Chapter 13
Conflict Management in Higher Educational Institutions:
A Complexity Perspective

Farooq Miiro
Islamic University in Uganda, Uganda

ABSTRACT

Conflicts are inevitable and very common in educational institutions the world over. Conflict happens whenever and wherever in HEIs. Conflicts also rampantly occur at HEIs. Conflicts are therefore inevitable although this should not cause alarm truth is that they are natural and have benefits to organizational progress. It can therefore be noted that conflict management is part and parcel of school administration challenges that HEIs managers should handle as part of institutional politics, with extra care to benefit system and its workers. Therefore, experienced managers should motivate different conflicting groups to improve their methods and attitude towards work so that organizational goal can be achieved in the most effective manner. This however is a tough undertaking since it requires technical knowledge and skills on the part of leader. Accordingly, understanding complexity theory and applying it effectively in organizational management can transform conflict into an effective catalyst for improving school system.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the world is experiencing mass global increase in terms of population, heavy demands and challenges that require improved standards of living come into play as a result of technological advancement (Leung Yu, 2010), Education is also turning into a commodity with the aim of addressing global demands that call for critical thinking and problem solving (the ability to ask the right questions), collaboration across networks and leading by influence, agility and adaptability, initiative and entrepreneurialism, accessing and analyzing information, effective written and oral communication, curiosity and imagination (Wanger, 2008). It can be observed that the education system the world is adopting today, encounters serious challenges that range from social, economic and political within educational institutions.

As many education institutions are mushrooming at all levels, they attract staff from different education backgrounds, culture, climate and ethnicity to serve the common goal of the institution with emphasis on cooperation, harmony and collaboration that address the institutional culture and climate, although little attention is put on competition and conflicts. Through employee efforts to meet the common purpose that entails school believes, values and norms conflicts emerge in different types that require complex managerial approaches to administer them. As educational management literature has been in place for quite long, it has not been dissecting the dynamics required in dealing with HEIs conflicts. In the recent past some studies have been done to establish the management of conflicts in secondary schools but little has been written about the conflicts in HEIs. Therefore this conceptual paper would like to illustrate the complexity in the management of conflicts in Higher education Institutions.

In the context of HEIs, conflicts have been in place for more than 200 years ago, the first of its kind was in the University of Glasgow where the founder turned against his university in 18th C, within the same university another staff set the computer laboratory ablaze, in America's leading public university, Berkeley was distracted for five years to 2003, another case that merits closes study, however, is one which has the distinct advantage of being a matter of public record since the findings of the enquiry into the 'Great Battle' was published as 'The Davies Report' (1994). The conflict was centered on the Philosophy Department of University College Swansea and ran from October 1989 until May 1993, (OECD).

It can therefore be observed that as HEIs are viewing themselves as modern organizations to achieve corporate goals with the aim of addressing the dynamics of the changing world, conflicts are also created in modern society (Adepoju & Safowara, 2012). Conflicts are natural phenomenon and behaviors that exist among

8 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/conflict-management-in-higher-educational-institutions/153718

Related Content

Intuitionistic Fuzzy Filters for Noise Removal in Images
C. Radhika, R. Parvathiand N. Karthikeyani Visalakshi (2016). *Handbook of Research on Generalized and Hybrid Set Structures and Applications for Soft Computing (pp. 53-64).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/intuitionistic-fuzzy-filters-for-noise-removal-in-images/148001

The Role of OIC in the Social Policies of Its Members
Sema Bölükba (2016). *Handbook of Research on Chaos and Complexity Theory in the Social Sciences (pp. 43-60).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-role-of-oic-in-the-social-policies-of-its-members/150410

A Community Psychological Perspective of Social Innovation
 (2021). *Theoretical and Practical Approaches to Social Innovation (pp. 194-210).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-community-psychological-perspective-of-social-innovation/267360

Online Group Work Is Possible, Just Not Easy
Pat Gibson (2019). *Handbook of Research on Transdisciplinary Knowledge Generation (pp. 231-241).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/online-group-work-is-possible-just-not-easy/226195

Game-Based Control Mechanisms for Cognitive Radio Networks
Sungwook Kim (2018). *Game Theory: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 435-486).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/game-based-control-mechanisms-for-cognitive-radio-networks/183121