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Chapter

Conflicts in Environmental and Agricultural Organizations in the Far North Region of Cameroon

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Abstract

The population of the Far North Region of Cameroon suffers the most from poverty and huge environmental challenges. As a result, they have the highest concentration of environmental organizations in Cameroon. Data was collected by interviewing key informants who work in environmental and agricultural companies. It was discovered that conflicts in such organizations are caused by the differences people have in terms of opinions, interests and needs as they work together with each other. Their strictness with one another also causes conflict especially when doing dirty or difficult work tasks. Conflict also comes about when the religious values of each other is not respected especially that of the Muslims in Christians dominated companies. There is also generational conflict which is characterized by the confrontation between the older and less educated generation who have some experience and young graduates who would like to implement new practices. Other causes are discrimination where workers are not promoted basing on merit but on their ethnic relation to one another. There is equally an economic cause which is due to the non-distribution of part of the substantial profits that some companies make to their employees as well as too low salary and poor work tasks distribution.

Keywords: environment, agriculture, organization, discrimination, Cameroon, religion, work task, relation, conflict, generational, economic

1. Introduction

Conflict has different meanings and is used differently depending on people's subjective experiences. The main problem is not the many different definitions but rather the ways scholars have conceptualized the term. As a result, scientists have defined conflict in broad terms: Jehn and Bendersky (2003) [1] defined conflict as "perceived incompatibilities or discrepant views among the parties involved". De Dreu et al. (1999) [2] state that conflict involves "the tension an individual or group experiences because of perceived differences between him or herself and another individual or group". The term conflict reflects the assumption of involving not only differences but incompatible goals and is a win-lose affair. In order to better understand conflict, Elisabeth N. and Stewart C. (2019) [3] ask the following questions which equally interest us: What does conflict look like? How should it be identified in the workplace? And how can we capture its dynamics in our theorization?

Louis R. (1967) [4] state that the term "conflict" can be used to describe various conditions and states such as the scarcity of resources, policy differences of a conflicting behavior, or an affective states such as stress, tension, hostility, anxiety, etc. of the individuals involved, or a cognitive states of individuals, which can be their perception or awareness of conflicting situations, and even still behavior, ranging from passive resistance to overt aggression. An industrial dispute means any dispute or difference between employers and employers or employers and workers or between workmen and workmen, which is connected with employment or non-employment or terms of employment or conditions of labour of any person. According to Priyakshi M (–) [5] *Conflict can be considered as a breakdown in the standard of decision making and it occurs when an individual or group experience difficulty in selecting an alternative. Conflict arises when individual or group encounters goal that both parties cannot obtain satisfactorily.*

Organizational Conflict or otherwise known as workplace conflict is described as the state of disagreement or misunderstanding, resulting from the actual or perceived dissent of needs, beliefs, resources and relationship between the members of the organization. At the workplace, whenever, two or more persons interact, conflict occurs when opinions with respect to any task or decision are in contradiction (Business Jargon, –) [6].

Task conflict is disagreement about the content of the work that workers perform; relationship conflict exists when employees have interpersonal incompatibilities arising from differences in personality or opposing values (De Dreu & Beersma, 2005) [7]. Process conflict is closely related to task conflict: Whereas task conflict has to do with the actual task, process conflict concerns how the task is done (Jehn, 1997) [8]. While the concepts of task and relationship conflict are widely used in conflict research, the application of process conflict is still limited. More recently, the concept of status conflict (Bendersky and Hays, 2012) [9] has emerged, and it concerns disputes over members' status positions in social hierarchy.

Despite disagreements, task conflict is commonly considered constructive and relationship conflict dysfunctional. Relationship conflict interferes with performance by lowering effectiveness, creativity, and the quality of decision making (de Wit, Jehn, and Scheepers, 2013) [10]. By contrast, task conflict is healthy and necessary because it stimulates discussions and prevents premature consensus, leading to enhanced decision-making quality, work-team effectiveness, and performance. Since the 1980s, major strand in organizational conflict research has concentrated on refining the conflict-type framework to distinguish between negative and productive conflict, by showing out how "these two types of conflict differentially affect work group outcomes" (O'Neill et al., 2013) [11].

Therefore conflict is an instrumental means to achieve authoritatively sanctioned ends. "It is through conflict that teams can be productive and enhancing and leaders effective" Tjos-vold's (2006) [12]. Depending on the situation and the kind of outcome desired by management, there is a widespread interest on how to attain the "right" kind of conflict for the achievement of goals.

Conflict equally occurs in the routines of work and the norms embedded in everyday social interaction as organizational members go about their daily activities which constitutes the cultural context of conflict (Mikkelsen, 2013) [13]. Therefore, conflict is an inherently dynamic process of communicating which pays particular interest to the role of language and symbols in shaping and co-developing it (Mikkelsen and Gray, 2016.) [14].

Specifically, there are three distinct and competing ways on conceptualizing conflict: as a distinct behavioral phenomenon, as an instrumental means, and as a social construction.

It is a process in which one party suggests that its interests are being opposed by another party. As a role, people see only the observable part of conflict –angry words and actions of opposition. But this is only a small part of the conflict process (Mcshane, S. and Glinow, M, 2008) [15] because the conflict process consists of five stages: firstly, a.potential opposition or incompatibility; secondly a cognition and personalization, thirdly, an intentions; fourthly a behavior; and finally an outcome.

Internal Sources of conflict refer to factors which are inherent within the framework of an organization. The major prime factor of internal sources of conflict is the "Opposing interests" of industrial actors. Differing interests bring about conflict because the two parties in organizations try to share the "industrial cake". Equally, there is usually "power relationship" between the two actors in an industry which make conflict production inevitable (Bernard O. Ashimi R. 2014) [16].

According to Gatlin, J. et al. (2019) [17], there are eight potential reasons which cause conflict in an organization: conflicting needs, styles, perceptions, goals, pressures, roles, differing personal values and unpredictable policies. An organization is a system of position roles with each member belonging to a role set. Conflict role occurs when an association of individuals sharing interdependent tasks and performing formally defined roles are influenced both by the expectations of others in the role set and by their own personalities and expectations. A person's role joins with that of other members' as well as their set of organizational roles to produce opportunities for a role conflict. This type of conflict increases individual's anxiety and frustration and reduced efficiency as it can as well motivate him to do better work (Henry P., Börje O. (1971) [18].

Unmanaged conflict in the workplace can lead to miscommunication which bring about confusion or non-cooperation, non-respect of deadlines or delays, increased stress among employees, weak creative collaboration and team problem solving, disruption to work flow, knowledge sabotage Serenko, A. (2020), Serenko, A. (2019) [19–20], reduced customer satisfaction, distrust, split camps, and gossip (De Angelis, Paula 2008) [21]. The win-lose conflict in groups may have some of the following negative effects: Divert time and energy from the main issues, delay decision, create dead locks, drive unaggressive committee members to the sidelines, interfere with listening, Obstruct exploration of more alternatives, reduce or destroy sensitivity, cause members to drop out or resign from committees, Arouse anger that disrupts a meeting, provoke personal abuse, cause defensiveness. It causes strains such anxiety, depression, physical symptoms, and low levels of job. Equally, interdependence recognizes that differences will exist and that they can be helpful, so members learn to accept ideas from dissenters (which does not imply agreeing with them).

An environment organization is one which is part of the conservation[1] or environmental movements[2] that seeks to protect, analyze or monitor the environment against misuse or degradation from human forces. In this sense, the environment may refer to the biophysical environment or the natural environment (Wikipedia the free encyclopedia List of environmental Organization) [22]. The organization may be a charity, a trust, a non-governmental organization, a governmental organization or an intergovernmental organization. Environmental organizations can be global, national, regional, or local. Some environmental issues that environmental

[1] seeks to protect natural resources, including animal and plant species as well as their habitat for the future

[2] Also known as the ecology movement, it includes conservation and green politics, and is a diverse philosophical, social, and political movement for addressing environmental issues. The movement is centered on ecology, health, and human rights.

organizations focus on include pollution, plastic pollution, waste, resource depletion, human overpopulation and climate change.

Agriculture places a serious burden on the environment in the process of providing humanity with food and fibers. It is the largest consumer of water and the main source of nitrate pollution of groundwater and surface water, as well as the principal source of ammonia pollution. It is a major contributor to the phosphate pollution of waterways OECD (2020) [23] and to the release of the powerful greenhouse gases (GHGs) methane and nitrous oxide into the atmosphere (IPCC.. Climate change 2001) [24]. Increasingly, however, it is recognized that agriculture and forestry can also have positive externalities such as the provision of environmental services and amenities, for example through water storage and purification, carbon sequestration and the maintenance of rural landscapes (Murgai, R., Ali, M. and Byerlee, D. 2001) [25].

In the Far North Region of Cameroon, there are seven organizations, that deals with issues related to the environment and agriculture: GIZ, PNDP, HYSACAM, ACEFA, SOLKAMTECH, COPPRESSA, SAHEL AGRO. We noticed that most environmental organizations intervene as much as possible to ameliorate the precarious environmental problems of the region while those dealing with agriculture are mostly transformative: transforming raw materials into finished goods.

We examine the causes of conflict in the above agricultural and environmental organization in the Far North Region of Cameroon whose population suffers the most from poverty and huge environmental challenges and which has the highest concentration of environmental organizations. Therefore our objective is to find out the causes of conflicts in environmental and agricultural organizations in the Far North region of Cameroon.

2. Theories of organization conflicts

Functionalists state that a conflict serves a social function and they ask the following questions: "Why is there conflict? What purpose does it serve?" George Simmel views conflict as designed to resolve divergent dualisms; as a way of achieving some kind of unity, even if it will be through the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties". Conflict serves as a social purpose even if reconciliation comes with the total destruction of one party. Conflict socializes members into a group and reduces the tension between group members. Furthermore, a conflict may end with a victory of one party over another or it can be resolved through compromise; or through conciliation.

Functionalists define conflict as "the clash of values and interests, the tension between what is and what some groups feel ought to be." Conflict serves the function of pushing society to new institutions, technology and economic systems. It is a "situation which generates incorruptible goals or values among different parties".

Functional, constructive forms of conflict is the conflict that supports the goals of a group and improves its performance (Robbins, S., et al., 2003) [26]. Conflict leads to competition among groups and they work harder to produce more, it is advantageous to the group and the institution. It is viewed as a confrontation between two ideas, goals and parties that improves employees and organizational performance. One of the main benefits of constructive conflict is that it gives its members a chance to identify the problems and see the opportunities. It also inspires new ideas, learning, and growth among individuals (Robbins, S., et al., 2003).

Conflict is "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards and interference from the other

party in achieving their goals" Floger, J. P (1993) [27]. This approach introduces two important concepts: Interdependence and perception. Interdependence is connected to such situations where one party's future actions depend on another party's actions. The differences are created by conflict, for example, values, goals, motives, resources and ideas. In the business world, differences in such characteristics as work experience, personality, peer group, environment and situation, all lead to difference in personal attitudes, beliefs, values or needs".

3. Methodology

We first of identified all the environmental and agricultural organizations in the Far North Region of Cameroon. Then we prepared a semi-structured interview guard which consisted mainly of questions that helped us to know the causes of conflict in the various organizations. We obtained a research permit from the director of the Higher Institute of Polytechnique Maroua in which the department of Environmental Studies is found. We then selected fifteen students Master students and trained them on how to conduct the interview and sent them to the field. They dropped the research permit at the head-office of each company and they were granted permission to conduct the interview with key-workers. They purposely selected experienced workers, that is, those who have been working in the companies for long and who had an in-depth knowledge of the functioning of the companies. They met them at convenient areas where the interview was conducted: some in their offices during break time or when their colleagues had gone out for break and others in the quarters and some in a quiet environment in the companies. Follow-up information were given in a created Whatsapp group. The experienced workers shared their views on the organizational culture and sources of conflict.

4. The results

4.1 Areas of expertise of the environmental and agricultural enterprises

The environmental and agricultural organizations in the Far North Region of Cameroon are either cooperation (GIZ), private structures (SOLKAMTECH, COPPRESSA, SAHEL AGRO) or parastatal structures (HYSACAM, PNDP, ACEFA). They have very diverse fields of activity: sanitation and waste management, reforestation, the fight against climate change, environmental protection, and the processing of agricultural products.

These organizations have varied domains of expertise: the PNDP operates on small scale micro-projects. It carries out: reforestation, waste management, small-scale disaster management, sanitation and pollution reduction. In the domain of reforestation, it fights against the advancement of the desert and it works in collaboration with the GIZ cooperation. In disaster management, it reconstructs schools that have been destroyed by floods. In the area of sanitation, it builds latrines for needy populations. In the area of biodiversity, it builds artificial ponds for animals and shelter.

SOLKAMTECH[3] SARL was founded in 2010 by a renewable energy and the environment engineer and its activities extend to other regions of Cameroon: the East, Adamawa, North regions where it has already implemented numerous projects. It aims at providing renewable energy as a solution to people who do not

[3] Solar Kamerun Technology

have access to electricity and those who cannot afford to pay huge electricity bills as well as those who have unstable electricity supply. This company is multifunctional because it is also involved in the business sectors: buildings and doing other public works, providing solar photovoltaic, thermal as well as wind and biomass.

Sahel Agro, also called Sahel Agro Wilfec Holdings was created in 2013 and it launched production in January 2015. It aims at improving the overall food conditions of the Sahelian zones and to set up a new method of consuming industrial product. It's main activity (area of expertise) is Agribusiness. It works in the processing and marketing of high quality corn flour and provides customers with product ranges of 500 g, 1 kg, 5 kg, 10 kg, 25 kg and 50 kg which are available anytime and anywhere.

The ACEFA[4] program was created in 2013 in Diamaré and it contributes to the sustainable improvement of producers' incomes in order to reduce poverty in rural areas and also helps to improve Family Farms and Producers' Organizations (POs).

GIZ has been working in Cameroon since the early 1960s. Its regional office is in Yaoundé where the company's activities are coordinated. The main sponsor of GIZ is the German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development. It operates in 12 different programs but we are interested in its PROFE[5]. This program operates in four regions of Cameroon: the Center, the East, the North and the Far North. In the far north region, it is aim at restoring landscape, responsible for wood and energy (improved stoves) and the management of non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

GIZ is a cooperation while SOLKAMTECH, COPPRESSA, SAHEL AGRO are private structures and HYSACAM, PNDP, ACEFA are .parastatal structures.

4.1.1 Sources of conflicts in environmental and agricultural organization

The conflicts in environmental and agricultural organizations in the Far North Region of Cameroon are: relational conflict of authority, generational conflict, discrimination, economic and work task conflicts. However, not all these conflicts are necessarily negative because for executives, the absence of conflict can even be a problem since it can mean the lack of collaborators or their inability to work with other workers to produce the best of them.

4.1.2 Relational conflict

Conflicts in organizations are regularly triggered by the differences people have in terms of opinions, interests and needs as they work together. These relations may be between employees or with senior colleagues, there are always misunderstandings between collaborators; that is, collaborators hardly understand each other when sharing opinions with each other. There are romantic relationships which create conflicts in enterprise or when employees are strict with one another especially when doing dirty or difficult work like keeping the environment clean. This exists when one person of the same hierarchical rank encroaches the competent domain of the other which produces conflict of authority and then leads to jealousy

In COPRESSA, there are conflicts between employees and in some cases with senior colleagues. For example in 2019, a colleague decided not to share the

[4] programme d'Amélioration de la Compétitivité des Exploitations Agropastorales (Programme to Ameliorate the competivity of Agropastoral Exploitation)

[5] forest, fauna and environment program.

company's vehicle with her colleague. This was because her colleague scolded her at the wrong time and place while they were in the field in front of people who were not members of their company. According to her, the population ought not to have been aware of it. As a result, they did not speak to each other for almost 4 months when they returned to the company until their hierarchy resolved their misunderstanding during a weekly meeting and resolutions were taken to restore peace and calm between them. It significantly affected the functioning of the organization and rendered workers less productive and there was a slowdown in the advancement of projects.

The sources of conflicts at COPRESSA are varied and diverse. When executing projects for example, there are always misunderstandings between collaborators; that is, collaborators hardly understand each other when sharing opinions with each other. Members are primarily focused on completing their tasks for projects to get through, although they hardly share ideas with other members. As a result, stress is generated through the rationalization of work. There is also a dysfunctional hierarchical relationship which does not only smoothly coordinate workers but also fail to communicate with them. As a result workers face personal difficulties and at times, they lack the motivation to work etc. It produces tensions which lead to social conflicts among workers.

There are romantic relationships which create conflicts in enterprises. One of the employees of the SOLKAMTECH was at logger head with his supervisor because they both fell in love with their colleague. In addition, two other employees also loved the same girl and it created bitterness and lack of collaboration between them.

Strictness is also a source of conflict in the sense that it causes tensions between employees, and brings about rivalry. For example in HYSACAM, when filling the dumpsters, workers hardly allow their fellow colleagues to leave even to satisfy their natural needs. Whenever it is done, the response is often a negative one even if the colleague concerned is a senior worker. Most often, the staff representative reports them to the hierarchy which summons them and sanctions them if necessary. The disciplinary council can punish them by either giving them a three-day warning or a permanent dismissal as it has been the case of several employees who were victims for leaving work for one reason or the other.

It also exists when one person of the same hierarchical rank encroaches the competent domain of the other which produces conflict of authority and then leads to jealousy. For example, in 2018, the technical head of the departmental cell was in a conflict of authority with the coordinator of PCP-ACEFA Maroua because he had established a good organizational culture in the establishment and it led to competition or rivalry: it is also present in the ACEFA program because employees are called upon to express their skills in order to produce an unbeatable final results and as a result, they are in constant competition with each other. As an illustration, last year's best employee was jealous of his co-workers and it caused huge conflicts which affected their relationship as well as their performance at work. There is an ACEFA employee of the same rank like his colleague who gave order to his fellow colleague and it created a tense atmosphere between them and he warned him to stop ordering him about. This type of conflict produces psychological problems: violence, anxiety, depression, aggression, frustration etc. which equally affects the personality of individuals).

Conflict also negatively affects the psychological well-being of employees. If it is severe, conflicting thoughts, ideas and beliefs can lead to resentment, tension and anxiety. It can also destroy collaboration and team spirit in the structure and structure will render the company less productive.

4.1.3 Religious conflict

Maroua is a Muslim dominated community and the Muslim do not joke with prayer and especially the hours they have to pray. Most often they close their businesses and stop their other activities in order to pray. However, some companies in the Far North Region where the Muslim do not hold dominant positions do not respect their prayer hours but the work tasks they have to complete thereby affecting the religiosity of its Muslims workers. At ACEFA for example, when it is prayer time for its Muslim employees, the coordinator will ask them to complete their work task before going for prayer. Therefore the Muslim employees are dissatisfied with this attitude and it generates conflicts. It must noted that the Muslims consider their prayer time seriously and they ensure to pray at affixed times of the day therefore, this generates a lot of conflicts between the Muslim workers and the company.

4.1.4 Generational conflict

Generational conflict is characterized by the confrontation between an older generation of workers who have some experience and young graduates who would like to implement new practices. Young graduates have more theoretical knowledge as compared to older workers who are less-educated or who are not graduates. When the young graduates try to put theories into practice or try to innovate the manufacturing process, they face opposition from the older generation. Young workers apply theory or try to maintain the standard in the laboratory to the letter to process products and respect the smallest details in the production process in order to avoid any possible risk. On the other hand, the older workers with practical experience are often careless and often do trial and error tests which often produce poor results.

A clear example is at Sahel Agro, during the grinding process of grains, young graduate will let the corn grains to naturally dry while older workers will put the grains in the oven (over 180 °C) in order for it to get dry faster which of course destroys the properties of the grains and render the flour produced less rich and of reduced quality. The older and experienced workers argue with the young graduates when they explain it to them and it leads to conflict between the two generations of workers. It was a serious problem between the two groups until an expert engineer in transformation intervened to clearly explain the young graduates' approach in transforming corn into flour to the older employees.

This confrontation between older people who have some experience and young graduates who would like to set up new practices is also visible at PCP-ACEFA and the most affected are the older generation because young people who have just graduated from the training schools have more improved knowledge of organizational culture, in other words an update of the corporate organizational culture.

This clash of opinion or ideology or technology that arose between the workers generally affected their morality and religion. Misunderstanding from a false interpretation of facts or actions affect the company and workers in various way: violence, anxiety, depression, aggression, frustration and the personality of individuals is hurt. It affects the organization work tasks, the psychology of the workers, the technological progress of production and retards the economic activities of the company and makes interdependence of tasks or heavy work methods difficult.

4.1.5 Ethnic discrimination

Workers are not promoted basing on merit but on their ethnic relation to one another. Position intended for one worker is most often given to a completely

different person. This leads to a kind of jealousy, lack of respect, denigration between employees hence widening the conflict between them in the company. At SOLKAMTECH excellence premium and other bonuses are given to employees basing on their relationship with the hierarchy and not necessarily on merit. Some workers work more and receive fewer bonuses while those who work less receive more bonuses. Tribalism is due to the fact that Bamilekes are the most favored in the structure and are the only ones who occupy the major positions in the company and this creates tension and disagreement between the employees.

4.1.6 Economic cause

The scarcity of resources (spaces, equipment, training, etc.) creates conflict in environmental and agricultural enterprises. Conflicts are present due to the non-distribution of part of the substantial profits that ACEFA makes to its staff. Employees complain that the bonuses that suppliers pay do not reach employees not even half and there is also the problem of too low salary at especially the private companies.

The delay in payment of wages at HYSACAM forces the employees to borrow money from their colleagues or they borrowed cooked-food from the women who carries out restaurants business around the organization. When salary is retarded for long, they find it difficult to pay back the food vendors and even their colleagues and it creates conflict between them, their colleagues and the food vendors. The debt conflict tarnishes the image of the company in the outside world and the personnel do not command the respect of the surrounding population and it tarnishes their dignity.

4.1.7 Conflict of work tasks

In the Far north Region of Cameroon, environmental organizations such ACEFA suffer from frequent poor distribution of work tasks. Our respondents (the employees) of ACEFA confirmed that workers of the same rank in the organization have unequal distribution of tasks while some workers have more tasks, others have less. Work is mostly informal, unplanned and therefore unpredictable. There are cases where some employees leave work much earlier than others. That is to say, they work overtime while others do not. However, some aspects of the work tasks of employees are well organized in this organization, the respect of the arrival and departure time are well managed. Interdependence of tasks (This is when the work of one person depends on the work of another). There is poor adequacy between the objectives set and the means made available, low investment in production tools (hardware, software, etc.), cumbersome, unclear working methods and procedures.

Conflicts have a negative impact on ACEFA Maroua it diverts certain efforts from bearing fruits and the achievement of set-down goals become difficult. At a time when efforts should be made to converge the resources of ACEFA Maroua towards the goals set, a conflict can arise that wastes the structure's resources and it leads to wasted time and money that have been invested in the project. Conflicts equally have a positive impact on the performance of the structure too because the birth and/or resolution of a conflict often makes it possible to find a constructive solution to a problem help members to improve or get better at the tasks. It also improves interpersonal relationships and increases team cohesion and performance.

4.1.8 Organizational type and conflict resolution

In Maroua, organizational conflict depends on the type of organization whether it is a co-operation, private or Organizational conflict is as a result of lack of team

work and organization of work. Where there is teamwork in organizations, there will hardly be conflict. In PNDP which is a cooperation where employees are better paid, there is harding conflict in its structure because there is solid teamwork and they work in harmony and all its departments are linked.

GIZ socializes its new recruits to respect its code of ethics and integrity which helps them to learn and understand how cooperation works. Communication is simple, fluid, without fear but the employee and the hierarchy must respect each other. The languages spoken are: French, English and the local language to facilitate the integration of new employees. The hierarchy supports employees facing a difficult task to enable them better advance in their tasks and for them to quickly integrate in the cooperation. At the GIZ cooperation, the concept of conflict is not a topical issue because it has a small and efficient staff with an exemplary behavior. The absence of conflict promotes an excellent working environment which always produces satisfactory result at the end of most projects.

At SOLKAMTECH the various conflicts are discreetly managed by the hierarchy without the intervention of other members which the conflict does not concerned. They always try to find a common ground for the conflicting party, at times the management board also takes particular cases to the court. The management does everything to prevent conflict from affecting the production and the returns of the company, and ensures that every worker gives the best of himself. However, personal problems are not managed by the company. They also manage conflict through negotiation which helps to reconcile opposing points of view, Mediation versus arbitration, in which case the mediator facilitates discussion, guides conservation or provokes it. At times too, the hierarchy may decide in an authoritarian manner (with or without the party concerned). This type of conflict resolution is necessary in emergency situations.

Equally through an amicable way, the hierarchy explains to the young people that despite their knowledge, it would be better to recognize the place of the elders and explain to them new ways of doing things in a humble and gentle way. In this case, the parties become involved in the resolution of the problem and the conflict is solved peacefully.

The circulation of information within the SOLKAMTECH company is provided by the company using an internal communication network, that is, an internal Internet, telephone and also through posting within the company. This is how the respondents are often informed about the organizational changes, set out objectives as well as the internal regulations, and any new development concerning work. Circulation of information at SOLKAMTECH between its employees is very important because it plays a role in letting everyone know the work tasks the company engages in. It also integrates interpersonal communication which facilitates the exchange of information between workers.

At COPRESSA Communication is facilitated through exchanges by organizing weekly meetings (every Monday) which allow the coordinator and employees to discuss the important activities of the previous week. This meeting helps staff to set goals for the current week and the coordinator use it to draw the attention of dishonest and misbehaved employees in the course of the week and congratulates all those who distinguished themselves throughout the week. It is a means intended to enable staff to present their suggestions and express their ideas on matters relating to the running of the business. There is also a platform in which employees communicate after working hours on good news concerning them like births and unfortunate events such as death.

The dialog or communication in this structure varies according to the post people occupy: executives communicate using a WhatsApp platform where they exchange on topics concerning the company. Information notes are pasted on

bulletin board for other employees. There is a rally with all company staff every Monday which helps to keep cohesion and allows new employees to learn about the hierarchy.

5. Discussion of results

This research shows that economic reason is responsible for the conflict that affects a good number of environmental and agricultural companies in the Far North region of Cameroon. This is because in many work situations, workers have to share common resources; therefore, the scarcer the resources in an organization, the greater the chance for a conflict situation. Resource scarcity leads to a conflict because each person that needs the same resources necessarily undermines others who pursue their own goals. Limited resources may include money, supplies, people or information Mcshane, S. L and Glinow, M.A. (2008). [15] but in this case, it is money. Equally, concerning the environmental companies in Maroua those in the private sector particularly suffer from this scarcity the more. This is due to conflict of interest in which there is a disorientation between the personal goals of the individual and the goals of the organization. As *Daniel K.; Robert L. (1966)* [17] puts it, this conflict of interest arises when the individual fights for his personal goals which hinders the overall success of the project.

This scarcity of resources creates conflict between the hierarchy as well as the workers and the surrounding environment as it is the case in HYSACAM. More so, the benefits of the organization are not equally shared; most often, the hierarchy takes everything giving little or nothing to the employees as it is the case in ACEFA. This shows that, the major prime factor of internal sources of conflict is the "opposing interests" of industrial actors. Differing interests bring about conflict because the two parties in organizations try to share the "industrial cake". Therefore, members of a company competes with each other over scarcity of resources like time, money, materials etc. leading to conflict between them.

Equally, the research also shows a generational gap between the older generation who is less-educated with a long experience in the company and a younger and educated generation who are more qualitative in the production process than the older generation thereby producing a generational conflict between them which is later resolved most often in favor of the younger generation. This shows that, conflict serves a social purpose even if reconciliation comes with the total destruction of one party. Conflict socializes members into a group and reduces the tension between group members. Conflict may end with a victory of one party over another or it can be resolved through compromise; or through conciliation. One of the main benefits of constructive conflict is that it gives its members a chance to identify the problems and see the opportunities. It also inspires new ideas, learning, and growth among individuals (KInicki, A. and Kreithner, R., 2008) [28]. The generational conflict at Sahel Agro was resolved through an expert engineer of raw material transformation giving reason to the younger generation to the detriment of the older generation.

The win-lose conflict in groups may have some of the following negative effects: Divert time and energy from the main issues, delay decision, create dead locks, drive unaggressive committee members to the sidelines and interfere with listening. The older and experienced workers argue with the young graduates when they explain it to them and it led to conflict between them. It was a serious problem between the two parties until an expert engineer in transformation intervened to clearly explain the young graduates' approach in transforming corn into flour to the older employees. This confrontation between older people who have some experience and young graduates who would like to set up new practices is also visible at

PCP-ACEFA and the most affected are the older generation because young people who have just graduated from the training schools have more improved knowledge of organizational culture, in other words an update of corporate organizational culture. This affects the older generation and they either drop out or resign from committees, their anger is arouse that disrupts a meeting, provoke personal abuse and cause defensiveness. It causes strains such as anxiety, depression, physical symptoms, and low levels of job performance (Richard A 1976) [14].

At the workplace, there is conflict whenever, two or more persons interact, especially when opinions with respect to any task or decision are in contradiction (Business Jargon: -) [6]. Our research clearly shows this when people or workers have it difficult to cooperate because of the attitude of one another either through an impolite usage of language or disrespect for a colleague in front of the population as it was the case at COPRESSA.

6. Conclusions

In this chapter, we have examined the causes of conflict in the agricultural and environmental organizations in the Far North Region of Cameroon whose population suffers the most from poverty and huge environmental challenges and which has the highest concentration of environmental organizations. We discovered that:

There are disputes over how revenues should be divided, how the work should be done, and how long and hard people should work. There are jurisdictional disagreements among individuals, departments and between unions and management. These subtler forms of conflicts involve rivalries, jealousies, personality clashes, role definitions, and struggle for power and favor. There is also conflict within individuals- between competing needs and demands – to which individuals respond in different ways.

We discovered also that conflicts in organizations are regularly triggered by the differences people have in terms of opinions, interests and needs as they work together. These relations may be between employees or with senior colleagues, there are always misunderstandings between collaborators; that is, collaborators hardly understand each other when sharing opinions with each other. There are equally romantic relationships which create conflicts in organizations when two or more male employees fall in love with the same female employees it creates conflict. It also occurs when employees are strict with one another especially when doing dirty or difficult work tasks like cleaning the environment. Equally when one person of the same hierarchical rank encroaches the competent domain of the other, it produces conflict of authority and then leads to jealousy. It also comes about when the religious values of each other is not respected especially that of the Muslims where a majority of the workers are non- Muslims, it provokes conflict because the prayers hours of the Muslims are hardly respected.

There is also generational conflict which is characterized by the confrontation between those who have some experience and young graduates who would like to implement new practices. Young graduates have more theoretical knowledge as compared to older workers who are less-educated or who are not graduates. When the young graduates try to put theories into practice or try to innovate the manufacturing process, they face opposition from the older generation.

One of the causes of conflict in environmental and agricultural organizations is discrimination: workers are not promoted basing on merit but on their ethnic relation to one another. Position intended for one worker is most often given to a completely different person. This leads to a kind of jealousy, lack of respect, denigration between employees hence widening the conflict between them in the company.

Another source of conflict is economic which refers to the scarcity of resources in environmental and agricultural enterprises. Conflicts are present due to the non-distribution of part of the substantial profits that ACEFA makes to its staff. Employees complain that the bonuses that suppliers pay do not reach employees not even half and there is also the problem of too low salary at mostly private organization unlike cooperation like GIZ.

Finally, the poor distribution of work tasks is another source of conflict in these companies. Our respondents (the employees) of ACEFA confirmed that workers of the same rank in the organization have unequal distribution of tasks while some workers have more tasks, others have less. Work is mostly informal, unplanned and therefore unpredictable. There are cases where some employees leave work much earlier than others. That is to say, some employees work overtime while others do not.

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