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**Research Methodologies**

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**RESEARCH REPORT PROPOSAL TITLE**:

Conflicts and Management Strategies In Financial: A case study of Barclays Bank Zambia Plc.

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# **Dedication**

To all those who have supported, encouraged, challenged, and inspired us. And especially to our Beloved Parents, honorable lecturer, and friends for all their guidance, love and attention which has made it possible for us to make it up to this point.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to establish conflict management strategies adopted by financial institutions in Zambia and determined the challenges of conflict management faced by these institutions in Zambia. The manager understood why and when conflict arises and in what situations conflict frequently occurred. The study targeted 43 banks in Zambia. Questionnaires were used as main data collection instrument in the study. Questionnaires were deemed appropriate as they ensured confidentiality of the respondents. The data collected from the field was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as percentages and frequencies. The findings of the study suggested that commercial banks used the strategies of accommodating, compromising, competing, collaborating and avoiding. The strategies that were most popularly used was avoiding and collaborating. The findings of the study also suggested that commercial banks faced the challenge of personal differences, challenge of different faith and culture, challenge of changing environment (globalization and technology), different ways of conflict management, challenge of critical skills associated with handling difficult people and situations, challenge of competition over scarce resources, the challenge of creating structural for consensus processes, challenge of cooperative discourse and the challenge of change. The challenge that was most popularly faced was competition over scarce resources. All the banks faced all the challenges.

**CHAPTER 1**

1. **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Conflict is a perpetual given of life, although varying view of it may be held. Some may view conflict as being a negative situation which must be avoided at any cost. Others may see conflict as being a phenomenon which necessitates management. Still others may consider conflict as being an exciting opportunity for personal growth and so try to use it to his or her best advantage. Whoever may fall on this continuum of viewpoints concerning conflict, seldom would one expect to be in a continual state of conflict as for the basis for employment. Conflict- free company has never existed and never will exist. Antagonisms, tensions, aggressions, stereotypes, negative attitudes and the frustrations of perceived conflicting need will always be present wherever men are forced to live and work together. However, conflict in organizations is a daily occurrence.

Conflict is inevitable among humans. When two or more social entities (i.e., individuals, groups, organizations, and nations) come in contact with one another in attaining their objectives, their relationships may become incompatible or inconsistent. Relationships among such entities may become inconsistent when two or more of them desire a similar resource that is in short supply; when they have partially exclusive behavioral preferences regarding their joint action; or when they have different attitudes, values, beliefs, and skills. Conflict is the perception of differences of interests among people‖ (Thompson, 1998, p. 4). Another definition of conflict would be a process of social interaction involving a struggle over claims to resources, power and status, beliefs, and other preferences and desires.

The aims of the parties in conflict may extend from simply attempting to gain acceptance of a preference, or securing a resource advantage, to the extremes of injuring or eliminating opponents. (Bisno, 1988, pp. 13– 14; see also Coser, 1968, p. 232) The theme of conflict has been with us and has influenced our thinking from time immemorial. It received different

degrees of emphasis from social scientists during various periods of history. Over the years the phenomena relating to conflict have fallen within the purview of the historian, the novelist, the philosopher, and the theologian, and [have] been treated systematically by authors in all of the biological and social sciences. Managing Conflict in Organizations has been investigated by the sociologist; and the struggle for survival by species of differing genetic endowments has been studied by the biologist. (Nightingale, 1974, p. 141) Scholars in organization theory became interested in studying conflict only in recent times. In recent years, there have been renewed interest and significant changes in the study of conflict in social and organizational contexts.

**1.1.1 Conflict management**

Conflict management involves implementing certain strategies to eliminate the negative aspects of conflict, increase the positive aspects of conflict and to enhance performance and effectiveness in an organized setting. Rather than eliminating or avoiding disagreements, the purpose of conflict management is to teach groups conflict resolution skills, such as managing conflict, finding self-awareness about the types of conflict and effectively communicating while in conflict with a team member. These skills assist teams in establishing a positive outcome from conflict. The practice of recognizing and dealing with disputes in a rational, balanced and effective way, Conflict management implemented within a business environment usually involves effective communication, problem resolving abilities and good negotiating skills to restore the focus to the company's overall goals. Conflict arises between individuals due to different styles of communication, cultural backgrounds and political and religious views. Conflict arises within groups due to disagreements between subgroups, and conflict arises between groups due to competition or rivalry.

Every business that employs people regardless of size and industry experiences interpersonal and organizational conflict. This conflict is caused by multiple inter-related variables and circumstances. For example, some of these causes include constant changes in the competitive environment, increasing diversity among employees, and limited resources. As a result of these changing variables managing conflict is important in many ways. First, it is important because unmanaged conflict can have expensive legal consequences as people seek litigation as a way to resolve disputes. Second, managing conflict is important because high level of negative conflict can cause employee dissatisfaction and expensive turnover as well as decreased productivity. Lastly, managing conflict is important because when done well it can become a catalyst for creativity and innovation as well as organizational learning. It can become a strategic advantage as a company becomes a learning organization capable of benefiting from different points of views. Employees of a learning organization feel open to express opinions and make suggestions that lead to improvements without the fear of conflict.

**1.1.2 Banking industry in Zambia**

The Banking industry in Zambia is governed by the Companies Act, the Banking Act, the Central Bank of Zambia Act and the various prudential guidelines issued by the Central Bank of Zambia (CBZ). The banking sector was liberalized in 1995 and exchange controls lifted. The banks have come together under the Zambia Bankers Association (ZBA), which serves as a lobby for the banking sector‘s interest‘s .The ZBA serves a forum to address issues affecting members. Over the last few years, the Banking sector in Zambia has continued to growth in assets, deposits, profitability and products offering. The growth has been mainly underpinned by an industry wide branch network expansion strategy both in Zambia and in the southern African community region and Automation of a large number of services and a move towards emphasis on the complex customer needs rather than traditional ‗off-the-shelf‘ banking products. Players in this sector have experienced increased competition over the last few years resulting from increased innovations among the players and new entrants into the market. The banking sector comprises banks that are locally owned, foreign owned, joint ventures etc. Different banks started their operations at different times and they also differ in size. Banks are classified into small, medium, and large according to the value of assets owned by each.

**1.1.3 Commercial banks in Zambia**

Commercial banks rely heavily on deposits to fund their activities, although borrowed funds are becoming increasingly important for the largest institutions. Historically, commercial banks have concentrated on commercial or business lending and on investing in securities. Differences between the asset and liability portfolios of commercial banks and other financial institutions, however, are being eroded due to competitive forces, consolidation, regulation, and changing

financial and business technology. Indeed, in the 2000s, the largest groups of assets in commercial bank portfolios were mortgage related. Commercial Banks and Mortgage Finance Institutions are licensed and regulated pursuant to the provisions of the Banking Act and the Regulations and Prudential Guidelines issued hereunder. They are the dominant players in the Zambian Banking system and closer attention is paid to them while conducting off-site and on-site surveillance to ensure that they are in compliance with the laws and regulations. Currently there are 43 licensed commercial banks and 1 mortgage finance company. Out of the 44 institutions, 31 are locally owned and 13 are foreign owned. The locally owned financial institutions comprise 3 banks with significant shareholding by the Government and State Corporations, 27 commercial banks and 1 mortgage finance institution. The banking system is expected to remain stable following amendments to the Banking Act that gives the Central bank powers to effectively supervise the sector. The strict enforcement of the Banking Act and prudential guidelines will continue to be pursued. Overall, recent efforts taken to ensure the stability of the banking sector are expected to facilitate a smooth functioning market based financial system. Industry overview – Zambia by: The Central Bank of Zambia.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Conflict management strategies refer to the specific behavior patterns one applies in conflict situations (e.g., Pruitt and Rubin 1986; Rahim 1983). In conjunction with the above, the purpose of this study, was to determine challenges of conflict management faced by commercial banks in Zambia and to establish conflict management strategies adopted by commercial banks in Zambia. The most important asset to any organization is the human resources (Halcrow, 1997). People are the most common element in every organization and they can be used to further an organization‘s competitive advantage (Decenzo, 1998). Conflict that is managed effectively by managers can lead to personal and organizational growth. If conflict is not managed effectively, it can hinder an employee‘s ability to perform and because of this, managers need to be aware of the ways in which conflict can escalate and be prepared to prevent or manage it in the workplace. The effectiveness of employees, teams and entire organization depends on how they manage the interpersonal conflict at work (Tjosvold, 1998).

Since the 1980s the commercial banks has witnessed an era of continual and dramatic change triggered primarily by global competitive pressures, enhancements in technology and a demanding customer-driven market (Ulrich, 1998). In this changing environment, the banks have to constantly adapt their activities and internal configurations to reflect the new external realities and this may bring about conflict between employees and between managers and employees. It‘s an era of competition in banking sectors, all banks are in pursuit to improve their services and products by according due importance to the customers. Usually, commercial banks are faced with the challenge of conflict management. The conflict management exercise should not be seen as targeting certain individual or group of individuals but should follow certain strategies that are deemed to be objective.

Conflict resolution has a thirty to fifty year intellectual history. Some studies have been done on various aspects of conflict management, for example: Ethnic Conflict Management in Africa: A Comparative Case Study of Nigeria and South Africa by (Emmy Godwil, 2005), the effect of conflict management on bank performance, a case study of keystone bank Makurdi by (Simon, 2013), the conflict management styles and strategies of educational managers by (karen l. Fleetwood, 1987), and conflict resolution strategies and their performance model for large-scale multiagent systems by (hyuckchul jung,2003) Yet, no systematic research seems to have been undertaken to find out the strategies used by commercial banks to manage conflict. The proposed study was intended to fill this gap in knowledge.

**1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

**1.2.1 General objectives**

To examine the causes and effects of conflicts between top management and subordinates in financial institutions.

**1.2.2 Specific Objectives**

1. To investigate the causes of conflicts between top management and subordinates in financial institutions.

2. To establish if high staff turnover resulted in conflicts between top management and subordinates in financial institutions

3. To assess if the increase in absenteeism caused conflicts between top management and subordinates in financial institutions

4. To determine if the tension in the work environment resulted from the conflicts between top management and subordinates in financial institutions

**1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Does conflicts between top management and its subordinate contributed to poor performance in financial institutions?
2. Had the staff turnover rate increased due to conflict between top management and subordinates in financial institutions?
3. Was an increase in absenteeism caused by the conflicts between top management and subordinates?
4. How did tension in work environment resulted in conflicts between top management and subordinates in financial institutions?

**1.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**

Financial institutions in Lusaka Zambia- An institution that offers banking business which includes, monetary transactions, investments, loans, deposit and currency exchange. For example, Barclays bank, Bayport, Finca and Capital solutions.

Conflict –a sharp disagreement or opposition of interests or ideas.

Top management – This is the highest level of management which includes senior management, executive management and upper management.

Subordinate-employees under the authority of another person

**1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

This study focused on commercial banks with respect to their employees and bank managers who are working in a particular branch. This research work was be of great use to the commercial Bank knowing the best strategy to adopt in managing conflict so as to benefit both parties (employers and employees). It helped them to learn how to recognize and benefit from their differences in the bank. And also it determined the challenges of conflict management faced by commercial banks. Findings of the study was also be important to students, scholars and other researchers who may be interested in understanding the management of conflict in the banking sector. The study went a long way to increase the existing body of knowledge in the area of conflict management. To other organizations, this study brought up the best conflict management strategy which can be borrowed and applied to other sectors of the economy by those facing similar challenges in managing conflict.

**1.6 DELIMITATION OF STUDY**

This study was designed to cover financial institutions such as Barclays bank, Finca, Bayport and Capital Solutions within Lusaka, Zambia.

**Limitation**

The researcher faced the following limitations: The response rate was not as high as expected because some would-be respondents failed to return their questionnaires, while others declined to be involved in the study claiming that there is no time to fill in the questionnaires implying that they are busy. Out of the forty-three questionnaires that were distributed, only forty were collected. The contents of the study would have been richer if a larger number of respondents were involved. The response rate was too low to allow for the use of statistical tests.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. **Introduction**

This chapter aimed to highlight and brought out literature and theories of a numbers of studies that relates to the various segments of conflicts between top management and their subordinates. The key focus of this review was on the causes of conflicts between top management and their subordinates and presented the conceptual and theoretical framework of this research.

**2.1 Empirical review**

The researcher wanted to gain and reviewed knowledge by high spotting what other researchers with related topics did. The researcher focused on three main fundamentals as follows;

**2.2 Conflict management**

Conflict management is prescribed not simply as a mechanism for dealing with difficult differences within an existing social system, but also as an approach that can facilitate constructive social change towards a responsive and equitable system (Fisher 2000).Organizational conflict may occur between two individuals, within small groups and work teams, or between groups (De Dreu & Van de Vliert 1997). It is obvious that conflict is an unavoidable reality of living; but, while one may recognize this, it still does not negate the fact that conflict is difficult to define, is often viewed much differently today than it was a few decades ago, and is linked to, but is more than, communication. Perhaps because conflict is such an elusive entity, one tends to discuss it in terms of sources, types, and stages. Considering this, conflict management seems to be a concept that can be dealt with pragmatically. Much has been written about the management of conflict. A great deal of the literature is derived from the business world. In simpler terms, Huseman (1977) views conflict management as distinguishing between useful conflicts and conflicts that should be eliminated. Also, conflict management should involve the ability to develop individuals who can work under stress but continue to be productive.

Conflict management refers to the modes used by either or both parties to cope with a conflict. Adler and Towne (1990) identified three possible courses of actions when faced with a conflict: (1) accepting the status quo (i.e. living with the problem); (2) using force and mandating change; (3) reaching an agreement by negotiating. Three types of outcomes result from these approaches to conflict management: Win–Lose approach, Lose–Lose approach and Win–Win approach. Conflict management research focus is centred primarily on the conflict situation and the person–situation interaction (Knapp et al. 1988). However, there is a reason to believe that conflict behaviour is determined by both situational and dispositional influences (Sandy et al. 2000). The findings suggest that the instrument is able to differentiate between conflict management strategies. Successful conflict resolution not only removes frustration but also leads to higher effectiveness, trust and openness (Van de Vliert 1998). Deetz and Stevenson (1986) discuss a number of items which must be kept in mind when preparing for conflict management. First, the manager must try to understand the type of conflict that he or she will be dealing with. It may be a conflict of differing opinions, incompatible roles, incompatible goals, or differing resources. Identification of the type of conflict will help in managing the conflict. Second, the manager must also be aware of the importance of the conflict so as to select appropriate strategies for management. Third, the manager must recognize the complexity of the conflict as this can vary widely. Finally, the manager must also be able to assess the energy and resources available for managing the conflict.

The effective management of an organization demands the integration of providers who may vary enormously in scale and influence, who may possess contrasting cultures, and who may be dominated by professionals coming from different disciplines based upon conflicting paradigms (Bryant 2003). The presence of personal and emotional tensions – conflicts – in the organization is one dimension of organizational culture. How leaders react to problems, resolve crises, reward and punish followers is all relevant to an organization‘s culture. Their perspectives on power tend to influence their strategies in conflict and enhance people to work together effectively. It seems logical that the employee/relations orientation of the leader has a positive correlation with trust and a negative correlation with conflicts (Bass & Avolio 1994, Ekvall 1996). The changing and turbulent environment in which managers now operate demand from them skills and abilities to manage conflict situations towards constructive outcomes. Conflict is a massive growth industry. It is an integral part of the fabric of a postmodern society that is increasingly litigious, competitive, complex and alienating (Bryant 2003). Too little conflict results in organizational stasis, while too much conflict reduces the organization‘s effectiveness and eventually immobilizes its employees (Marquis & Huston 1996).

**2.3 Challenges of Conflict management**

There are potential and a few big challenges faced in conflict management. Some of these challenges are, the first challenge of conflict management is the challenge of change where real listening and reflecting is going on; people cannot communicate without changing each other. One big challenge for conflict managers is to address people's very real fear of being persuaded through listening. Many times, when mediation doesn't work, it is because participants have a stated intention of listening and a determined behaviour of not listening. We misunderstand that. We believe that people don't listen because of their values or other barriers. That's sometimes the case. More often, it is that people fear that what they hear will change them. People change when they identify a conflict within themselves. The second challenge is having different ways of conflict management Research on conflict management strategies found that there are at least about 5 strategies of conflict resolution. There is, among several others, also very comprehensive conflict resolution strategies extremely informative and very dependable for example the seven strategies of conflict management by Donna Cardillo, RN, MA. Challenge of Different faith and culture is the third. Conflict management and building bridges of understanding among people of different faiths and cultures is really a big challenge. Multiculturalism, as expressed through behaviours and attitudes, may also affect interactions and performance in today‘s work environment (Martin et al. 1994).

Critical skills associated with handling difficult people and situations is a challenge in conflict management because the changing and turbulent environment in which managers now operate demand from them skills and abilities to manage conflict situations towards constructive outcomes. Conflict is a massive growth industry. It is an integral part of the fabric of a Postmodern society that is increasingly litigious, competitive, complex and alienating (Bryant2003, p. 75). Too little conflict results in organizational stasis, while too much conflict reduces the organization‘s effectiveness and eventually immobilizes its employees (Marquis & Huston 1996). Without the skills could be a challenge in conflict management. Then there also a challenge of Competition of scarce resources. Scarce resources in an organization could pose be a big challenge too because employees compete for those scarce resources causing conflict among them. Competition can be defined as when two or more groups or organizations vie for the same resources. In business these ―resources‖ could be sales, market share, contracts, employees, and ultimately, profits. In the nonprofit sector, the competition might be donations, grants, clients, volunteers, and even political influence. The Challenges of changing environment [globalization and technology] is also another one in conflict management where globalization has caused change and restructuring so that Banks operate more flexibly. There has been a rapid growth in virtual teams, with people from different backgrounds and cultures working across vast regions and time zones Volatile, fast-changing workplaces. Email and electronic communication are the most practical ways to connect, but these can be anonymous and lead to misunderstanding.

Last and the least the challenge of creating structural support for consensus processes. There are a number of consensus-building models that operate remarkably effectively, even though the rights-based structure casts a shadow over them. The current structure supports a rights-based approach to everything, but interest-based problem- solving is fundamentally different. So long as the publicly-funded mechanisms are based on rights, we are making a statement about the importance of rights as opposed to interests.

Finally, the challenge of cooperative discourse is also a challenge in conflict management. Times of transition demand a readiness to explore other ways of thinking. Each person contributes to the greater understanding. This leads to a more appreciative process. As we deal with larger group issues, it becomes more important to consider paradigms other than batting a tennis ball back and forth. People have a strong yearning to be listened to and appreciated for who they are.

**2.4 Conflict management strategies**

Many communication texts make reference to strategies used by individuals (or small groups or organizations) in the management of conflict. Some include a spectrum of strategies, while others concentrate on an elaboration of a single strategy. Although some researchers have described a variety of strategies, no one makes the claim that his/her list would include all possible strategies apparent in a conflict situation. Fraser and Hipel (1984) refer to a strategy as "any set of options that can be taken by a particular player (participant). While noting that the function of conflict analysis is the enabling of participants to make better decisions, they recognize three steps in approaching conflict. First, they recommend what is referred to as modeling; that is, the considering of conflict as a whole. Second, the participant must determine all possible resolutions to the conflict. Third, particular strategies must be evolved. When people find themselves in conflict, their behavior can be described in terms of where it lies along two independent dimensions—assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness is the degree to which you try to satisfy your own concerns, and cooperativeness is the degree to which you try to satisfy the other person‘s concerns.

**2.1.1 Work relationship between top managers and subordinates in financial sectors**

The concerns over work relationships created in institutions and to avoid conflicts to widespread pushed the concept of good work relationships in work places into prominence. (Grant, 2014).

This translates into a problem as work relationships should be created from grass root to have good workable goals. Conflicts are unavoidable but man gable when good relationships are maintained between the top and the subordinates.

**2.3 Conceptual Framework**

The researcher looked at how different variables of conflict in financial institution linked to each other, and how depended or independed they are to each other.

***See Diagram illustration below:***

The variables in the diagram above summarized the positive and negative impacts of causes of conflicts, and how each variable can affect each other.

Conflicts in organizations tended to bring out poor management and results if not resolved. Failure to work out conflicts can have a direct or indirect effect on work which might not affect resources and might nor ne adequately allocated, hence having a direct impact on the objectives of the institutions .it also affected service delivery hence systems and models must be recommended for them to be implemented, thereof leading to conflicts.

However, the same variable affected positively, in the best outcome of the other will influence the positivity of another. Adequate resource allocation caused positive impact, which led to attainment of objectives. Thus, any implementation seeked to advise and recommend better ways for conflicts in organizations.

**CHAPTER 3**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Proposed methodology**

This chapter explained various methodologies that were used in gathering data and analysis which are relevant to the research. The methodologies included areas such as the allocation of study, the research design, sample population, sample design and procedure, date collection, administration of data, data analysis, procedure, data liability and validity, schedule of activities, budget and references page.

**3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Parahoo (2006) the design selected for research should be the one most suited so as to achieve an answer to the proposed research question. For the purpose of the proposed research question the researcher chose to use of cross-sectional survey.

Qualitative studies allowed researchers to explore behaviours, perspectives, feelings, and experiences in depth, quality and complexity of a situation through a holistic framework (Holloway and Wheeler 2002). In contrast quantitative research is a formal systematic approach which incorporates numerical data to obtain information about the world (Burns and Grove 2009), which would not be suitable to gain the information required for this study.

**Data Collection**

The study largely utilized primary data. The data was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A sought demographic of the respondents and that of the Bank while Section B addressed aspects of conflict management strategies and Section C the challenges faced in conflict management. The questionnaire was administered on a ‗drop and pick up later‘ basis.

The questionnaire was distributed among various branches of renounced banks. Mode of dispatch included person delivery as well as through mail, Follow up visits was also under taken to get the work complete. Personal interaction with the Bank‘s Managers was established as and when it deem necessary. Confidentiality of personal information was guaranteed to avoid

Embarrassing situation for the employee among their colleagues. By and large questions were received within stipulated time frame.

**3.2 SAMPLE SITE**

The sample site was Barclays Bank Plc (Kafue House and Mutaba House) in Lusaka.

**3.3 SAMPLE POPULATION**

The sample population were the 200 employees from Barclays Bank Plc.

**3.4 SAMPLE SIZE**

The sample size were100 respondents. This sample size was calculated by combining different factors using the creative survey systems sample size calculator. It was reached by putting into consideration the following factors:

Confidence level:

Confidence interval:

Accuracy percentage:

**3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE**  
Purposive sampling method were used to select respondents involved in the governance of Barclays Bank Plc.  
3**.6 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**  
The research used questionnaires, and study of past reports on audit. The choice of these instruments facilitated the collection of two types of data; namely primary and secondary data.  
  
**3.6.1 Primary Data**  
The researcher used questionnaires as primary data collection instruments. For the sake of consistency and completeness of data collection, the questionnaires were semi structured that included both open ended and closed ended questions. This was done in an effort to get as much information as possible from the respondent.  
**3.6.2 Secondary Data**  
Secondary data was the data that already existed and was of some particular relevance to the topic at hand. For the purpose of this research study, secondary data were collected through an extensive literature search from: past audit report queries, journals, Budget and internet

**3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**  
Data were analyzed using methods that involved analyzing the data from both the qualitative and quantitative approaches used in the study concurrently or sequentially.   
**3.7 RELIABILITY OF DATA**  
Data is concerned with consistency of responses with which repeated measures produced the same result across time and across time and across (Saunders et all 2013). For the sake of consistence and completeness of data collection, the questionnaires were semi structured included both open ended and closed questions. This was done in an effort to target as much information as possible from the respondent.  
**3.8 VALIDITY OF DATA**  
Validity was concerned with whether the findings were really about what they appear to be about. (Saunder, 2003). All questions were pre tested in the relevant study areas. Modifications were made before actual data collection for the purpose measuring theoretical meaning and concepts and consistency of language to be used to represent concepts thus validity test pre-test of questionnaire also assisted in detecting irrelevant ambiguous and redundant questions.

**3.9.2 BUDGET‬**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ITEM | DESCRIPTION | COST (K) |
| Transport |  | 200 |
| Printing of questionnaires |  | 120 |
| Materials to be used |  | 150 |
| Typing and printing |  | 150 |
| TOTAL COST |  | 620 |

Table 1

**CHAPTER FOUR**

* 1. **FINDINGS, RECCOMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.**

The study showed that the causes of conflict between top management and its subordinates included salary scales, poor communication, levels of education, personality differences and increase in work load. Some employees stated that after the decisions are made among the top managers communication of that decision was not spread for all to access it and have a say to it organization leaving them to have unending conflicts.

**CAUSES OF CONFLICT**

**Salary scales**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Salary Scales** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |  |
| Level 1 | 1 | 4 |  |
| Level 2 | 6 | 24 |  |
| Level 3 | 8 | 32 |  |
| Level 4 | 10 | 40 |  |
| **Total** | **25** | **100** |  |

Table 2

As seen in table 2 this study showed that wage gaps between to management and its subordinates caused conflicts. The study also showed that the margins are too great to compromise as seen above. The subordinates claimed to be the ones who do the work but still get little salaries.

**Poor Communication**

It was seen that an increase in poor channels of communication increases the probability of conflicts in organizations because it reduced information that was important to reach subordinates. This meant that many people depended on a certain information would suffer if communication was poor and work expectations cannot be reached.

**Levels of Education**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Education** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Certificate | 6 | 24 |
| Diploma | 9 | 36 |
| Degree | 7 | 28 |
| Masters | 3 | 12 |
| **Total** | **25** | **25** |

Table 3

This study showed that institutions in which the top managers where less or only has basic education were prone to conflicts. Some employees stated that they felt uncomfortable being lend by managers who have lower education than themselves and some stated they felt its difficult leading staff with little education to them. In institutions this study showed that employees are reluctant to advance their education as many are still diploma holders.

**Lack of Equal Opportunities**

This study showed that conflicts between top management and its subordinates had a probability of unequal opportunities amongst the staff, issues of favoritism, meritocracy and nepotism which led to the rise of conflicts.

**Increase in Workload**

This study has showed that conflicts came about through the work load that top managers gave their subordinates. It showed that work is an unequally share and some employees were exposed to more challenging and difficult tasks while their managers tended to take the work on an easy pace.

**Unclear Job Roles**

It has been seen that in jobs roles are mostly not made clear to subordinates, and this brings about misunderstanding on who was doing what and who there are supposed to report to has also shown that top managers do not care about job roles along as the work is done but this cause unclear roles and may lend to unending conflicts.

**Poor Work Environment**

The study showed that any environment that was not pleasing to work in which is provided by top management caused conflicts between them and their subordinates. A poor work environment caused work to be retendered and slowed the work business this brought about unending top to down work conflicts.

**Gender Inequality**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender inequality** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Male | 7 | 70 |
| Female | 3 | 30 |
| **Total** | **10** | **100** |

Table 4

As seen in the table above this study showed that one source of conflict was that of gender inequality in most institutions brings about conflicts. This study has shown that top managers tended to favor more of the male gender which is 70% as compared to the female gender. This led to conflicts between top management and its subordinates.

**Absence of Head**

The study showed that many conflicts arose from the absent of heads. Departments complained the lack of support from there line supervisors and challenges that come with supervisors over pilling to supervise other departments which are not under them. This led the rise of conflicts and many subordinates not understanding their line of subordinates.

**Conclusions of the study**

From the study it was noted that the commercial banks faced the challenge of personal differences, challenge of different faith and culture, challenge of changing environment (globalization and technology), different ways of conflict management, challenge of critical skills associated with handling difficult people and situations, challenge of competition over scarce resources, the challenge of creating structural for consensus processes, challenge of cooperative discourse and the challenge of change. The challenge that was most popularly faced was competition over scarce resources. All the banks faced all the challenges. From the study it is noted that the commercial banks used the strategies of accommodating, compromising, competing, collaborating and avoiding. The strategies that were most popularly used were avoiding and collaborating. It is advisable for commercial banks to use a combination of two or more strategies so that objectivity is observed. The findings of the study also point to the fact that similar strategies are used by banks irrespective of their age, ownership and size.

**5.4 Recommendations of the study**

The management of the commercial banks in Zambia should take bold step on trainings on conflict management to have the knowledge of managing conflict. They should also ensure that all the employees are having enough knowledge on conflict management by having frequent in-house training. The commercial banks should embrace the fact that workers come from different backgrounds, faith and different cultures and therefore Banks would be able to understand each employee behavior and know how to deal with them in case of any conflict between employee or with the customers around. The management should ensure that the competition for resources is minimal. Increasing more resources in Banks like for instances enough computers and providing in-house training to their employees on new technological. The management of the commercial banks should also ensure that they are clear conflict management policies that govern the employees in the Banks and have clear strategy that manage conflict. Carry out frequent research so as to understand what other banks and other organizations do in case of conflicts. Through research, they will be able to consumer behavior and hence adopt to a certain strategy that will be able to address the conflict management between employees and customers.

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