

Conflict Management in Improving Schools Effectiveness

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Abstract: Conflict is something that cannot be avoided. Schools are required to have an effective approach in managing the conflicts faced to increase the effectiveness and achievement of the school. This article was created to illustrate and explain the application of conflict management in a increasing school effectiveness. The method used is a qualitative approach to library research methods by analyzing related empirical findings that have been made and adding to the thinking of researchers as their contribution. The findings in this study was that conflict does not always have a negative impact on school life, but the existence of conflict can encourage creativity, adaptation, and school innovation. There are several styles of conflict management that can be used in the handling conflict in schools. The limitation of this research is that it only addresses conflict management in certain cases at school. The application of conflict management in schools will ultimately improve the harmony of relations between school members and increase the effectiveness of the school so that it precisely and effectively achieves desired goals.

Keywords: *conflict management, effectiveness, school*

INTRODUCTION

Effective organization is a challenge that will always be faced because it will affect the service and quality provided by the organization to its users. An organization consists of various components that are interconnected and have a dependency in establishing cooperation to achieve its goals. The organization consists of various individuals with various backgrounds, attitudes, traits, and points of view, this diversity has the potential to cause differences and discrepancies that ultimately lead to conflict. Conflict is something that naturally occurs and cannot be avoided in social interactions within the organization. Conflicts that occur can have positive, or negative effects, depending on the organization itself in managing conflict.

Just as in educational organizations, a school is a meeting place for various individuals with different backgrounds, traits, attitudes, and perspectives, therefore conflict is also normal in schools, so that harmony between school members requires that each school demands every citizen to cooperate in anticipating and overcoming conflicts that occur in schools. Schools need a structuring, arrangement, and control so that they can overcome conflicts that occur and school goals can be achieved. A good school does not mean that the school has never experienced conflict, but that the school is able to manage conflicts that arise and can make the conflict one of the benchmarks for increasing school effectiveness, in other words the school has good conflict management. The existence of conflict management can help schools to be able to manage conflict well so that it can be a potential for progress and school effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict Management

Conflicts arise because of difference of opinion between members and between groups in an organization where each member of the organization has their respective perceptions that they think are right. In the book *Organizational Behavior* written by Soetopo (2010) it is explained

that the sources of conflict in organizations including school organizations include: communication problems, organizational structure, human factors (Smith, Mazzarella, and Piele, 1981). In schools, conflicts can occur at all levels, both intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, intra-organization, and inter organization (Mulyasa, 2005).

Considering that conflict cannot be avoided, a good approach to be applied in school is to try to utilize the conflict in such a way that it can be precisely and effectively achieved desired goals. The principal as the highest leader in the school must be able to manage conflicts properly to provide positive benefits, and avoid negative consequences. School principals should not avoid conflict, but manage it so that it can encourage schools to be dynamic and conflict does not hamper school programs.

According to Wirawan (2010) conflict management is defined as the process of a party involved in a conflict or a third party devising a conflict strategy and implementing it to control the conflict to produce the desired resolution. Whereas Abi Sujak (2010) explains that conflict management refers to an intervention that is designed to reduce conflict that explodes or to increase conflict in the hope that it can overcome organizational lethargy. The following are some objectives of conflict management according to Wirawan (2010) in his book *Conflict and Management of Conflict*.

- 1) Prevent disturbances to the members of the organization to focus on the organization's vision, mission and goals.
- 2) Understanding others and respecting diversity.
- 3) Increase creativity.
- 4) Creating procedures and mechanisms for resolving conflicts.

According to Wirawan (2010), conflict management style is a pattern of people's behavior in dealing with situations in conflict. There are five styles in conflict management namely.

- 1) Avoidance style. With this style parties facing conflict tend to withdraw from conflict situations or be neutral. And if a conflict is not resolved, it will affect managerial tasks.
- 2) Accommodating style. A conflict management style with a low level of assertiveness, and a high level of cooperation. A person ignores his own interests, and seeks to satisfy the interests of his conflict opponents.
- 3) Competition style. Conflict management style with high level of awareness and low level of cooperation. This style is a power-oriented style, where a person will use his power to win conflicts at the expense of his opponent.
- 4) Style of compromise. Conflict management styles that to tend to sacrifice interest in taking agreements to reach an agreement.
- 5) Collaborative style. It is desire to identify the causes behind the conflict, share information openly, and find ways to solve it by considering the benefits to be gained.

School Effectiveness

School effectiveness can be defined to the extent that an educational organization as a social system with certain resources can fulfill its objectives without the abnormal use of its processes and resources and without putting inappropriate pressure on members of its organization (Marini, 2016). Fulfillment of school goals are related to the availability of resources which means that school in different situations and conditions have different possibilities for completing certain levels of effectiveness. School as an organized system of interaction consists of people who interact with each other and are bound together in an organic relationship.

According to Stres (in Rofai, 2006) there are three main perspectives in analyzing what is called organizational effectiveness, namely: (1) the goal optimization perspective, where effectiveness is assessed accorded to a measure of how far an organization has succeeded in achieving the goals it deserves to achieve. (2) system perspective, where effectiveness is assessed from the opportunities of various factors that follow patterns, inputs, conversions, outputs, and feedback, and include the environment as an external factor. (3) perspective of human behavior where effectiveness is assessed based on the behavior of personnel or members in the organization that affect the success of the organization for a long-term period. In this case the integration between the behavior of individuals and groups as a unit of analysis, assuming that the only way to achieve goals is through the behavior of individuals in the organization. For a school, effectiveness is one concept that has a very important meaning. With the effectiveness of the organization, it can be seen or measured whether this organization is a healthy or sick organization or is successful or not in increasing high productivity. According to Usman (2013) there are several quality and effective organizational indicators, namely: focusing on customers, focusing on efforts to prevent problems, investing in people and considering humans as invaluable organizational assets, having strategies to achieve quality, treating complaints as feedback to improve self (responsive), treats policies in quality planning, strives for a process of continuous improvement by involving all relevant parties (participation), forming quality facilitators (willing and leading the process of change), encouraging members to innovate and be creative, clarifying the roles, and responsibilities of each organization members, have a vision and mission, have an objective and clear evaluation strategy.

MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

The data in this study were obtained from the results of research that has been done, and have been empirically tested for truth. The researcher analyzes and compares then contributes his thoughts and contributions by adding the results of the researchers' thoughts. Method This research method is a qualitative research approach with library research methods. The researcher analyzes the data obtained from the results of the existing research and literature and adds the thought of the researcher as his contribution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the presentation of this article cover five styles of conflict management, namely: neglect, compromise, accommodation, collaboration, competition. Conflict cannot be avoided in organizations, because organizations are a gathering place for people who has different characteristics and unite to achieve a predetermined goal. It is undeniable that differences in character, traits, and attitudes and differences of opinion will always be found. These differences often trigger conflict. Some things that can cause conflicts in schools include: inadequate education staff welfare, personality mismatch (Okotoni & Abosede, 2003), power struggles, scarcity of resources (Broni, 2012), changes in teaching and learning processes, cultural differences, changes environment (Gumuseli & Ozge, 2009). These conflicts, if not handled properly, will have a negative impact on schools such as hindering schools from achieving their goals, creating suspicion, tension, and stress by the teachers and communities (Broni, 2012), in addition to the occurrence of conflict can also have an impact what is good for schools is recognition of staff and students, cooperation and innovation created by teachers and staff (Broni, 2012).

Each school has different conflict, and therefore, the way of handling the conflict is also different. Conflicts that occur in schools are in line with the increasing complexity of life and the demands of work so that the principal must be able to control it, because it can reduce achievement and performance. When conflicts are not managed properly, conflicts will have a negative impact on the organization (Oresajo, 2015). There are many management techniques to correct or handle conflicts. Management holds considerable control in handling conflicts in school organizations. Conflict management strategies can be applied in reducing conflict in school organizations. The ability to control conflicts that occur in schools requires certain management skills, which are called conflict management. Principals as leaders and managers in schools have an important role in this regard. Conflict management can be interpreted as the process of devising strategies that will apply to resolve conflicts and control those conflicts to produce the desired expectations of schools. However, it cannot be denied that not all school principals have sufficient insight and abilities regarding conflict management in schools. Only a few school principal have sufficient ability and insight on conflict management in schools, more and more school principals tend to misunderstand the role of conflicts that occur in schools and assume that conflicts must be avoided and stopped (Msila, 2012). Conflicts cannot be avoided, but the occurrence of conflicts also does not always have a negative impact on schools, what if the conflict can be managed properly with an appropriate and effective approach than the conflict can also have a good impact on schools, for example, increasing creativity and innovation. If managed properly, conflict can develop creativity and innovation to develop parties involved in conflict (Wirawan, 2010). So that school principals must get conflict management guidance and training so that they have sufficient insight and ability about conflict management, can get used to the skills of how to diagnose conflict in the early stages and can resolve the conflict constructively. Muindi, Elizabeth Ndunge, Jonathan Meuma Mwanja, & Joseph K Metet (2017) revealed that most principals who develop conflict management strategies by collaborating with each other to make school performance improve and collaborative conflict management styles successfully applied and influenced significant in influencing student performance. These skills are not only mandatory for school principals but also teachers and school staff (Dady, 2015). Lloyd & Uzhenyu (2017) found that conflicts that can be occurred in schools are conflicts between students' parents and teachers, between students and teachers, between education staff and teachers, between teachers and students, and between students and students. All school members showed a high level of interest in being able to manage conflict. The community has major role in conflict management in schools.

At Ghanaian Schools, West Africa: conflict originates from threats to student autonomy, neglect of a teacher and student needs, and scarcity of resources resulting in underdevelopment in the school development and suspicion and tension between staff, and the community. The conflict turned out to have a positive influence in schools, namely recognition of staff, teachers, and students. The principal has significant role in this conflict, namely building consensus, avoiding arguments and blaming staff, teachers and students when conflicts arise. They met with relevant parties when the conflict occurred and requested assistance from the Ghana Education Service and counselors, so, they could resolve the conflict and improve the quality of schools. (Anthony Afful-Broni, 2012). In a high school in Osun State, Nigeria: conflicts that occur due to personality mismatches, lack of ability to manage administration, not involving students in the school administration, inadequate staff and teacher welfare. It was also found that some school administrators did not have knowledge in conflict management. To overcome conflicts that occur above the school is very required to have insight and ability in managing

conflict and is required to choose strategies that are relevant and effective to be able to resolve conflicts that occur.

According to Thomas & Kilman theory there are five styles of conflict management that can be applied in schools. The conflict management styles used by each school are different. Schools must carefully choose the conflict management style used so that the application of the conflict management style can help analyze the relationship between the causes of conflict and can turn conflicting situations into meaningful experiences for schools. Research conducted by Farooq, Bilal, Shama, and Rukhasana (2016) revealed there is a relationship between conflict management styles and teacher professional commitment.

The effectiveness of an organization can be seen through three perspectives, namely the perspective of goal optimization, system perspective, and human behavior perspective. School effectiveness can be defined to what extent an educational organization as a social system with certain resources and ways can fulfill its objectives without the abnormal use of its processes and resources, and without putting inappropriate pressure on members of the organization (Marini, 2016). Meeting the objectives of this organization is related to the availability of resources which means bringing schools in different situations and conditions have different possibilities in completing certain levels of effectiveness. Conflict can increase profit or strengthen personal or group power and can increase collaboration, innovation, adaptation, and creativity of its members through the best solutions to lead to better achievements (Usman, 2014). With good conflict management by the school it will have a good impact on the sustainability of the school and can help in achieving its goals and can improve its performance. Organizations that are active in resolving conflicts can improve the relationship between organizational goals, and the effectiveness of organizational performance (Pazos, 2012), so that conflict management has an important role in increasing organizational effectiveness.

Research conducted by Salim (2017) shows there is a significant positive effect between conflict management on the effectiveness of school management. Where in this study mentioned the contribution of conflict management to the effectiveness of school management variables is 0.220 which can be interpreted that 22.0% of the variance of school management effectiveness can be influenced by conflict management variables. The role of conflict management in improving school effectiveness is by applying effective and efficient conflict management styles by the schools, so, it can help make conflict resolution decisions through consideration based on various information thinking and perspectives, while also being able to learn from various conflicts situations encountered. There they will both think of procedures and mechanisms such as what can resolve a conflict. When this has been obtained through procedures and mechanisms that are carried out repeatedly in resolving conflicts, then it will become an organizational culture. Every school citizen is required to be able to communicate well and be able to understand a variety of character traits of other school residents, which of course vary from ethnicity to mindset. Conflict management is quite influential in helped to prevent conflicts that might arise due to differences in the organization depending on how a manager processes conflict management. So that in the end will create a harmonious school climate and atmosphere and can improve school effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

The five styles of conflict management are: neglect, compromise, accommodation, collaboration, competition. These styles can be used in managing conflicts that occur in schools. The choice of effective conflict management styles varies because the conflicts faced by each

school also differs. With the existence of good conflict management by the school it will have a good impact on the sustainability of the school and can help in achieving its goals and can improve its performance, can help make conflict resolution decisions through consideration based on various information thinking and perspectives. Through conflict management we can increase effectiveness in the field of education in achieving its goals, so that every conflict that occurs does not go on without a clear solution because it takes time. Schools that are active in resolving conflicts can create a harmonious school climate and atmosphere, as well as increase the relationship between organizational goals of school effectiveness.

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