

# Institute **JOURNAL** of Studies in **EDUCATION**



Vol. 4, NOS. 1 & 2

DECEMBER, 2013 / DECEMBER, 2014

---

Published by  
**INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION**  
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

ISSN 0795-2199

**INSTITUTE JOURNAL OF STUDIES  
IN EDUCATION**

*PUBLISHED BY*

**INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN  
ILORIN, NIGERIA**

**VOL . 4, NO. 1**

**SEPTEMBER, 2013**

# **CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND SECURITY IN NIGERIAN'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

BY

**RISIKAT, T. Lawal**

Department of Teacher Education, Faculty of Education,  
University of Ibadan

**SABA, Mamman Daniel**

E-mail: sabamumandamill@yahoo.com  
% Department of Social Science Education,  
University of Ilorin.

&

**OLANIYI, Abiodun Jubril,**

E-mail: jubab83@g,mail.com

## **Abstract**

---

*This paper x-rays conflict resolution and management for sustainable peace and security in Nigerian educational system. The concept of conflict, sources of organizational conflict, conflict resolution technique like compromise, consensus confrontation, meditation, collective agreement and integration were extensively analyzed. Equally the paper discussed the effect of conflict on the security of a pluralistic nation like Nigeria. Conclusion and recommendations were proffered such as respect for human right, dialogue proper funding of the educational sector open channels of communication and avoidance of rigidity during negotiations to allow peace to reign in all levels of Nigeria educational system.*

---

**Key words:** *conflict, resolution, peace and security.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Conflict no doubt is an important aspect of human management. There is no organization, be it formal or informal, without its own level of conflict. However, conflict is more pronounced in formal organization. Conflict between individuals and groups is a universal phenomenon and the earlier the managers understand this and identify the important areas of conflicts, the better it will enable them use the people in the organization productively, efficiently and effectively to achieve the organizational goals and objectives. Any attempt or failure to identify areas of conflict in an organization could be a great mistake which may eventually be too costly for such organization. Ignoring areas of conflict could adversely affect the

## Sources or Organizational Conflict

Conflict is inevitable and it keeps occurring. Every individual encounters at least two or three conflicts everyday either at home or at work. There are numerous sources of conflict within the formal organization. Parts of the sources conflict over resources, conflict over psychological needs and conflict involving values.

### Conflict over Resources

This occurs when two or more people want the same thing and it is not enough to go round. In such cases, the parties might often be seen attacking the resources and the heat of the conflict will be focused on it. When the resources are made available, the conflict is resolved. The most obvious manifestation of this problem comes when the annual budget is set. Each department typically submits a request for its needs for the next fiscal year, and top management adjusts the request based on its knowledge of the total organization. Department heads often see their requests cutback because the resources for the total organization are limited.

Added to the basic problem of limited resources is the conflict over psychological needs. This is a conflict that cannot be seen but which affects the psyche of the individuals and its productive capacity. Youths, for example, have many needs. Such needs include love, security, belongingness, friendship, etc, a student whose seat is taken away might not necessarily want another seat elsewhere because he or she might want to sit close to a friend for protection. Even if another seat is provided for him or her in another place, the conflict might occur between him or her and another student if he or she insists on the choice of where to sit.

In the same vein, the potential for conflict is likely to be high where groups or individual perceive and interpret the same phenomenon differently. In the secondary school system, for example, attention needs to be focused on the point of contact between the teacher and the students. The psychology of learning suggests that students will not learn well unless they are actively involved in the process and so accept responsibilities for their learning activities. If otherwise, they will complain and they need to be listened to else they will find some other way to attract attention to themselves.

However, conflict involving values are the most difficult to understand and resolve. Values are our beliefs and what we are often not prepared to negotiate. When people in conflict talk about transparency, honesty, equality and fairness, they are talking about different values but, conflict is more likely to be resolved when the parties understand and respect each other's values. It is therefore important and necessary to understand the source of conflict before it is resolved.

It is observed that most violent conflict in Nigeria educational institutions have been traced to communication gap between the students and the school authority. When there is delay by school management in meeting students' demand or failure of the school authority to involve students in decisions making this could lead to conflict and in fact had led to breakdown of laws and orders in the past.

## Conflict Resolution, Techniques for Sustaining Peace and Security in Education

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship. After all, two people cannot be expected to agree on everything all the time. Learning how to deal with conflict rather than avoiding it is important. When conflict is mismanaged, it can cause great

the needs of both parties. Thus, the needs of the parties will be integrated by the solution. With this method too, the in-lose mentally is often so strong that the opposing groups assume an integrative solution is impossible.

Ultimately, arbitration, mediation and negotiation are other methods and procedures for addressing conflict.

Arbitration is a method of settling difference between two parties by the use of an impartial third party called an arbitrator who is accepted to both sides and whose decision is binding and legally enforceable on the contesting parties. The arbitral procedure consists of the company and the union submitting their disagreement to the arbitrator. After hearing all the evidences, the arbitrator issues a decision. It is based not on what is believed to be wise and fair, but upon how the arbitrator understands the language of the contract to be applied to the case at hand. Thus, an arbitrator like a judge issues a decision based on evidence before him or her. There is no doubt that the extensive use of this type of arbitration has helped to reduce the number of strikes even in our school system.

### **Mediation**

This process sometimes called conciliation; is a means by which a third party, the mediator attempts to reconcile the differences between the contesting parties. The mediator may try to maintain constructive discussion, search for common areas of agreement and suggest compromises. However, the mediator's decisions are not binding and need not be accepted by the contesting parties.

### **Collective Agreement**

The Trade Disputes Act states that a collective agreement is any agreement in writing for the settlement of disputes and relating to terms of work concluded between an employer or representative of employers in an organization on one hand and one or more trade unions representing workers on the other hand. Where this exists, such a collective agreement shall be deposited with the Minister in charge of labour matters. In the case of a collective agreement entered into before the date of commencement of the act, then within fourteen days of its execution.

The question of the legal status of a collective agreement has received judicial determination in a number of cases. A consensus of judicial opinions has it that a collective agreement is devoid of ordinary legal effect.

### **Effects of Conflict on the Security of a Nation**

Conflict in Nigerian educational institutions is displayed through strike action in which industrial relations refer to the series of effort highlighted by coordinated temporary stoppage of official duties by workers to protest any form of unfair treatment or to demand for the institutionalization of better conditions of service.

Workers, all over the world and over the years, have discovered the effectiveness of strike in settling industrial disputes and so, hardly does a year pass without one form of strike or the other by one trade union or another. The situation is particularly common in Nigeria where governments at various levels seemed to have perfected many styles of denying workers of their legitimate rights. The resultant effect of this is incessant or endless strikes.

Nigerian teachers and students at all levels are the worst hit. Governments give so many reasons for breaching the agreement reached with the teacher thereby violating their rights and denying them of issues covered by collective

agreement freely entered into by the government and in-point is the ongoing ASUU strike in public university system in Nigeria.

As there is no action without proportional reaction, conflict has negatively and maximally impacted on students lives thus, sending bad signals to the nation's security. One of the most easily visible negative effects of strike on students is the demonstrated capability of the phenomenon in lowering the quality of products of our public schools. There is no doubt that the quality of graduates at the various levels of the nation's school system has continuously been denuded over the years. It is no longer news that most graduates can no longer function as expected. There are teachers who do not know what and how to teach just as there are doctors who are not better than quacks. This is simply due to persistent strike actions embarked upon by lecturers at various tertiary institutions. This no doubt is dangerous and poses a security, threat to the nation because many of these half-baked graduates are often used as bad boys as they are willing hands.

Another area of conflict which is threatening the security of this nation is the situation where many students were forced out of school because they are intellectually dehydrated and emotionally frustrated from pursuing intellectualism as a result of persistent teachers strike. Some of them abandoned schooling totally and forever and eventually become hoodlums in the society.

News had it that as a result of long strike actions, some students were lured into various forms of criminalities like political hooliganism, rape, cultism and the like. It is no longer surprising that groups like Boko Haram, Kidnappers and armed robbers have at their command level many of these students of various institutions are out of schools as a result of persistent strikes.

Constant conflict accompanied by strike actions by Nigerian teachers have made Nigerian educational certificate not to be reckoned with globally. Hence, graduate teachers are usually subjected to series of examination before they are employed and in the course of this, some get frustrated, abandoned teaching jobs and join bad gang where they think they can make quick money. This is a serious threat to national security. In short, if conflicts at the various levels of the nation's educational system are not resolved, attainment of peace and security of this great nation may be a mirage.

## Conclusion

Conflict triggers strong emotions and can lead to hurt feelings, disappointment and discomfort. When handled in an unhealthy manner, it can cause irreparable rifts, resentments and break-up. But when conflict is resolved in a healthy way, it increases the understanding of one another, builds trust and strengthens relationships. Hence, educational managers should know that conflict is inevitable, but could have positive effects on the organization if handled carefully and with immediate attention.

## Recommendations

For the sustenance of peace and security in Nigerian educational system through conflict management and resolution, the following suggestion are hereby put forward:  
Educational managers should cultivate the habit of respect and due regard to human right.

Dialoguing and bargaining should be used in a fair, honest, equitable and acceptable manner.

Education at all levels must be well funded.

Parties involved in conflict should not be punished for demanding their rights.

There is the need to keep communication channels open between employers and employees at all times.

Trade and student unionism should not be banned in as much as justice is done.

Rigidity should be eliminated during negotiation. A give and take approach will promote industrial peace.

### References

- Adeyemi, M., Akinyinwa, O. & Rufus, P. (2010). Educational administration, applied concept and theoretical perspective, Lagos: Joja
- Blake, R, and Mouton, J. (1964). The management grid. Houston: Golf.
- Geoffery, C. (2007). Conflict within the university communities Studies in Higher Education 2 (1): 38.
- Gray, J.L. & Starke, A.F. (1990) Organizational behaviour concept and applications Ohio: Menll Publishing Co.
- Harry, W.B. (1998). The practice of facilitation: managing group process and solving problems Greenwood.
- Imodu, P.B. (2001). Enhancing national unity through conflict management, poverty alleviation and gender empowerment in Nigeria. A lead paper presented at the National Conference organized by the National Association for the universities of technology. Minna, 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2001.
- Manktelow, J. & Carlson, A, (2013). Resolving conflict rationally and effectively. Free Newsletter.
- Robbins, S. (1974). Management organizational conflicts, Englewood Cliffs N.K. Prentice.
- Salau, K.K. (2002), Elements of labour economy. Ilorin: Nathadex Publishers.
- Selekere, S.B. (2000). Youth decadence: Causes, course and analysis: Enugu: Jimmy.
- The Nation Newspaper (2013). Wike advises students against crime. Thursday Sept. 19, 2013.
- Watton, R and Dutton, J. (1969). The management interdepartmental conflict: A model and review Administrative Service Quarterly 14 (7) 3-4.
- Yusuf, O. Alli (2001). Religious tolerance, conflict resolution and human rights A paper presented at the National rights Commission Seminar hold at circular Hotel, Ilorin.
- Zook. G. (2003). The concept of strike . Jakarta: Mccah Press.