significant number strongly disagreed to it. 28 respondents also disagreed on information over load.
- Bad emotions are likely to decrease the effectiveness of the information. 67 respondents agreed they pass information without considering the mood of the receiver. Another 27.5 percent of the receiver also strongly agreed to the same. This clearly calls for attention in regards to communication problems in the organizations.

- A strong indicator of choice of communication medium is evident here by 81 of the respondents agreeing they prefer a certain type of communication channel over the other. Communication apprehension can be a typical reason for this. The fact that more than half of the respondents agreed to this can be a good indicator that it should be dealt with quickly. These kind of problems often result in decreased communication and later on decrease on the organizational effectiveness as a whole. Conflict situations may occur in this case (Robbins,1996).
- As much as possible employees should communicate in a clear and concise manner. This makes the communication process effective and productive. As the survey indicates 76(45.4%) ,of the respondents do not feel their coworkers are not clear and concise enough when communicating. Even if the 40 percent of the respondents feel comfortable in the communicationskill of their co workers there is a need to address this issue at large.

Reward Factors

Kerr(2005) discussed numerous reward systems are ineffective because they are fouled up in hat the types of behavior rewarded are hose which the rewarder is trying to discourage. This may be one of the many faults in therewarding systems of different organizations. The next section deals with reward factors that often result in conflict.

Table 12: Reward Factors as a Cause of Conflict

Reward Factors		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Q.28 I feel unsatisfied with the reward system that the organization follows.	Frequency	25	31	35	59	17	23
	%	15.0	18.6	21.0	35.3	10.2	100
Q.29 I usually enter into argument with my manger as a result of the reward system	Frequency	12	50	32	61	12	167
	%	7.2	29.9	19.2	36.5	7.2	100
Q.30 I don't feel comfortable to work in harmony with those who receive unfair reward.	Frequency	23	19	42	59	24	167
	%	13.8	11.4	25.1	35.3	14.4	100

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Source, Own Survey, 2015

- 59(35%) out of the total respondents feel the reward system in place is unsatisfactory. Yet another 10 percent of the respondent feel strongly unsatisfied with the rewarding system the organization follows. This makes a strong case in the light of having a reward system that is satisfactory and accepted by all the employees.
- Reward systems which are not transparent often result in disagreements between the evaluator and the person who is evaluated. The 36.5 of the respondents argue with their supervisors on rewards. Yet another 7.2 percent of the respondents strong agree that they usually disagree with the evaluation of the reward process. On the contrary 50 and another 12 respondents are in harmony with their manger, which shows the problem is not similar across the organization.
- One of the results of unfair reward systems is the decrease in the performance of other workers whose achievement is not properly acknowledged. The immediate effect of such causes is decreasing morale to cooperate in the workplace. 59 respondents are not comfortable enough to work with those who they think have received an unfair reward for their performance. Furthermore, 24 of the respondents strongly believe they don't work in harmony with fellow workers. This in fact is an alarming rate and should be dealt effectively by the HR in implementing a reward system that can be judged transparent by the employees. Apart from that, trainings should also be given to employees and supervisor so that they can have a clear understanding on the process of the reward system.

4.4 Types of Conflicts

This part of the analysis will discuss different aspects of conflict that exist in EEP. To identifying the types of conflicts that the respondent's experiences in their workplace, respondents were first requested to indicate the frequency of conflicts, kinds of common conflict and how they perceive the general nature of conflicts.

Frequency of Conflicts among employees

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they have conflicts in the workplace. Accordingly the following response was collected.

Table 13: Frequency of Conflict

Rate of Conflict		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Frequency	Often	18	10.77	10.77
	Sometimes	134	80.23	91
	Never	15	9	100
	Total	167	100.0	

Source, Own Survey, 2015

As shown in the table most employees have conflicts in the organizations. The number of employees who have conflicts “sometimes” are 134; which makes 80.23 % of the total amount of respondents. Only 15 employees or a total of 9% of respondents “never” had any kind of conflict with other employees of the organization. Only 18 percent of the total respondents agreed they have conflicts often. The percentage is indicated using figure 2.

FIGURE 2: FREQUENCY OF CONFLICTS



Source, Own Survey, 2015

Types of Conflicts

Respondents were asked to select the type of conflict, they have experienced repeatedly from the four categories. Accordingly the following data was collected.

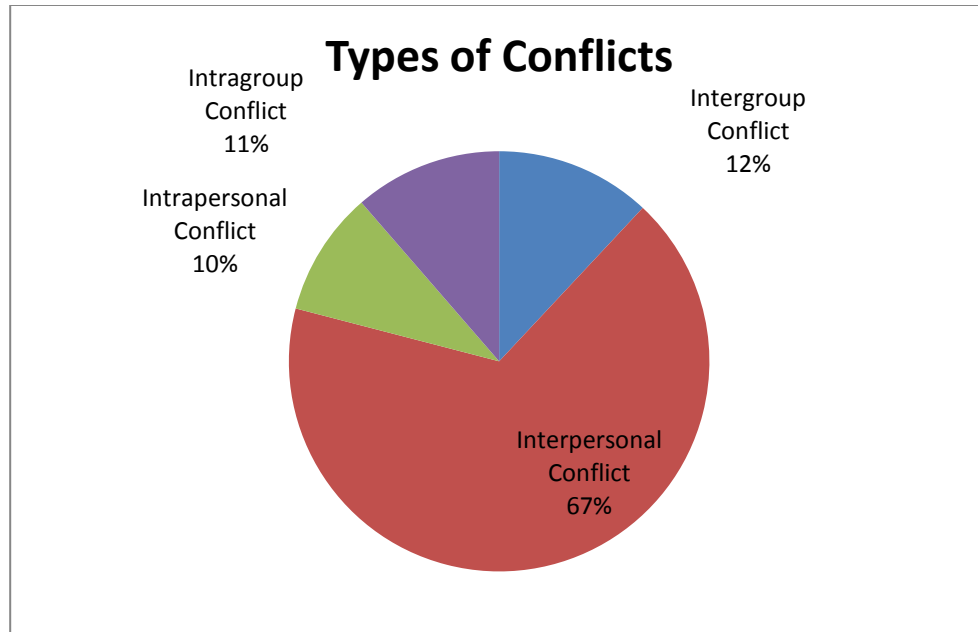
Table 14: Types of Conflicts

Types of Conflicts		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
	Intergroup Conflict	20	11.97	11.98
	Interpersonal Conflict	112	67.06	79.02
	Intrapersonal Conflict	16	9.58	88.63
	Intragroup Conflict	19	11.37	100
	Total	167	100	

Source, Own Survey, 2015

According to the response that was gathered from the sample respondents, the majority which accounts for 112 (67%), agree that interpersonal conflict is the major types of conflict in their workplace, whereas 20 (11.97%) of them strongly agree intergroup conflict is the main type of conflict in the organization. Only 19 people have Intragroup conflicts while the rest 16 responses are connected to intrapersonal conflicts. This finding is consistent with the finding of Hotepo et al., (2010) who conclude that interpersonal conflict is the main cause of conflict in Nigerian service industries. The finding is also supported by the earlier findings of Adomi and Anie, (2005) who argue that interpersonal conflict is one of the major causes of conflicts in Nigerian universities libraries. The finding is summarized using Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: TYPES OF CONFLICTS



Source, Own Survey, 2015

Nature of Conflict

It is also important to identify the conflicts that usually occur as either destructive or constructive character. This as discussed in the beginning of the research paper helps to determine whether it should be resolved (destructive) or managed (constructive).

Table 15: Nature of Conflict as Perceived by respondents

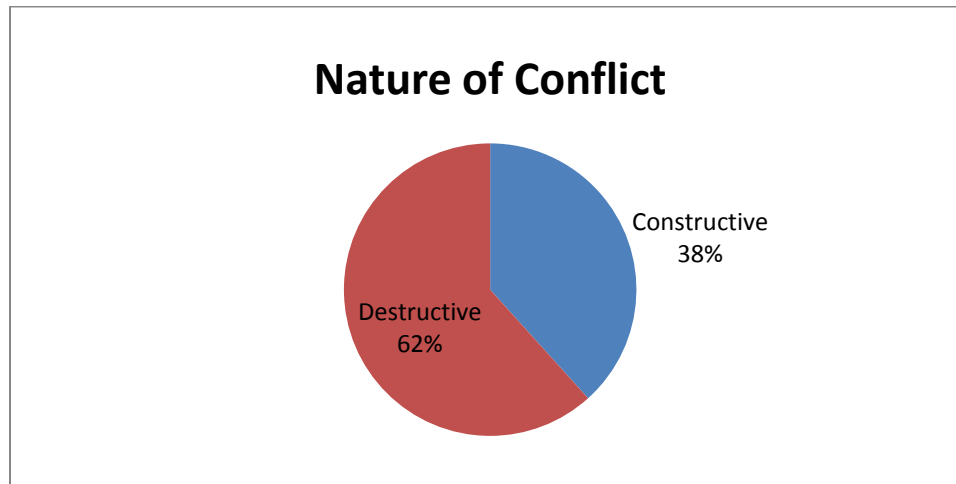
Types of Conflicts		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
	Constructive	64	38.32	38.32
	Destructive	103	61.68	100
	Total	167	100	

Source, Own Survey, 2015

As the response shows there is a difference between the perception of what the respondents regard as destructive and constructive conflict. It can be noted that 64 (38.32%) of the respondents suppose that they usually have to deal with constructive conflict and 103 (61.68%) of the respondents think that they usually deal with dysfunctional conflicts. It is assumed that

most of the respondents regard conflicts as destructive rather than constructive. This can be seen in the next figure.

FIGURE 4: NATURE OF CONFLICT



Source, Own Survey, 2015

4.5 Management of Conflicts

This part of the research tries to investigate the conflict management techniques used by the managers, conflict management trainings and rate of skills used to handle conflicts. Only respondents in the managerial position are discussed since they are directly responsible for the management of conflicts that arise in the work place.

Conflict Handling Strategies

Respondents were first asked to indicate the technique they use to address conflicts. Accordingly the following data was collected.

Table 16: Management of Conflicts

Management of Conflicts		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
	Avoidance	1	4.0	4.0
	Smoothing	3	12.0	16.0
	Forcing	1	4.0	20.0
	Compromising	2	8.0	28.0
	Collaborating	16	64.0	92.0
	Other	2	8.0	100.0
	Total	25	100	

Source, Own Survey, 2015

The most popular strategy in this case is Collaborating 16 (64.0%) and the most unpopular is Avoidance (4.0%) and Forcing (4.0%), with one person using each management style. Most of the respondents used the conflict management styles listed in the questionnaire, only two of them don't use any of these strategies. The next figure shows the use of conflict management styles among respondents.

Conflict Management Training

Studies show that conflict management skills are important for managers and non managers as well. Furthermore, managers are interested in learning more about organizational conflict and its management. This trend was checked in EEP, and the following data was collected.

Table 17: Conflict Management Training

Training in relation to Conflict Handling Mechanisms?		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	6	24.0	24.0
	No	19	76.0	100.0
Total		25	100	

Source, Own Survey, 2015

The frequencies show that a significant number of respondents, that is 76 percent of the total managers, did not take any kind of training in relation to conflict handling mechanisms. This is in fact a very alarming rate which needs to be addressed.

Conflict Handling Skills

The next part assessed if the managers are satisfied with their current conflict resolution skills or not. The results are showed in table 15.

Table 18: Conflict Handling Skills

Conflict Handling Skills		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
	Very Good	2	8.0	8.0
	Good	5	20.0	28.0
	Average	14	56.0	84.0
	Bad	4	16.0	100.0
	Very Bad	0	0.0	100.0
	Total	25	100	

Source, Own Survey, 2015

It is clearly seen that most of the managers assess their conflict handling skill as “Average” with a 56 percent of the total responses. 5 of the managers believe they have a good conflict management skill while 4 of them described their conflict handling mechanisms as “Bad”. The rest two have a “very good” skill.

4.6 Effect of Conflict

This part of the study will analyze the last objective of the study which is output of conflict in EEP. The sample respondents were presented with seven dysfunctional outputs of conflicts in their workplace. They were asked to mark the outputs of conflict that they experienced the most during their stay in the organization. If any they were given a chance to select more than one alternative. The frequency that the respondents score for the different effects of conflict is shown in the table below.

Table 19: Effect of Conflict

Effect of Conflict		Frequency	Percentage	Rank
	Decline in Performance	91	54.5	1
	Hostility towards colleagues	27	16.2	6
	Decline in Cooperation	68	40.7	3
	Experiencing Depression and Lower job motivation	41	24.6	6
	Considering a Job change	73	43.7	2
	Diversion of energy from work	66	39.5	4
	Developing health problem	16	9.6	7
	Other	44	26.3	5

Source, Own Survey, 2015

As descriptive statistics for the outcomes of conflict reveals, a decline in performance is the major outcome of conflict in EEP followed by employees looking for a better job and decline cooperation. Hostility towards coworkers and developing a health problem are among causes that have least frequencies. The last part of the alternatives” Other” has a 44 responses , indicating that the outcomes of conflicts are not the listed items only. This can be taken as indicator that the outcome of conflict are not only dysfunctional but constructive as well. The summary is shown in figure 6.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the research, which are based on the analysis conducted in the previous chapter. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section is dedicated to discuss summary of findings; the second section deals with the conclusion while the last section discusses the recommendation of the researcher.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study attempted to identify the causes, types and outcomes of workplace conflict in Ethiopian Electric Power. The study employed exploratory research design which aim to identify the most frequently occurring conflict type, the major causes of conflict in the organization and the outcomes of these conflicts on the employees and the organization. It uses both primary and secondary sources of data to conduct the study. Questionnaires were used for primary data and books, articles, journals and other published materials for the secondary source of data. Out of a total population of 1817 a sample of 167 respondents were selected using stratified systematic sampling techniques. The findings of the study are:



Based on the descriptive analysis made in the previous chapter the findings are summarized so as to answer the specific questions raised at the beginning of the study:

What kinds of conflicts are prevalent in Ethiopian Electric Power Office?

- Concerning to the type of conflict that the respondents experience most frequently, majority of them which accounts for 112 (67.06%) agreed that interpersonal conflict is the major type of conflict in the organization. The other types of conflicts accounted only for the rest of 34 percent underlining the major conflict throughout the organization is an interpersonal conflict.

What are the causes of these conflicts?

Regards to the causes of conflict the most common factors were presented to the respondents. These included communication factors, structural factors, reward factors and personal factors. The findings are discussed below.

- Under structural factors the 77 (46.1 %) of the respondents agreed they have specialization that limited their knowledge about other people's job roles and responsibilities.
- Dependability on a coworker to complete tasks is strongly agreed by a majority of 115(69%) responses, showing a high. This shows a significant amount of task interdependence on the job which may lead to conflict.
- The lack of clear line of responsibility is another factor that was uncovered as a cause of conflict with 70(42%) agreeing on it. This in turn resulted in unnecessary transfer of responsibilities from one employee to another.
- Uncertainty about one's role is another factor that was supported with 46 of the total sample. Even though this shows a less significant percentage, one cannot completely oust the probability that it may be a cause of conflict.
- The next section dealt with personal factors. The first item in the personal category to be uncovered as cause is difference in skill ability and experience. This was supported with a total 61 respondents accounting for the total of 36.5 percent agreeing to the same. In line with this 61 of them also believe they have a difference in personalities, attitudes and beliefs.
- 57 of the respondents also believe they have high level of organizational citizenship. 32 of the respondents disagreed about having equal level of organizational citizenship. This can be a ground to conflict.
- When it comes to difference in age, cultural background ethics and values 52 respondents agree the difference affects them. It shows the diversity that exists in the work force in relation to the above factors can lead to conflicts.
- Most of the respondents with a total of 41.9 percent response chose to be neutral when it comes to personal problems. However, the next level of respondents with a total of 53 percent admitted that their personal problem affects their relation with coworkers.

- The next part dealt with communication issues. In relation to misunderstanding in the workplace 69 respondents agreed they are often misunderstood by their colleagues while the other 19 strongly agree to the same.
- Information overload is supported with 68 of the respondents. In line with this 67 of the respondent also attested that they convey information regardless of the receiver's mood. Another yet significant number of response was recorded when respondents were asked on their preference of medium of communication. This accounted to a total of 81 respondents.
- In relation to reward systems, the majority of the respondents which accounted for 59 responses , feel unsatisfied with the overall reward system the organization follows. Hence it strictly follows that again most of the respondents , which is 36.5 of the total responses enter into argument with their respective managers about the result of the reward systems. As a result of this, it can be further argued that those who don't feel the reward system is fair don't feel comfortable to work with those who receive unfair rewards. This is in line with 35.3 of the respondents agreeing to the same.

What are the major outcomes of these conflicts in the organization?

- Concerning the outcomes of conflict; the most prevalent outcome, according to the response is decline in performance with 91 respondents and a total of 54.5 percent. Considering a job change is followed by 73 respondents and a total of 43.7 percent.

5.2 Conclusion

Since workplace is composed of peoples from diverse environment having different interest, values, opinion, personality and attitude, the existence of conflict is undeniable. The key elements in conflict seem to include: opposing interests between individuals or groups, recognition of such opposition, the belief by each side that the other will thwart (or has already thwarted) there interests, and actions that actually produce such thwarting. Handling workplace conflict is the most challenging but very important task for management to create peaceful and harmonized work environment in the organization.

The study investigated causes of conflicts that existed in the organization, the type of conflict and their effects in the organization. As per the research's objective and from the collected

and analyzed data, it can be concluded that; interpersonal conflict is the major type of conflict that exists in the organization followed by intergroup conflict. This is inline with the empirical results, concerning causes of conflict, that there is convincing evidence that the major cause identified by the study is indeed the causes of conflict in other organizations, but having different degree.

From the four major causes of conflict identified, 'communication factors' which incorporates misunderstanding, logical reasoning, information overload, wordings, channel of communication and clarity of communication appears to be the major cause of conflict followed by 'reward factors' which includes satisfaction level, agreement with management on results and comfort level of relationship with workers after reward. Personal factors appeared to be the third favorite while the least chosen one is structure factors.

Concerning the outcomes of conflict decline in performance took the lions share while the others: considering a job change, decline in cooperation and diversion of energy from work ranked accordingly .

It is also important to note that even if conflict occurs in the organization frequently and eighty percent of the respondents agreed that it happens intermittently, only 24 percent of the total managers have taken the proper training or that will assist them to handle conflicts in the proper manner. It can be easily inferred that most of the managers don't have the skill and this is also reflected in 56 percent rating their skills as average while 4 of them responded their skill as 'Bad'. It is also a matter of interest to see that conflict is seen as destructive by 62 percent of the respondents.

5.3 Recommendation

Introduction

As stated in the statement of the problem, identifying and understanding the causes and outcomes of workplace conflict is very basic and mandatory requirements for managers who would like to move towards improving the quality of outputs and increase overall organizational performance.

The research showed that interpersonal conflict is the most prevalent one, and in order to decrease the frequency of such conflicts the researcher recommend the following:

Recommendation 1:

- When dealing with interpersonal conflicts the researcher forwards two steps; diagnosis and intervention. The diagnosis should essentially indicate whether there is too much intrapersonal conflict in an organization and whether its effects on individual effectiveness are dysfunctional. In addition the sources of such conflicts should be clearly indicated. These sources may be altered to reduce or generate conflict. Intervention is needed when the effect of intrapersonal conflict on organizational participants becomes dysfunctional. Two major intervention techniques, such as role analysis and job design, are available for the management of intrapersonal conflict.
- The organization should encourage social programs and events in which its employees will have the chance to come together and share what problems they have with each other. By doing so, they may be able to overcome their differences and minimize the gap between them. Furthermore, such events will help employees to have a better insight into their workers from different perspectives such as ability, beliefs, values, age and other related factors. These social programs may include trips, sightseeing, get together, holiday celebrations, retreats, etc.

The organizations should also try to inculcate a social relationship among workers and managers of the organization by encouraging the latter to play a figure head role by appearing on special occasions for the employees such as marriage, funerals, birthdays, etc. This may minimize the frequency of conflict occurring and strengthen the bond between the employees and his/her supervisor by creating a friendly relationship where they get to know each other better in terms job roles and responsibilities.

The research also showed that there is no clear line of responsibility available, which resulted in uncertainty about one's role and transfer of responsibility to another person.

Recommendation 2:

- When an employee joins the organization he should be given an orientation stating his responsibilities and roles clearly. His/her supervisor should also be there to indicate what is expected from the employee throughout the year. Constant coaching is mandatory in gearing the employee to the required expectation. Moreover to mitigate chronic problems in relation to role ambiguity and unwanted transfer of role to another person the researcher forwards the Technique of Role Analysis. Application of this technique involves five distinct steps which are listed as follows:

1. *Purpose of Role.* The focal role occupant (i.e., individual whose role is being analyzed) initiates the discussion relating to his or her role. The group members or their representatives discuss the purpose of the role (i.e., how the role fits in with the goals of the organization and/or subsystems).

2. *Role Perception.* The focal role occupant lists the activities that he or she feels occupy the role. Participants discuss the items and ask for explanations, and, thus, new items are added and ambiguous or contradictory items are dropped. The participants help the role incumbent to analyze the prescribed and discretionary components of the role. This frequently “enables the individual to clarify the responsibility he must take on himself for decisions, the choices open to him for alternative courses of action, and new competencies he must develop in his assigned role” (Dayal & Thomas, 1968, p. 487).

3. *Expectations of Role Occupant.* The focal role occupant lists his or her expectations from the group members. Members of the group discuss these expectations to clarify role interdependencies; a mutually acceptable solution is reached describing expectations and obligations.

4. *Expectations from Role Occupant.* Each participant presents a list of expectations from the focal role, which represents the group’s views of the participant’s obligation to the group member in performing his or her role. Here much of the process in step 3 is repeated for each participant.

5. *Role Profile.* The focal role occupant is responsible for writing down the main points of the discussion, called a role profile. This consists of (1) prescribed and discretionary activities, (2) obligation of this role to other roles in the group, and (3) expectations of someone in his or her role to other roles in the group.

As clearly shown in the research the organization suffers from communication related problems.

Recommendation 3:

- The organization should set formal communication channel through which the right information is provided to the intended person only. This can be done clarifying what kind of information is needed by which department and more specifically by which employee. This will highly minimize the unnecessary information load faced by the employees.

All the necessary information may also be disseminated to the employees in timely manner to avoid any conflict that arises as a result of delayed information. Managers of the different department should encourage open communication policy to enable employees to get the right information at the right time. It should also be underlined the need to train employees in relation how and when to convey information. Furthermore trainings should also be delivered to encourage employees to use more communication channels as opposed to a single medium.

Formal procedures should be set in place to guide employees as to what kind of channel of communication should be used in different scenarios. This will decrease the person-channel dependency, helping them to explore more choices as one sends or receives messages.

As seen in the research, the reward system also created a grievance in the employees.

Recommendation 4

There should be clear cut procedures for rewarding employees in the organization. Not only that the whole process of the reward system should be transparent. There should be forums where ambiguities are eared and clarified. The parameters of the reward system should be done in collaboration with the employee so that he/she knows exactly what is expected or rewarded. The reward provided should also have both internal and external equity. In order to reduce employee dissatisfaction on the reward system, the organization should develop several incentive schemes and every individual should get fair treatment.

Addressing intergroup conflicts,

Recommendation 5

The sources of intergroup conflict can come from different sources including relationship between line and staff. Process interventions, such as problem solving, confrontation, can be used for managing conflict between groups. Structural interventions, such as the analysis of task interdependence, may be used to manage intergroup conflict. Other structural interventions involve hiring, transferring, or exchanging group members, clarifying and formulating rules procedures, developing an appeals system, altering the system of communication, and providing valid information when the perceptions of the members are distorted.

General Recommendation

- Organizational conflict must not necessarily be reduced, suppressed, or eliminated, but managed to enhance organizational learning and effectiveness. To do so, managers in the organization should equip themselves with enough knowledge and skill to settle conflicts in a constructive manner that will increase the organization effectiveness. The imitative should not only come from managers but the organization should equally help its managers to get the proper knowledge by allocating budgets and facilitating the process.

Human resources departments must take responsibility for training programs on conflict management that can help organization. Looking at organizations that have made conflict management a core competency, however, it is clear that top management must also be actively involved in building openness into the organization's culture and modeling constructive conflict management.

To conclude conflict handling in the new paradigm calls for changes in other organizational processes, such as culture and leadership, which can support the organizational members' newly acquired skills of conflict management.

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APPENDIX A
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM
MA-HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
Survey Questionnaire

Dear Respondent:

This questionnaire is prepared by a graduate student from Addis Ababa University, for the purpose of understanding the “**Workplace Conflicts**”. This questionnaire contains relevant questions that will serve as an input for the study. Please assist me in giving correct and complete information to present a representative finding on the current status of the factors causing workplace conflict in the organization.

Your genuine support in responding to the raised questions has paramount importance for the attainment of the study’s objectives. Furthermore, the information that you provide shall be kept strictly confidential..

Thank you in advance for your cooperation,

Daniel Mebratu

NB: The researcher can be found via a telephone on 09130652284 or danielmebratu@yahoo.com

General instruction

- There is no need to write your name or anything that discloses your personal identification.

- Close- ended questions are answered by placing a tick (✓) mark with in the box.
- The questionnaire contains **five** parts.

Part One: Respondent's profile

I. Indicate your choice by placing a tick (✓) mark with in the box.

Gender

Male

Female

Age

18-25

26-35

36-45

46 and Above

Educational level

Below Grade 12

High School Complete

Certificate

Diploma (Level IV or V)

Bachelor Degree

Masters Degree

Phd

Year of experience in the organization

Below 1 year

1-5 years

6-10 years

11-15years

Above 15 years

What is your position at the company?

Managerial

Non- Managerial

Please Specify: _____

Part Two: Causes of Conflict

II. **Place a tick (✓) mark in the appropriate box.**

Use the following Keys to completed questions in this part.

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree

No.	Question items	Likert Scale				
		SDA	DA	N	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
Structural Factors						
2.1	I have little knowledge of other people's job roles and responsibilities.					
2.2	There is no enough resource to perform my job.					
2.3	There is a goal conflict between my department and other departments.					
2.4	There is a goal conflict between me and my colleagues.					
2.5	I depend on another person to complete my responsibility.					
2.6	There is an underlying tension between my supervisor and me.					
2.7	Other's responsibilities are passed to me because there is no clear line of responsibility.					
2.8	I'm uncertain about my role.					
Personal Factors						
2.9	My colleagues have different skill, ability and experience.					
2.10	My colleagues have different personalities, attitudes and beliefs.					
2.11	I believe I have high level of organizational citizenship.					
2.12	I often disagree with my colleagues.					

2.13	I am usually calm, less hostile when dealing with co-workers.					
2.14	I am open and eager to learn new experiences and new ideas.					
2.15	I am sociable, and outgoing when the need arises.					
2.16	My colleagues are different from me in terms of age, cultural background, ethics and values.					
2.17	I get harassed because of personal factors.					
2.18	I was treated less favorably because of personal factors.					
2.19	My personal problems affect my relation with coworkers.					
2.20	I feel frustrated in work.					
2.21	I am dissatisfied with the facility, rule and regulation the organization follow.					
Communication Factors						
2.22	I often feel misunderstood by my colleagues.					
2.23	I don't have the ability to logically reason, to collaborate and network with others.					
2.24	I am often overloaded with information to the extent that I forget to deliver important information.					
2.25	I convey information regardless of the receiver's mood.					
2.26	I prefer to communicate in a selected medium since I feel less professional in using other channels of communication.					
2.27	My supervisor/coworkers fail to use sincere, clear, concise, and kind words during communication					
Reward Factors						
2.28	I feel unsatisfied with the reward system that the organization follows					
2.29	I usually enter into argument with my manager as a result of reward system					
2.30	I don't feel comfortable to work in harmony with those who receive unfair reward					

Part Three: Types of Conflict

III. Place a tick (✓) mark in the appropriate box. For question number 2 you can tick more than once.

1. How *often* do you have conflicts?

- Often Sometimes Never

2. What *kinds of conflict* occur within the organization frequently? Please choose the most common one.

- Intrapersonal Conflict
 Interpersonal Conflict
 Intergroup Conflict
 Intragroup Conflict

3. How do you characterize the general *nature of the conflicts* that frequently occur in the organization?

- Constructive: Conflicts that occurred in the organization resulted in positive performance of employees and the organization as a whole.
 Destructive: Conflicts often lead to negative effects destroying the team environment and performance of employees and the organization as a whole

Part Four: Management of Conflicts

IV. Place a tick (✓) mark in the appropriate box. For question number 1 you can tick more than once

1. What kind of strategies do you use to *address conflicts*?

- Avoidance: I usually avoid, deny or retreat from any kind of conflict.

- Smoothing: I focus on areas of agreement and avoid points where agreement could not be made.
 - Forcing: I use force and domination to reach an agreement.
 - Compromising: I bargain and search for solutions that bring some degree of satisfaction to both parties.
 - Collaborating: I am usually concerned about the opponents concern and find alternative that address both parties interest.
 - I use other methods.
2. Did you participate in any kind of training in relation to Conflict Handling Mechanisms?
- Yes
 - No
3. How would you rate your Conflict Handling Skills?
- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Very Bad | Bad | Average | Good | Very Good |

Part Five: Effect of Conflict

V. Place a tick (✓) mark in the appropriate box. You can tick more than once

1. What effects did you experience as a result of conflict? You can tick more than one.
- Decline in Performance
 - Hostility towards colleagues
 - Decline in Cooperation
 - Experiencing Depression and Lower job motivation
 - Considering a Job change
 - Diversion of energy from work
 - Developing health problem
 - Other

Thank you for taking your valuable time to complete my survey.

-----**END**-----