

MODULE 1 BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICT

Unit 1	Definition, Causes and Types of Conflict
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UNIT 1 DEFINITION, CAUSES AND TYPES OF CONFLICT**CONTENTS**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The word “conflict” is as old as mankind. This is because the word has been in existence in all spheres of human life since the inception of the world. In the recent past, the world socio-political environs have been on the boil despite the colossal amount of human and material resources expended on global peace and conflict management by several nations, states, regional organisations and the United Nations (UN). Rather than a global crisis diminishing in spite of the several steps taken, it is becoming more virulent and destructive because it has continued to drain the energy and manpower resources of the troubled spots if not the entire world and emasculate governance.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the origin of the word “conflict”
- define conflict in your own words

- discuss causes of conflict
- explain types of conflict.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Historical Background and Conceptual Definition of Conflict

The word “conflict” is derived from the Latin word *confligere*, meaning to “strike together.”

Lexically, according to *Webster Dictionary, Vol. 1, 1971*, conflict means : to strike, to dasy. A fight, struggle or battle, clash, contention, confrontation, a controversy or quarrel, active opposition, strife or incompatibility, to meet in opposition or hostility, to contend, to be contrary or to be at variance.

Conflict also means contradiction arising from differences in interests, ideas, ideologies, orientations, beliefs, perceptions and tendencies. Although, conflict is a normal, natural and inevitable phenomenon in any interactive situation of human life, contradictions exists at all levels of the society – intra – psychic/personal, interpersonal, intra – groups, inter – group, institution, intra – national and international. Conflict is not necessarily negative in itself. It is often a by – product of social change and may lead to constructive transformation.

Many scholars have come up with different definitions, concepts, views or school of thoughts of conflicts from a more intellectual platform all over the world.

Quicy Wright (1990:19) defines conflict as opposition among social entities directed against one another, it distinguished competition and defined it as opposition among social entities independently striving for something of which the resources are inadequate to satisfy all. Competitors may not be aware of one another, while they are parties to a conflict.

Two points which are directly related to conflict analysis and management can be deduced from this definition. One is that contrary to the old perspective which regards conflict as national, it is not inevitable, only competition can be so regarded.

Secondly, conflict and competition are two points of a continuum on which conflict represents aggravated competition. In order words conflict arises when disagreement emerging from competition cannot be resolved. It follows therefore that conflict management has to begin with

and include management of supposedly simple competition. The other point that can be inferred from Wright's definition is that conflicts are themselves processes that tend to degenerate from non-violent to violent and from crisis to full-scale war.

Conflict take on a wide variety of forms and have been classified based on the intensity or scale of violence, structural and character of parties in conflict (such as class, ethnic, groups, religious group, racial group, and so on) and manifesting a distinct spatial character (such as national, regional, inter-state or international). However, non-violent conflict has the potential to become violent if the regulatory mechanism is ineffective.

Wright also opines that war is a type of conflict, thus, by understanding conflict we may learn about the probable characteristics of war under different conditions and methods most suitable for regulating, preventing, and winning wars. Wright proceeds to give two senses in which war could be understood, that is, in the legal sense, war is considered a situation during which two or more political groups are equally entitled to settle conflict by armed force. Whereas in the sociological sense, which is of ordinary usage, war refers to conflicts among political groups carried on by armed forces of considerable magnitude.

Kriesberg (1973:17) simply defines conflict as “..... a relationship between two or more parties who..... believe they have incompatible goals.”

Stagner defines conflict as “...a situation in which two or more human beings desire goals which they perceived as being obtainable by one or the other, but not both... each party is mobilising energy to obtain a goal, a desired object or situation, and each party perceives the other as a barrier or treat to that goal.”

Ross (1993 6:xiv) notes that: “If disadvantaged groups and individuals refuse to consider open conflict, they deny themselves what sometimes is their most effective means for bringing about needed change”. Rose therefore saw nothing wrong in conflict, he saw it as a natural and inevitable human experience and as a critical mechanism by which goals and aspirations of individual and groups are articulated, it is a channel for the definition of creative solutions to human problems and a means to the development of a collective identity. What Ross is trying to infer is that without conflict we cannot have change.

Similarly, Laue (1990:256-7) tries to disabuse our minds about the dysfunctional perception of conflict. He notes that:

conflict is not deviant, pathological, or sick behaviour per-se. It is not the opposite of order..... There is orderliness in conflict, although conflict can become disorderly. And it can be a very helpful and useful part of society.

What to be feared is destructive conflicts (that is, conflict that have started producing negative results) rather than conflict itself.

Action Aid (1994) and Hoivik and Meijer (1994) see conflict as “incompatible behaviour between parties whose interests are or appear to be, incompatible or clashing.” Two things could be taken from these simple definitions. The first is that conflict emanates from (social) relationships. The conflicting group must groups must reside in close proximity whether physically or psychologically.

3.2 Causes of Conflict

As earlier mentioned, conflict is inevitable and it keeps occurring in every individual life, either at home, work, social outings or even when we sleep in our bedroom without interacting with anyone. Although, we are familiar with those inexhaustible things that cause conflicts, but in this context, they can be categorised into four namely:

- conflicts over resources
- conflicts over psychological needs
- conflicts involving values
- conflicts over inadequate information

Conflicts over Resources

These types of conflicts are usually easy to identify because they can be seen and are more potentially easy to resolve. This conflict occurs when two or more people are competing for inadequate (or perceived to be inadequate) resources over a period of time. The competition may assume negative or destructive dimension when the available resources are not evenly and judiciously distributed. The relatively deprived would always struggle to improve their lot. This view agrees with the Marxian theory of conflict, which posits that the more the rate of unequal distribution of scarce resources in the society, the greater is the basic conflict of interest between its dominant and subordinate segments. He also says that when practices of dominant segment create “alienation dispositions” the more the subordinate segments of a system become aware of their collective interests and question the distribution of scarce resources, the more likely they are to join in overt conflict against dominant segment of a system. Resources that cause conflict include

landed properties, money, vehicles, and company ownership/shares among others.

Conflict over Psychological Needs

Conflicts over psychological needs of groups and individuals are conflicts which cannot be seen but affect the psyche of the individual and group self-actualisation, need for individual and group respect, attempt to project one's group to be better than the others. With particular reference to Maslow's theory, he points out that when an individual psychological need is achieved or satisfied, such an individual becomes dominated by a drive for the other unsatisfied needs through a process he calls "Fulfillment Progression". Example includes structural factor, politics, personality clash, and ethnicity.

Conflict Involving Values

Contradicting value systems such as religious beliefs, ideological positions, and general worldview is another factor responsible for social conflict among the interacting parties. Conflict involving values are the most difficult to understand and resolve because most times people could die for what they believe in. According to Weaver, who likens culture to an iceberg, he says "internal culture", is implicitly learnt and difficult to change. That is part of culture that is below the waterline in the iceberg analogy. It includes some of our beliefs, our values and thought patterns, attitudes, non-verbal communication and perception. Beliefs are interrelated and form "belief system", which because they are learnt in life, are difficult to change. Examples of values laden conflicts include the Cold War, terrorism (suicide bombing), religious conflicts such as 1980 Maitatsine crisis, the 1991 Bonnke crisis in Kano, the 2002 Beauty Pageant crisis. Others include the September 30, 2005 Cartoon crisis over a Danish newspaper, Jyllands Posten, published cartoons caricaturing Prophet Mohammad, the most recent of all the religious crisis in Nigeria is the *Boko Haram* crisis that has killed an estimated 3,500 people.

Conflict over Information

The last but not the least of the factors causing conflict in any society is "manipulation of information". The pivotal role of information in societal conflict cannot be over-emphasised, they can either be manipulative or constructive. Especially in a widespread conflict situation, the role of information becomes more crucial, difficult and dangerous. When the information system in a society is tampered with, there is bound to be conflict. The information system can be tampered with in different ways. This can be either by feeding people with lies or

giving the right information at the wrong time. In our contemporary societies, the quantity and quality of information vary dramatically and are dependent on wide range of factors, from level of literacy to social cohesiveness and stability to available technology. Central to the availability and quality of public information is the media (print, audio and audio-visual).

Also, in deeply divided societies, the media can also shape opinion and decisions related to the nature and scope of conflicts, as well as the potential alternatives to conflict, where social, political and economic conflict have degenerated into widespread violence, the role of information in mitigating the effects of violence or in presenting alternatives can be crucial. Because communication is an integral part of conflict, it comes as no surprise that those participating in organised violence often use the media to attack opponents, and “spread disinformation or misinformation” and “rally external and internal support.”

Some of the communication barriers that are capable of distorting meanings are physical distance, language, and the listeners value judgement.

3.3 Types of Conflict

It is important that we know types of conflict we encounter in our day-to-day activities. There are numerous kinds of conflicts but we will limit ourselves to the following:.

- a. **Intra-Personal Conflict:** This type of conflict occurs within an individual. Examples of such are use of time, choice of partner, moral questions, goals and aspirations.
- b. **Inter-Personal Conflict :** This refers to conflict between two or more individuals over an issue.
- c. **Intra-Group Conflict:** This refers to conflict between individuals, or faction within a group.
- d. **Inter-Group Conflict:** This refers to conflict between groups such as club, class versus class, family versus family.
- e. **National Conflict:** This refers to conflicts within a nation, involving different groups within the nation. This could be interethnic, inter-religious, or competition for resources.

- f. **International Conflict:** This refers to conflicts between nations. This could be for ideological reasons, territorial claims, and political competition.

3.4 Classification of Conflict

Ted Robert Gurr, in his article “A Comparative of Civil Strife” and Quincy Wright in his paper “The Nature of Conflict” rightly argue that the level of violence rather than its absence or presence is a better criterion for classifying conflicts.

Wright for instance distinguishes between “ordinary” conflict which involves small-scale violence usually at the individual and group levels and war, which is carried out by armed forces and involves violence of considerable magnitude.

Similarly, Gurr distinguishes between “turmoil,” which includes both non-violent and small-scale violent conflict and rebellion or internal war. The point in this latter classification is that notwithstanding their peculiarities, conflicts differ largely in degree rather than kind and should therefore be analysed in terms of continuum which has non-violent conflict at one end and violent ones at the other. This enables us to pay close attention to the possible escalation or worsening of conflicts, sometimes a simple non-violent/violent classification appears to shape the other.

Another popular classification categorises conflict into structural and non-structural conflicts. Structural conflicts which tend to be endemic are those which are predisposed by the innate character of the polity. Typically, they result from “unjust repressive and oppressive sociopolitical structure”. Structural factors also include inequality among groups in obtaining access to socioeconomic and political privileges and benefits such as education, income distribution, unemployment, and control of political power, as well as low levels of national integration which encourage “zero-sum” context for state power.

Defined in such terms, Wherp, in his work “Conflict Resolution” opines that most conflicts in Africa are endemic by definition to the extent that the predisposing factors are not embedded in the political system. They result from specific policies or actions by the state or groups and do not generally last for too long.

The third classification of conflicts is based on the character of the parties in conflicts . Thus, ethnic and religious conflicts (which are most prevalent in Africa) tend to be the most important bases of identity for

most individuals and as such attract strong loyalties to the groups involved.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In the light of the above discussion on the concept of conflict, we can deduce that conflict is inevitable in human life, but the degree or intensity of conflicts is determined by the attitude or mode of approaches adopted by the parties involved.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, historical background and various definitions of conflicts postulated by different scholars were critically examined, which various causes and types of conflict were discussed to facilitate proper understanding of the concept.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Critically discuss the concept conflict from your own perspective.
- ii. Is conflict negative or positive to human existence? Discuss.
- iii. Can conflict be totally eradicated? Discuss.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 CONFLICT THEORIES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is important for you to learn about the theories and empirical studies conducted by scholars or researchers in the area of social conflicts to have comprehensive understanding of the various school of thoughts and their diverse views and opinions in this unit. The rationale for the study of these theories is to enable you identify the strengths and weakness of the previous work done in the past in relation to the protracted contemporary issues of social conflicts coupled with arrays of various emerging conflicts at all levels of every society worldwide.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- categorise different conflict theories
- analyse the various conflict theories
- identify and relate one or more conflict theories to different conflicts facing the human race.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Conflict Theories from Sociological Perspective

3.1.1 Karl Marx Theory

Marx the great social philosopher opines that the degree of inequality in the distribution of resources generates inherent conflicts of interest. He explains that contradiction in capitalist modes of economic production and how these would lead to conflict processes that would usher in communism via a revolutionary action that would be carried out by the proletariat (the ruled). Although, his predictions were wrong, perhaps because of some fatal errors in his logic, but his analysis is still very much useful, applicable and relevant to most of the conflicts being experienced the world over.

Karl Marx views that the more the rate or degree of inequality in the distribution of the relatively available or the scarce resources in the society, the greater is the basic conflict of interest between its dominant and subordinate segments. The more the subordinate segments (proletariat) become aware of their true collective interests, the more likely they are to question the legitimacy of the existing pattern of distribution or allocation of scarce resources. Also the subordinates are more likely to become aware of their true collective interest when changes wrought by dominant segments disrupt existing relations among subordinates, practices of dominant segments create “alienative dispositions”, members of subordinate segments can communicate their grievances to one another, which, in turn, is facilitated by the ecological concentration among members of subordinate groups, and the expansion of educational opportunities for members of subordinate group.

Marx also exerts that the more the subordinate segments at a system become aware of their collective interests and question the legitimacy of the distribution of scarce resources, the more likely they are to join in overt conflict against dominant segments of a system. The greater is the ideological unification of members of subordinate segment of a system and the more developed is their political leadership structure, the more likely are the interests and relations between dominant and subjugated segments of a society to become polarised and irreconcilable. The more polarised are the dominant and subjugated, the more will the conflict be violent. The more violent is the conflict, the greater is the amount of structural change within a society and the greater is the redistribution of scarce resources.

3.1.2 Max Weber Theory

Weber sees conflict as highly contingent on the emergence of “charismatic leaders” who could mobilise subordinates. He opined that subordinates are more likely to pursue conflict with superordinates when they withdraw legitimacy from political authority when the correlation among members in class, status, group, and political hierarchies is high, the discontinuity or degrees of inequality in the resource distribution within social hierarchies is high, and when social mobility and social hierarchies of power, prestige, and wealth are low.

Conflict between superordinates and subordinates becomes more likely when charismatic leaders can mobilise resentment of subordinates. When charismatic leaders are successful in conflict, pressure mounts to routinise authority through new systems of rules and administration. As a system of rules and administrative authority is imposed, the more likely are new subordinates to withdraw legitimacy from political authority and to pursue conflict with the new superordinates, especially when new traditional and ascriptive forms of political domination are imposed by elites.

3.1.3 Conflict-Theory Model of Dahrendorf

Dahrendorf (1958) introduces to the theory of conflict the view of productive and constructive conflict. He sees conflict as necessary for achieving an end in the society or for realisation of social goals. He holds that social conflict produces change in the system which is necessary and good. Dahrendorf’s attempt was to determine a systematic locus and a specific framework for a theory of conflict in sociological analysis. He contends for two different kinds of struggles in an organisation. He calls them “exogenous” and “endogenous” conflicts.

The endogenous conflict is the conflict that is generated within an organisation, system or a society. In this, he agreed with Marx that internal conflict comes from the present social structure. He went beyond the internal dynamics of conflict to allow for external factors, which he called exogenous conflict. This also influences social change. In other words, exogenous conflict is brought upon or into a system from the outside. The theory asserts that certain conflicts are based on certain social structural arrangements and hence are bound to arise whenever such structural arrangements are given.

Furthermore, the dichotomy of social roles within imperatively coordinated groups, and the division into positive and negative dominance roles are facts of social structure. Here are the assumptions

for the structural arrangement which could lead to conflict as Dahrendorf presents in his conflict theory model.

- In every imperatively coordinated group, the carriers of positive (status quo) and the negative (change of status quo) dominant roles determined two quasi-groups with opposite latent interest.
- The bearers of positive and negative dominant roles organise themselves into groups with manifest interests unless certain empirically variable conditions intervene.
- Interest groups which originate in this manner are in constant conflict concerned with the preservation or change in the status quo.
- The conflict among interest groups in the sense of this model leads to changes in the structure of the social relations in question through changes in the dominant relations.

3.1.4 Pluralist Perspective of Conflict

The advocates of the pluralist school of thought such as Hugh Clegg *et al*, holds a different view about conflict. The school views conflict as having a constructive contribution towards what is defined as healthy industrial order. Thus, given the appropriate institutions of regulation, the overt and active manifestation of conflict resolves discontent, reduces tension, clarifies power relation and adjusts the industrial structure. Accordingly, it creates as many solidarity groups as it devices and re-embodies the principles of self-determination.

The pluralist school emerged as a criticism to the political doctrine of sovereignty, the notion that in an independent political system, there must be a final authority whose decision is supreme. Contrary to this assumption, the pluralists believed that within any political system, there are groups with their own interests and beliefs and the government itself depends on their consent, loyalty and cooperation to survive. Rather than existence of a definitive decision by final authorities, this theory contends that there are instead only continuous (conflicts, antagonisms) and compromises.

In essence, a plural social or industrial relation has to accommodate different and divergent pressure groups in order to ensure that the differing group interests are harmonised such that social and political changes take place peacefully. Thus, to the pluralists, same is achievable through continuous negotiation, concession and compromises within and among these pressure (interest) groups and between the authorities.

Given these backgrounds, and based on expositions of the functionalist and the pluralist schools, and their identification of the place of effective communication in the prevention and management of industrial conflicts, as evident on the need for clear communication, understanding, continuous dialogues, negotiation, concession and compromises within and among the differing groups in the work place, institution or society.

3.1.5 Structural – Functional Theory

Talcott Parson (1960) champions the course of this theory after the World War II. The structural functionalist asserted/projected that individuals will adjust to a given structure in an organisation institution or society. Any change in the structure of the organisation or institution causes conflict and it destabilises the organisation. Conflict should then be minimised in order to maintain stability with both the individual as well as the institutions. The theory reflects a system approach where each part has one or more functions to perform. The theory sees conflict as dysfunctional, abnormal, and a disease which can be endemic to a society. It focuses on things that will maintain the state of equilibrium and collaboration in the organisation.

3.1.6 The Theory of Structural Balance

Helder (1958) in this theory states that Ego tends to like whom his friend like, but dislike whom his enemy like. Also Ego tends to dislike whom he dislike, and likes whom his enemy dislikes. This non-rational approach to theory of conflict has the following assumptions according to Mazur (1968).

- For any three persons or groups, there are four trials: like – dislike, support – conflict, conformity – divergence, and positive identity – negative identity. All these tend to balance.
- Within any triad, an increase in magnitude of one sign leads to an increase in magnitude of all signs.
- Relationship of like, support, conformity, and positive identity tend to coincide. On the other hand, the relationship of dislike, conflict, divergence and negative identity tend to coincide. The tendency increases with increasing intensity of the signs, and consonant relationship increase together.

Assumption on Ethnicity and Conflict

According to Person, Novak, and Gleason (1982:1), the word “ethnic” was derived via Latin from the Greek *ethnos*, which means “nation or race”. Ethnicity has been viewed since the earliest times in terms of a group setting associated with the idea of nationhood. But in recent years, the instrumentalists’ view of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in Africa and the rest of the world hold that “ethnicity is not a natural cultural residue but a consciously crafted ideological creation”, ethnic conflicts result from the manipulations of the (radical) elite who incite and distort ethnic/nationalist consciousness into an instrument to pursue their personal ambitions.

The problem with the theory despite the fact that it contains some validity is that, it almost ignores completely the core motives and elements in ethnic conflicts such as the roles of fear and group psychology and importance of symbolic controversies which are often less comprehensible to the “outsider”.

Thomson (2000:58) defines an ethnic group as “a community of people who have the conviction that they have a common identity and common fate based on issues of origin, kinship, ties, traditions, cultural uniqueness, a shared history and possibly a shared language.”

Toland (1993:3) basically agrees with Thomson in her conception of an ethnic group, but takes it one step further by adding a sense of longing on the individual level: “...(ethnicity is) the sense of people-hood held by members of a group sharing a common culture and history within a society.”

Bamass argues the assumption “ethnicity and nationalism are not ‘givens’, but are social and political constructions. They are the creations of elites, who draw upon distorted and sometimes fabricated materials from the cultures of the groups they wish to represent in order to protect their wellbeing or existence or to gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as for themselves... this process invariably involves competition and conflict for political power, economic benefits, and social status between the political elite, class, and leadership groups both within and among different ethnic categories” (Kruger 1993: 11).

In the light of the discussion above, it is important to note that mere differences in values or regional development, or between ethnic groups for that matter, do not as such promote ethnicity and ethnic conflict, according to Kruger (1993:12). Quoting Brass, he states “... Ethnic self-consciousness, ethnically based demands, and ethnic conflict can occur

if there is some conflict either between indigenous and external elites and authorities or between indigenous elites.”

Nevertheless, the assumption on ethnicity and conflict therefore, states that, “ethnic identity has a symbolic dimension which makes conflict arising from it more intense than otherwise. Ethnicity has the symbolic capability of defining for individual the totality of his existence including his hopes, fears and sense of the future. Any action or thought that is perceived to undermine the ethnic group which include those that diminish its status in the eyes of the members evokes very hostile and some times violent response.” An aggressive and murderous ethnic militia man may even believe that his very existence is threatened by the perceived injury to his ethnic group. Similarly, a poor villager believes that a cabinet minister from his village represents his own interest and share of the national cake even though he may never receive any personal material reward as a result of the appointment.

3.1.7 Assumption on Culture and Conflict

Culture simply means the sum-total of all human existence which comprises norms, values, traditions, beliefs, customs, languages, patterns of behaviours, art music, food, mode of dressing and so on. Cultures have been delineated along a number of dimensions by various writers such as:

Glen Fisher, in an interesting book called *Mindsets* and in his chapter in Weaver’s book (1998:140) characterises two kinds of societies: those based on achievement and those on ascription. Those described as “achievement” emphasise doing, in contrast to being, which describes “ascriptive” societies. The former value change and action, whereas the latter value stability and harmony.

Weaver (1998:72-74) likens culture to an iceberg, in which only the tip is seen above the water line. The part that is obvious is the external culture, which is explicitly learned, is conscious and more easily changed. The external culture includes many of the elements that we normally think of as “culture”: music, literature, drama, foods, dress, customs, and verbal communications. These are all aspects of “behaviour”. External culture may also include some of our beliefs, such as religion and explicit ethnics.

These aspects of culture are all obvious to a newcomer. However, there is also an internal culture, which is implicitly learned and difficult to change. That is the part which is below the waterline in the iceberg analogy. It includes some of our beliefs, our values and thought patterns, attitudes, non-verbal communication, and perceptions. Beliefs are

interrelated and form “belief system”, which because they are learnt early in life, are difficult to change. It is also difficult to perceive and fully understand the internal culture of someone from a different group. Yet it is this part of culture that defines who we are and what really is important to us. Because we are often unaware of these elements it is difficult to articulate them to others, even to those whom we love. And we most unlikely to expose our inner-selves to someone with whom we are in conflict.

Geert Hofstede in Weaver 1998:148-158 describes four dimensions by which he placed a number of societies on graphs. Two are particularly relevant to conflict transformation (p.149):

- Power distance – defines the extent to which the less powerful person in a society accepts inequality in power and considers it normal. All societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others.
- Individualism – opposes collectivism (in the anthropological sense). Individualist cultures assume individuals look primarily after their own interest and those of their immediate family. Collectivist cultures assume that individuals – through birth and possibly later events – belong to one or more close “in-groups” from which they cannot detach themselves. A collectivist society is tightly integrated; an individualist society is loosely integrated.

Hofstede characterises American and Northern European societies as generally having low power distance and high individualism. Many African and Latin American societies have large power distance and low individualism. Some of the Southern European societies are in the middle with large power distance and medium individualism.

John Paul Lederach, probably one of the best known theorists and practitioners in the field of conflict transformation today, posits that “social conflict emerges and develops on the basis of the meaning and interpretation people involved attach to action and events. Social meaning is lodged in the accumulated knowledge, that is a person’s bank of knowledge” (1995:8). Conflict is related to meaning, meaning to knowledge, and knowledge is rooted in culture. People act on the basis of the meaning that things have for them. The symbolic interactionist, Herbert Blummer (1969) emphasises the importance of symbols and meanings attach to them. Therefore, Lederach’s assumptions (1995:9-10) can simply be liberally summarised as follows.

- Social conflict is a natural, common experience present in all relationships and cultures.

- Conflict is a socially constructed cultural event, people active participants in creating situations and interactions they experience as conflict.
- Conflict emerges through an interactive process based on the search for and creation of shared meaning.
- The interactive process is accomplished through and rooted in people's perceptions, interpretations, expressions, and intentions, each of which grows from the cycles back to their common sense knowledge.
- Meaning occurs as people locate themselves and social "things" such as situations, events, and actions in their accumulated knowledge. A person's common sense and accumulated experience and knowledge are the primary basis of how he creates, understands and responds to conflict.
- Culture is rooted in the shared knowledge and schemes created and used by a set of people for perceiving interpreting, expressing and responding to social realities around them.

However the term "culture" is often linked with ethnicity, as both the external and internal cultures are often determined by our ethnic groups, along with influences from the larger world through socialisation, education, the media and exposure to a different way of thinking and behaviour. We talk about "the culture of violence", "the culture peace", "the culture of poverty", "the culture of corruption", "corporate culture" and so on as they pervade different societies in various or different forms.

3.1.8 The Role Theories of Turner

Role is defined as that set of activities associated with any given position in an organisation, which include potential behaviours in that position, and not only those of the incumbent in question. Although Turner accepts a process orientation, he was committed to developing interactionism into "something akin to axiomatic theory". He recognised that role theory was segmented into a series of narrow propositions and hypotheses and that role theorist had been reluctant "to find unifying themes to link various role processes."

Turner's strategy was to use propositions from the numerous research studies to build more formal and abstract theoretical statements. He therefore, sought series of statements that highlight what tends to occur in the normal operation systems of interaction. To this end, Turner

provided a long list of main tendency propositions on (a) roles as they emerge, (b) roles as an interactive framework, (c) roles in relation to actors, (d) roles in societal settings, (e) roles in organisational settings, and (f) roles and the person. The most important of these propositions to this study are examined below.

Role as an Interactive Framework

- The establishment and persistence of interaction tend to depend on the emergence and identification of ego and alter roles.
- Each role tends to form as a comprehensive way of coping with one or more relevant alters roles.
- There is a tendency for stabilised roles to be assigned the character of legitimate expectations and to be seen as the appropriate way to behave in a situation. (Tendency for legitimate expectations).

In these three additional propositions, interaction is seen as depending on the identification of roles. Moreover, roles tend to be complements of others as in parent/child, boss/employee roles – and this operate to regularise interaction among complementary roles.

Role in Societal Settings

- Similar roles in different contexts tend to become merged, so they are identified as a single role recurring in different relationships. (Tendency for economy of roles).
- To the extent that roles refer to more general social contexts and situations differentiation tends to link roles to social values. (Tendency for value anchorage).
- The individual in the society tends to be assigned and to assume roles consistent with one another. (Tendency for allocation consistency).

Many roles are identified, assumed, and imputed in relation to a broader societal context. Turner first argued that people tend to group behaviour in different social context into as few unifying roles as is possible or practical. This people will identify a role as a way of making sense of disparate behaviour in different contexts. At the societal level, values are the equivalent of goals in organisational settings for identifying, differentiating, allocating, evaluating, and legitimating roles. Finally, people tend to assume multiple that are consistent with one another.

Role of Business in Conflict Situations

Widening communities of business actors around the world is moving to adopt new approaches to corporate social responsibilities, and a “triple bottom line” of profitability, social and environmental responsibilities. Under the right conditions, the private sector may be able to help prevent violent conflict. Like public and aid supported investments, the private sector needs to be guided by an informed commitment to guard against side effects of its investments which may have negative impacts on the “structural stability” of the local and national host society, and plan for ways in which it can ensure the maximum positive benefits.

Business – local, small and medium – sized enterprises, multinationals and large national companies – can play a useful role in conflict situations. Conflict implies higher risks and costs for businesses, and it is therefore, in the interest of most businesses to support efforts that prevent, resolve or avoid exacerbating conflicts. It thus becomes imperative for each and every business enterprises/organisations to support peace making and peace building activities. It is only under a peaceful atmosphere and environment that the “corporate culture” of any organisation could be accomplished. Challenges include how to:

- develop a sufficiently long – term perspective to promote sustainable development and help reduce conflict, and strike a balance between long–term thinking and short–term investment horizons, with the need for quick returns in unstable situations.
- understand the roles of some trade actors or networks in causing or exacerbating conflict – in particular in extractive industries (diamond, oil, forest products, and others) that are major sources of revenue for warring parties and arms sellers.
- encourage big business to stimulate local development, job creation and basic social infrastructure, especially in remote areas. This can contribute to long – term social stability and improved local livelihoods.
- link the social investment programmes that are sometime supported by companies, in particular in the health or education sectors, to wider development and conflict concerns.
- harness the potential role of companies as powerful players who could use their influence positively on political actors not only to negotiate immediate conditions for their investments but also to avert violent conflicts.

- ensure that the use by companies of public security agents and military personnel to secure installations and protect staff is not at the expense of the local population, and that illegitimate armed groups or the youth are not being inadvertently supported or financed by them.

4.0 CONCLUSION

However, the conflict theories from sociological perspective have exposed us to various views, opinions, ideologies and assertions propounded by different scholars about how conflicts emerge or arise among individuals during the course of social interaction at the individual, institution and societal levels.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has considered some of sociological theories of conflict. The first and second theories discussed were propounded by Karl Marx and Max Weber. Dahrendorf's conflict theory models, pluralist perspective of conflict and theory of structural balance were also examined. Assumption on ethnicity and conflict, culture and conflict and role theories of Turner were also explained in order to broaden your knowledge and to expose you to various multidimensional theories of conflict.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Justify the relevance of Karl Marx's theory to modern day conflicts.
- ii. Explain the relationship between culture and conflict.

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UNIT 3 PHASES IN CONFLICT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Stages of Conflict and Conflict Cycle
 - 3.1.1 Stages of Conflict
 - 3.1.2 Conflict Cycle
 - 3.2 Conflict Energy
 - 3.3 Conflict Handling Styles
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A beginner in the field of peace studies and conflict resolution usually perceives or sees conflict as something negative that should be avoided like the plague. Although, due to individual differences, conflict is an inevitable and recurrent fact of life. We should therefore develop our understanding of conflict and its positive management.

The Chinese do not see conflict as negative in their language; rather, they see conflict as “an opportunity or chance for change as well as risk or danger.” Therefore, conflict is neither positive nor negative; however, how it turns out to be is determined by our response, which is a function of our perception, attitude, background and the environments. Knowing the root causes of conflicts does not automatically proffer solution or clue on how to prevent or resolve them, as the inherent dynamic of conflicts tend to give them a Life of their own. Conflict tends to emerge/evolve in a cyclical pattern, often with several vicious cycles that are closely entertained. Even a removal of the original problems may not guarantee an end to a conflict, as additional conflict is being generated by the conflict itself.

However, having a positive approach to conflict help one to manage it in a constructive manner with positive results while people with negative connotation of conflict tend to handle conflicts in a destructive way with negative effects.

Each conflict situation contains certain predictable elements and dynamics that are amendable to regulation and change. There are two

key propelling variables in conflict (escalation) cycle: opportunity and willingness.

Opportunity

This has to do with the available resources at the disposal of a person, group or a country such as money, people, arms, land, minerals, good organisation, external support and so on.

Willingness

This is desire or need to act. This is a situation whereby a group of people are determined and convinced to embark on an action aimed at changing their situation irrespective of the likely consequences.

Both the opportunity and willingness are complimentary in nature in the sense that one may have the means to act but may not be willing to do so or the willingness to act may be there but the means is lacking. In the light of the above, for conflict to move from one stage to the other, both must be present because they are dependent on each other.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain dynamism of conflict
- discuss stages of conflict or conflict cycle
- present two sides of conflict energy
- state various forms of conflict handling styles.

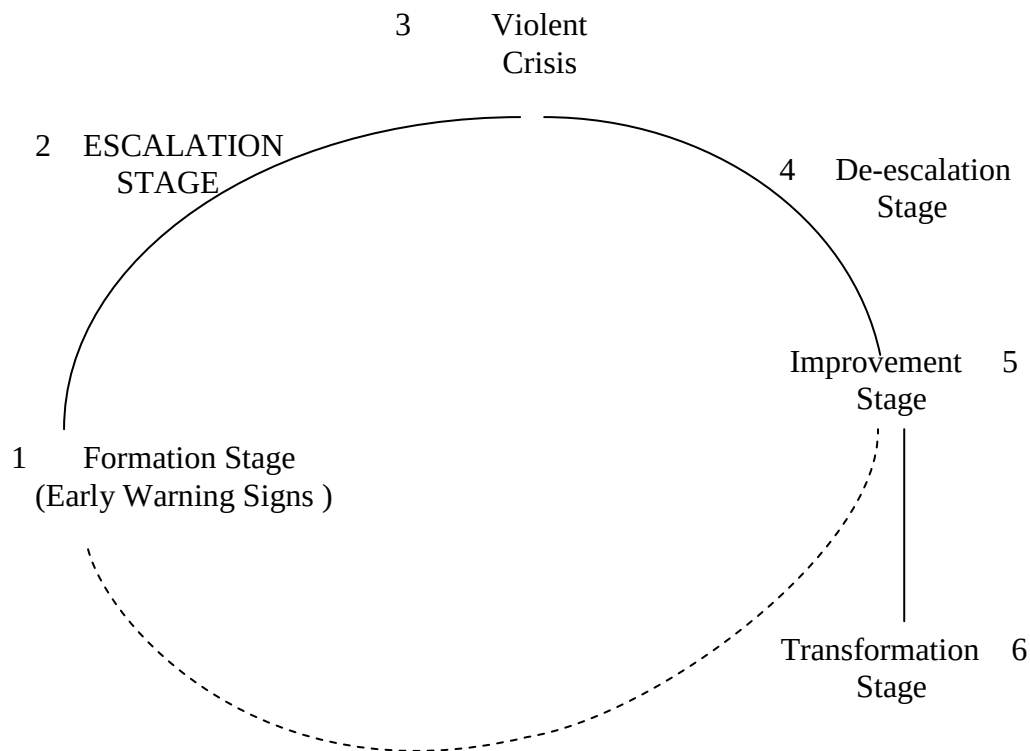
3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Conflict Cycle and Stages of Conflict

Conflict tend to progress from one place to another when the stakeholders (the oppressed and the oppressor) become more aware of a conflict of interest, means to act and then mobilise to alter the prevailing situation to each group advantage. In the course of altering the situation or addressing the injustice being faced by the oppressed, a sporadic violence can erupt if either parties should fail to adopt positive approach of conflict management.

3.1.1 Stages of Conflict

The following are the various stages of conflicts emerging in different parts of the world.



Source: Conflict Resolution Stakeholders' Network (CRESNET) Training Manual 2001.

STAGES

A. The Formation Stage

This is the first stage of conflict whereby a problem emerges and acts or things, or situations that were previously ignored or taken for granted now turn to serious issues. The obvious antagonistic shifts in attitude and a behaviour patterns is a clear indication of the early warning signs of conflict formation, which need to be addressed if further escalation is to be avoided.

B. The Escalation Stage

This stage is characterised by the formation of enemy images. People begin to take sides, positions harden, communication stops, perception becomes distorted and parties begin to commit resources to defend their position, leaders begin to make inflammatory public statements regarding their positions and street demonstrations intensity.

C. The Crisis Stage

At this stage, parties in conflict now begin to use physical barricades to demarcate their territories. Attempts to defend or expand territories or interests lead to direct confrontation and eruption of violence. Stockpiled weapons or arms are now freely used in an attempt to dominate or have upper hand leading to breakdown of law and order and essential services are virtually disrupted and people begin to experience discomfort due to lack of water, food, electricity and other essential goods and services.

D. De-escalation Stage

This is the stage in which parties in conflict begin to experience gradual cessation of hostility arising from conflict weariness, hunger, sanctions or external intervention.

E. Improvement Stage

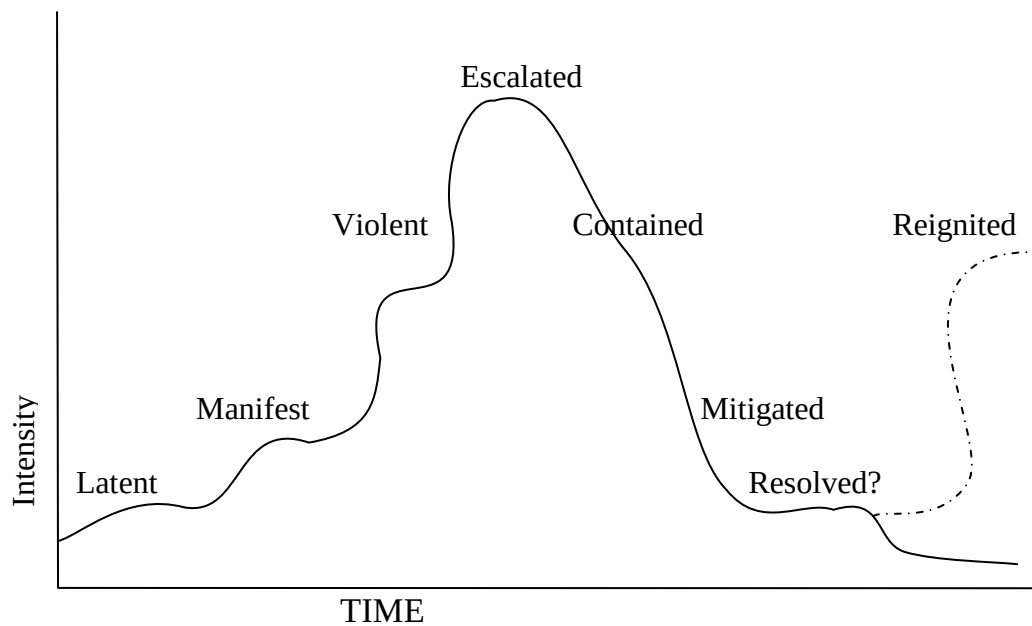
At this stage, stakeholders begin to have a rethink, shift ground and needs for dialogue are recognised and efforts are made towards attaining relative peace.

F. Transformation Stage

All causes of conflicts have been removed at this stage and reconciliation has occurred. This stage is the most difficult stage to attain in any conflict situation, though desirable, attainable and accomplishable.

3.1.2 Conflict Cycle

It is now generally believed that conflict most times evolve in a cyclical pattern that are closely related.



Source: Background Paper for the Danida Conference on Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Africa 2001 Prepared by Bjorn Moller.

i. Latent Phase

This is the first phase of the conflict cycle where a conflict is dormant and barely expressed by the conflicting sides that may not even be conscious of their conflicting interests or values. At this phase, a conflict can easily be “nipped in the bud” through a preventive action on the basis of early warning in principle. Although, latent conflicts are difficult to detect with any degree of certainty – and their presence and absence may be hard to verify. Despite that, we can still identify various indicators of impending conflicts, such as inequality, growing poverty, frustrated expectation, unemployment, pollution and a growing tendency to view problems in “us versus them – terms,”.

ii. Manifest Phase

At this phase, conflicting parties express their demands and grievances openly, but only by legal means. It is easier to identify both problems and stakeholders, at this stage while preventive action can still be taken to prevent conflict escalation or degeneration into violent confrontation. Despite limited time available, exhibit conflict behaviour and regroup themselves in opposing camps. Mediation efforts geared towards compromise solutions still stand a reasonable chance of success provided violence has not occurred.

iii. Violent Phase

This phase is characterised by direct physical attacks and confrontations leading to spilling of blood and loss of life of both conflicting parties and innocent people and thereby produce additional motives for struggle elongation, if only to “get even” or escape retribution for atrocities committed. Moreover, people having their various private agendas and that are personally benefiting or profiting from the continuing crisis often usurped the initial/existing leadership structure in order to have influence and control over their groups.

iv. Escalation Phase

Under this phase, violence breeds further violence, producing an escalatory momentum. Moreover, the longer the struggle has lasted, and the more destructive it has been, the more do the warring parties (and especially their leaders) have to lose by laying down their arms. Only victory can justify the preceding bloodshed; hence, the proclivity to struggle on as long as there is even a slight hope of prevailing, thereby attaining the power to set the terms. Neither the violence nor the escalation phases therefore leave much scope for peaceful intervention, mediation or negotiations. On the other, embarking on military intervention at this stage could be regarded as a risky enterprise despite the fact that it might make a difference.

v. Contained Phase

Escalation comes to a halt in this stage. This could be because the conflicting parties have temporarily exhausted their supply of weaponry, leading to lower intensity. At this stage, there appears hope for negotiations and mediation efforts by the intervention of a third party aiming towards a truce. Most times, peacekeeping forces can be introduced to protect each side against the possible breaches of the truce by either of the conflicting parties. The truce agreed upon allows for the provision of humanitarian aid to the civilian victims without supporting either of the warring sides.

vi. Mitigated Phase

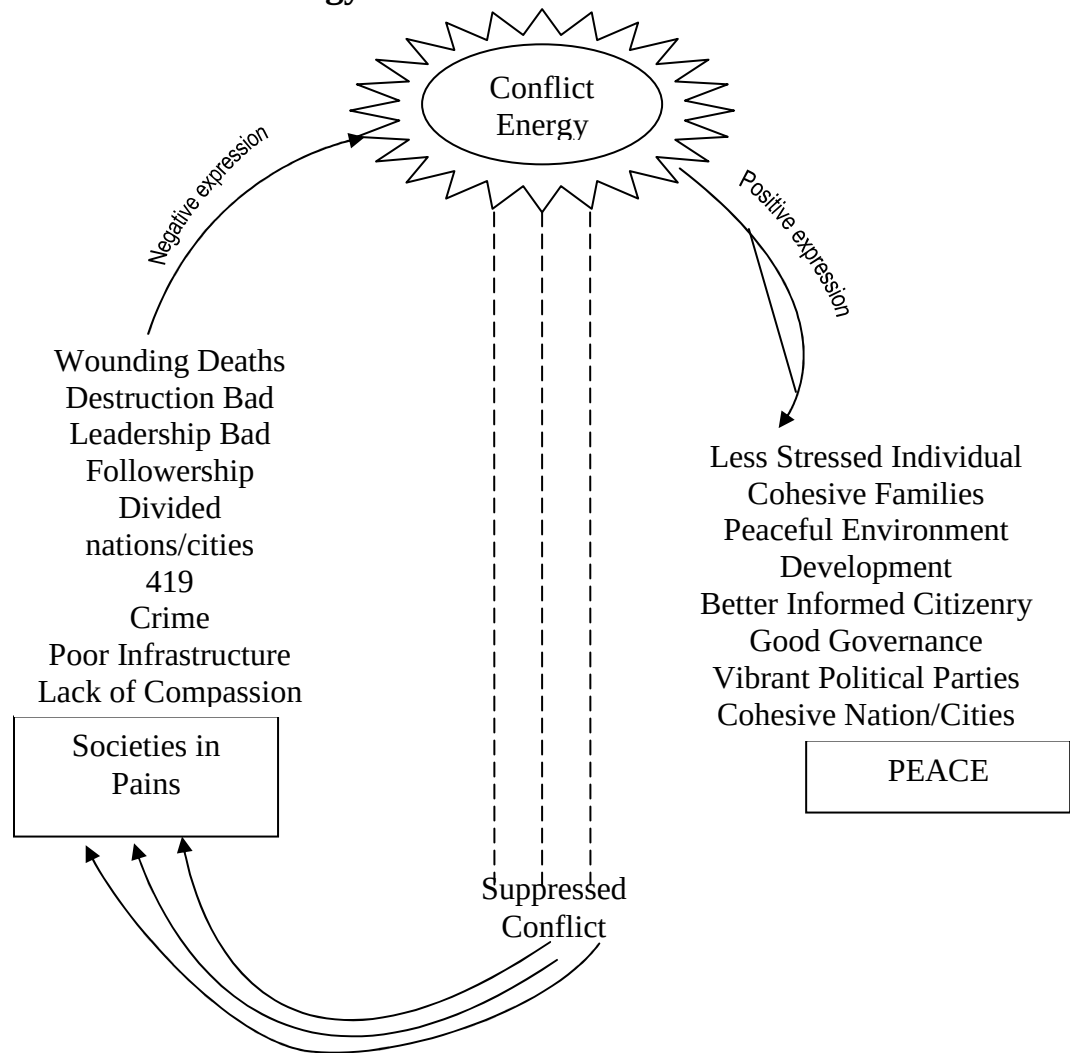
Mitigated stage of any conflict is the period during which the basic causes of conflict remain in place, but the conflict behaviour and attitude has been significantly changed with reduced or less violence and more political mobilisation and negotiation. At this stage, the ray of post-conflict recovery can easily be read and felt in the minds of political leaders on opposing sides, while external factors are at the advantage of

gaining new leverage, that is, serving as potential (but not unconditional) provider of aid.

vii. The Resolution Phase

This phase is the most perceived critical stage of all the phases, as success or failure of post-conflict peace-building will determine whether the conflict will flare up again. For a tangible and enduring or sustainable success to be accomplished, both the underlying causes of the conflict and its immediate consequences must be addressed. This include reordering of power relationships, bringing some of those responsible for the preceding blood shed to trial and facilitating reconciliation between the opposing sides as a precondition of future coexistence. At this stage, the importance of external actors is very crucial in the following areas such as provision of various forms of assistance and support to the emerging civil society after the resolution of the conflict, and to support programmes for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants, including child soldiers.

3.2 Conflict Energy



Source: Conflict Resolution Stakeholders' Network (CRESNET) Training Manual 2001

3.4 Conflict Handling Styles

3.4.1 Conflict Handling Styles

These are various forms or ways by which individual, groups, societies or nations perceive and respond to conflicts arising from diverse/conflicting views, opinion, ideas, values and belief. The behaviours and attitudes of the parties concerned usually determined the success and failure of any conflict which can be described along these two basic dimensions namely:

a. Assertiveness

This describes the extent to which an individual attempts to satisfy his needs and concern.

b. Cooperativeness

This explains the extent to which a person attempts to satisfy his needs and concerns as well as the other person's needs. These two basic dimensions of behaviour can be applied to define or explain the following five conflict handling styles: dominating/competing; accommodating; avoiding; collaborating and compromising.

i. Dominating/Competing

This takes place when an individual is very assertive and not cooperative. Such a person pursues his own concerns at another person's expense. It is a power-oriented mode. It is a position that states: "I have to win." It can also mean: "I have to stand up for myself, for my rights." It entails defending a position by argument, by rank, or by economic advantage. This position connotes "you win, the other loses."

ii. Accommodating

You are unassertive and cooperative. It is the opposite of competing. When accommodating, you neglect your own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this handling style. It can be selfless, generous; it can be yielding because of weakness or low self-esteem.

iii. Avoiding

You are unassertive and uncooperative. You do not (immediately) pursue your own concerns or those of other person. You do not address the conflict. It can be a diplomatic way of handling conflict, postponing for a better time. It can also be a withdrawal, that could lead to worsening of a relationship.

iv. Collaborating

Under this dimension, you are both assertive and cooperative. It is the opposite of avoiding. You are working with the other person to find a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both parties. It means dialogue, it means good listening, it means understanding your and the other person's needs and concerns and creating solutions to meet those concerns. In this case, both sides win. A win-win situation for all.

v. Compromising

You are partially assertive and partially cooperative. When you compromise you attempt to find an expedient, mutually acceptable solution which partially satisfies both parties. When you compromise, you split the difference, you make concessions, you give up something, to gain something in return. You seek a middle – ground position. You win a little, and you lose a little.

3.4.2 Model Two

This second model grouped conflict handling styles into three major headings or classifications in as much as approaches to conflict vary from individual to individual. The classifications are thus:

1. Avoidance/Denial

This is a common way of handling or dealing with conflict. We may decide to avoid the other party/person or pretend that the conflict does not exist even though we are hurt or angry. We need to observe that this approach or style of handling conflict often leaves us feeling more hurt, frustrated, and annoyed. It can be likened to a housewife who keeps sweeping dirt under the carpet; the dirt will surely become a heap, which she will not be able to manage one day. This approach creates room for a win/lose option, an option where one person gets what he/she needs and the other person gets nothing. This style does not actually solve the problem but buries it for the time being.

However, this style is useful in some situations, for example, avoidance method can be a stop gap to reflect on what next line of action or step to be taken.

2. Confrontation/Fighting

In this approach, some people, group, nation or state might decide to slog it out with the other party in conflict situation. They threaten, attack, yell, insult and tenaciously hold on to their point of view and disagree with the other party's point of view. This approach often leads to violence and it creates lose/lose option, an option where both parties lose.

Neither party gets what he/she needs. In some cases, confrontation might also lead to win/lose where the stronger party with bigger power wins while the weaker party ends up being the loser.

3. Problem Solving

This is an approach whereby the parties in conflict listen with the intent to understand the underlying elements in the conflict and attack the issues. The parties adopting this style normally show respect for differences and look for ways to resolve the problem. Furthermore, people using this style or approach are less concerned about who is right or wrong. They view conflict as belonging to both parties which require their mutual collaboration to resolve. This approach creates room for a “win/win solution”- a situation where both parties come out satisfied with the solution. They are both happy and satisfied because their needs and desires have been met and their relationship has been restored.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is now crystal clear that it is important to know the stages or phases of conflict progression to enable you ascertain the step to be taken in the prevention of conflict escalation and management approaches to be adopted in managing conflicts that are at different stages or phases of conflict cycle.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, two key propelling variables in conflict escalation are discussed together with the stages of conflict, conflict cycle, and conflict energy while various conflict handling style were extensively discussed.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. With particular reference to the key propelling variables in conflict escalation, discuss five stages of conflict of any of the types of conflict..
- ii. Define conflict cycle and explain different phases of conflict known to you.
- iii. With reference to a case study of any past conflict, discuss the phase or stage of such conflict and the conflict handling style adopted in managing the conflict.

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UNIT 4 CONFLICT ANALYSIS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning/Definition of Conflict Analysis
 - 3.2 Categories of Stakeholders
 - 3.2.1 Criteria for Determining Primary Stakeholders
 - 3.3 Pre-Intervention Conflict Analysis
 - 3.4 Definition of Conflict Mapping and Tracking
 - 3.4.1 Conventions for Mapping Relationship
 - 3.5 Conflict Analytical Tools
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is a clear known fact that conflict exist at all levels of human interaction either at interpersonal, intra-group, inter group or at communal, national and international levels. Therefore, it has become imperative for a conflict management practitioner, intervener or a peace studies and conflict resolution student to acquire necessary knowledge and skills required to enable such a person gain an insight into the hidden issues in conflict. The issues ranging from the causes of the conflict, stages/phases of conflict, the stakeholders (parties in conflict), and the conflict analytical tools and techniques necessary for proper understanding of conflict analysis in view of proffering sustainable solution to the conflict. Analysis is usually accompanied by “conflict mapping” and “tracking” both of which are very important at giving the conflict management practitioner a clear picture of what is happening, what is at stake and what could be done to manage the “difficult” situation.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the concept of conflict analysis
- explain the meaning of stakeholders, categorise stakeholders and itemise criteria for determining them
- state pre-intervention conflict analysis
- define conflict mapping and tracking.

- identify conventions used in mapping relationships
- enumerate different conflict analytical tools.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning/Definition of Conflict Analysis

Conflict analysis is a critical review, interpretation and explanation of what is observed and recorded about the conflict situation. Alternatively, conflict can be defined as a process by which the root causes, dynamics, issues, and – other – fundamentals of conflict are examined, reviewed and unraveled through the use of various mechanisms for proper and better – understanding of the conflict from several perspectives.

Conflict analysis avails peace experts intervening in a conflict the opportunity of gathering necessary data or information that will facilitate bringing together of parties in dispute and reveal a dependable, reliable and effective direction on the choice of strategies and action to be adopted for a successful intervention and termination of conflict.

3.2 Categories of Stakeholders

A stakeholder is defined as those men and women, group or parties who are directly or indirectly involved in the conflict and have a significant stake in the outcome.

a. Primary Stakeholders

They are those whose goals are, or are perceived by them to be incompatible and who interact directly in pursuit of their respective goals. They are the direct investors in the conflict.

b. Secondary Stakeholders

These categories are affected directly by the outcome of the conflict but do not feel to be directly involved. As the conflict progresses, they may become primary and primary may become secondary.

c. Interested Stakeholders

These parties have an interest in the conflict. They stand to benefit from the outcomes whether peaceful or conflictual. The difference between interested and secondary stakeholders is that the interested stakeholders suffer no direct impact of the conflict in the short and medium term.

3.2.1 Criteria for Determining Primary Stakeholders

Determining where stakeholders should be put is both political and fluid. The following often determines the decisions of interveners in selecting the stakeholders to engage.

i. Functional

This suggests those who directly wage the conflict. Their legitimacy on the negotiating table is their capacity and ability to perpetuate the conflict. They are the embodiment of the conflict. Observers believe they have the power to end the conflict.

ii. Representativity

This is political aspect of stakeholders' categorisation. Stakeholders are primary because they represent a large number of people who are directly affected by the conflict. These people also have the means to wage conflict or build peace.

iii. Moral Authority

Primary stakeholders can also be determined because their moral authority carries the vision of post-conflict society. These include religious leaders, civil society organisations including women's organisations and traditional leaders among others. Earlier, this category was only confined to the secondary level.

Five Elements Required to Structure Analysis of Stakeholders

- i. **Relationship** -What is the interaction between the stakeholders?
- ii. **Agenda/Power** -What are the agendas of key stakeholders for conflict and for peace?
- iii. **Needs** - What are the needs of the different stakeholders? Which needs are opposing and overlapping?
- iv. **Action** -What actions are the different stakeholders undertaking to promote peace or conflict?
- v. What is the cumulative power of actions for peace or conflict?

3.3 Pre-Intervention Conflict Analysis

Entering into conflict situations by a researcher or conflict management practitioner is often an unpredictable task which requires a critical careful conflict analysis. It is not enough for him/her to just note the positions of the stakeholders (parties) in the conflict but s/he must have a thorough understanding of their interests, values and needs as well.

The following model suggests a way for the intervenor to gather data and increase the certainty that his/her entry will be constructive to the disputing parties. It is the responsibility of an intervenor to develop a comprehensive picture of the conflict by identifying its key element. The pre-intervention information gathered usually points the intervenor in a certain direction, suggesting ways to engage the parties to reduce tensions and work together to find solution to the problems that they face on one hand. Additional information or data collected during the course of intervention should also be incorporated into the conflict analysis. This may help you determine why an issue is so hard to resolve or it may suggest an alternative approach to conflict management.

1. History of the Conflict

It is important for a conflict analyst to understand the significant events that has happened in the past between the parties. It reveals the genesis of the conflict and whether they have had previous disputes. History also enables the intervenor to ask the following questions. What has been the pattern of their relationship? Was there a recent change in the relationship? Did the conflict abate at one time before re-escalating? What past efforts have been made to resolve it and why they failed? Proffering answers to these questions might require visiting local, state and native archives for documentary evidence. Oral interviews might also be used to gather necessary information.

2. Context of Conflict

It is also necessary to know how the parties are currently trying to resolve their differences. What is the physical environment of the conflict? That is the social, economics and political environment of the conflict, as well as the dimensions of the external situations (state, sub-regional and global). How do the parties communicate and make decisions?

3. Primary Parties

It is necessary to identify the parties involved in the conflict. In doing this, you should ask such question as: “what are the parties’ positions and underlying interest? What are their values and perceptions of the other parties? Do the parties have settlement authority? And what interest, goals, or needs do the parties share in common?

4. Power Relations

This has to do with the ability to influence or control other events, which could be in form of physical strength, status, control of resources, persuasive ability, support of allies, and so on. There are two major types of power that can be exercised by either of the parties in conflict. These are hard power, which is usually associated with violent conflict while the other is soft power that is identified with positive conflict. The following questions are usually being asked under power relation: Is there balance of power between the disputants? What is/are the source(s) of the parties' power? What resources are at the disposal of each party? How often do the parties use their power and what are the consequences of such power? Are there any untapped power bases of the parties? What method of peace process is suitable for the success of the intervention?

5. Other Parties/Stakeholders

Apart from the already mentioned primary parties, we also have secondary parties and shadow parties that must be considered. Their link or relationships with the primary parties ought to be carefully examined to understand the overall underlying problems associated with a conflict. Secondary parties can easily be identified compared to shadow parties because most times, shadow parties hide their identities but supply primary parties resources required for the prosecution of conflict.

The roles these parties play in the conflict must be ascertained. You should know whether they align with either of the primary parties or neutral. When and how these parties can be involved in the peace agencies or organisations availability and involvement in the process of conflict resolution cannot be underestimated.

6. Issues

- a. What are the primary issues as identified by the parties?
- b. Are there hidden or secondary issues not stated by the parties that are needed to be identified?
- c. What kind of intervention procedures are necessary for the types of issues are identified?
- d. Is the conflict genuine in its own right or is it merely a symptom of other unresolved conflict(s)?
- e. If the latter or former, how much time and efforts must be expended on the conflict in order to reach or arrive at a reasonable and sustainable resolution?

7. The Immediate Situation

This involves ascertaining the present situation by asking such questions as: “What is happening now? (Should the first step be efforts to move towards negotiations, or are short-term violence reduction strategies called for? It is the responsibility of the intervenor to determine the most effective and reliable conflict management strategy to adopt in accordance with the urgency and demand of the conflict situation. For example, if the conflict is at a violent stage, definitely, the intervenor may be compelled to adopt some violence reduction strategies to reduce the rate of likely casualty that may arise.

8. Stages of Conflict

- a. We have to ascertain whether the conflict is escalating or stabilising, and ask why?
- b. If the conflict is escalating, what is happening? Are issues moving from specific to general? Is there an increase in issues or resources used to wage the conflict? Has disagreement turned to antagonism? Is there an increase in the level of power being used by either parties? Are the parties polarised? Has extremist leadership arisen? Is communication affected or being distorted? Are parties engaged in propaganda campaigns?
- c. If the conflict is stabilising, what is happening? Are safety-value mechanisms put in place? Is there a fear of escalation? Are there agreements on norms and values? Are there social bonds, friendships, cross-cutting memberships among party members? Are there other third party intervenors or external interference or threat? Are there time constraints or other limitations on the further use of resources?

9. Timing

Timing is important in pre-intervention conflict analysis for the following reasons.

- To ascertain the actual and right time of intervention.
- Determine the most profitable and successful time of the intervention.
- To know the party that is likely to benefit from immediate intervention.

10. Possible Options of Intervention/Settlement

- The level of knowledge and understanding of the parties alternatives should be considered.
- Level of parties awareness of each other's alternatives or option should be considered.
- Examine the efforts made so far by the conflicting parties in the accomplishment of their options.
- Evaluate the realistic nature of the parties.

3.4 Definitions of Conflict Mapping and Tracking

Conflict Mapping

Wehr (1979:18) describes conflict mapping or the first step in intervening to manage a particular conflict. Conflict mapping can also be defined as graphical representation of the conflict in which the conflicting parties are placed in relation to the situation on ground.

Maps are used for a variety of purposes to understand conflict situation better, to ascertain where power lies, to examine conflict clearly from one viewpoint, to look for openings (way out) or new strategies, to know where our allies or potential allies are placed, to find our own niche, to evaluate what has been done and for many other reasons.

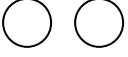
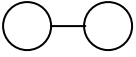
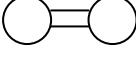
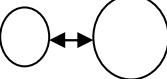
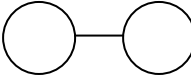
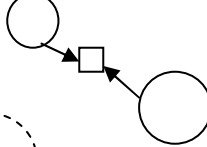
Conflict Tracking

Conflict tracking is the process, which involves monitoring, observing and recording the trend of change and continuity in the conflict process. What to keep track of could include:

- conflict parties include internal leadership struggles, varying prospect for military success and the reading of general population to express support for a settlement; possible ways of re-defining goals and finding alternative means of resolving differences including suggested step towards settlement and eventual transformation; likely constraints on these, and how these might be overcome.
- it is important for the person keeping track of the conflict to pay careful attention to the minutest details about the issue and circumstances around him.

3.4.1 Conventions for Mapping Relationship

The following are the particular conventions we use in mapping relationships existing between or among the stakeholders (parties) involved in a conflict situation.

1.  The circles indicate parties to the situation. The size of the circle indicates power relations of the parties.
 2.  Straight lines indicate direct relationship between the parties when communication is at its best.
 3.  Double connecting lines indicate an alliance
 4.  Dotted lines indicate informal weak or intermittent relationship
 1.  Arrows indicate the predominant direction of influence or activity.
 6.  Lines like lightening indicate discord or conflict.
 7.  A double line like a wall across lines indicates a broken relationship.
 8.  A square or rectangle indicates an issue, topic or some thing other than people.
-  Shadows show external parties which have influence but are not directly involved.

Source: Conflict Resolution Stakeholders' Network (CRESNET) Training Manual 2001

3.5 Conflict Analytical Tools

Conflict mapping tracking and analysis processes are the essential ingredients required in pre-third party intervention for the collection of essential and comprehensive information/data by a mediator or conflict intervenor to discover purposeful tool(s) and techniques that can be used or adopted to suit their needs.

Through such data, Moore (1996:114) notes, that a mediator would:

- develop a mediation plan or conflict strategy that meets the requirements of the specific situation and the needs of all parties.
- avoid entering a dispute with a conflict resolution or management procedure that is appropriate for the stage of development or level of intensity that the dispute has reached.
- operate from an accurate information base that will prevent unnecessary conflicts due to mis-communication, mis-perception, or misleading data.
- clarify which issues and interests are most important.
- identify the key people involved and the dynamics of their relationships.

As mentioned above, some of the techniques or tools may look familiar or may be unfamiliar. However, all have been tried and used repeatedly and successfully by people from many different types of conflict situations. In many cases, groups have adapted them to suit the particular needs they have or based on the perceptions of the people who work on it.

some of the available tools/techniques are discussed below.

A. Timeline

Timeline is a graph that shows events plotted against a particular time-scale. It shows different views of history in a conflict: helps to clarify each side's perception of events and facilitate easy identification of events that are most important to each side. It lists date (year, month, or day, depending on the scale) and depicts events in chronological order.

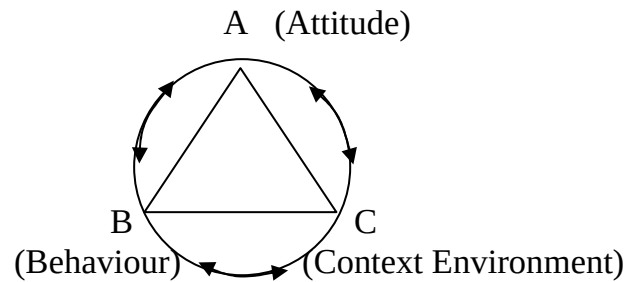
In a conflict situation, groups of people often have completely different experiences and perceptions: they see and understand the conflict in quite distinct ways. They often have different histories. People on opposing sides of the conflict may note or emphasise different events, describe them differently, and attach contrasting emotions to them.

Using the Timeline

Timeline is not a research tool per se as mentioned above, but a way to prompt discussion and learning. In conflict situation, it is usually used early in a process along with either analytical tools or later in the process to help in strategy building. It is also used when people disagree about events or do not know each other's history; and as a way of helping

people accept their own perspective as only part of the “truth,” variation is use: it is used by parties themselves and shared with each other; it is followed by a discussion about events that are highlighted by each side and adding a line for peace initiatives during the same time period.

ABC TRIANGLE METHODS OF ANALYSIS



Attitudes (willingness to change, fixed position)

Behaviour (agitation, demand, pleas, violence)

Context (the background)

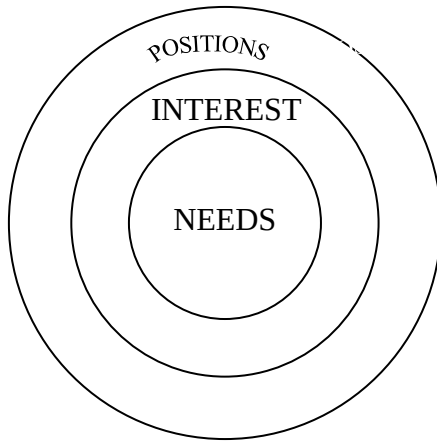
ABC analytical tool sees conflict having three above mentioned elements, which affect one another.

The third party intervenor or peacemaker in a conflict, uses this tool by drawing up a separate ABC Triangle for each of the major stakeholders in the conflict. He lists key issues relating to attitude, behaviour and context from the parties viewpoint, identify the most important need and fears, and inform each of the parties, his needs and fears as you think, and place these in the middle of the triangle of each of them. You later compare and contrast the perception of the parties for detecting the major object of conflict and then pay attention on the majority. The causes and issues, which are the products of the parties differences, will be addressed, while intervenor will make the parties see reasons on why they should do away with negative perceptions and embrace peace in order to bring about positive and sustainable peace.

The Onion/Doughnut Method of Analysis

This is a graphic tool based upon the analogy of an onion and its layers. The outer layer contains the positions (parties' wants). Underlying these are the interests of the parties in conflict (what parties want to achieve from the situation concerned). The third layer is the core cause at the conflict situation, that is; the most important needs to be satisfied. It is important for intervenor to carry out or do this “onion” analysis for each of the parties involved.

When times are stable, relationships are good, and trust is high, our actions and strategies may stem from our most basic needs. We may be willing to disclose these needs to others, and discuss them openly, if we trust them, and they may be able, through analysis and empathy, to grasp our needs even before we disclose them.



In more volatile or dangerous situations, and when there is mistrust between people, we may want to keep our basic needs hidden. To let others know our needs would reveal our vulnerability, and perhaps give them extra power to hurt us. If all of us are hidden from each other, they are also less likely to grasp our needs through analysis or empathy because of lack of knowledge and because our mistrust changes our perceptions of each other.

In such a situation of conflict and instability, actions may no longer come directly from needs. People may look at more collective and abstract level of interests, and base their actions on these. When the interests are under attack, they may take up and defend a position, which is still further removed from their original needs.

This type of analysis enables intervenor to understand the dynamics of a conflict situation, and prepare dialogue facilitation between groups in a conflict. The analysis is most useful in a mediation or negotiation processes when parties involved in either of the processes which to clarify for themselves their own needs, interests and positions. As they plan their strategies for negotiation, they can decide how much of the interior “layers” – interests and needs – they want to reveal to the other parties involved.

Force – Field Analysis

This tool can be used to identify the different forces influencing a conflict. It is used to analyse both positive and negative forces in a conflict. Whenever action is being taken to bring about change, there

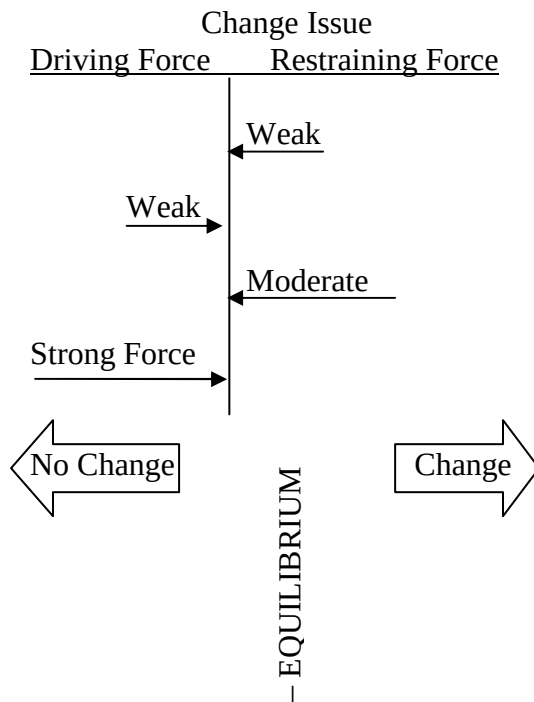
will be other forces that are either supporting or hindering what you are trying to achieve. This tool offers a way of identifying these positive and negative forces and trying to assess their strengths and weaknesses. It can also help you to see more clearly what is maintaining the status-quo.

How to use this tool

- First and foremost, you begin by naming your specific objective that is the action you intend to take or the change you desire to achieve. Write this objective at the top of the page and draw a line down the centre of the page.
- On one side of the line, list all the forces that seem to support and assist the action or change to happen. Next to each one draw an arrow towards the centre, varying the length and/or thickness of each arrow to indicate the relative strength of each force. These are pointing in the direction of the desired change.
- On the other side of the line, list all the forces that seem to retrain or hinder the desired action or to minimise in some way the negative force, in order to facilitate increase in the likelihood of the desired change happening.
- At this stage, you may want to examine your plan of action and make modifications in your strategy if necessary in order to build upon the strengths of the positive forces and then try to reduce or even remove the effects of the negative forces.

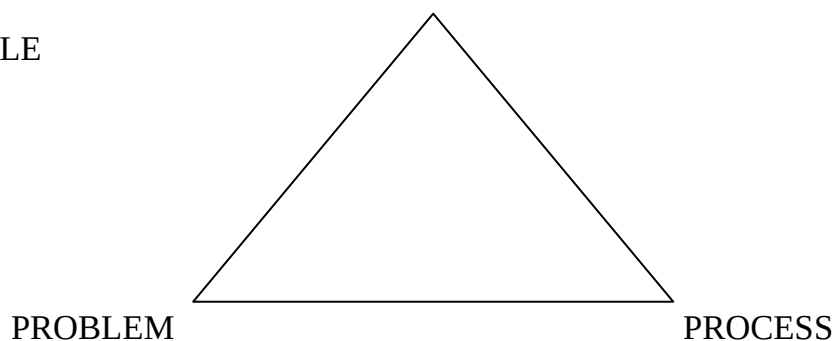
The Force Field Analysis was developed by an American Social Psychologist Kurt Lewin (1951) as a useful tool built on the premise that forces are often driven by human habits, customs, and attitudes that can affect the change process.

Force Field Diagram



PPP MODEL

PEOPLE



PEOPLE

- Who are the individuals and groups directly involved?
- Who will be affected by or can influence the outcome?
- What leadership and structure does each group have?
- How does each group view the situation?
- How is each group affected?
- What particular feelings, issues, and other variables characterise each?
- What are the main discrepancies in perception?
- What communication, connections links does each have with the others?

PROCESS

- What have been the sparking issues?
- Is there a historic pattern to their interaction?
- What is the process each would want to follow?
- As the conflict developed, what additional problems or issues emerged?
- What degree of polarisation is there between each party?
- What activities of each party have and are intensifying the conflict?
- What role do more moderate individuals and groups have?

PROBLEM

- What are the interests, needs and values of each party?
- What do they propose or pursue to meet them?
- What shared basic needs (security, self esteem, food, rights, land, etc) underlie the conflict?
- What are the minimal essential outcomes each party might be satisfied with?
- What are the basic areas of agreement and disagreement?
- What resources are there for dealing with this conflict?
- What stage has the conflict reached – is it ripe for resolution/transformation?

This tool can be used to analyse conflict by proffering answers to the several questions put forward above. If reasonable answers were proffered, then the conflict intervenor would be able know the stage of the conflict, the parties involved, their positions, basic needs, values perceptions and differences. Having known all these, you will then be able to decide on the method or process to be adopted in facilitating reconciliation (peace agreement) between the aggrieved parties, so as to bring about enduring/sustainable peace to the previously troubled spot.

DPT MODEL

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| D – Diagnosis: | Investigating the history of sickness |
| P – Progress: | Establish the present state of success and where it could be in future. |
| T – Therapy: | The prescription or treatment. |

This analytical tool is based on the premise that any individual or society that is in conflict is sick and therefore they need to see a doctor.

This means that there is a direct relationship between conflict and our physical, emotional and spiritual well being. Negative conflict expression reduces our overall capacity to build a healthy society.

Therefore, to build a healthy society, it is now the responsibilities of the conflict manager together with concerned authority or parties to bring about drastic reduction or removal of perceived sickness by proffering or prescribing lasting and sustainable treatment for sickness. Having carried out a proper diagnosis/examination of cause and trend at the conflict, appropriate measures/treatment can now be adopted for the removal or eradication of the sickness and its cause.

PILLARS

This is a graphic tool that is built on the premise that some situations are not really stable, but are being “held up” by a range of factors or forces, which are the “pillars”. If the pillars can be identified and then find ways of removing them or minimising them, effects on the situation we will be able to topple a negative situation and replace it with a positive one.

How to use this tool

The tool can be made use of by following these trends listed below:

- identify the unstable situation (conflict, problem or injustice) and show this as an inverted triangle standing on one point.
- identify the forces or factors that are likely to be maintaining this situation and show these as the “pillars” on either side of the triangle holding it up.
- put into consideration how each of these pillars might be weakened or removed from the situation. List your strategies briefly for each of the pillar.
- consider what stable situation could replace this unstable one.

Example of a Pillars Analysis



4.0 CONCLUSION

With all the above discussions, we can now see that before any conflict can be prevented or resolved amicably from degenerating into a violent one it is important for a conflict manager or intervenor to be well equipped and versatile in conflict analysis techniques or tools to afford him the opportunity of understanding the conflict situation, and knowing the stakeholders, causes of conflict, the parties' views, perceptions, interests, values before embarking on conflict resolution/management process that will bring about positive and sustainable peace.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit explained and defined conflict analysis, stakeholders, categories of stakeholders, and criteria for determining primary stakeholders. The unit also defined "conflict mapping" and "tracking" and showed conventions used in mapping relationships. Different tools of conflict analysis that can facilitate proper and better understanding of conflict situation and types of relationship existing between/among stakeholders in relation to sustainable conflict resolution were extensively discussed.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. a. What is conflict analysis?
b. Discuss any four conflict analysis tools.
- ii. a. Define conflict mapping and tracking.
b. Draw or show different conventions used in mapping of relationships and indicate their meanings.
- iii. a. Who are stakeholders?
b. Explain different categories of stakeholders.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 A Conceptual Overview of Conflict Transformation
 - 3.1.1 Conflict Transformation
 - 3.2 Types of Transformation
 - 3.2.1 Issue Transformation
 - 3.2.2 Rule Transformation
 - 3.2.3 Structural Transformation
 - 3.2.4 Actor Transformation
 - 3.2.5 Personal and Group Transformation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose or objective of conflict transformation is to put in place positive peace that will be congenial to the non-violent handling of conflict. Conflict transformation also educate and enlighten parties in conflict to see conflict not as necessarily destructive or negative, but as a means of tapping into the opportunities embedded in conflict issues for the shared benefits. Conflict transformation involves the transformation of issues, actor, structures and rules.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the basic idea of conflict transformation and its' features
- describe the different complementary scopes of conflict transformation
- explain its' indispensability for engendering positive peace especially at the post – conflict phase.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 A Conceptual Overview of Conflict Transformation

If the right technical approach is not applied in handling the post-conflict situation, a relapse of conflict becomes inevitable. This is

because most efforts to achieve peace in the post-conflict situation often provide at best stability or conflict containment. This is usually the case when conflict transformation is not professionally undertaken. Therefore, what is conflict transformation?

3.1.1 Conflict Transformation

The fundamental objective of this latest concept is to transform unfair social interactions. The International Alert (1996: I:1-, II: 37) conceptualises conflict transformation as a:

..particular approach which aims to recognise the grievances, needs and issues of all the parties. It focuses on the processes by which conflict develops into violence, rather than focusing exclusively on how to bring a violent conflict quickly to a cease fire for settlement. It addresses the *structural reality* of inequality, rights and injustice in the society involved, and offers alternative ways of addressing those matters. This approach aims to transform a conflict from violence and destruction into a constructive force which reduces social change, progressively removing or at least reducing the conditions from which the conflict and violence have arisen. The peace, which develops, can then be well-founded and sustainable.

Conflict transformation is essentially integrative conflict resolution orientation that aims at positively altering those perceptions, communication and root factors that instigate conflicts. This laborious approach is preferred because it focuses on:

- producing transformation in the whole conflict environment
- producing transformation in the relationship of the conflicting parties, or
- producing empowerment-based transformation in parties to the conflict (Burgess and Burgess, 1972: 285-286).

Conflict transformation is the aggregate of all efforts that concentrate on the developmental stages or processes of a conflict, rather than simply on its end point. In addition, it pays attention to how conflict transforms relationships, communication, perceptions, issues and social organisation. Based on this, conflict transformation aims to transform the conflict from violent manifestation characterised by armed conflict and war to constructive and peaceful expression.

Conflict transformation also focuses on transformation and sometimes the removal of all structures that impede sustainable positive peace. It also seeks ways of involving all stakeholders including erstwhile

combatants, local individuals, communities and external third parties in a concerted way.

Conflict transformation can also be defined as an improvement of the whole context of the conflict, a positive change in the disputants' relationships or complete behavioural and attitudinal changes of the disputants. Conflict transformation entails an informed reassessment and redefinition of the disputants to explore avenues for new compensations and appointments. The aim of this is to transcend zero-sum (win-lose) phase to arrive at a positive-sum (win-win) agreement. New mutually benefiting arrangements are proposed and worked out in which the hitherto contested issues become less or no longer relevant and other issues and values become more dearer to all the parties in the conflict. An example is the Franco-German reconciliation after the Second World War.

Conflict transformation has also been defined as a particular approach that takes into cognisance the grievances, needs and issues of all the parties. It pays due attention to the degeneration stages of conflict to violence rather than solely on how to bring a violent conflict to a cease-fire or settlement. It confronts the structural reality of inequality, rights and injustice in the locales concerned and proposes alternative ways of addressing those realities.

Conflict transformation aims to transform a conflict from violent and destructive stage into a constructive force, which will lay the foundation for social change. This can be achieved by systematically and progressively removing and playing down the conditions that gave rise to conflict and violence. The objective is to have a well-founded and sustainable peace. In achieving the foregoing, due attention is paid to the actors, the issues, the rules, and the structures.

In approaching conflict transformation, there are two broad approaches. These are non-violent conflict transformation associated with Gandhi otherwise known as the Gandhi theory. The second though seemingly unscrupulous approach is a combination of approaches that does not pre-suppose resolution of the incompatibilities, but tries to freeze the conflict, negate it, protect it, through all kinds of devices, including structural and direct violence.

The non-violence theory or Gandhi theory is vehemently intolerant of the use of either structural violence or direct violence because it will contradict the spirit and letter of the non-violence theory. In addition, non-violence is an admonition to struggle against both direct and structural violence, and an equally strong admonition not to use them in the struggle. Non-violence or Gandhi theory will also not condone the

fair protractive devices earlier mentioned because they are antithetical to the non-violence theory of conflict transformation. For Gandhi; “there is no way to peace; peace is the way; to be taken, now.”

One of the chief proponents of conflict transformation is John Lederach. In his analysis, Lederach distinguishes conflict transformation from conflict management and conflict resolution. Conflict transformation is desirable than the two because it emphasises a broader and deeper understanding of the conflict. “Conflict resolution” suggests that conflict is destructive like fire; therefore, it should be put out quickly. It also implies that conflict is a flash or spark that can be handled once and for all in a decisive manner through mediation or other intervention processes.

“Conflict management” correctly posits that conflicts could be protracted in span, which makes it difficult to be swiftly resolved, but “management” implies that people can be directly or remotely manipulated, as they were physical objects. Furthermore, the notion of management implies that its goal is the mitigation or control of volatility without dealing with the real source of the problem.

Conflict transformation transcends simply eliminating or controlling conflict, but stresses making on the dialectic or dynamic nature of conflicts. In the context of social conflict, Lederach argues that social conflict is ordinarily created by humans who have relationships that suffer immediately there is a conflict. Therefore, cause-and-effect relationship goes both ways from the people and the relationships to the conflict and back to the people and the relationships. Conflict changes relationships in predictable ways often negatively; it changes modes and contexts of communication processes of social organisation, altering images of the self and of the other.

Lederach also opines that conflict transformation is a prescriptive concept. This implies that on its own, conflict can have destructive consequences. However, the consequences can be regulated or transformed in order to improve self-images, relationships, and social structures depending on the way it is handled. Usually this is done by transforming perceptions of issues, actions, and other people or groups. In as much as conflict destroys relationships by altering perceptions and emphasising on the differences between people and positions, efficacious conflict transformation can work to improve mutual understanding. Even when actors’ interests, values, and needs are contrasting or irreconcilable, a fair understanding of one another though contacts and communication can help. This has potentials or effects on the way conflict is expressed. This can make the expression of conflict

aggressively or violently replaced by non-violent advocacy, conciliation or attempted cooperation.

For the success of conflict transformation processes have been evolved. Although different writers emphasise different aspects, nevertheless, most of them seem to agree on the following for conflict transformation to be effective.

- Multi-level participation involving elements from all social levels of the involved parties, from top decision makers through middle range opinion leaders to grass roots constituents, including those who would normally be excluded from the process and whose interests would not be represented in 'normal' negotiations.
- Efforts to empower the 'underdogs' in the struggle so that between parties that are more equal than they could otherwise be.
- Efforts to ensure that those directly involved in the conflict can control the transformation processes to their own satisfaction and thus make sure that any outcomes have the approval and support of those affected.
- Focus not merely on immediate issues but also on long standing traumas and on any deep-rooted sense of past injustices.
- Brokerage by appropriate intermediaries who understand the culture and social structures in which adversaries are embedded.
- Co-creation of a new understanding of the conflict, how it arose and what it needs to be changed in order both to resolve it and to ensure that other, similar dispute do not arise in future.
- An ability to create and put in place procedures that will maintain and continue the changes found necessary to resolve the current conflict and prevent others arising in future, or-when they arise – taking on a protracted and destructive form.
- The mutual, inter-active education of adversaries about the nature of the socio-political and economic systems from which the conflict arose and of the dynamics of that conflict; and their training in skills that will enable them deal with that conflict and other that may arise in future.

The above according to Mitchell helps to understand the concept of conflict transformation in three main categories. The first category comprises those dealing with personal changes, the second, those dealing with structural changes and the third those dealing with relationship changes.

Conflict transformation is geared towards positive peace and restorative justice. In theory and practice, it transcends conflict management and conflict resolution. It stresses the restoration of relationships to the status-quo-ante of the conflict.

3.2 Types of Conflict Transformation

3.2.1 Issue Transformation

In many instances, issues are often shaped by perception and the fear of its effects on parties concerned. These are some of the factors that impinge on conflict transformation. Schmid (2000) defines issue transformation as a change in the political agenda of the conflict, downplaying the importance of original conflict issues and emphasising shared concern for new issues. However, for issue transformation to aid any conflict transformation process the particular types of conflict must be accurately understood and analysed. Therefore, a modification of Schmid definition becomes auspicious because other than political issues or conflicts there are other types of conflicts with vexed and salient issues that must necessarily be transformed. Issues of identity, security, religion, ecology and others also often need to be transformed. The main thrust of issue transformation is to make discordant tunes less salient while making concordant tunes better perceived and appreciated. Issue transformation also entails the dexterous handling or manipulating of issue structure and contents to enhance the possibility of conflict transformation. Issue transformation calls for the expansion of the agenda rather than restricting it to maintain social coalitions and the convergence of disparate interests.

Politically, arrangements supportive of the previous agenda will have to change. Put succinctly, the transformation simultaneously encapsulates several actors and connects issues and actors with each other. In large-scale conflicts, this may entail significant political rearrangement within most of or all the countries involved. This has to be done continuously and mindfully so as not to be seen as prying into the domestic confines or precincts of actors to avert violence and instability.

Surrounding most issues that need transformation are the parties' needs, interests and values, which are not always accurately and explicitly expressed by their positional statements. Interests, needs and values are the concepts that underlie most conflicts, yet one often mixed up. The concept of "interests" usually refers to what people or parties in a conflict want. They may be material things as they often are or not. They are usually negotiable people are willing to trade more or less are interest for more or less of another. For the fact that conflicts are defined based on the incompatibility of interests, it is assumed that for things like (money, land, jobs etc.) the more one person or group possesses the less the other party possesses. Therefore, when conflicts are conceptualised in the context of interest the conflict becomes a fixed-sum conflict or zero-sum game.

Needs are also things people want in a conflict. However, they are often immaterial things such as security, identity and recognition. Needs constitute an integral part of the human being. Needs are different from interests in many significant ways. First, they are often non-negotiable. Parties in conflict rarely want to trade away their identity, security or recognition. Identity especially ethnic and religious is so fundamental to human satisfaction, that people will go to any length to protect and preserve them. This may include the violation of fundamental norms, or reduce their ability to obtain their interests, in a bid to fulfil or protect their fundamental needs.

A second fundamental difference is that needs are often inextricably linked together. While interests may be arranged or shared in such a way that only one side gets its objective, needs based issues can not be so shared because of their intangible nature. Insecurity or denigration of one party's ethnic identity or the desecration of one party's religious symbols would likely trigger violence or aggression. It is, however, theorised that, if one's identity or security is secured, then the likelihood of threatening that of others is greatly reduced.

Values are also crucial to the social well-being of man. Values are fundamental beliefs that are non-negotiable. Values are the ideas, habits, customs and beliefs that are characteristic of particular social communities (Burton, 1990). Values determine how we understand the world and how we respond to it. Similar to needs, if one's values are questioned or threatened, one gets compelled to strongly defend one's values.

Since values and needs are non-negotiable, any attempt at issue transformation as part of conflict transformation process must pay due attention to the two. In order to transform issues values and needs must be extensively and dexterously handled. This is more expedient because of the increasing occurrences of intra-state conflicts especially in many African countries mostly based on ideological conflicts, which are inextricably linked to issues of needs and values.

3.2.2 Rule Transformation

As the popular saying goes, "rules are made for human being and not vice versa." Among the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria, it is also opined that there can be no violation of rules or norms where none hitherto existed. Rule transformation as part of conflict transformation processes usually occur during intense conflict or after. Vanyinen (1991) describes rule transformation as one of the measures to restructure a conflict. Rule transformation tries to redefine the norms which actors in a conflict are expected to follow in their mutual interactions. According

to the structuralist approach, the rules of behaviour have been presumed to be dependent on the position of an actor in the structure and in that way on its relative power and interests. This implies that rules would only alter the behaviour of an actor in a conflict based on the interests of the actors and the relative power it possesses to achieve the interests. In recent times, scholars such as Vaymen, 1991 argue that rules can have independent impact on inter-actor relations. This is why it is opined that a significant transformation of rules can be expected to alter actor behaviour and hence create a new basis for managing the conflict. At this juncture, it becomes apposite to explain further that rule transformation also aims to change rules operation in a conflict setting or surrounding the issues in a conflict in a way that will at least meet the needs of the parties in conflict in order to reduce violent or destructive confrontation.

In most international conflicts or large-scale civil wars, an outsider that commands true respect of the parties may be in the best position to initiate and manage it. To achieve proper rule transformation, some conditions are necessary. These conditions may include the disappearance of legitimate authority institutions and law and order. Zartunan (2001) illustrates this with six different cases – Lebanon, Liberia, Somalia, Zaire (Congo), Haiti and Yugoslavia. The rules have to changed or transformed in the aforementioned conflict theatres based on the stark reality that parties needed help to get out of the conflict web. The emphasis is on third-party diplomacy relying primarily on negotiation, not on military or other physical involvement although this may be involved ancillary. The six instances above confirm the efficacy of preventive diplomacy in initiating rule transformation. The cases are:

1. Lebanon under civil war from 1975 until 1989

- **February 1976:** Arabisation of the Syrian initiative to provide incentives and modifications for the proposed Constitutional Document while the conflict was still in civilian hands;
- **July 1982:** Reagan initiative that focused on the Lebanese problem, brought in Syria, and worked deliberately on a peace agreement;
- **March 1984:** Saudi and US cooperation with Syria to provide incentives and guarantees and to include militia and parliamentary leaders to reinforce the Lausanne Agreement and
- **December 1985:** March 1986. Saudi, Egyptian and Western involvement alongside Syria to broaden and strengthen the Damascus Accord.

2. Somalia under civil war after 1988

- **October 1988:** UNSC, Organisation of African Unit (OAU) and Inter-Government Agency on Drought and Development (IGADD) condemnation of Hawgessia massacre, mediation of monitored ceasefire, and convocation of national reconciliation conference under US – USSR leadership;
- **May 1990 – January 1991:** US – IGADD mediation of Siad Barne's resignation (such as arranged by Mengistu in March 1991) and leadership transition through a sovereign national conference (as used elsewhere in Africa);
- **March – June 1991:** Earlier UNSC authorisation of United Nations Operation in Somalia UNOSOM 1, with anus embargo and a more inclusive Djibouti congress.
- **March 1992:** UNSC authorisation of humanitarian intervention, peacekeeping monitors, confidence – building measures and a reconciliation conference, with a broadened mandate for UN mediator Salumonu, as a follow-up to the Mogadishu ceasefire;
- **March 1993:** Seamless transition from the United State Force in Somalia (UNITAF) to UNOSOM II, with a continuation of UNITAF policies of grassroot institutionalisation, enforcement, and policing; and
- **October 1993:** Firm reaction by US Forces to deaths at the Aideed Cornal.

3. Liberian State collapse into civil war after 1990

- a. **October 1985:** US desertification of fraudulent electoral results and support for the true court to end Doe's regime while political forces were still intact and the army had not been cleansed of anti-Doe forces;
- b. **June 1990:** US evacuation of Samuel Doe to safety and retirement offered by Nigeria and Togo, thus offering an opportunity for influence with Taylor;
- c. **April – July 1992:** Inclusion of all factions and a stronger mediation role for the Carter Centre's International Negotiation Network (INN) to provide fuller implementing details and a monitored disarmament for the Yamouskrov IV agreement;
- d. **July 1993:** Stronger mediation rule by the Carter Centre's INN and the Special Representative to the UN Secretary-General to provide for realistic disarmament and interim governance at Cotonou and;

- e. **July 1998:** Follow up to the Taylor-Kabbah agreement through redeployment of an augmented ECOMOG force along the Liberian – Sierra Leonean border and in the diamond region.
- f. **August 4, 2003:** ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) numbering 3,500 troops were deployed to Liberia. Nigeria contributed 1,500 troops to the vanguard. The mandate of ECOMIL included:
 - g. establishing zones of separation (205) between the parties to the conflict;
 - h. facilitating the functions of the Joint Monitoring Commission (JMC), in accordance with the Accra Agreement on Ceasefire and Cessation of hostilities;
 - i. taking necessary steps to guarantee the security and freedom of movement of personnel of the force and of humanitarian agencies;
 - j. forming the nucleus of an International Stabilisation Force (ISF) and preparing the ground for its deployment.Sources: Zentman (2001) and Yoramus (2005).

The instances above show instances where the rule governing primary parties were altered or transformed by third-parties through acts of preventive diplomacy. There are empirical cases of rule transformation within the gamut of conflict transformation approaches.

3.2.3 Structural Transformation

A major distinguishing feature of conflict transformation is the transformation of necessary structures. This is one of the fundamentals of conflict transformation that makes it different from conflict resolution and conflict management. The explicit commitment to effecting structural transformation goes a long way in transforming any conflict. This is even one area where consensus exists between conflict resolution theorists and practitioners on one hand and proponents of conflict transformation. This is because a durable peace can only be achieved with some level of structural change either political or socio-economic. This is often reinforced when the implication of not effecting the structural transformation becomes imminent.

It will not be incorrect to state that one of the causes of many violent conflicts is structural imbalance, especially in plural societies. This structural imbalance could be in terms of representation in places like the army, civil service and other national or juicy (plump institutions) (Galtung, 1996). For example, the protracted and violent intra-state conflict in places like Liberia and Sierra Leone were not unconnected to

structural imbalance in terms of who gets what in the highly centralised and seemingly unitary presidential systems of those countries.

Structural transformation also entails the influencing of structures officially to prevent any win – lose outcome or feeling in the post – conflict phase. The common concerns of the transformation school includes can be categorised into two. These are the need for sustainable structural and attitudinal change within society and institutions in order to address outstanding issues connected to the conflict. The second concern is an advocacy for the erecting or revival of indigenous and locale – compliant political, social and economic mechanisms and attitudes that discourage the use of violence in resolving or handling conflicts.

Before an effective process of conflict transformation can be implemented; there must be lucid understanding of structural conflicts. As put forward by Galtung (1996), *structure conflicts* can be well understood when compared with actor conflict. According to Galtung (1996) an *actor conflict* involves an actor who is also the subject, conscious of what he wants, why he wants it, and how he feels about what is and what ought to be. Galtung (1996) argues that structural conflict is rarely recognised or articulated by individuals. This implies that for people identity and against a structural conflict, there must be a mobiliser or instigator examples of these include; Saro-Wiwa, and Martin Luther King.

Furthermore, Galtung posits that a situation of structural conflict implies structural violence, characterised by a vertical structure. This features the repression of freedom, particularly political freedom, and economic exploitation. A structural conflict is sustained through some ways. First, the prevention of consciousness formation and conscientisation. This is done by using agenda setting as a tool or manipulation of information from above. Second, by preventing mobilisation and organisation of those in the lower stratum of the society. Conscientisation and mobilisation are often repressed by the entrepreneurs or lords of structural conflict and violence because they are the processes needed for people to identify and articulate their interests in the community. This is why structural conflicts are not easily articulated because identifying or understanding them is often made difficult or impossible by the conflict entrepreneurs, sometimes the state.

Therefore, it can be deduced that a social structure or system that allows formation of consciousness, conscientisation, mobilisation and mass organisation of people from below cannot be described as fundamentally structurally violent. In order to deal with structural conflict, Galtung

offers four approaches based on the non-violence school of thought. These are *confrontation*, *struggle*, *de-coupling* and *re-coupling*.

Confrontation implies selecting and addressing an issue that is central and reflective of the conflict. This approach based on Gandhi's famous Salt March (to Dandi in Gujarat, 5 April 1930) entails starting the issue clearly and expressing the desired outcome.

Struggle for overcoming repression and/or exploitation is concerned about how the struggle is prosecuted or implemented. In the Gandhi line of non-violence this must be by the non-violence methodology, that is "peace by peaceful means." The non-violence approach posits that a violent struggle against structural violence will lead to more violence especially against a violent state that uses the carrot and stick or hard-power in handling conflict. The assertion in this context is for the peace researcher to emphasise that conflict can only be solved if all parties are convinced that they cannot force the other(s) to submit.

Decoupling empirically means getting the exploited or repressed empowered to depend less on the structure that is exploitative. The purpose is to build autonomy and the ability for self-reliance in the masses. This implies looking elsewhere for services hitherto provided by the state.

The purpose of recoupling is to reintegrate those who were hitherto alienated from the structure or restoring people's or citizens' confidence in the state. This is usually through having an horizontal structure based on human rights rather than repression, equity instead of exploitation, autonomy instead of penetration, integration instead of segmentation, solidarity instead of fragmentation and participation instead of marginalisation. While decoupling aims to erect positive structures from below, recoupling strives to build new ones that are more inclusive and less violent from the top.

Therefore, structural transformation implies profound changes in the entire structure of inter-actor relations in a conflict setting or formation. Structural transformation is very central to conflict and its transformation especially social conflicts. The profound transformation of the structure that induced the conflict ensures the durability of the peace achieved in such circumstances.

3.2.4 Actor Transformation

Central to conflicts either at the inter-personal or community level is human being. The way human beings view and handles any conflict

determines whether it will be destructive or constructive conflicts. Based on the assertion of Galtung (1995:53) that:

“... conflicts are generally not solved... what survives after a conflict has disappeared from the agenda is conflict energy reproduced and produced by the conflict. Then energy does not die... it attaches itself to one or more conflicts, possibly also the old one”.

Therefore, the need for man, the chief agent in conflict to be empowered to transcend the conflict has informed the concept of actor transformation in conflict transformation.

One of the main factors to be transformed in any conflict is man or the actors. Either at the inter-personal or inter-group levels there are actors involved. Particularly, conflicts at the inter-group, inter-community and inter-national levels have the common features of leaders and followers or primary and shadow parties.

At the inter-personal level, a transformation of the actors or parties has direct and positive effects on the conflict. This can be achieved by strengthening actors' capacity to analyse situations and make effective decisions for themselves and to appreciate the views of others. It focuses on improving the actor's sense of empowerment or self-determination, and their abilities for recognition or responsiveness to others. This embodies the goal of the transformative approach to a conflict, beyond just reaching an agreement about the issues that appear to divide the parties or even less desirably – having intermediaries construct a settlement to which the parties are then expected to stick to.

In addition, at the inter-personal level, the potentials or advantages of transformational mediation cannot be ignored. Succinctly put, transformational mediation entails helping individuals to wriggle out of difficult circumstances and reducing human differences in the midst of conflict. This stems from the potentials of mediation to produce two useful effects, empowerment and recognition. Simply put, empowerment means the restoration to individuals on consciousness of their own value and strength and their own ability to handle life's problems. Recognition implies the reawakening in individuals of acknowledgement and empathy for the situations, problems and plights of others.

Transformational mediation at the inter-personal level also helps actors to define problems and goals in their own terms, thus validating the importance of these goals and problems in the parties' lives. In addition, transformational mediation can help the actors in being able to personally decide how or even whether, to settle a dispute and it can

help the parties marshal their own resources to address problems and achieve their own objectives. In short, the aim of transformational mediation is that it helps parties in conflicts to perceive it as opportunities for growth and transformation, not as problems that is, inherently and pathologically destructive.

The proponents of transformational mediation such as Bush and Folger also argue that transformation of society is an indirect result of individual transformation. Although they accept that this may need a long period of time to take place-especially in societies susceptible to violent and intractable conflicts like Cyprus, Sri Lanka or former Yugoslavia. It is nevertheless a desirable and worthwhile venture. This is because of potential to change the society through the individual. Although there is no fixed mode of achieving societal transformation through individual or actor transformation, it must however be based on the peculiarities of each case.

At the broader level, transformation of actors should include the general promotion of natural empathy and understanding between parties particularly among leaders, opinion makers and grassroots individuals, including a sense of shared responsibility for the origins and dynamics of the conflict in the first place. Furthermore, transformation processes should be targeted at erasing completely the sense of helplessness about the conflict among participants, especially those at the local and grassroots levels of the parties and at increasing the sense of empowerment. This should be targeted at achieving some impacts on the way they conduct conflict; its resolution and the structures that hitherto gave rise to it. At this level of actor transformation of conflict, emphasis should be on achieving major and widespread improvement in peoples.

- Framing and understanding of the issues in conflict.
- Acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the other party, its claims, concerns and hopes.
- Sense of responsibility for the origins of the conflict and the interactive manner in which it has inevitably been presented.
- Consciousness of the other party's perspectives and objectives, and reasons for their being held.
- Recognition of the need for short-term mutual re-assurance and building of longer-term trust between the parties.
- Sense of competence and capability in confronting the search for solutions to the conflict and undertaking actions to prevent repetition.
- Willingness to include the interests of those not morally represented in the search for solutions, including future generations.

- Acknowledgement of the existence of past grievances, injuries and traumas plus willingness to examine these thoroughly and to search for means of healing the damage caused through a variety of means, including reconciliation and mutually acceptable process of restoration and if necessary – redistributive justice.
- Acceptance of the need for a durable, inclusive and acceptable solution to a mutual problem, which may involve major structural change.

In another context, actor transformation within the ambit of conflict, transformation can include processes of disarming, demobilising and reintegrating of ex-combatants who usually constitute the primary parties in most violent conflicts. This is very plausible particularly at the phase of reintegration.

Actors are principal factors in conflicts whether at the inter-personal or inter-group level. The attainment and sustainability of peace depends largely on the extent of the transformation that has taken place within and amongst actors in conflict. Therefore transforming actors irrespective of the intensity of the conflict has a strong bearing on the conflict and relationships. The indispensability of actor transformation in conflict transformation has been stressed. The effect on conflict and relationship has also been highlighted coupled with a description of processes involved in conflict transformation. Appleby (2001) based on Lederach's thought on transformation proposes that actor transformation should involve the grass – root and mid – level players. These comprise well – meaning and respected leaders drawn from the community especially in cases of communal conflicts. This must however be done carefully not to inadvertently worsen the conflict situation by bringing people with veiled unscrupulous interest in the conflict or shadow parties.

3.2.5 Personal and Group Transformation

This option considers the prospects that certain positive changes exist in the heart of every person that could be harnessed to positively transform conflicts. Basically, reciprocal respect for one another must be harnessed to correct misrepresentations, mistrust, extreme dislike, deliberately distorted perceptions etc. It advocates the need for individuals to be willing to reach settlement with others with whom they had conflicts in time past. That is, people should be open minded about the idea of reconciliation rather than being rigid and deliberately prejudiced. Or, to state this principle more clearly, community-wide reconciliation efforts cannot result into any meaningful achievement in situations where individuals are blocking efforts to their personal transformation. It thus emphasises the need for individuals to embrace the idea of forgiveness

and entertain the idea to start anew with their former adversaries or enemies. Therefore, it is significant for the community elites or opinion leaders to be persuaded by the personal transformation agenda in order to for them to run with it to appropriately manage the conflict.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In the light of the above, it has therefore become imperative for conflict transformation to be embraced by all sundry. This is so because conflict transformation pays attention to how conflict transforms relationships, communication, perceptions, issues and social organisation rather than simply focusing on its end point as relates to conflict resolution and conflict management.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, two broad approaches to conflict transformation were discussed. The non-violent conflict transformation associated with Gandhi is vehemently intolerant of the use of either structural violence or direct violence, while the other approach is a combination of approaches that does not pre-suppose resolution of the issues or incompatibilities at stake, but tries to freeze the conflict, negate it or protect it through any available means. Despite the various approaches emphasised by different writers, most of them seem to agree on an all-encompassing conflict transformation processes. In addition, deferent types of conflict transformation were also discussed for proper understanding of students.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Discuss Gandhi's theory of conflict transformation.
- ii. Explain how an effective conflict transformation can be achieved.
- iii. Enumerate types of conflict and explain any two.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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