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**CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**

**KUMASI, GHANA**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY**

**M.A CHRISTIAN MINISTRY WITH MANAGEMENT**

**END OF FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS – 2018/19 ACADEMIC YEAR**

**LEVEL 600**

**MACM 614: Conflict Management**

**May, 2019**

**70 Marks**

**Time Allowed: 3 Hours**

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**GENERAL INSTRUCTION TO CANDIDATES:**

- Answer **Question 1 and any other 3 Questions**
- Present all answers in essay form
- Marks will be awarded for clarity of expression of ideas and grammar
- Write your index number on top of the question paper

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## **QUESTION 1**

### **CASE STUDY**

#### **CONFLICT IN STATE HOSPITALS IN GHANA**

Over the years the term conflict has been branded to many people as an awful conduct of parties who engaged in an argument which is normally generated from differences in ideas, beliefs and values. It was tagged as a disturbing force (Walton, 1969), hence most scholars advocated for its eradication. By the year 1980, researchers such as Tjosvold (1991), began to rethink about the constructive and solidarity consequence of conflict. Thus, though conflict act as a negative force operating against successful completion of group common goals, it may also lead to positive effects depending on the nature of the conflict (Obasan, 2011).

From the literature of Henry (2009), organizational conflict is regarded as the friction that occurs when the goals, interests or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible with those of other individuals or groups in an organization and where they may block or frustrate each other in an attempt to achieve their objectives. Other writers such as Meek, Heit and Page (2005), Hart (2000) and Reece and Brandt (1996) adding their voices to what is meant by conflict share a similar view that it is a state of opposition, disagreement or incompatibility between two or more people or groups of people which is sometimes characterized by physical violence or assault. Their views on conflict actually points to the fact that it is not always that parties tend to be physical or violent towards each other that one can actually say there is conflict. In some instances as can be found in the comments by Lambert and Myers (1999) and Hocker and Wilmot (1995), conflict can be latent and the other party may not even be aware that there is a conflict. In the case of health care environment, a patient may be in conflict with a physician without the physician been aware that the patient is in conflict with him since it is believed that conflict is cognitive rather than behavioral state.

Conflict is inevitable hence needs a strategic approach in terms of its resolution so that the end result can be functional rather than dysfunctional. Whilst it tends to be inevitable, from the literature of Rahim (2001), departments, units and sections competing with limited resources is one of the most common sources of conflict in organizations. Looking at the literature given by the writer, the researchers of this study based on their own observation see it as one of the major causes of conflict in Ghana government



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hospitals where patient frustrations due to congestions and pressure on health equipment generate frequent quarrels and disagreements among them and staff based on the time taken for health care professionals to deliver a service. To Tseveendorj (2008), the causes of conflict are not only limited to scarce resources but people's perception and culture also breeds conflict. Culture and perception is very instrumental human make up that is very hard to transform. Instances where team mates working on the same task have diverse cultures and values, their perception on how to achieve the task vary because each one's decision will be influenced by his values or beliefs. From the literature of Henkin and Cistone (2000), factors such as religion, educational level, gender and age have high influence on perception and as such makes people think differently. Looking at the writers assertion on the fact that age, religion, educational level and gender play important role in influencing perception, one can infer from the comment made by Tseveendorj (2008) and counter argue that the root cause of conflict as a result of differences in reasoning, believe and thinking is not perception but differences in age, religion, gender and educational level since the latter has high influence on the former.

As organization comprises of people from different backgrounds and conflicts are bound to occur, it is necessary for managers and supervisors to acquire skills that will enable them manage conflicts when they occur since according to Watson and Hoffman (1996) supported by Dana (2001), managers most of the time spend about 42% of their time dealing with conflict related matters. Reynolds and Kalish (2002) share a similar view with the writer since to them; managers nowadays spend at least 25% of their time resolving workplace conflicts. Looking at the comments regarding the percentage of manager's time devoted to resolving workplace conflicts, it presupposes that organizations need to pay much attention to how they can benefit from conflict situation when they occur by ensuring that it tends out to be functional one. In ensuring that the outcome of conflict is functional, it is necessary for managers to also ensure that they adopt the right approach in terms of its management. In the view of Gatlin et al (2012), an early intervention by investigating disputes and complaints when they are raised, identifying root causes of problems in addition to symptoms, and sharing this information to create change can facilitate a smooth resolution of the conflict. In talking about the various approaches to handling conflicts, Johnson and Johnson (2000) and Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana (2009) recommends mediation as the best approach to be adopted by managers in resolving conflicts.

*Noted: The above case was extracted from the Research Journal of Business and Management (RJBM) Vol. 1(3).*



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**Required:**

- a) From the article, according to Hocker and Wilmot (1995), conflict can be latent and the other party may not even be aware that there is a conflict. Apart from this latent stage, with examples explain the other **three stages** conflict may travel. **(9 marks)**
- b) Identify and explain **four demographic factors** in the article that the authors are saying can lead to conflict. **(16 marks)**

**QUESTION 2**

Dr. George Dapaah, the medical superintendent of ANIWAAH MEDICAL CENTRE, Emena which is a suburb in Kumasi wants to treat a patient who was admitted last two weeks but the hospital management disagrees with him and will not allow the medical doctor to carry out the assignment since the patient has no health insurance card. To the medical doctor, it is also not right for the management of the hospital to refuse giving treatment to patients simply because the patient has no health insurance.

**Required:**

- a) Identify the class of conflict that exists between Dr. George Dapaah and the management of the hospital. **(3 marks)**
- b) Apart from the class of conflict which you have identified, explain with examples **FOUR different** classes of conflict that may exist between the employees in organizations. **(12 marks)**

**QUESTION 3**

You graduated from Christian Service University College with a Master's Degree in Christian Ministry with Management and as part of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Theology Week of the Theology Students Association of Ghana – CSUC Chapter, they are organizing a seminar on the theme 'Conflict: A Necessary Evil'. They have invited you based on your knowledge in conflict management to give a 30 minute presentation on the above theme which the emphasis is on the positive and negative aspects of conflicts in organizations. As a fresh graduate, you are required to prepare your notes so that the presentation can go on as planned. **(15 marks)**

**QUESTION 4**

One of the strategies that can be adopted by organizations to resolve conflicts in organizations is NEGOTIATION. What do you understand by the term negotiation as a strategic tool for conflict resolution? **(3 marks)**

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- b) State and explain the **THREE** main types of negotiators that can be used for conflict resolution. **(12 marks)**

**QUESTION 5**

Whilst engaging in conflict can be detrimental to the progress of an organization, the opposite can sometimes be the case as conflict and its occurrence can be of benefit to the same organization. As the Senior Pastor of CHRIST EMBASSY CHURCH, critically examine the factors that need to be considered before deciding whether or not to engage in conflict? **(15 marks)**

**QUESTION 6**

Research has shown that there is no one best way of handling conflict and the best approach to handling conflict will depend on the situation. As a student who had just completed a course in conflict management, critically examine **five direct approaches** to managing conflict in an organization **(15 marks)**

**Examiner: Prof. Gabriel Dwomoh**