



NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
MASTER'S IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

**HOW CULTURAL DIFFERENCES INFLUENCE
CONFLICT WITHIN AN ORGANISATION:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NEAR EAST
UNIVERSITY**

RUFARO DENISE CHIPINDU

MASTER'S THESIS

NICOSIA
2018

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RUFARO DENISE CHIPINDU

20165446

MASTER'S THESIS

THESIS SUPERVISOR

ASSIT. PROF. DR. AYSE GOZDE KOYUNCU

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2018

ACCEPTANCE/APPROVAL

We as the jury members certify that “How cultural differences influence conflict within an organisation: A qualitative study of Near East University”

Prepared by

Rufaro Denise Chipindu

Defended on

05/06/2018

**Has been found satisfactory for the award of degree of
Masters of Business Administration**

JURY MEMBERS

**Assist. Prof. Dr. Ayşe Gözde Koyuncu
Near East University
Department Innovation Management**

.....

**Assist. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Ertugan
Near East University
Department Marketing Management**

.....

**Prof. Dr. Mustafa Sağsan
Near East University
Department of Business Administration**

.....

**Prof. Dr. Mustafa Sağsan
Graduate School of Social Sciences
Director**

DECLARATION

I Rufaro Denise Chipindu, hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “How cultural differences influence conflict within an organisation: A Qualitative Study of Near East University” has been prepared by myself under the guidance and supervision of “Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayşe Koyuncu” in partial fulfilment of The Near East University, Graduate School of Social Sciences regulations and does not to be the best of my knowledge breach any Law of Copyrights and has been tested for plagiarism and a copy of the result can be found in the Thesis.

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Name, Surname: Rufaro Denise Chipindu

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother and my late father. My late father taught me that you can achieve anything if you work hard and focus on your goals. Though you are gone, you gave me the wisdom and strength to achieve anything I want in life and I say thank you. To my mother, thank you for never giving up on me. To be where I am today, it is due to your undying love and support you continuously give me every day.

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ABSTRACT

HOW CULTURAL DIFFERENCES INFLUENCE CONFLICT WITHIN AN ORGANISATION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

People are often identified by their cultural backgrounds across the vast majority of societies that surround us. The diversity in cultures that exists have been seen to have an influencing factor on conflicts. The way people view and perceive things differently towards certain issues that may arise within an organisation. It has been noted that the differences in cultures have led to many clashes arising due to misunderstanding other people's cultural contexts. Inter-cultural and intergroup conflicts are types of conflicts that are influenced by religion, communication and values. The research study main objective is to examine the cultural differences that influence conflict within an organisation. The cultural theories in the research study elaborate on the cultural differences that exist and how they influence conflict in an organisation. The research study made use of explorative research design and qualitative research method. Semi-structure interviews were used as the research instrument. Sampling method that was used is Quota sampling with a sample size of fifty participants from diverse cultures. Data sources that were used are both primary and secondary data. Analysis of data was done using Qualitative Content Analysis. Results showed that that cultural differences influence conflicts greatly. Communication, religion and values were cultural factors that respondents noted to influence conflicts proudly. This research study will assist the management in any organisation create an environment where people appreciate cultural diversity. This can be done by creating social activities that allows people from diverse cultures to interact with one another hence giving room for learning and having a better understanding of other cultures.

Key words: Culture, Cultural Differences, Conflict, Interpersonal Conflict, University Students.

ÖZ

KÜLTÜREL FARKLILIKLAR ÖRGÜT ÇERİSİNDE ÇATIŞMAYI NASIL ETKİLER: YAKIN DOĞU ÜNİVERSİTESİ ÖRNEĞİ

Genellikle bireyler çevrelerindeki toplumlar açısından kendi kültürel birikimleri ile tanımlanırlar. Kültür ise içinde barındırdığı farklılıklar nedeniyle çatışmaları etkileyen bir unsur olarak görülmektedir. Bireyler bulundukları örgüt içerisinde bazı konularda farklı bakış açısına ya da farklı algılara sahip olabilmektedir. Öyle ki kültürlerarası farklılıkların diğer kültürlerle ilgili olarak yanlış anlamalara neden olduğu ve bunun da birçok çatışmayı beraberinde getirdiği bilinmektedir. Çatışma kavramı kültürler arası ve gruplararası olarak ayrı ayrı değerlendirilmekte ve din, iletişim ve değerler gibi faktörlerden etkilenmektedir. Bu anlamda bu araştırmanın temel amacı, bir örgüt içerisinde çatışmaya neden olan kültürel farklılıkları incelemektir. Dolayısıyla çalışmada, kültür ile ilgili teorilere, var olan kültürel farklılıklara ve bunların örgüt içerisinde gerçekleşen çatışmayı nasıl etkilediğine odaklanılmaktadır. Bu noktadan hareketle keşfedici bir araştırma gerçekleştirilmiş ve nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden mülakat uygulaması yapılmıştır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu araştırmacının kendisi tarafından hazırlanmış ve araştırma aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini farklı kültürlerden elli katılımcı oluşturmaktadır. Son olarak araştırmada birincil ve ikincil verilerden yararlanılmış ve niteliksel içerik analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar, kültürel farklılıkların çatışmaları önemli ölçüde etkilediğini göstermektedir. Öyle ki görüşmeye katılanlar iletişim, din ve değerlerin çatışma üzerindeki etkisini özellikle belirtmişlerdir. Gerçekleştirilen çalışma, tüm örgütlerde yöneticilere, kültürel farklılıklara rağmen huzurlu bir ortamın yaratılması açısından yardımcı olacaktır. Bunun yolu ise, farklı kültürlerden bireylere diğer kültürleri anlama, öğrenme ve iletişim kurabilme olanağı tanıyan sosyal aktivitelerin oluşturulması olarak düşünülebilir.

AnahtarKelimeler: Kültür, Kültürel Farklılıklar, Çatışma, Kişilerarası Çatışma, Üniversite öğrencileri.

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INTRODUCTION

Across the globe people are often identified by their different nationalities and diverse cultures. The different cultures encompass different views and perceptions that individuals tend to have towards certain situations within an organisation. Almeida (2002) defined culture as the behaviours, contents and the way people think. It focuses on individual's beliefs, values, customs and language that are transmitted through the interaction with others. Culture is of vital importance since it assists or aids people in the way they live and articulates the manner information is administered. There are cultural dimensions that are used to address people's cultural origin and how their culture is influenced by their nationality. This gives a clearer understanding of the different cultural dynamics that are around the world.

The diversity in cultures have often lead to misunderstandings arising between parties over certain issues that would have occurred. Miscommunication between parties are often due to differences in cultures and cultural distances (Shadid, 2007). The conflict that arises between individuals from different cultural backgrounds often differ in terms of the differences in religion, languages, values and living standards. There is less conflict between people that have cultures that differ slightly nonetheless are similar in a way. The differences in cultural standards as well as certain factors such as traditions were stated as inappropriate to compare or rather often seen as threatening to other cultures. Issues such as these tend to create a gap in cultures between individuals located in the same environment (De Dreu et al., 2007).

Cultural factors such as gender, religion, communication (language), social structure and values often influence conflict within an organisation due to differences in views and interpretation of situations (Triandis, 2000). Individuals from certain cultures may deal with conflict easily while others tend to find it difficult in dealing with it amenably hence this leads to the system of sweeping it under the carpet. Conflict is defined as a way people or groups view differences between themselves and other individuals in terms of beliefs, norms, values and

practices that are seen as being of vital importance to each of them (De Dreu et al., 2007). Conflict is triggered when there are cultural differences between individuals within an organisation or through general interaction with one another. This often leads to cross-cultural conflict which generally occurs in the context that individuals are not willing to understand each other's diversity in cultures.

Misunderstandings often arise due to miscommunication between parties which is caused by diverse cultures. The social culture of individuals has influenced profoundly on conflict within an environment. The individual's cultural background has influenced greatly in the way conflict is handled within an organisation (Kaushal and Kwantes, 2006). Every country has a way of doing things especially on the cultural context. Upon assessing it was noted that factors such as cultural differences, preferences, religious beliefs, social structures as well as ethnicity have led to intercultural conflicts within the organisation (Hammer, 2005).

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 Background of the study

In the past decades, the issue of cultural differences that exist in the society has been an area of interest for many researchers. Cultural differences is a structure arising from the mixing of people who come from different cultural backgrounds (Tereza and Fleury, 1999). Issues of cultural differences within organisations and societies often is highlighted on a regular bases which increases activities that arise from different countries. When people from different cultures do not understand their way of doing things, it was seen that people operating within organisations were prone to clashing with one another.

Nowadays, the number of students and staff working as well as studying in foreign counties come from diverse cultures. The differences that exists between people who are within any nation or culture are far greater than the differences that exists between groups. Cultural diversity is the representation in one social system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance. The significance of differences between people is what makes people to feel vulnerable within an organisation.

The way people behave towards other people that come from a culture that is different from theirs is often different especially due to their upbringing, education, personality, past experience and social standing (Bucher and Bucher, 2010). Numerous researchers developed studies that highlighted and explained the different cultures that exist from one country to the other. There is intimate space between different cultures which bring out different messages. These cultural differences also show that each individual within a society has a different

way of interacting with people that have cultural backgrounds which are totally different from theirs. Everyone grows up with a certain culture they follow in terms of their religious belief, dressing, norms, values and communication styles they use (Gardensuwartz and Rowe, 2003).

1.2 Statement of research problem

The cultural differences that exists in an organisation influences misunderstandings that arise between parties or groups which often lead to conflict. The different languages, religions, norms as well as values which are cultural factors that are within an organisation lead to misapprehensions of issues or situations that may occur between parties. How these cultural factors influence conflict has been noted to be negative since they strain relations between people involved. Conflict often occurs when people tend to focus mainly on their culture hence unwilling to learn and understand other individual's cultural ways. Culture that a person comes from tends to have a great influence on most of the conflict aspects in an organisation. This shows that the differences in culture tend to have an effect on how situations are handled when misunderstandings arise.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 Main Objective

- To examine the cultural differences that influence conflict within an organisation.

1.3.2 Secondary Objectives

- To identify how religion influences conflict within an organisation.
- To identify how communication influences conflict within an organisation.
- To identify how gender influences conflict within an organisation.
- To identify how social structure influences conflict within an organisation.
- To identify how values influence conflict within an organisation.

1.4 Research Question

- What are the cultural differences that influence conflict within an organisation?

1.5 Importance of the study

This research will assist in management of a multicultural organisation better and efficiently. It gives a better understanding on the differences in cultures that people have and the ways in which they approach situations that arise from misunderstandings that would have ensued. The management, staff and students will benefit from this research study. This will assist them in learning more about the different cultural dimensions that make up people from different nations and how cultural factors influence conflict. The researcher finds the research study as being of vital importance as it broadens the mind as well as assists in the linkage of what was learnt in some courses to practice. In addition, the research helped in giving the researcher experiences in researching and collecting information from various scholarly journals and books that pertained to cultural differences and conflict. The usage of certain data collection techniques for various sources made the research simpler. This research study will contribute also for further research studies in the similar research area as a guideline for future research work.

1.6 Definition of terms

Culture - This is what make up people in the society in terms of what they believe, language, habits norms and values that ground them and the way they behave in certain situations. It is what makes an individual appreciate, react and feel certain things that surrounding them.

Cultural differences - People come from diverse cultures that are unique and different in their own way. Many factors such as religion, language, ethnicity and values tend to be different depending on the nationality of an individual.

Cultural dimensions - These are used to describe a precise culture of different nationalities and how it affects the values that individuals have in relation to their behaviour or ways of doing things which influence conflict.

Religion - This is regarded as what an individual believes in and worships more or less as the practices a person does in terms of faith in a higher power.

Conflict - This is when individuals disagree or misunderstand each other which leads to miscommunication arising. This is mainly due to differences in personalities, views, interests and religious backgrounds.

Intercultural conflict - Conflict often occurs when people from different cultures do not understand each other. Often such people tend to have different ways of doing things especially handling the conflict in diverse ways.

1.7 Summary of Chapters

Chapter two focuses on literature review that exist pertaining to cultural differences and conflict. It explains previous work done by other researchers on the role culture plays and cultural factors that influence conflict. It explains the literature on various cultural dimensions created by numerous authors which explained the differences in cultures that people from different nationalities have and how they influence conflict.

Chapter three explains the methodology used for the research study. It explains the research design and method used for data gathering of the research. It describes the reason for using the research method, sample size, sampling method and research instrument used. It eludes the overall method used in obtaining data pertaining to the research study.

Chapter four focuses on the results acquired from semi-structured interviews conducted with participants and analysis of the results by making use of Qualitative Content Analysis System. It also summarises the results acquired from the interviews conducted.

Chapter five is the final chapter that focuses on the recommendations and conclusion of the research study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the empirical and theoretical studies in the area of cultural differences that influence conflict within an organisation (Griffin and Pustay, 1999). The sources of information for literature review will focus mainly on textbooks and scholarly journals. The focus will be on culture, cultural factors, cultural dimensions, conflict and its types that are linked with diversity in culture.

2.2 Culture

Brown and Race (2014) argue that culture as a variable in a research study was seen to be challenging to measure due to the numerous cultural measures and different definitions. Hofstede (1980) defined culture as the way an individual's mind is set in which it differentiates people from one group to another inclusive of the values that are distinguished from their backgrounds. Culture is not inherited rather it is erudite by people. According to Gudykunst and Kim (1992), culture is the way people share information among different people. Culture is what defines people from different countries in terms of their beliefs, values and norms which assist in an individual in operating in various conditions (Schwartz, 1992).

Culture shapes our lives to become who we are in the society (Munter, 1993). This is a contributing factor that is often changing regularly and is regarded as a vital dimension of people's lives. Groups in the society often distribute cultural messages that demonstrate the identities of people in the world set people apart

from one another (LeBaron and Grundison, 1993). Culture is a vital aspect in assisting people in having a better understanding of the way they behave and the reason why they react or operate in a certain manner. Van de Werf (1998) stated that people are driven to change their cultural principles when there is a change in situations. He added that members of the society have the ability to produce culture that is influenced by the environment they are located in.

The impact of how an individual thinks or acts is unknowingly due to people's cultures (Shadid, 2007). Cultures may differ in different societies within a country in that people are often members of a subculture.

2.3 Theories of culture

There were various cultural theories that were created by numerous researchers to ensure that people would understand that everyone comes from different cultures (Triandis, 2001). Cultural differences tend to influence conflict within organisations and societies because people view and deal with situations differently according to their cultural background (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008). The differences in culture are often linked to the differences in an individual's religion, language, standards and principles (Hofstede, 2011). There are many researchers that established different cultural frameworks that showed the differences and similarities in culture that are prone to conflicting with each other.

This research study focused on evaluating the different cultural theories that exists in order to establish how they influence conflict between parties within an organisation. In addition, each cultural difference sheds light on a better understanding of the national culture individuals are identified with. These theories were developed to show the differences in cultures that exist among people hence they show that their differences may influence conflicts to arise (Chow et al., 2002).

2.3.1 Geert Hofstede

One of the most influential researchers who established the cultural differences that people have. He established the five dimensions of national culture (Guirdham, 2005). The theory was created to summarise the differences

between societies in the world. The dimensions are important as they assist in establishing the differences in culture that exist in different countries (Hofstede et al., 2010).

2.3.1.1 Collectivism-Individualism

This is a dimension of culture that assists organisations in analysing how differences in culture influence conflicts (Hofstede et al., 2010). Cultures that are individualist in nature tend to be self-centred focusing on their individual needs over others. They are goal oriented setting out for their own personal desires and success over of those that belong to a group. The British, Americans and Australians are often associated to being individualist in nature (Weldon and Jehn, 1995). People associated with this cultural dimension tend to be seen as dominating hence they are associated with being autocratic in nature (Goldenberg, 1988).

The tasks that need to be completed often prevail over their relationships with others. Triandis (2001) established that individualistic people are good at shaping the environment that they operate in to suit their characters. It was discovered that individualists tend to create relationships that are artificial with people in their environment (McAuliffe et al., 2002). Carnevale et al. (1996) stated that individualist cultured people influence conflict since they do not consider other people's views or contribution in a working environment therefore inconsiderate of what people feel about their actions.

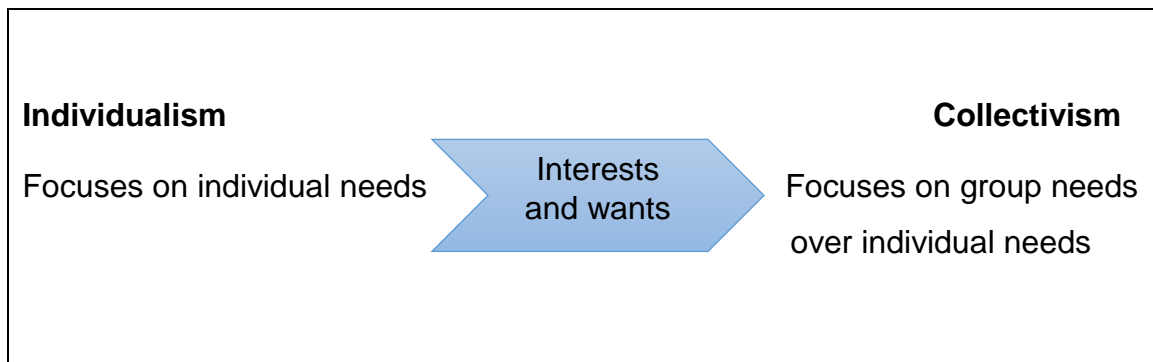
Individualists prefer to work by themselves and consider team work as a hindrance to the achievement of their goals hence they are regarded as selfish people drive by self-interest (Triandis, 2001). The disassociation of themselves from working in a group often influences conflict in that they view themselves as better than others hence undermining the abilities or capabilities of other people in a group (Hofstede, 2001).

Triandis (2001) established that people who are from individualistic cultures are prone to intracultural conflicts while collectivist cultures were certain in encountering conflicts that are intercultural in nature. He stated that

individualistic cultures focused less on hierarchy and are linked with having a low power distance.

Figure 1 below shows the difference between personal interest and group interest. Collectivist cultural societies are described as people who are loyal in their group context. Asians and Africans are often associated with this cultural dimension (Triandis, 1995). The people value the group goals over what an individual wants to achieve hence often make decisions as a group (Triandis, 1998).

Figure 1: Individualism-Collectivism



Source: (Griffin & Pustay, 1996)

These people are family oriented hence resources are often shared within the group. People in this cultural dimension focus on making sure the whole family is catered for (Triandis, 1994). Collectivist cultures focus on hierarchy and are seen to be more drawn to a high power distance (Triandis, 2000). Collectivists tend to show an individualistic attitude towards other groups in their society due to their view of seeing other people as not qualifying to being part of their group (Imada, 2012).

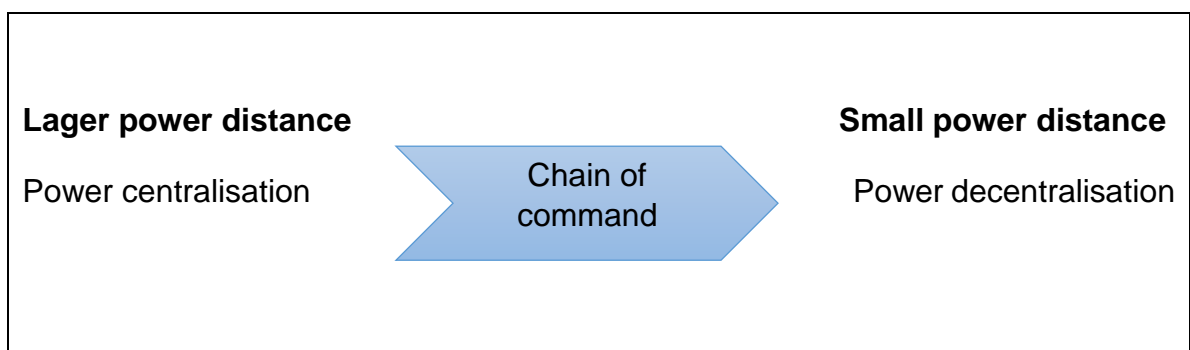
Collectivists often want a feeling of being needed in the society and they often want to have a role in the society. Rafferty and Tapsell (2001) mentioned that focus is not on individual desires however they thrive to accomplish goals through team work. Collectivists are bound to influence conflict among people within the group due to the fact that other people in the group may demand or

control others. Misunderstandings may arise because the group may become selfish and feel threatened by an individual who has unique traits.

2.3.1.2 Power Distance

This is a cultural dimension that focuses on hierarchy and status that is used in dividing of people in the society. Power distance often shows the authority that superiors have within an organisation over other people (Hofstede, 1993). The management of the institution demands everyone to respect the authority they have (Koerner, 2006). People from countries that have a larger power distance are often differentiated from one another through levels within the society. The focus of power within an organisation is shown in figure 2 below. People from Arabic countries showcase large power distance culture (Hofstede, 1993). According to Triandis (1995), misunderstandings are guaranteed to happen when management abuses their authority by not treating people fairly when it comes to performance of tasks. Some people may be good at their job however a manager may decide to find faults in their work in order to dismiss them from their job due to fear of being threatened that their position may be taken (Shadid, 2007).

Figure 2: Power distance



Source: (Griffin & Pustay, 1996)

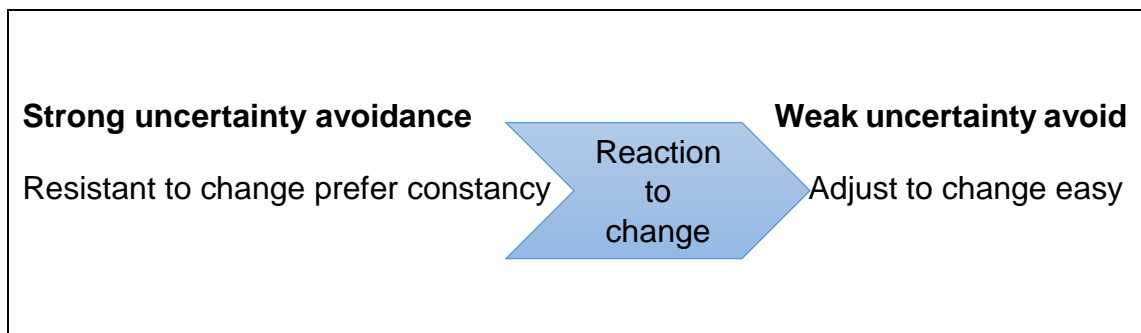
Griffin and Pustay (2005) stated that an individual in the top management exercises excess authority over its middle or lower management, the grievances from either of these strata becomes null and void. This is as a result of the incumbent of the top management being unnecessarily difficult to cope with. The cultures that have power distance that is small often focus on equality within an

organisation. In some cultures such as those found in Nordic countries where power distance is of no relevance, the organisation power is decentralised accompanied with an organisational structure that is flat (Halverson and Tirmizi 2008).

2.3.1.3 Uncertainty Avoidance

This is a cultural dimension that shows the degree to which people in the society express feeling being uncomfortable with ambiguity (Hofstede, 1993). The cultures that have an uncertainty avoidance that is weak have a certain preparedness in taking risks however dislike rules that are unwritten. Hadi (2004) stated that cultures that have a strong uncertainty avoidance are willing to follow rules and regulation set in the society or organisations. In figure 3 below shows the reaction subordinates have to change in a strong or weak uncertainty avoidance culture. The subordinates in a strong uncertainty avoidance cultural organisation are prone to remaining in an organisation which shows a tendency of being loyal. Conflict is bound to occur between parties located in a strong uncertainty avoidance cultural organisation (Shadid, 2007).

Figure 3: Uncertainty Avoidance



Source: (Griffin & Pustay, 1996)

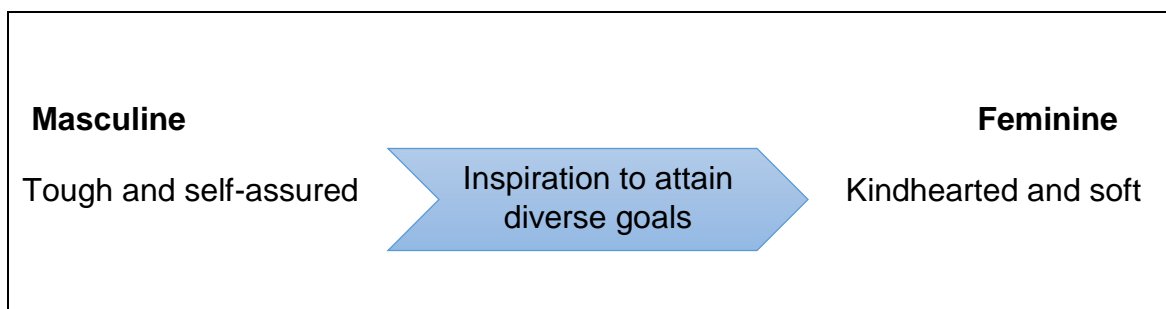
A cultural organisation that have a strong uncertainty avoidance tends to push employees in resisting to any changes that may occur within the organisation. Subordinates in this cultural organisation prefer consistency and stability in the way things are done. Conflict may arise between subordinates and top management when new structures and rules are implemented driving people to accept them without criticism (Overton and Lowry, 2013).

2.3.1.4 Masculinity-Femininity

This is a dimension that differentiates the roles of men and women in the society. In societies that are masculine in nature are often associated within narrow-mindedness while feminine societies are more oriented to being modest (Makovec et al., 2006). Griffin and Pustay (1996) alluded that both males and females are driven by accomplishing certain goals that are diverse. In cultures that are masculine, men are more goal oriented and performance driven. Cases such as these are witnessed with the Japanese and Austrian cultures (Shadid, 2007).

Figure 4 below shows the differences between masculine and feminine cultures. In feministic cultures, females are seen to be soft and often caring for other people. Scandinavian countries are regarded as to having societies that are dominated by females (The Hofstede Center, 2014). Conflicts arise when females in a masculine dominated organisation feel that they are discriminated from being promoted to top management positions when they have the required qualifications. Men in most organisations feel that women do not have the capacity to lead or that only males are able to be in top positions since they are tough not weak like women.

Figure 4: Masculine-Feminine



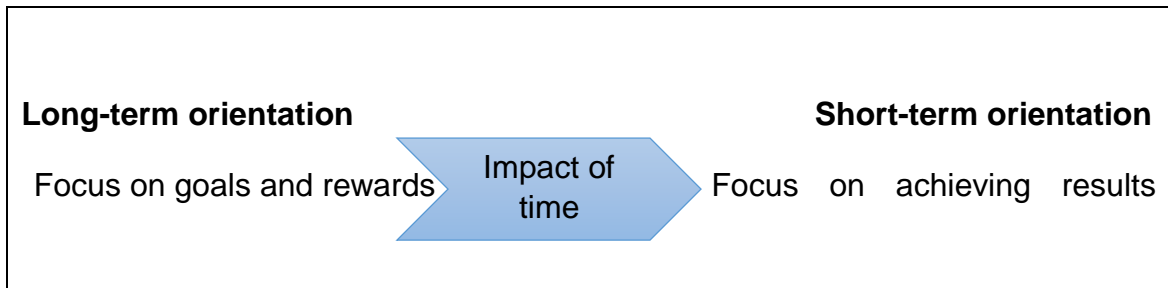
Source: (Griffin & Pustay, 1996)

2.3.1.5 Long-short term orientation

It is a cultural dimension that focuses on time and its impact on the future. In log-term orientation cultures put emphases in the future more than the present. People in this culture focus on attaining goals and working hard to gain rewards

(Makovec et al., 2006). Cultures that are short-term oriented focus more of their time on creating relationships with others. People in this cultural context believe that there is a linkage between what happens in the present and past (Basset, 2005). Short-term oriented cultured people are quick at achieving the desired results in an organisation (The Hofstede Center, 2014).

Figure 5: Long-Short-term Orientation



Source: (Griffin & Pustay, 1996)

Figure 5 above shows the differences between long and short term oriented cultures. Conflict is prejudiced when long-term oriented cultured people feel that short-term oriented people are putting less effort on their work than others do to achieve goals. The short-term oriented people are prone to making decisions faster which may jeopardize the organisation hence clashes are bound to arise with others who take time in decision making.

2.3.2 Fons Trompenaars

After Hofstede established the cultural dimensions used by different nations, Fons Trompenaars conducted further research that established the theory of seven dimensions of cultures that people from different countries have. Table 1 below shows the seven dimensions of culture. The dimensions that were developed showed the different cultures people have and the relationships that people have within a given society or environment they operate in (Thomas, 2008).

Table 1: The Seven Dimensions of Culture

Dimension	Focus
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Universalism vs Particularism	Which one is more important than the other – relationships or rules?
Individualism vs Communitarianism	Do people function more as individuals or in a group?
Specific vs Diffuse	Are much involvement do we get in?
Affective vs Neutral	Are emotions displayed?
Achievement vs Ascription	Is status given when you prove yourself?
Sequential vs Synchronic	Are things done one at a time or many tasks at once?
Internal vs External	Is the environment controlled or we work with it?

Source: (Trompenaars Hampden-Turner Consulting, 2009)

2.3.2.1 Universalism-Particularism

Cultures that are Universalist in nature are mainly focused on following the rules, values and regulations (Trompenaars, 1997). Universalist societies are inclined to the right things and dealing of cases equally and justly. The countries that are associated with being Universalist in nature are Canada and United States of America (Trompenaars and Woolliams, 2003). They view that rules must be adhered to at all times than focusing on creating good relationships with others. Conflict is influenced in universalistic organisations due to the fact that students and employees may not be willing to conform to rules and regulations that would have been set for them which leads to clashes occurring. Taking into account a situation where an organisation may implement a rule that women cannot wear a hijab to work may influence conflict.

Particularistic societies are more oriented to creating relationships with others than following rules. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) discovered that Russians, Indians and Chinese people are particularly associated

with this culture. Particularistic culture association and circumstance determines rightness and wrongness of an issue that would have occurred (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008). In organisations that are family owned, disagreements may transpire between a staff member and a relative of the owner of the institution who is also an employee. Particularistic cultures tend to consider that the family member or friend to the owner of the business is always correct hence an individual may feel their grievances are not being heard (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2004).

2.3.2.2 Individualism-Communitarianism

This dimension was first established by Hofstede then Trompenaars later elaborated on it further. Societies that are individualist in nature focus on what an individual wants and needs over what others want. Decision making is often made individually hence rewards are given for their individual effort (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008). While in communitarian societies, focus is on working as a group where goals and objectives are set as a group. Decision making is mostly done in a collective nature where a consensus is reached together as one team therefore nepotism becomes eluded (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Individualist cultures are prone to having misunderstandings with others in that they focus on their own goals and desires without considering other people's views or contributions to a given task or assignment. In cultures that are group oriented are prone to influencing conflict with people within the group where individuals may feel that their ideas are not being heard or often overlooked (Shadid, 2007).

2.3.2.3 Specific-Diffuse

This dimension focuses on the way people in societies interact with one another (Kippenberger, 2000). Cultures that are diffusive in nature tend to combine their personal and work life together. Diffusive cultures value qualities such as loyalty, appreciativeness and ambience (Gesteland, 2000). In this culture, employees are able to have meetings with their bosses outside work environment. In specific cultures, work life is never mixed with their personal life and their

relations with colleagues remain in the workplace. Top management in specific cultures tend to have no authority over employees outside the working environment.

The differences in cultures often impact on misunderstandings arising between parties. People from diffusive cultures may feel the completion of tasks are completed faster when they work after hours and sacrifice their lunch time. However, people from specific cultures may not be willing to sacrifice their lunch time or outside working hours to complete a task given to them (Trompenaars, 1997). Misunderstandings transpire when diffusive cultured employees might feel unrecognised in that they would be making more effort to complete the task earlier than others. They may feel that their workmates are deceitful while they are earnest in their dedication to work (Binder, 2007).

2.3.2.4 Emotional-Neutral

Gesteland (2000) mentioned that people who have a culture that is neutralistic in nature exhibit a lack of emotions in the environment they operate in. Poland is a country that has a neutralist culture where people have noble conduct and undisclosed emotions (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2000). Neutralist cultures pay much emphasis on elimination of personal sentiments on decision making process within an organisation (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008). People from neutral cultures have no physical contact with other people. According to Ross (1997), emotional cultured people express their emotions and feelings as well as physical contact with others.

People are allowed to express their emotions and making use of gestures to communicate. Trompenaar and Hampden-Turner (2006) stated that the lack of clear understanding and knowledge of practices that these cultures follow leads to conflict within the organisation. People with a neutralist culture may view people who express feelings as being unprofessional in the workplace while emotion cultural people may view neutralist people as being disrespectful due to their inability to portray emotions (Snodgrass, 2002). In neutralistic cultured people may incur misunderstandings as they view nonverbal communication by

emotional cultural people as being rude and impolite hence this influences conflict to arise.

2.3.2.5 Achievement-Ascription

In achievement cultures, people are driven by their status based on their performance and accomplishments over time (Trompenaars, 1997). People are rewarded for their performance and often making use of their titles when need be. The high status that people possess in the society is often measured according to their accomplishments. Ascription cultures focuses on who an individual is in society hence status is given according to who you are. Cultures that are ascribed tend to be derived from the time a person is born, age and gender (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2001).

The behaviour that people show often is determined by their roles in society in terms of their title (social status). According to the research that was conducted by Trompenaars (2002), the Polish and Chinese are associated with being ascription cultured while Indians and Canadians are achievement cultures. Organisations are certain to clash with one another due to the fact that when one is focused on being ascription culture oriented and the other being achievement culture misunderstand each other when communicating with one another (Luthans and Doh, 2008).

2.3.2.6 Synchronic-Sequential

This is a dimension that tries to evaluate whether cultures are able to focus on doing things one at a time or all at once. Sequential cultures value time in terms of completing tasks giving on time. The issue of punctuality is important hence arrival to a meeting or a lecture late is often considered disrespectful or rude (Luthans and Doh, 2012). British and German people are often associated with this culture. When an organisation has diverse cultures such as sequential cultured employees or students tend to be punctual for lectures, meetings or appointments unlike synchronic cultured people who do not value punctuality tend to influence clashes to occur with others.

Synchronic cultured people tend to multi-task many things at the same time hence less preference on time. Many tasks are often done interchangeably hence the targets are often flexible for such people (Trompenaars, 1997). Africans and Japanese people are associated with sequential culture. There is no urgency in the way things are done hence view time as being readily available. Synchronic cultured people juggle too many tasks at the same time (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1999).

Conflict follows when a synchronic cultured people believe that plans in a project may be moved however sequential cultured people believe plans drawn should be stuck to hence these differences influence the rise in clashes.

2.3.2.7 Internal-Outer Direction

This is a dimension that focuses on the way people control their environment. Inner direction culture view that for people to achieve their goals they ought to take control of the environment they operate in. People believe that they can take control of nature by making an effort to (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). Trompenaars (1997) stated that people who have internal direction culture are aggressive in nature. In outer directional cultures are peaceful people who strive to maintain good relationships with others. People in this culture are controlled by the environment surrounding them.

Outer direction cultures have a good attitude and behaviour towards others which assists them with evading conflict with others (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008). People that come from outer direction cultures often manage conflicts easily with others by having discussions that are open with others finding the best solution to the issue. Internal directional cultures are prone influencing conflicting with others due to their aggressive behaviours and attitude that have towards other people (Gudykunst, 2003).

2.3.3 Shalom Schwartz

Research was done on the values that diverse cultures possess making use of the different views. The cultural dimensions were created basing on the relation of the values an individual has and the way they can be connected with

their work (Hanges and Dickson, 2004). Conservatism and autonomy shows the needs of individuals and groups in the society. Conservatism is similar to collectivistic cultures that focus on working together to achieve group goals (Rafferty and Tapsell, 2001).

Autonomy focuses on needs of an individual from group needs showing similarities to Hofstede's individualistic culture (Guirdham, 2005). Hierarchy and egalitarianism is the second dimension that is almost similar to that of power distance. Main focus is on ensuring that people value fairness in their society. Egalitarianism culture views that people are equal and interests are shared. Hierarchy ensures that hierarchy is followed in the culture hence compliance with roles ought to be adhered to (Gouveria and Ros, 2000). Mastery and harmony is the third dimension where mastery is similar to masculine culture. In mastery, individuals are success driven focusing on their goals and individuality. Harmony is when individuals work in unity and are peaceful in the society they operate in (Guirdham, 2005).

The cultural dimensions evaluated how people differ in terms of their culture which explains the way people act in the society. Conflicts are an inevitable aspect that arises due to the clashes of diverse cultures. Cultural differences influence conflict in any environment hence it is difficult to understand one's culture or rather being in their shoes for a day.

2.3.4 High-Low Context Communication Theory

This is a framework that was created by Edward Hall to show the way different cultures communicate (Wurtz, 2005). The cultures are divided in two which are high and low context cultures which makes emphasis on the value different cultures place on communicating with one another. Hall (1990) stated that it is important to understand that people come from different cultural backgrounds which need to be understood for easier communication with others. He created a theory that showed the linkage of individualism to low context cultures and collectivism to cultures that are high context in nature hence

establishing theories that are connected to conflict which are intercultural in nature.

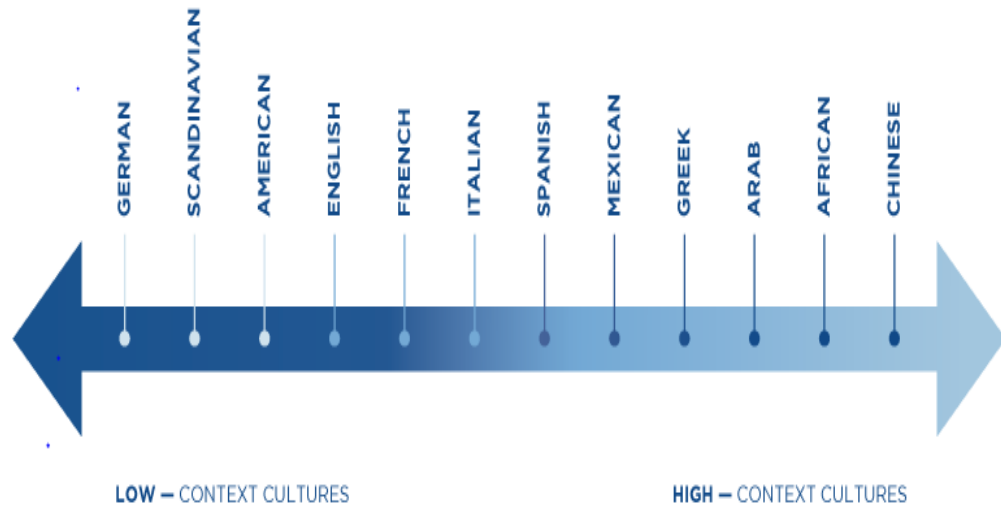
Low context cultures are often associated with being individualistic in nature where communication is direct and simple enough to understand (Dulek et al., 2009). The low context cultured people have relationships that are short. Sorrels (1998) mentioned that low context cultures are associated with being monochronic hence they see time as being tangible. In this cultural dimension, there is information that is gathered pertaining to individual's values and their behaviour towards others when clashes arise. It shows that there is a connection between certain cultural factors and their influence on conflict. Time is of vital importance to them hence it should be well spent on the right things. Tasks are completed on time and they adhere to deadlines being met. Individuals place much focus and preferences on what an individual needs over a group needs (Hall, 1990).

Under high context cultures, focus is on communication non-verbally making use of gestures and the voice tone. These people are collectivistic in nature hence group needs are more important than what an individual wants. The relationships that are created in this cultural context are often long lasting than of low context cultures (Hall, 1990). The communication in high context cultured people is indirect and polychronic in nature. Time is not vital in any way in that even when deadlines are not met it has no impact to them (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008).

Figure 6 adapted by Neese (2016) below shows the different cultures that are categorised as being low or high context. Conflict within an organisation is influenced when employees from different cultural contexts clash in terms of tasks being completed on time (Tung, 2002). When assigned with a task, low context cultures pay particular attention to meeting deadlines hence they are bound to clash with people from high context cultures in that meeting deadlines is not vital to them as long as tasks are completed (Hall, 1990).

This applies to Near East University since employees and students are from diverse cultural backgrounds hence the speed in completing tasks may differ due to cultural context they grew up in.

Figure 6: High-Low Context Cultures



Source: Adapted from (Neese, 2016)

2.4 Conflict

According to Kreinter and Kinicki (2004), conflict is when two parties have different opinions on an issue that would have arisen. The authors determined that conflict between two parties often need to be managed by a third party. Cole (2010) defined conflict as being a clash of interests of one group or individual with that of another group or individual were arousing of emotions occur hence solving the conflict with compromising strategy is nullified. He further added that disagreement is the reason for conflict occurring hence the degree of the conflict ranges from different levels. Mensah and Effah (2003) believed that conflict occurs when then party interests are different hence their views and opinions are always right over the other.

Kaushal and Kwantes (2006) mentioned that the way people's lifestyles are often busy tend to influence conflicts in the society. The way people focus on their personal needs first over others which often leads to behaving in a certain way towards others. Schmid (1998) alluded that parties involved in misunderstandings often strive to attain the same goals or rather tend to make an effort to achieve goals that are mismatched from the beginning. Spreitzer et al. (1997) stated that culture was one of the underlying factors that influenced conflict within an organisation. He stated that the behaviour of individuals was often influenced by their cultural backgrounds.

Conflict cannot be avoided in any way since it revolves around peoples' day to day life (Verma, 1999). Ramsay (2001) established that people prefer to live with conflicts that are unresolved than to try and resolve certain misunderstandings that cannot be solved. Fisher (2001) identified that conflict had many levels that are different in their own ways. The differences in the values people have and having feelings that are negative are seen to be triggering misunderstandings between parties (Azamosa, 2004). Meyer (2004) indicated that the way a person reacts to a situation often influences misunderstandings to ensue between parties.

Cole (2005) ascertained that disagreements are vital for change to occur in a society. He added that a state of indifference would arise within an institution due to the absence of the desire to contend among parties hence there would be no clashes that would transpire. Mullins (2007) mentioned that behaviour of an individual changes due to conflict hence they strive to hinder other people from achieving their goals.

2.4.1 Types of conflicts

Conflict often occurs in everyone's day to day life be it as group or individual in the society. Various researchers established that there were many different types of conflicts that exists in the society and organisations that people operate in. Shermerhom et al. (2004) stated that intergroup, interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and intercultural conflicts were the main types of

conflicts. He established that intergroup, intragroup and intercultural conflicts were influenced by cultural differences that people have hence some cultural factors such as religion, language and values were influencing aspects of the clashes to transpire.

2.4.1.1 Interpersonal Conflict

This is a type of conflict that occurs between two or more people that view their differences in goals and values from one another. It is a conflict that negatively affects performance of individuals within an organisation (Barki and Hartwick, 2004). The conflict occurs when people have personalities that are different which then results in clashes occurring due to their differences in opinions (Slocum and Hellriege, 2007).

Schat et al. (2006) established that conflict that is interpersonal was found within an organisation ranging from gossips and arguments that are petty. People who engage in interpersonal conflict often focus less on their work with the fear of engaging in other conflicts (De Dreu et al., 2004). Jamel (2007) claimed that most people are prone to stress which often is due to frictions with other people.

2.4.1.2 Intrapersonal Conflict

This conflict occurs within a person which often arises due to a goal. Slocum and Hellriege (2007) gave an example as to an individual's decision on a job position in two institutions which possess challenges on the salary and location. The researchers added that this conflict occurs when an individual is given task to complete by his or her superior that he or she regards as to being unethical. The conflict within yourself occurs on whether to carry out the task that is wrong in your eyes or rather to refuse and risk being dismissed.

Dimas (2007) indicated that the values an individual has as well as principles are guided by this type of conflict. It is inner fighting with one's self on certain issues that make an individual to become indecisive on which direction to take. It affects the way an individual communicates with others and their relationships because of the aggressiveness or anger a person may portray to others hence affecting their daily work (Amason, 2000).

2.4.1.3 Intragroup Conflict

Conflict on the goals and procedures that transpires between members of a group. Thomas (2008) stated that intragroup conflict occurs due to incompatibilities among some members of a team. Members of a group have a tendency of forming sub-groups which often leads to conflict in that the overall group performance becomes affected (Slocum and Hellriege, 2007). Coleman and Kugler (2014) highlighted that certain members of a group often display behaviours that lead or trigger conflict within the group. Research that was done on intragroup conflict established that conflicts tend to arise due to relationship and task related issues that people are focused in (Amason, 2000).

De Dreu and Weingart (2003) defined task conflicts as to the differences in opinions that group members have pertaining to a task given to them. This conflict has been seen as to being beneficial to groups when performing tasks that are complicated (Amason and Sapienza, 1997). Jehn (1997) stated that conflicts that occur due to relationships are triggered by the differences in values and beliefs that an individual has. Bono et al. (2002) believed that relationship conflict involves a personal attack on an individual which tends to lower their self-esteem. It is conflict that is very harmful to an individual as it can affect their social life.

2.4.1.4 Intergroup Conflict

Intergroup conflict is defined as disagreements that arise between group members in the same group or with other groups (Thompson, 2000). A contributing factor to intergroup conflict is competition between groups. Saroglou and Cohen (2013) established that individual's view that being part of a group gives them some sort of identity. The way a group interacts with other groups is influenced by the way they view themselves. Fisher (2000) argued that conflicts that are intergroup transpire due to the different interests hence this influences the attitude that members have towards other groups. The differences in values, needs as well as incompatibility are elements that lead to intergroup conflicts in an organisation.

Herriot (2007) stated that religion as a cultural factor is important for a group in securing its identity hence conflict occurs due to fault lines in religion. Religion is not always a factor that influences conflicts within a group however it serves as an identity element that separates groups that are clashing with each other (Saroglou and Cohen, 2013). Religion provides individuals with a sense of belonging as it increases their self-esteem when being part of a group. Religion assists in connecting members together within a group (Krietner and Kinicki, 2006).

Neuberg et al. (2014) discovered that religious infusions that are high in groups were prone to conflicts that would arise because of biasing and discrimination of other groups. Groups that are weak endure constant confrontation from the other stronger groups which results in conflicts. Brandt and Renya (2010) argued that religion does not play any role in intergroup conflict however differences in personality is a triggering factor for misunderstandings that arise. Kashima (2016) argued that religion is an underlying factor in culture that influences intergroup conflict. He discovered that when people have different religions they view things differently hence what a person does or wears may be taboo to the other. He added that while one group is able to work with men the other group may be religiously prohibited to do so.

Kashima (ibid) stated that religion plays a central role in every person's life. He mentioned that cultural aspects such as differences in beliefs, ethnicity and race play a vital role in influencing intergroup conflict. Researches that were done in this context by few authors supported this notion made by Kashima stating that religious beliefs were an underlying factor that lead to conflicts (Mavor et al., 2011).

2.4.1.5 Intercultural Conflict

Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2003) defined intercultural conflict as being the mismatch of beliefs and inharmoniousness of goals that arise when communicating with people from diverse cultures. The researchers added that intercultural conflict is associated with cultural groups that are formed in societies

which also influence the way an individual acts. Triandis (2001) mentioned that this type of conflict includes a degree of judgments made by people and their ethnic opinions. The diversity in cultures that people have in the society is the root cause of intercultural conflicts. Individuals have different ways of understanding the appropriate behaviour others should possess when communicating upon a misunderstanding arising.

The attitude and behaviour that people have towards each other often results in conflicts arising which lead to complex situations occurring (Ting-Toomey and Oetzel, 2001). The authors pointed out that miscommunication and misunderstanding between parties were the reason for intercultural conflict arising. The breakdown in communication between parties occurs due to being unaware of other people's cultural forms of communication. The difference in religious beliefs, values, preferences and interests of parties cause conflicts. Zweifel (2003) established that conflict would intensify between parties due to ambiguity. He added that intercultural conflicts arise when parties do not know or understand each other's languages.

The different viewpoints that people have tends to clash with what an individual strives to achieve personally (De Dreu et al., 2007). Intercultural conflict is associated with the diverse cultures, languages and mentalities that individuals have (Ling and Lim, 2007). Schmidt et al. (2007) mentioned that intercultural conflicts are bound to ensue in an institution full of people from diverse cultures hence these clashes often lead to strained relationships. Ting-Toomey and Takai (2006) established that intercultural conflict arises due to the differences in worldviews of one cultural group which are mismatched with another group's cultural worldviews operating with the same organisation. Frictions then arise between different groups of individuals that are cultural based.

Hofstede et al. (2010) argued that most intercultural conflicts were due the differences in values an individual has which are considered as the factor that dominates all other factors. He added that people in society have values that are different hence every individual has different values from another therefore

conflict is inevitable. The differences in culture influence conflict to ensue among people within the same society hence it is a contributing factor for misunderstandings to arise. It was noted that people find it difficult to tolerate the cultural differences that are in the society they operate in (Hofstede et al., *ibid*).

2.5 The role culture plays in influencing conflict

Kamil (1997) stated that cultures is an emblematic dimension that is embedded in people's lives. Culture is inscribed in most of the conflicts that arise in an organization. Culture is always seen as an aspect in conflict, either as an influencing factor or as a playing a role in it (Ross, 1997). Culture influences conflict however it does not generate it therefore the two are seen to be intertwined (Avruch, 1998). The behaviour an individual has towards other cultures is often due to their cultural background (Van de Werf, 1998). Leonard and Law (2004) stated that culture influences the way people communicate with each other in groups. The cultural differences that people have pervades conflicts from arising.

The role of culture in influencing conflict is that it outlines people's insights on conflict and assists in the way they respond to clashes that would have occurred (Worchel, 2005). It was established that culture played two vital roles in conflict. Firstly, ethnicity and culture of an individual was noted to serve as a way to establish the different groups that are involved in the conflict. Secondly, is the role that culture plays within an intragroup hence culture outlines people's perception of conflicts in a society (Worchel, *ibid*). When an individual or a group have different values clashes arises when people do not want to acknowledge that differences amongst them exist hence viewing others as being abnormal (Kaushal and Kwantes, 2006).

Shadid (2007) is of the opinion that the way an individual views themselves apart from others is influenced by their culture. Culture has an effect on the way people frame their relationships with others and detects people from diverse cultures view conflict. Any conflict that centers on an individual's identity, a cultural component is usually there. Culture pervade conflicts in every way hence it

occasionally tends to cause intensity amongst individuals. Tensions that arise because of conflicts between employees or students are due to the different cultural disciplinary which lead to strained relationships (Avruch, 2009). Since culture molds the perceptions people have, differences are bound to surface with people within an organisation (Deep et al., 2017).

Lewis (2013) stated the cultural experiences are rooted in an individual hence culture assists in the way people behave when conflict arises. Social instability is caused by culture hence conflicts arise between parties. Culture also influences the interaction people have with others therefore encouraging individuals to behave in a certain way towards selected people (Boggis et al., 2013). The cultural background of an individual tends to interact with their personality. It was noted that even though culture plays a vital role in influencing conflict, personality of an individual also has a contributing factor to conflict arising amongst people. Personality of an individual is seen as a mediating and contributing factor in clashes occurring (De Dreu et al., 2007). The conflict that often arises between parties is often personal in a certain way even though there is a cultural element to it.

2.6 The cultural factors constituting to the differences that influence conflict

There are numerous cultural factors that frequently influence the way people react or behave in certain manner. These are factors that cause people to misunderstand each other due to their differences in culture. The cultural factors include religion, values, communication, social structure and gender (Shadid, 2007).

2.6.1 Religion

This is an important aspect in every culture which is focuses on what people believe in. Several countries tend to value religion differently as it is a factor that makes up a nation or defines it. Griffin and Pustay (1999) mentioned that religion is what shapes people in terms of their attitude. The combination of what people believe in and practice tend to impact greatly on individuals values towards their religious beliefs (Saroglou, 2008). There are various religions

around the world which are mostly dominate in many countries which include Islam, Christianity and Hinduism. Hunter (1991) is of the opinion that conflicts that are influenced due to religion have an adverse and positive effect towards the developments in the world. Beckford (1985) established that religious conflicts had increased due to the political as well as economic modernization in the world.

Huntington (1993) stated that religion often is unseen as factor that affects the society however it is in fact a social factor that influences conflict. The values a person has tends to play a vital role in religion in that it helps in the way an individual becomes committed to their religion. Carment and James (1998) identified that the attainment of goals that are of value to an individual often are due to the religion they belong to therefore it provides opportunities for them. Weigel (1992) highlighted that the main source that continues to trigger conflicts in many societies or communities is religion. Religion is indented in people from different nationalities therefore it has been noted to lead to conflict.

Conflict arises due to the policies that are implemented by the organisation and individuals or groups religious practices (Triandis, 2001). In Christianity women are often allowed to do what man can do in terms of being given positions in an organisation. Women are at par with men there is no one better than the other. Unlike in the Muslim community woman are usually not given higher positions than men seeing as though they should always be under them (Kulkarni, 2012). Conflict is influenced in terms of following of religious holidays in a country with a religion that is not Christianity. Muslims are strict about their religious holidays that they should be adhered to however Christians do not see the need to follow their religious holiday since they have their own holidays that they follow.

In an institution conflict is influenced taking into account Near East University which is located in a Muslim country. The institution only started recognizing Christmas as a public holiday for all international staff and students in 2017 due to the vast complains that their religious holidays were not being recognised however people had adhere to the Muslim holidays only. This then shows that religion is an influencing factor in conflicts.

2.6.2 Communication

This is the exchange of information between two or more parties about a message. This is the involvement of a person who sends the message and the other who receives it. The messages may have a third person who acts as a mediator in transmitting the messages from the sender to the receiver (Krauss and Morsella, 2000). For feedback to occur, the receiver of the message needs to interpret the message properly before responding. There are different meanings to the way people communicate in every culture (Shadid, 2007). Communication may be done either verbally or none verbally depending on an individual's cultural background or rather nationality. When communication occurs between people from different cultures, it was noted that there is the influence of a cultural-induced language conflict that arises due to the differences in attitudes that people have towards each other (Gao, 2002).

Communication is seen as being one of the central hub of conflicts. The reason being that when there is poor communication between people, they tend to halt interacting with each other hence it leads to strained relationships. Conflict is influenced when there is miscommunication and misunderstandings between individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Shadid, 2007). This could transpire between an academic staff member and a student. When a student answers a questions in a certain manner and the lecturer may feel the student answered in an aggressive manner it leads to conflict taking place. Conflict could arise when staff member's timetables clash and the other staff member would not be willing to compromise in terms of changing the day and time for their lecture.

Poor communication influences conflict between the two parties nonetheless the approach used when communicating could lead to strained relations. Lack of proper communication between students from different cultural backgrounds stimulates conflict due to the facial expressions and gestures that they use may be misinterpreted as being disrespectful. One party may be misconceived to be arrogant and rude towards the other party (Usunier and Lee,

2005). When people speak different languages they are bound to misunderstand each other when communicating with one another.

The institution's registration office on a regularly bases encounters conflict with most students. This is due to the miscommunication or language issue were people may not understand one another when discussing the student's issues. Both employees and students influence clashes to occur with others due to their lack of properly communicating the problem at hand. A study that was made by (Vallaster, 2005) established that most individuals or groups of people encountered conflict due to language differences in that interpretation of a language from Turkish to English or vice versa may mean something totally different to what the person intended to say.

British and Australians in the English language may mean something totally different according to their views. This leads to misunderstandings arising due to language barriers between parties. Garcia and Canado (2005) argued that cultural differences and background they come from as well as the usage of English language often was noted to leading to intercultural conflicts amongst people. Communication issues often arise when people speak the diversities of the same language.

2.6.3 Gender

Robbins and Judge (2011) established that the ability of people in reading each other and how they react to a situation differs between males and females in the society. Benschop and Mieke (2011) is of the opinion that processes in the organisation and their practices are often rooted in gender. According to Woods and Eagly (2015), gender is regarded as what shapes people in a society we are born in. Reilly and Neumann (2013) asserted that it is important understand how gender differences play a role in influencing conflict. Faniko et al. (2016) stated that differences come from the gender stereotypes who are of the opinion that women are supposed be housewives while the men are the ones who are supposed to go to work and support the family.

Blackburn et al. (2006) suggested that in society's conflict is bound to happen between females and male dominated societies. Saroglou (2008) added that people who are stereotypes tend to influence conflict within the work place due to gender discrimination occurring within the organisation. Wood and Eagly (2009) mentioned that living beings and groups in the society are certain to conflict with each other. There are many characteristics that are associated with female roles as well as male roles in the society (Weisberg et al., 2011). David (2015) established that when people in an organisation are discriminated due to their gender they are prone to conflicting with one another.

The element of biasness is stated when employees fight for equality treatment in their work environment. Wood and Eagly (2015) pointed out that women were seen as being sensitive, family oriented and empathetic while men were often described as dominant, goal focused, hard and competitive. Gardner and Gabriel (2004) stated that man who are in high positions in organisations have a tendency of discriminating women or hindering them from acquiring higher positions than them. Cadinu et al. (2013) is of the opinion that groups that are created in an organisation which are inclined to gender equality tend to lead to stereotyping taking place hence this influences clashes.

Most countries that are restricted by their religions such as Islam often have inadequate employment openings for women. This is due to their belief that women should not be interacting with males who are not their husbands which is inclined with their religious rules. Research that was done by many feminists groups evaluated that most of the organisations have operated in societies that are patriarchal and viewed gender as *“one of the important characteristics of contexts in which status relations and values is negotiated”* (Taylor and Miller, 1994).

2.6.4 Social Structure

Jameson (2009) is of the opinion that social structure is the way people structure their relationships with others over a certain period of time. The vast majority of societies tend to have certain attributes and behaviours that they have

due to their social structure location. A social structure is often termed to be the base in every society as it assists people with the societal roles that they play (Griffin and Pustay, 1999). The structure of the organisation determines the way people from diverse cultures are treated. The roles that individuals often play within a group or family tend to differ from one society to another. The Chinese and Arabs often view family as being of vital importance when doing business however Americans do not value this notion much (Granovetter, 2005). There are various components that constitute to social culture with include the culture, groups, social class as well as status of an individual (Griffin and Pustay, 1999).

The issue of discrimination comes in to play since every organisation has a chain of command. Employees and students cannot gain direct access to the head of the university hence they have to pass through the proper channels when they need to air out their grievances. An element of discrimination may occur since the top management is not fully represented by diverse cultures that are in the organisation which influences the rising of misunderstandings to transpire. This then leads to people being treated differently due to their race and ethnicity orientation (Mizock, 2013). African students working in the institution tend to be given fewer benefits than the other students who are not of African ethnicity. The work being done by both groups is the same however conflict is inevitable between the parties and the top management due to preferential treatment.

2.6.5 Values

Schwartz et al. (2000) defined values as what an individual sets as standards and ideals that they stand by in their day to day lives. It is seen as to what people view as being important to different cultures. Values are things that people hold as being significant to them (Allen and Friedman, 2010). These are the goals that motivate people to achieve what they want working towards them. When individuals have different values about what they want, often they tend to consider different things as important to them leading to conflicts due to mismatched objectives (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). Conflict Research Consortium (2005) discovered that most of the conflicts that transpire in the society are

influenced by the differences in values hence persuading the parties involved in the conflict is difficult.

The values a person has are often difficult to change because they are grounded in a person they do not disappear overnight. In an institution people are bound to conflict with one another due to their unwillingness in negotiating in changing their morals (Shadid, 2007). Students and staff members tend to believe that their values are affiliated with those of the institution often until an issue ensues. When a person's values are challenged or questioned that is when individuals realise their importance in their lives. The values that elderly people within an organisation tend to have are different from the younger ones. The failure for people to accept that people have different values is what often influences conflicts to arise within an environment. This influences people to insult others in terms of their character which makes the situation worse (Kimmel, 2000).

Barash and Webel (2002) argued that when two parties have different ways of communicating their values to each other their behavior towards one another tends to become negative. The individuals are of the belief that their way of communicating their values is better than the other hence viewing other people's acting or intellect is regarded as being bizarre or substandard (Kimmel, 2000). This is one of the most challenging factors of culture when it comes to influencing conflict in that when people have different values they know what is correct and wrong hence there is the inability to change a person on what they believe in (Shadid, 2007).

2.7 Managing conflicts arising from diverse cultures

According to Overman (1991), conflict that arise due to diversity in culture may be better managed when people have a better understanding of individuals cultural differences within an organisation. Horwitz et al. (1996) mentioned that managing diversity in the organisation may assist in changing some values and attitude individuals have. This aids in people having a greater understanding and tolerance of the diverse cultural backgrounds that people come from operating within the organisation. Francesco and Gold (2005) mentioned that the cultural

differences that people have encompass various characteristics which include the ethnicity and gender.

Management tries to establish the best solutions that combine the characteristics by ensuring that people within the organisation are valued in accordance with their cultural backgrounds. Green et al. (2002) stated that when management is equipped in managing culture diversity within the organisation, it creates an effective working environment that has reduced conflicts. The researchers added that management can create awareness of cultural diversity on a daily bases in an organisation which then encourages employees to embrace other people's cultural differences. When managing diversity within the organisation, there is reduced conflicts that are influenced by cultural differences due to the fact there is better understanding of people's identities (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2007).

Jones and George (2014) mentioned that top management may limit the number of conflicts that may arise due to cultural differences by developing values that are ethically inclined with positive attitudes for better usage of the human resources within the organisation. When people are aware of how diversified the organisation they are operating in is, it allows individuals to change their attitudes towards others hence improving the behaviour that they may have around others. Therefore an organisation's management ought to have a better understanding of the fact people come from cultures that are different and view or respondent to certain situations that may arise when interacting with others in a certain way.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter explanation is made on the research design and research methods used for the research study. It explains the sampling technique and sample size that were used for study. The data collection method and procedure are also explained as well as the data analysis. It explains the way the researcher ensured ethics were considered in conducting the research study. The explanation of the validity and reliability of the research study are made in the section.

3.2 Research Design

This is an arrangement for acquiring data used in solving and structuring problems. It is a framework that stipulates the type of information collected which makes use of certain procedures. The research design is vital for the research study since it ensures that the required measures are taken so that the research study findings are valid (Saunders et al., 2012). Usage of a research design assisted the researcher in acquiring the relevant data that conforms to the research area being investigated. The research study was qualitative in nature and exploratory research design was used. It is a research design that is used to answer the “how” in the research topic. It assists the researcher in examining data closely in a specific context (Yin, 2009).

3.3 Research Method

Berg (2007) stated that qualitative research is the characteristics, perceptions and description of things. According to Crewswell (2009), data

collection which is qualitative in nature is often made through the use of interviews, analysis of content, observations and questionnaires. Denzin and Yvonna (2000) are of the opinion that qualitative research processes meanings that are not tested experimentally in terms of their quantity and amount. The data analysis under this research study incorporate the interpretation, evaluation and contrast of information collected from individuals (Hatch, 2002). The research method used was qualitative in nature on the grounds that of the discernments that are under study tend to be viewed as being vital to the research study.

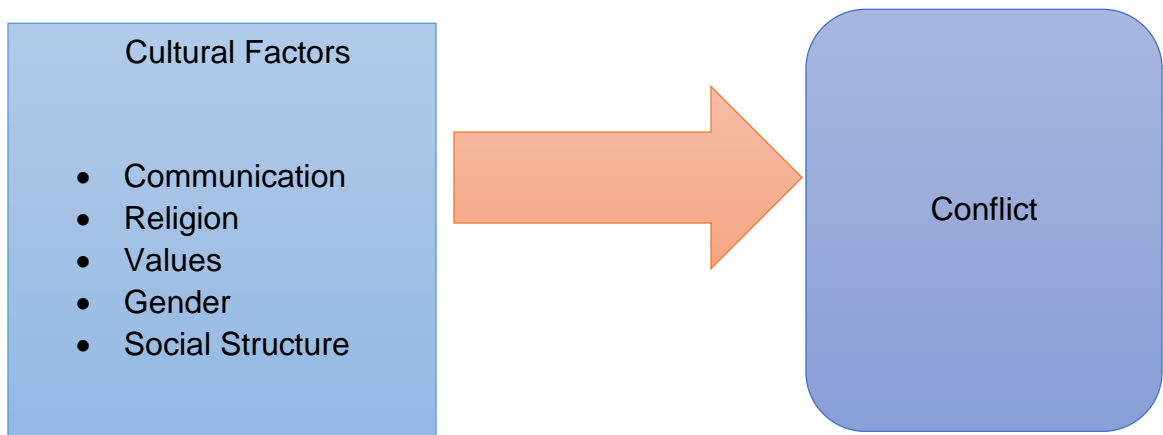
The researcher made use of qualitative research due to its comprehensive analysis of information taking in to account the existence of individual cultural differences in the society. In addition, this method was used since it provided a complete and systematic representation of the research study. The research study aim was to understanding how cultural differences influence conflict within an organisation. The reason for using this method was that the researcher wanted to evaluate what individuals thought of about being in a diverse cultural organisation and how they viewed this diversity as being the influencing factor for conflicts to arise amongst them. This would assist the researcher in having a better understanding of other people's opinions about the topic at hand.

Qualitative research is very open and flexible hence this is another reason why the researcher chose this method. It assisted the researcher in attaining the relevant information in a relaxed setting with participants being free and open about their views and experiences in the area being studied. Cultural differences influence conflict within an organisation is an area that has not been clearly researched on by many researchers hence it is an area that is of vital importance in organisations and the society's people operate in. It is an area that has been overlooked which needs other individuals to research on making information readily available to others. It was imperative that the researcher made use of qualitative research that assisted in the collection of information source that is rich of which the data collected in a quantitative nature will not be able to provide.

Bryman (2004) supported the usage of qualitative research since it gives accessibility to additional information when collecting data in the research study which is attributed to its nature of being open. The reasons stated above show that qualitative research method is the preferred method used for data collection in the research study. Case study was used to get an in-depth detailed understanding of how cultural differences and cultural factors had an influential element in conflicts within the organisation. The study was conducted in one area which led to focusing on individuals located in one institution. The demerit of qualitative research is that analysis of data is done in words hence the research becomes subjective in nature which may lead to overload in information.

3.4 Research Model and Hypothesis for the study

Figure 7: Conceptual Model



The cultural differences that exist and influence conflict are supported by the cultural theories explained in chapter two of the research study. The cultural factors represent the independent variable that influence conflict within the organisation while conflict is the dependent variable in the research study. The following hypothesis can be drawn from the model above:

H₀: Cultural factors do not influence conflict within the organisation.

H₁: Cultural factors influence conflict within the organisation.

3.5 Sample Procedure

3.5.1 Sample Size

Bell (1993) defined a sample as being a subset of a group where information is collected pertaining to the research study. It is the selection of a group of people within a population that are taken for assessment. A sample of people are drawn in a way that it fairly represents the population as a whole. The sample focuses on individuals from diverse cultures who are part of the employees and students at Near East University. The participants of the research study included both female and males of ages between twenty to sixty-five years located within the organisation. The sample size of the research study was limited to fifty participants since qualitative research focuses on a small sample size.

The researcher made use of semi-structured interviews which are known for needing an in-depth analysis of information hence the more reason that qualitative research makes emphases on a small sample (Saunders et al., 2015). Upon conducting interviews with the fifty participants, the researcher decided that the data collected had reached a point of saturation. Brod et al. (2009) stated that saturation of data arises when explanations become repetitive and are no longer focusing on the research study.

3.5.2 Sampling Method

The sampling method used in the research was non-probability sampling. The method that was used for selected individuals are gathered within a sample to participate in the research study however not all are selected. A benefit of using non-probability sampling is that is an expedient system used by in research studies in sample gathering that yields no costs (Robin and Babbie, 1997). When conducting a pilot study, it makes use of non-probability sampling method. Non-probability sampling is used when the researcher attempts to attain information from individuals that may become sensitive to the questions that are asked.

People are unwilling to contribute information that is truthful when situations that raise ethical concerns hinder the researcher from communicating with all the people in the sample. Quota sampling method was used for this

research study. Bell (1993) defined quota sampling as a process of data gathering from a group within a population. It focuses on distinct features that are reflected within the sample. The research study focused on the cultural differences that exist in the institution hence the population was divided into specific groups according to the ethnicities of the people. The sampling method that was used, influenced by the researcher's topic.

There was representation of both genders equally in each group. People have different cultural backgrounds hence each group viewed and contributed differently to the research study. The participants were grouped in accordance to their ethnicity however each country has subgroups in the society which have different cultural factors that influence conflicts. This prompted the researcher in dividing the study into groups. The benefits of using quota sampling include collection of primary data is done in a faster manner and it is a cost effective method to the researcher (Saunders et al., 2012). The demerit of this sample is that it has an element of biasness when collecting data which may affect the researchers work (Morse et al., 2014).

3.6 Sources of Data

The research study encompassed both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through the use of interviews with participants. Data collection was made from selected students who participated in the research study during their free time. Selection of participants was made by placing them in a specific cultural group. Secondary data was focused on the previous researches that were done by other researchers on cultural differences and conflict which encompassed the use of relevant scholarly articles and journals that were written in line with the research study.

3.7 Research Instrument

Blaxter et al. (2006) mentioned that a research instrument is a tool that is used for the process of gathering information pertaining to the research study. The researcher made use of semi-structured interview for data collection. Semi-structured interview was chosen as the research instrument for the research study

in accordance with the research topic. The qualitative nature of the research study prompted the choice of this instrument due to its ability to acquire information that is in-depth and detailed from participants. The research study focused on individuals located in one institution which aided in the examination of the cultural differences that influence conflict amongst people in the organisation. The selection of the research instrument was influenced by the objective of the research study which was in line with the area being researched on. Semi-structured interview was selected as the research instrument used for data collection. This research instrument gave the research direction by providing the relevant information on the manner of establishing how conflict was influenced by the diverse cultures that people came from.

3.7.1 Interview Questions

Saunders et al. (2015) stated that the when selecting questions for an interview must be in line with the objectives of the research study. The research study interviews were directed by interview questions which focused on themes on the questions that were asked to the respondents. The research study interview questions were guided by five pre-set themes that focused on the area under study.

The first theme of the interview focused on the respondents' background in terms of their age, nationality, religion and gender. This assisted the researcher getting familiar with her participants.

The second theme of the interview was centered on whether respondents have encountered conflict before. It had a follow up question on where they had encountered the conflict. This was asked to establish if respondents had incurred any type of conflict before.

The third theme focused on the cultural differences that respondents viewed as influencing the conflict. It also focused on the role culture plays in influencing conflict in a multi-cultural organisation. The researcher aimed at exploring more on the research topic at hand.

The fourth theme focused on the cultural factors participants thought influenced conflict and how they viewed that these factors influenced conflict. This assisted in attaining the impact cultural factors had in triggering misunderstandings. The researcher was trying to establish respondents' views and personal experiences effect on their operation in the organisation.

The last theme of the interview was influenced by the discovery that conflict had another influencing factor another than culture that played a major part. This prompted the researcher to ask participants opinion on whether differences in personalities influenced clashes to arise. This theme was prompted by the discovery of literature that stated that personalities had a hand in influences conflicts in an organisation.

The question that was asked at the end of the interview gave an opportunity for participants in voicing their view on the research study and assisted the researcher in establishing better ways to minimize diversity in culture as a factor that would influence conflicts in societies and organisations.

3.8 Data Analysis

General strategies was regarded as being one of the strategies used in analysing data in a qualitative nature (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The method that was used in analysing data ought to be in line with the research method used in the research study (Schumacher, 2010). Creswell (2013) mentioned that there were four steps that should be taken when analysing data that is qualitative in nature. First step is data collection, second step is data reduction for coding and theme setting, third step is placing the data into coding and themes and lastly codes as well as themes are organized and conclusions are drawn. Neuman (2011) stated that data collected should be categorised in a manner that is recognisable in order for easier analysis.

The researcher was aware that the respondents' actions that were non-verbal in nature were put into consideration as being an influencing factor to the responses given to the interview questions (Coleman, 2014). The method that was used for qualitative data analysis in this research study was Qualitative

Content Analysis. Mayring (2014) established that qualitative content analysis assists a researcher in managing and coding of data in well-organised manner. Content analysis guides qualitative steps in a strict manner hence it is an effective way of analysing data. The researcher went through all the written notes that were made during and after the interviews numerous times for cross checks and better understanding.

Upon completing this the researcher identified the data and placed it under set themes and codes. The data was then placed in a coding scheme where it was grouped for data analysis. The interviewer documented information during the interview by taking down notes on a record sheet while the interviewee spoke. By doing so it reduced the biasness that qualitative research is associated with. The researcher played a vital role in qualitative research since the data collection process, analysis and results were done by her alone without any assistance from anyone. The researcher took corrective steps in eliminating any biasness to the research result.

3.8.1 Qualitative Content Analysis vs Discourse Analysis

Qualitative content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then make inferences about the messages within the texts, the writers, the audience and even the culture and time of which these are a part. Texts can be defined broadly as books, interviews, discussions, articles or really any occurrence of communicative language (Rourke and Anderson, 2004).

Discourse analysis is a qualitative method of analysis, which explores the meanings produced by language use and communication, the contexts and processes of these meanings. Discourse analysis aims to perceive and categorize various meaning-making processes, networks and practices from the data. Discourse analysis as an analysis practice includes various starting points and discipline-specific applications (Maaliskuuta, 2010).

Discourse analysis highlights the precarious nature of meaning and focuses on exploring its shifting and contested nature while content analysis assumes a consistency of meaning that allows for occurrences of words to be assumed equivalent and counted. Discourse analysis focuses on the relation between text and context, content analysis focuses on the text abstracted from its contexts (Herrera and Braumoeller, 2004). Therefore, the researcher opted for qualitative content analysis as a data analysis method due to its unobtrusive means of analysis of data.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The norms, values and morals assessment of participants in the research study is known as research ethics (Stockley and Balkwill, 2013). The interviewee's identity was kept private and confidential hence anonymity was a priority. The consent of the participants was sort before they participated in the research study therefore they were not persuaded or forced in participating. Participants had the option of withdrawing from the interview prior before it began. Each participant was labelled with numbers in order for none disclosure of their private details in terms of putting their names which prompted for documentation to become easier and quicker to obtain. The collection of data was gathered from participants was sorely used for the research study purpose. Respondents participated in the research study due to implementation of the anonymity factor that was considered by the researcher.

3.10 Validity and Reliability

Bouma (2001) defined validity as the meticulousness of data gathering on an instrument that determines what is being measured by the instrument used. The researcher carried out a pilot test on the participants which assisted in establishing previous mistakes that were made. An error that was discovered of improperly structured interview questions which could have yielded redundant responses from participants was amended in time before interviews were carried out. The semi-structured interviews were used in collection of data which made the research study to become reliable. The designing of the interview questions

ensured validity hence the threat that data would be bias was reduced greatly. Measures were taken by the researcher to ensure results were reliable. The reason that the researcher acquired a response rate that was high from participants was mainly attributed to the preventive measure of ambiguity that she took.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the results that were attained from the interviews that were conducted by the researcher. Themes were grouped from the responses that were given by participants which assisted in categorizing responses into sub-themes.

4.2 Respondents background

The respondents that were interviewed encompassed both staff and students operating within the institution. This is a theme that focused on establishing the respondents' backgrounds in terms of their age, nationality and gender. The ages of the respondents were between twenty and sixty five years which took into consideration that some staff members in the institution that are elderly. Table 2 below shows the list of participants who contributed to the study by giving their responses to questions asked.

Table 2: Research Participants

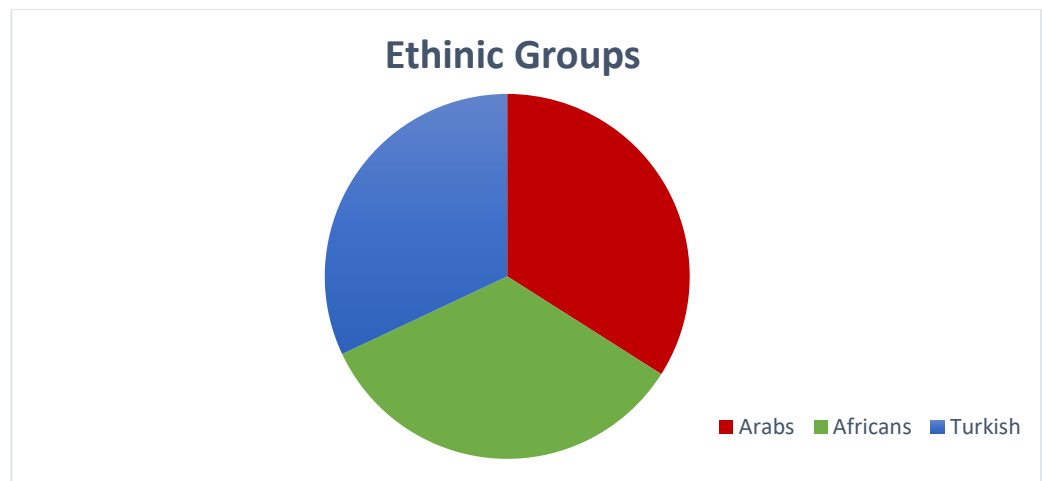
Respondents (R)	Age	Nationality	Department/Office	Study/Work Period
1	24	Kenyan	Accounting	3
2	27	Ethiopian	Business Administration	2
3	22	Jordanian	Nursing	3
4	43	Turkish	Tourism	5
5	30	Turkish	Online Services	3
6	24	Zimbabwean	Law	2
7	30	Syrian	Marketing	2
8	40	Turkish	Psychology	4

9	24	Saudi Arabian	Economics	4
10	25	Tswana	Computer Engineering	3
11	26	Ghanaian	Medicine	4
12	22	Lebanese	Banking and Finance	3
13	28	Ugandan	Mechanical Engineering	2
14	39	Turkish	Innovation Management	3
15	30	Turkish-Cypriot	Economics	4
16	45	Turkish	International	3
17	20	Yemen	Communication	1
18	32	Libyan	Marketing	3
19	24	Ethiopian	International	2
20	22	Angolian	International Relations	2
21	26	Congolese	Pharmacy	3
22	22	Zimbabwean	Economics	2
23	24	Syrian	International Relations	3
24	20	Palestinian	Banking and Finance	1
25	50	Turkish	Law	5
26	34	Iranian	Computer Engineering	4
27	32	Turkish	International	3
28	26	Lebanese	Banking and Finance	2
29	27	Turkish	International Office	2
30	42	Turkish	Tourism	5
31	25	Zimbabwean	Marketing Management	1
32	30	Nigerian	International Business	2
33	24	Syrian	Political Science	2
34	21	Palestinian	Psychology	2
35	23	Turkish	Economics	1
36	32	Turkish	Online Services	4
37	22	Ethiopian	Tourism	2
38	30	Nigerian	Construction Engineering	3
39	27	Lebanese	International	2
40	26	Libyan	Banking and Accounting	2
41	46	Turkish-Cypriot	International	4
42	30	Turkish	Civil Engineering	3
43	23	Syrian	Dentistry	2
44	20	Namibian	Nursing	2
45	21	Zambian	International	1
46	23	Algerian	International	3
47	34	Zimbabwean	International	2
48	51	Turkish	International	4

49	42	Turkish	International	3
50	32	Qatar	International Business	2

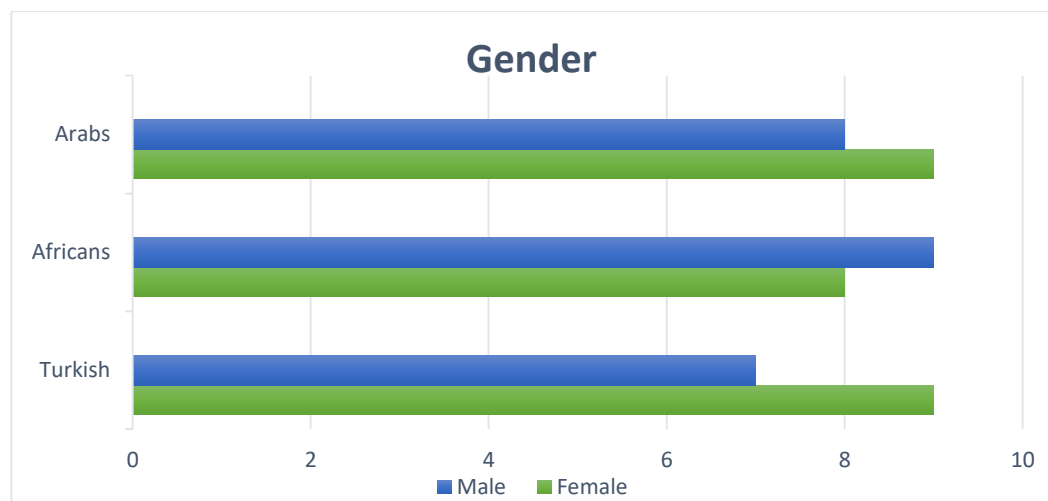
The research study focused on the cultural differences that exist hence respondents from different nationalities were interviewed and were grouped according to their ethnicity. The researcher grouped the responses acquired from the participants in three distinctive ethnic groups which were Africans, Turkish and Arabs which are represented in figure 8 below.

Figure 8: Ethnicity Representation



The researcher ensured that the respondents were gender balanced in order to ensure data was attained from both males and females for the research study. Gender representation of the three ethnicities is illustrated in figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Gender Representation



4.3 Encountered conflict before within the institution

Under this theme, the researcher was trying to establish whether the respondents had encountered any misunderstandings or clashes within the organisation. The researcher had sub-questions pertaining to the type of conflict that participants had encountered. The vast majority of African and Arab respondents stated they had encountered conflict within the institution in the Department and International Office. The researcher noted that these two places kept on being brought up by respondents when they were interviewed.

The majority of Turkish participants mostly mentioned that they had encountered conflict mostly within the institution in the cafeterias or just in the open far away from the departments. From the response that were given by participants, it showed that most of the people were incurring problems in two specific places within the institution.

Sought of conflict that was encountered by various respondents were mainly personal, cultural and racial type of conflict. All the three ethnic groups were frequently stating that personal and cultural conflicts were the main types of conflicts they had encountered. However, vast number of African participants mentioned that they had encountered more of racial kind of conflict.

4.4 The existing cultural differences influence on conflict

There are cultural differences that exists within the institution which prompted the researcher to strive in establishing whether they were regarded as having a contributing element in influencing most of the conflicts that people had encountered. This was the third theme which aimed at establishing people's views on the influence of cultural differences on conflicts.

African Ethnicity

Sixteen out of seventeen African respondents interviewed mentioned that they felt that the conflict they encountered was influenced by the diversity in cultures that exist in the institution. Most of respondents stated that conflict was

influenced due to the different values and different cultural backgrounds that people have. Some of the responses that participants gave are explained below:

A respondent pointed out that “everyone comes from a different cultural background which encompasses their religious beliefs and way they communicate with others.”

(R.1)

Another respondent explained that “people come from different cultural backgrounds hence people react in a different manner when placed in certain situations. There is also the issue of stereotyping people due to their race which often leads to people being discriminating or treated unfairly.”

(R.2)

Arab Ethnicity

The respondents under this ethnic group stated the similar statements as the ones that the African respondents mentioned. The focus was on diverse cultural backgrounds and difference in values as the reasons as to why cultural differences influence conflict. Eleven out of seventeen respondents explained that they were brought up in strict households hence they uphold their values highly. Some of the responses that were given by respondents are below:

One of the participants in the interview explained that an individual's cultural background often is overlooked even though it contributes greatly in conflicts arising. She emphasized that

“Each individual is different in their own way because their approach to certain situations differs due to their cultural background hence they have a certain value system that is within them which is unchangeable.”

(R.3)

People uphold the values that are embedded in them hence a times people clash due to the unwillingness of respecting a person's moral values. Another respondent said that

“Most of the local people are not enlightened on the fact that everyone has a culture they follow despite being far away from their home country their cultural background describes who they are which gives them a certain identity amongst others.”

(R. 7)

Upon interviewing another participant, she elaborated that *“people in general have different interpretations and understandings of situations which often is contributed to the different cultural backgrounds that exist.”*

(R. 9)

Turkish Ethnicity

Twelve out of sixteen Turkish participants mostly pointed out that the different cultural backgrounds that people originate from impacted on conflicts that transpire amongst people or groups within the society. Four of the respondents however were of the opinion that cultural differences did not have an influencing factor nonetheless rather other issues such as general judgment of others, clashes in personalities and a weak organisation system were the main reasons.

People generally did not understand that their upbringing is totally different from others hence they may not have been taught or used to having so many people from diverse cultures in the same place. The responded mentioned that

“It would take time for people to adjust to the fact that everyone has a different cultural background that is unique in their own way hence conflicts may be influenced when they stereotype others.”

(R. 4)

Another participant stated that *“the vast majority of people judge others by the way other country mates treat other people in the society which people view that everyone is alike in some manner because of a bad experience.”*

(R. 5)

While another mentioned that *“the cultural background that people come from and the moral values that are in them are not the same as others.”*

(R. 8)

Cultural differences that influence conflict in the institution

The researcher aim was of attaining relevant information from the respondents on what they viewed to be the cultural differences that influenced most of the conflicts within the institution. The vast majority of respondents from all the three ethnicities interviewed mentioned that the ethnicity (race) of people, gender roles and the way people communicate (body language and gestures) were the cultural differences they viewed to have an impact on conflicts. Analyses was made on the respondents' views pertaining to the cultural differences they highlighted which were according to their personal experiences.

African Ethnicity

The issue of race (skin colour) has been an issue that most of the African respondents pointed out to be influencing conflicts. Twelve of the respondents emphasized that it was due to discrimination and lack of understanding that arise with other ethnicities which lead to conflicts. The majority of female African respondents explained that they were often underestimated in terms of their capacity to achieve tasks given to them. Much emphasis was made on the fact that they were viewed as being unable to air their concerns when it came to having discussions with the males in the institution.

The communication element was an issue that was brought up by most of the respondents. Fifteen of the African respondents pointed out communication

with other people from other cultures influenced conflicts due to the fact that people tend to use gestures to communicate differently. Taking into consideration that people use gestures in terms of eye contact or facial expressions may be interpreted differently by people from another cultural context.

Arab Ethnicity

Thirteen out of seventeen respondents pointed out that gestures and body language were the cultural difference that influenced conflict. Many participants mentioned that physical contact with other people especially the opposite sex is prohibited in their culture as well as being enclosed in the same room with them. People from another cultural context will not understand this cultural difference which leads to them to become pushy into having direct contact with others hence misunderstandings arise. Nine of the respondents mentioned that they had faced discrimination because of their ethnicity and the fact that they could not speak and understand the local language.

Turkish Ethnicity

Many Turkish participants (eleven) mentioned gestures and body language were influential in conflicts arising when dealing with other cultural contexts. Respondents explained that the body language that someone uses when communicating may be misunderstood as being aggressive or provoking which often lead to misinterpretation of what an individual is trying to say hence conflicts arising.

Role of culture in influencing conflict

Culture is embedded in everyone as it defines who a person is in terms of their attitude and handling of certain situations. The interviews that were conducted brought out the reasons why culture was regarded as playing a part in influencing conflicts. Upon analysing it was noted that the explanations that many respondents gave included that people come from many different cultural contexts hence the differences in behaviours, different upbringing and different values that individuals had.

African Ethnicity

Sixteen African respondents pointed out that culture did indeed play a vital role in influencing most of the conflicts they had encountered. The difference in upbringing and values kept on coming up in the interviews hence people have a tendency of not recognizing them in terms of their existence.

One of the respondents said *“that people have different upbringings, values and beliefs hence people do not understand others in terms of their cultures.”*

(R. 10)

She explained that people tend to act as if they do not have insights on the fact everyone comes from different backgrounds that have different ways of doing things. A times people are not willing to understand that we all have a different upbringings that cannot be changed by temporally relocating to another country hence it is not easy for people to adjust.

In addition, another respondent explained that

“Everyone has a different way of doing things and uphold their cultural values greatly hence each individual feels that their culture is better than the other which leads to conflicts arising.”

(R. 11)

Among the respondents interviewed, one felt that in an environment that has cultures that are different people ought to make an effort to gain a better understanding of others cultural contexts. He stated that

“When an institution has people from diverse cultures, people tend to uphold their culture highly than others in terms of what they value, their behaviours or attitude they portray and their general upbringing which often is misconceived as being arrogant or proud.”

(R. 13)

Turkish Ethnicity

Majority of Turkish (eleven) participants also mentioned that they felt that culture was an element that contributed to conflicts. Upon analysing the data obtained from the interviews, it was established that the vast majority of respondents knew that people come from different upbringings however they choose to ignore and brush it aside. Some of the explanations given by participants are mentioned below:

People need to understand that everyone comes from a different upbringing. Generally people have different perceptions of others just by looking at them which often influences people in having the wrong perceptions of other people's cultures. The respondent said that

"People are brought up and not taught that there are many cultures that exist around the world hence tend to have a negative attitude towards other races due to lack of exposure which triggers conflicts with other people."

(R. 14)

Another respondent viewed that people's upbringings are different hence this may have an influencing element in conflicts since people's view things differently in their eyes. Some cultures tend to have no urgency in the way they do their things. She said that from her personal experience

"When an individual comes from a culture that is fast paced in everything they do they find it difficult to adjust or get along with other people who are not from their cultural context."

(R. 15)

"Culture has no role in influencing conflicts because I feel it is important to understand that people have different cultures and accepted that people are different hence there is the urge to learn more about the different cultures that exist in the institution."

(R. 16)

Arab Ethnicity

Eleven out of seventeen Arab participants mentioned that they felt that culture played a vital role in influencing conflicts. However, six of the Arab respondents stated that culture did not play any role as they felt the need to accept that people come from diverse cultures. Under this ethnic group, one of the participant's believed that:

"People tend to do things differently in terms of some cultures are fast paced while others are slow. He indicated that it is mostly attributed to the person's background and upbringing hence adjusting tends to be difficult for people to fit in."

(R. 17)

Majority of people have moral values that they have due to the way they were raised which may clash with other individuals who do not uphold theirs. Another participant elaborated that

"People have different ways of handling themselves when put in a certain situation because of their upbringing."

(R. 18)

In summary, many of the respondents spoke about the reasons they felt the conflict encountered was influenced by cultural differences that existed. The three reasons that repeatedly mentioned by respondents were the different cultural backgrounds, stereotyping of others and the difference in values. The issue of communication in terms of body language and gestures and ethnicity were the most mentioned cultural differences which most respondents from all the ethnic groups felt played a part in prompting the conflict to transpire. The information respondents gave showed that cultural differences influence conflict greatly in different ways.

When people have a better understanding that many ethnicities exists in the society and communication styles from one culture to another is different it would eliminate negativity and assist in accepting that each individual is different

in their own way. The cultural dimensions that support the cultural differences highlighted by the respondents in the literature reviewed are Hofstede's masculine-feminine dimension, Trompenaars neutral-emotional and Schwartz mastery and harmony dimension. This shows that cultural differences highlighted influence on conflict within the organisation greatly.

4.5 Cultural factors that influence conflict

This fourth theme was intended on acquiring information from respondents on the factors that they viewed as the ones that influenced conflicts. Upon conducting interviews with participants, many pointed out that the cultural factors they felt influenced conflict within the institution were religion, communication (language), values, gender and others. All three ethnic groups had their own opinions they gave pertaining the reasons why they had opted for the choices that they had made.

The reasons for cultural factors being the most influential in conflicts

African Ethnicity

Majority of African respondents made emphasis on religion, language, gender, values and others as being the factors they viewed as having an influential part in conflict. A few explanations that respondents gave for selecting these cultural factors are explained below:

“Religion determines the type of a person you will be hence conflict may arise due to the fact that people are not willing to accept the different religious beliefs people have. Language barrier influences conflict in that people will not understand one another due to not being able to communicate the same language hence miscommunication between parties.”

(R. 19)

The respondent highlighted that gender roles that exist in the society tend not to give women equal roles as men in terms of promotions. People are racially

discriminated because people lack knowledge or rather are ignorant that everyone comes from different ethnicities. She said that

“An individual’s upbringing shapes the values that a person has when growing up hence when operating in an organisation that has people who do not uphold the values that you have my cause clashes to arise.”

(R. 20)

Another respondent mentioned that *“due to the country being predominately Muslim there is a view that people should conform to their religious holidays and yet many individuals have their own religious holidays which are not recognised by the institution. She explained that this influences conflicts due to the fact that people are expected to conform to the religious beliefs of the country which are in total conflict to their religious beliefs.”*

(R. 21)

In addition, one of the respondent’s stated that the language barrier leads to misinterpretation of what an individuals is trying to say. She said that

“Most of the local people have an element of ignorance that most international students prefer English as the language of communication hence some people act like they cannot speak the English language yet they can.”

(R. 22)

People may say something and then translating it may mean something totally different hence misunderstandings arise. Emphasis was made by a few respondents that there is an element of discrimination that occurs especially with females in terms of their status and opportunities may cause conflicts since some cultures feel women and men should be seen as equals in societies while others do not.

Arab Ethnicity

The Arab respondents mostly underlined that religion, communication (language barrier) and values were factors they viewed to be influential in conflicts. Most of the participants made emphasis on the fact that language barriers within the institution makes communication difficult for both staff and students. A few explanations that were given by respondents are explained below:

The beliefs that an individual has may be different to another tends to influence conflict due to people lacking understanding. The respondent said that

“When meeting other people who are from the same religion who do not adhere to the laws tends to instill a person some sort of urge to approach others to change their ways which influences conflict.”

(R. 26)

She felt that communication with people that do not understand English tends to lead to the rise of conflicts since most people would prefer to speak their own language. She added that the local people expect everyone to learn their local language for easier communication however the local people are not willing to learn English which causes resistance.

Another respondent explained that he upholds his moral values due to the way he was raised and his self-conscious of what he does. He said that

“Many people within the institution are disrespectful and rude especially if your values and the way you uphold yourself is not in accordance with what they like.”

(R. 28)

It is difficult for many students to communicate with employees who do not understand or speak English well which leads to people conflicting with one another when people misinterpret or general lack of understanding of what you will be trying to say.

“The language barrier makes it difficult for people to explain or air out their grievances they face to in the institution with others who do not understand English language that much.”

(R. 23)

Turkish Ethnicity

Majority of the Turkish respondents emphasized that communication and values were factors they felt were most influential. Some respondents elucidated that most international students and staff are not willing to learn the local language for easier communication because they may feel there is no need for them to learn it. It tends to influence conflict in that the people may view themselves better than others.

“The inability for people to express themselves better when communicating has prompted people to misinterpret what an individual will be trying to say hence conclusively viewing others as being rude. The issue of people who understand English language tend to pretend that they do not hear what the other person is saying leads to misunderstanding to arise.”

(R. 25)

“The issue of values has been seen to be very influential in that people are ignorant to what other people’s values. The respondent said that different cultures interpret something that is done by another person or what they uphold may be of no importance to another culture hence people block the idea that everyone is different in their own way.”

(R. 27)

The ascent that people from different cultures have and the medium of communication leads people in not understanding what the other person is trying to say may influence conflicts. The respondent mentioned that

“The values a person has tend to differ from one individual to another were one may not find the need to respect another’s values tends to push people to the edge hence arguments may arise.”

(R. 30)

Conflict encountered due to the cultural factors

The researcher’s aim was to establish whether respondents had encountered any conflicts due to the cultural factors that they had selected. The responses that were given by respondents were similar since many of the participants kept on mentioning communication and values as being the cultural factors that lead to them encountering conflicts.

African Ethnicity

Sixteen of the African respondents mentioned that they had encountered conflict due to the cultural factors (language, values, others) while one of the respondents did not. Responses that participants gave varied in terms of the explanations they gave hence they frequently pointed out the same cultural factors that had influenced the misunderstandings that were incurred.

One of respondents gave a response explaining their view on encountering conflict due to two cultural factors. She mentioned that

“When approaching certain offices when trying to enquire about something they faced discrimination due to their skin colour hence often experienced being brushed off. She also added that the language barrier causes problems when trying to communicate with staff and students were people do not understand each other.”

(R. 31)

Another respondent expressed concern as to the way people are treated due to being racially different from others. He also mentioned the same factors as the previous respondent from his personal experience as having a vast influential element to the conflict. He felt that some people act like they cannot speak English

and yet would have spoken to them before in the same language. He pointed out that

“The fact that I am ethnically different in terms of my skin colour it seems to lead to people having a stereotyping element when it comes to being assisted or treated differently from others. I feel it is unfair for people to discriminate others just because of my African origins hence it makes me as an individual to have a negative attitude towards others who are not of the same ethnicity as me. The fact that people in such a diverse cultured organisation are unable to accommodate others is rather disappointing.”

(R. 32)

The only respondent that did not encounter conflict due to the cultural factors they had selected gave an explanation. He believed that people from other cultures are generally unfair when expecting the locals to learn English yet themselves are not willing to learn Turkish for easier communication. The belief that everyone ought to learn the local language by taking an initiative may give the Turkish people motivation to learn English hence their attitude towards other cultures may change drastically.

Arab Ethnicity

Twelve out of seventeen respondents had encountered conflicts due to the cultural factors that they had selected. However five of the respondents stated that they had not incurred any conflict due to those cultural factors. Majority of respondents made emphasis on the values that they uphold which are attributed to their religious beliefs. Most of the respondents also pointed out the issue of communication as being the major attributing factor in conflicts that they had encountered.

One of the respondent's interviewed pointed out that because of the way their parents brought them up they cannot afford to go against their religious beliefs and values in order to fit in with other people from different cultures. He underlined that

“People push you to go against your values in order for them to feel you can associate with them or feel as if you are part of them of which you will never be part of their cultural context hence this creates a barrier between parties involved.”

(R. 33)

The interviewer encountered another respondent who mentioned a similar explanation to that was given by the previous respondent. He explained that

“When you are brought up with values that are embedded in you people have a tendency of being ignorant or act as if they do not understand what grounds you influences conflicts.”

(R. 34)

He further explained that he had encountered conflict also due to the language barrier that is in the institution. The issue of having certain staff members who are unable to explain certain things in the English language posed as a disadvantage for international students who do not understand the local language which stimulates conflicts.

This showed that many of the respondents frequently highlighted the same cultural factors and gave relatively similar reasons to why they felt they influenced the conflict. The five respondents who did not encounter conflict did not give any explanation hence they just gave no as their answer to the question.

Turkish Ethnicity

Nine out of sixteen respondents explained that they had encountered conflict due to language barrier that exists in the institution. Majority of the respondents stated the fact that international students only want to speak in English hence if they made an effort to learn the basics of Turkish language there would less clashes arising. One of the respondents stated that

“When trying to communicate with other people who cannot speak Turkish is difficult since I cannot speak much English it takes time for me to translate what a person will be saying.”

(R. 35)

Another respondent highlighted the fact that many people are resistant to learning the Turkish language for better communication and understanding. She explained that

“I find it difficult to explain something to someone who doesn’t understand my language tends to cause many problems in terms of misinterpretation of what I will be trying to say to them.”

(R. 36)

He highlighted that even though people have different values they tend to contradict from one person to another even in the same cultural contexts which prompt to disagreements arising.

In conclusion, the information respondents gave showed that five of the cultural factors have a great influence on conflict within the institution. Many respondents from all the three ethnicities encountered conflict due to the various cultural factors they had selected as to having an influential element. They gave their views and opinions which were mostly centered on cultural factors such as religion, values, others and communication (language) as the influencing factors of the conflicts. Religion was a factor that was mentioned by many respondents in having an influencing part in conflict. This is supported by what Huntington (1993) mentioned that religion is a social factor that influences conflict. As mentioned in the literature review, Weigel (1992) supported this notion that religion contributes to majority of conflicts in societies.

Communication (language) was the most mentioned factor by most of the respondents. Gao (2002) stated that cultural-induced language conflict is influenced by improper communication between individuals. In addition, Shadid (2007) supported that conflict is influenced when there is miscommunication that arises with people from different cultural contexts.

Garcia and Canado (2005) established that conflicts are also influenced when people come from diverse cultures try to speak the same language which

leads to miscommunication and lack of understanding due to the different ascents. Majority of female respondents mentioned that gender was factor that influenced conflict. David (2015) maintained that when people are discriminated due to the issue of gender they are bound to conflict with one another. Cadinu et al. (2013) supported the perception that gender was indeed a factor that influenced conflict when there is gender inequality within an organisation leads to certain people stereotyping others hence clashes then arise.

Values that people have can be contradicting with one other which leads to clashes occurring. This was another factor that was highlighted as to having a contributing factor to conflicts arising. Barash and Webel (2002) supported that when two parties have different ways of communicating their values to each other their behaviour towards one another tends to become negative. Conflict Research Consortium (2005) also supported what respondents highlighted about this factor by discovering that most of the conflicts that transpire in the vast majority of societies are influenced by the differences in values that people have.

From the interviews the respondents mentioned that others was also a factor that contributed greatly in conflicts. It is the number one factor that tends to affect many African respondents when dealing with ethnicities that are different from them.

4.6 Differences in personalities influence on conflicts

This was the fifth theme that the researcher implemented with the aim of establishing the responses that were given on the area that was being examined. It was created in order to establish whether personalities that people have could influence conflict other than cultural differences.

African Ethnicity

Fifteen out of seventeen African respondents felt that differences in personalities that people have influences conflict greatly. Many of the respondents pointed out that this was due to the fact that people have differences in shared opinions, individualism and backgrounds. Some of the responses that were given are explained below:

One respondent explained that some people generally feel a certain entitlement which often is the largest problem people have. People are stubborn hence they feel things should go according to the way they want however not considering others leads to misunderstandings arising. He mentioned that

“People feel the need to fit in hence not willing to adjust to the current environment or society they are operating in.”

(R. 37)

The personalities that people have differ hence many people are prone to not getting along even when operating in the some cultural context. It has been noted that the environment or society a person grows up in tends to shape the personality of an individual. Taking note that many people have grown up in individualist cultures they tend put their preferences first other than others which makes it difficult for them to operate within a group with others.

Another respondent detailed that people who are socially may be seen by others as being too vocal hence it often leads to them preferring to operate as an individual than associating with others. He said that

“People have different personalities may misunderstand each other because people have different opinions in certain situations and different characteristics. In addition, people with personalities that are like are prone to conflict also when each individual perceives they are right pertaining to the issue at hand.”

(R. 38)

People generally come off to others as being mean and yet their personality may come off as being too aggressive which often leads to people being misinterpreted wrongly by others who interact with them. Many of the respondents expressed that people are different and personalities cannot be changed since everyone's backgrounds impact greatly in molding an individual to become the person they are today.

Arab Ethnicity

Thirteen of the Arab respondents agreed that different personalities have a contributing factor in the rise of conflicts. Majority of the respondents highlighted the fact that people share different opinions which are bound to contradict with others. Four of the respondents did not give explanation to why they thought personalities do not influence conflict rather just disagreeing with the question asked.

Emphasis was made by one of the respondents who explained that he found that some people are introverts while others are extroverts. He explained that placing people in one room who are more talkative than others are bound to log heads when communicating with one another. He pointed out that

“People tend to clash with one another because of clashes in personalities hence everyone is not willing to admit their wrongs or swallow their pride.”

(R. 39)

Shared opinions are different from one person to another were people view things different according to the way they understand in their own eyes.

Another respondent gave an example of what she encountered with another person within the institution. She explained that

“I apologized to one student when I bumped into her by mistake as I was rushing to class. Due to the differences in personalities she did not take it lightly and blow things out of proportion as if I had intentionally did what I did. I did not understand why she took it to heart considering I do not know her.”

(R. 40)

She explained that people need to understand that we all have different personalities hence people need to accept that and try to adjust to the fact that people do not tend to offend anyone by the way they act because it is not intentional. People have different personalities people tend to lack understanding

hence people feel that they are more superior to others which leads to instigating clashes.

Turkish Ethnicity

Twelve out of sixteen respondents said “yes” while four respondents answered “no”. Analysing the responses that were given by participants in the research study showed that individualism and different backgrounds were mentioned numerous times in the interviews.

When people have huge personalities while others have a reserved type of personality it may influence conflict. An individual may crack a joke while talking to people and others may not respond to the joke because personalities differ hence others may laugh while others will not see anything funny. One respondent highlighted that

“I am always smiling all the time that is who I am but I have noticed that others are always frowning or misunderstand my kindness for weakness hence interpretations differ from one individual to another. We have different opinions or views of what we encounter in our day to day lives hence often a times these differences lead to conflict.”

(R. 41)

Another respondent mentioned that the people behave in a certain way a person responds often leads people to react in a certain way usually when placed in a corner or just generally opinions differ. She said that

“People have different personalities hence conflict is inevitable between parties or groups involved in a discussion.”

(R. 42)

In conclusion, analysis was made that majority of respondents from all the three ethnicities felt that differences in personalities also influence conflicts in the institution. Responses that were given were similar as many of the participants highlighted some reasons that were alike emphasizing that people are different

not only because of their cultural backgrounds but in the way they perceive things. This was supported in literature review by De Dreu et al. (2007) that personality is seen as a contributing factor in most conflicts arising. Slocum and Hellriege (2007) mentioned that when people have different personalities it results in clashes arising because of the difference in views and opinions of a certain subject matter.

4.7 Hypothesis Testing

First hypothesis that was drawn for the research study was that cultural factors had no influence on conflict within the organisation. The results attained from the interviews showed that majority of respondents felt that the cultural factors have an influencing part in conflicts. Cultural factors that were mentioned include others, gender, religion, values and communication (language barrier). The respondents gave information that showing that five out of the six cultural factors have a great influence on conflict within the institution. Majority of the respondents that were from the three ethnicities had encountered conflict because of either one or two of the cultural factors they had selected. This shows that (**H₀**) that stated cultural factors do not influence conflict within the organisation is rejected. While (**H₁**) that stated that cultural factors influence conflict within the organisation is accepted.

4.8 Summary of results

Table 3: Data Summary

Results							
	Interview Questions	Ethnic Groups					
		Africans (17)		Turkish (16)		Arabs (17)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

1.	Encountered any sort of conflict before in the institution.	15	2	11	5	13	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where did you encounter this conflict? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department International Office Cafeteria Bus stop 					
2.	Sought of conflict encountered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Cultural Racial 					
3.	View that cultural differences that exist influence conflict.	16	1	12	4	11	6
	a. Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different cultural backgrounds Different values Stereotyping of others 					
	b. Other things that influenced the conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General judgement Clash in personalities Weak organizational system 					
3c.	Cultural differences that influence conflict in the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Gender Roles Body Language and Gestures 					
3d	Role of culture in influencing conflict	16	1	11	5	11	6
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different behaviours Different upbringing Different values Different views about others 					
4.	Cultural factors that influence conflict in the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion Communication (Language) Gender Values Others 					
4a.	The reason why the cultural factors are most influential in conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miscommunication (misinterpret) Lack of knowledge Discrimination Ignorance 					

4b .	Encountered conflict due to these cultural factors.	16	1	9	7	12	5
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of accommodating others • Lack of understanding • Resistance of learning • Shift in attitude • Contradiction of values 					
5.	View of whether differences in personalities influence conflict	15	2	12	4	13	4
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference in shared opinions • Individualism • Difference in background 					
6.	Suggestions or additional information pertaining to the research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training • Social and Sport Activities • Offer Language courses • Equal treatment • Prioritize English Language 					

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This is the last part in this research which includes the findings of the research study, recommendations and implications for management. Limitations and suggestions for further research in this area are also discussed.

The research findings that were obtained from the interviews that were conducted with participants are described below:

Upon analysing the results obtained from the interviews, it was established that cultural differences influence conflicts greatly within the organisation. According to the respondents, the way people communicate with each other is the major cultural difference that leads to clashes. Communication styles differ from one culture to another especially when people make use of gestures and body language when communicating with others. It frequently leads to people misinterpreting what the other person is trying to say hence misunderstandings transpire between parties or groups involved. The following findings will be discussed by linking them to the research questions of the research study that were in the introduction stage of the thesis.

What cultural differences influence conflict within an organisation?

This is concerned with staff and students perceptions whether they view the existence of these differences having an impact on conflicts. The cultural differences that were identified by participants were ethnicity, gender roles and usage of body language and gestures when communicating. Majority of participants explained the issue of racial discrimination that they faced when operating within the organisation. This would lead to people conflicting due to preferential treatment that was given to other ethnicities.

Gender roles often was a cultural difference that would lead to conflict because of women being not treated fairly as men. When women feel an element of discrimination due to their gender conflict may arise because of the feeling of being underestimated or incapable of completing tasks or assignments given to them. Communication between parties when making use of gestures and facial

expressions may be seen to be provoking the other person to engage into a conflict. Interpretation in various cultural contexts of the gestures may mean something totally different from what individual may think it meant.

What cultural factors influence conflict within an organisation?

Many responses that were given by respondents centered around four cultural factors that they viewed as having an influence on conflicts that are encountered in the institution. The four mentioned factors by majority of respondents were religion, gender, communication (language), values and others (race). Each ethnicity had certain cultural factors that they selected leaving out others. Communication (language) was mentioned by all respondents as being the major cultural factor that lead to misunderstandings arising due language barrier when communicating with one another in the organisation.

How do these cultural factors influence conflict within the organisation?

When people have their own religious belief they feel that theirs is more important than others hence misunderstandings arise. Due to the country being predominately Muslim there is a view that people should conform to their religious holidays and yet many individuals have their own religious holidays which are not recognised by the institution. This influences conflicts due to the fact that people are expected to conform to the religious holidays of the country which are in total different from their religious holidays. Sometimes people from the same religion may conflict due to others not following the laws that are placed hence an individual may approach others about not following those religious laws which may trigger a clash.

Language barrier often leads to individuals misinterpreting one another due to lack of understanding which influences conflict. When translating what a person is trying to say in one language can mean something totally different which leads to misunderstandings arising. People are resistant of speaking English for easier communication however they prefer to people to speak the local language which prompts conflicts to transpire. Some people are able to speak English however

pretend as if they cannot understand what you would be trying to say hence it triggers emotions which lead to conflict.

Many people explained that there is an element of discrimination that occurs especially with females in terms of their status and opportunities may cause conflicts. This is due to some cultures feel women and men should be seen as equals in societies while others do not. The gender roles that exist in the society tend not to give women equal roles as men in terms of opportunities.

Others is a factor that influences conflict within the organisation greatly. Majority of respondents felt that their due to their ethnic origin would lead to people facing an element of discrimination because people are ignorant or lack of knowledge. Racism plays a major role especially the African ethnicity have encountered conflict due to racial discrimination. People felt that their issues were often not heard by the management hence giving preference to other ethnicity. Racism is encountered on a regular bases were people are excluded in getting positions in the organisation and are regularly treated unfairly which leads to conflict arising.

The values that people uphold play a vital role in influencing conflict. Values differ from one individual to another hence people tend not to respect other people's values hence it pushes people to the edge hence arguments often arise. The need to fit in causes people to sway from their values even if they are contradiction with others.

In conclusion, people are generally ignorant that people have different ways of doing things. Respondents expressed their concern that some ethnic groups are not willing to accept that people differ depending on their cultural background. The cultural differences and cultural factors that exist in the organisation influence conflicts profoundly even though they are often overlooked as being the main cause of clashes. The cultural dimensions that exist showed the cultural differences that from masculine-feminine, neutral-emotional and mastery and harmony dimension were in line with the responses respondents gave. The literature that was reviewed showed that four of the factors were

highlighted by respondents as having an influencing element in conflicts. It showed that cultural factors which brought out the differences that exist in the organisation contribute to the majority of conflicts that would arise between parties. Conclusively diversity in culture influence conflict when people lack understanding and knowledge on how to deal with people when put in situations that are tough. Therefore, it can be concluded that differences in culture influence conflict negatively.

The implications for management of the organisation pertaining to this research study are explained below:

The area that was researched on will assist management in managing the organization better and instilling an organizational culture that accommodates every ethnicity. When staff is trained in terms of treating every individual fairly and speaking fluent English language will attract more international students and staff to the institution. The management can employ diverse cultured people which will decrease the issue of students transferring to other institutions because of lack of accommodation and discrimination. The reputation of the institution will be known more with less complains and more praise of the way they treat international staff and students. It will decrease conflicts and improve the interaction of all the ethnic groups located within the institution.

There are recommendations that may be given to the university pertaining to the area that was being researched which are highlighted below:

Firstly, the institution ought to employ multicultural employees who can speak more than one language. These people need also to be trained or enlightened on the fact that cultural differences exist within the organisation hence they need to learn to adjust. All ethnicities should be represented in the international office so that international students feel that they are being accommodated.

Secondly, the organisation should instill a culture of treating people fairly without racially discriminating others due to their ethnicity. This reduces conflicts from arising between parties or groups hence all people operating in the

organisation will not be demotivated or discouraged from studying at this institution.

Thirdly, the institution ought to introduce social and sporting activities that allow all the ethnicities to participate. There should not be any separate events that accommodate a certain type of group of people. This will improve the interaction of people which will assist everyone in learning of the different cultures that exists hence creating better relationships with each other.

Fourthly, staff operating in the institution who cannot speak English well ought to be given English classes in order to improve their communication with others. The institution needs to include English language because majority of students are attracted to the institution with the view that English language is used as the language of instruction. English should be implemented as a second language that is spoken by everyone for easier communication with both international staff and students.

Recommendations that may be given to the students operating within the institution are listed below:

Firstly, students need to learn the local language before studying in the country for easier communication with others.

Secondly, students need to learn to interact with other people from different ethnicities so that they can learn about other cultures that exist within the organisation. By doing so, students will have a better appreciation and understanding of how others communicate and operate.

There are suggestions for future research in this area under study which are mentioned below:

Recommendations are made for future researchers to make use of the same topic to attain information focusing on many organisations that has staff that is multi-cultured. In addition, they can have a larger sample of respondents that is qualitative in nature or rather make use of quantitative method to reduce biasness. Research may be done further of establishing the effects of intercultural conflict

on students' performance within the organisation. This will further analyze the impact conflict has on the way a person performs within the organisation.

The limitations of the research study are explained below:

The first limitation of the research study was that the research was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research method is known for its biasness in nature it has in that the researcher is responsible for collecting data and analysing it. On the other hand, quantitative research makes use of software systems for analysis of data which reduces a research from being biased. This then reduces the research from being reliable.

Second limitation was the of the language barrier that exist. The researcher found it difficult to interview some participants due to the fact that their knowledge of English language was limited. The respondents would translate the questions into their language over an application on their phones for better understanding. It was difficult for the researcher to attain the required information clearly from participants which required an element of patience.

Third limitation was that of the fact that this research is an issue that is evolving hence acquiring relevant literature was difficult because the area has not been fully researched on. Most of the information was attained from textbooks hence few academic articles were used.

Fourth limitation was that the research was focused on one private education institution. It does not encompass government owned institutions hence it does not fully mean that results attained are what other institutions encounter which means information cannot be generalized.

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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The background of respondents

Gender:

Nationality:

Age:

Conflict

1. Have you encountered any sort of conflict before in the institution?
 - a. Yes: Where did you encounter this conflict?
 - b. No: Have you encountered conflict outside the institution?
2. What sort of conflict did you encounter?

Cultural Differences

3. In your opinion, do you think that the conflict was influenced by the cultural differences that exist?
 - a. Yes: Why do you say so?
 - b. No: What do you think influenced the conflict?
- 3c. What cultural differences do you think influence conflict?
- 3d. Do you think that culture plays a role in influencing conflicts amongst people or groups? Yes/No: Please explain why?

Cultural Factors

4. What cultural factors do you think influence conflicts within the institution?

Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication (Language)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Status	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Values	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others	<input type="checkbox"/>

4a. Why do you think the cultural factors you selected are the most influential in conflicts?

4b. Have you encountered conflict due to these cultural factors?

Yes/No: Please can you explain?

Closing Questions

5. Do you think other than cultural factors, the differences in personalities that people have influence conflict in the institution?

Yes/ No: Explain.

6. Do you have any suggestions or additional information pertaining to the research topic?

APPENDIX II

Near East University

Graduate School of Social Sciences: Masters in Business Administration

Research Title: How Cultural Differences Influence Conflict Within an Organisation: A Qualitative Study of Near East University

Interview Consent Form

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking time to read the information on this sheet about conducting an interview pertaining to the research study. I kindly ask you to tick the boxes below as confirmation and agreement to the statements below before participating in the interview.

I have read and endorse that I understand the material on the sheet

☐

My participation in this interview is voluntary hence I am able to withdraw without having to explain myself for opting out of participating. I also understand that when asked any questions that I do not feel like answering, I have the right not to answer without giving any reason as to why I am refusing to answer.

☐

I recognize that my personal details and responses shall be kept private hence my personal details will not be linked to any materials pertaining to the research study. I understand that no identification pertain to my participation shall be recognized in the research results.

☐

I agree and understand that the interviewee will be taking down notes during the interview that will be used for analysis of data only. The interview will take 15-25 mins and will be conducted in a private place which reduces the risk of privacy being compromised.

☐

I understand and approve that my unidentified data collected for the research study will be used for future reference in relation to publications after the research study is completed.

☐

I therefore agree to participate in this interview.

☐

Please sign below as your conformation of agreement to participate in this interview.

Participant's name

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW REPORT SAMPLES

Interview 6

Gender: M
24

Nationality: Zimbabwean

Age:

Interviewer: Have you encountered any sort of conflict before in the institution?

Interviewee: *Yes I have encountered conflict in the institution.*

Interviewer: Where did you encounter this conflict?

Interviewee: *In my department.*

Interviewer: What sort of conflict did you encounter?

Interviewee: *It was more of personal conflict where I had a disagreement with my lecturer over a certain issue.*

Interviewer: In your opinion, do you think that the conflict was influenced by the cultural differences that exist? If Yes: Why do you say so?

Interviewee: *Yes: This is because we all come from different cultural backgrounds hence people tend to expect you to adjust or conform to the culture that the institution is accustomed to.*

Interviewer: What cultural differences do you feel influence conflict in the institution?

Interviewee: *In my opinion, I feel that Body language and Gestures, Race and Gender roles.*

Interviewer: Do you think that culture plays a role in influencing conflicts amongst people or groups? Yes/No: Please explain why?

Interviewee: *Yes: People are brought in different societies hence people are raised in cultures that have their way of doing things. This also constitutes that values that ground people from their upbringing.*

Interviewer: What cultural factors do you think influence conflicts within the institution?

Interviewee: *In my opinion, Religion, Communication (Language), Values and Others influence conflict.*

Interviewer: Why do you think the cultural factors you selected are the most influential in conflicts?

Interviewee: *People may not be understanding my beliefs and what you worship hence this may influence conflict in that they may want me to change my beliefs or conform to the religion of the country. The language barrier that exists were people do not understand one another's language may cause misunderstandings to arise were interpretation of something said may mean something totally different. The values that people have may not be understood when you are located in a country which has diverse cultures that do not have moral values. The issue of race comes into play when people do not understand other people's ethnicity hence discriminating others due to their skin.*

Interviewer: Have you encountered conflict due to these cultural factors? Yes/No: Please can you explain?

Interviewee: *Yes: Most of the times preference in class or offices is often given to people with different ethnic orientation from mine hence a time I have faced racial discrimination in that context. There is a tendency of people trying to push you to go against you values in order to fit in with others hence this has often created a barrier between people from diverse cultures. Being a Christian I have faced an issue of not being accepted in the society because of my cultural belief hence not being accommodated in terms of my religious background.*

Interviewer: Do you think other than cultural factors, the differences in personalities that people have influence conflict in the institution? Yes/ No: Explain.

Interviewee: *Yes: People view things differently depending with their personalities. Taking for instance, when talking to people you can make a joke*

and another person may not respond to it the way you expected them to. Another example is that you may smile at a person and try to talk to them which they can respond negatively by ignoring you or walking away. A good example is people who are more introverts while others are extroverts.

Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions or additional information pertaining to the research topic?

Interviewee: *An organisation top management should structure their organizational culture in implementing an environment that adapts and accepts diversity in cultures that people have. They should create clubs and events that allows people to interact with one another hence having a better understanding of other people's cultures. In addition, the institution should offer language courses where people can learn variety of languages to eliminate the language barrier that exists.*

Interview 12

Gender: F

Nationality: Lebanese

Age: 22

Interviewer: Have you encountered any sort of conflict before in the institution?

Interviewee: *Yes I have encountered conflict in the institution.*

Interviewer: Where did you encounter this conflict?

Interviewee: *I was at the International Office.*

Interviewer: What sort of conflict did you encounter?

Interviewee: *It was more of personal conflict that has occurred with another student on the bus.*

Interviewer: In your opinion, do you think that the conflict was influenced by the cultural differences that exist? If Yes: Why do you say so?

Interviewee: *Yes: This is mainly due to the cultural backgrounds we were brought up in. I was brought up in a strict family with moral values hence the other person did not understand that I stand firm in the values I have hence we clashed on that aspect since I was not comfortable with what they were implicating me with.*

Interviewer: What cultural differences do you feel influence conflict in the institution?

Interviewee: *In my opinion, I feel that Gender roles, Body Language and Gestures.*

Interviewer: Do you think that culture plays a role in influencing conflicts amongst people or groups? Yes/No: Please explain why?

Interviewee: *Yes: The fact that an institution has multicultural people there is high probability that clashes may arise because individuals hold their culture highly and value the way they were brought up.*

Interviewer: What cultural factors do you think influence conflicts within the institution?

Interviewee: *In my opinion, Religion, Communication (Language), Gender, Values and Others influence conflict.*

Interviewer: Why do you think the cultural factors you selected are the most influential in conflicts?

Interviewee: *Language barrier influences conflicts due to people's lack of understanding or knowing others languages. The fact that the institution is located in a Muslim country, there tends to be criticism of what an individual believes since they do not follow the countries religious beliefs cause's people to be unable to express their religion without judgement. Gender is a cultural factor that influences conflict since there is discrimination of females in terms of their status or opportunities. This is influenced by the country's religion that women should be below men. The values a person has can contradict with others who do not uphold the same values hence individuals face being excluded in the society. This pushes people in influencing you to do what you do not want or approve off to fit in.*

Interviewer: Have you encountered conflict due to these cultural factors? Yes/No: Please can you explain?

Interviewee: *Yes: The issue of my personal beliefs being questions by my other friends seeing as though I am Lebanon they expected me to be Muslim however they were shocked that I am a Christian hence they were pushing me to change my religion. Another factor is that of language when some lecturers do not explain certain things in English and explain in Turkish which favours Turkish students influenced conflict to arise because I felt students who can speak English and understand it were being discriminated.*

Interviewer: Do you think other than cultural factors, the differences in personalities that people have influence conflict in the institution? Yes/ No: Explain.

Interviewee: *Yes: The issue of diverse personalities influences conflict. Taking into account certain people I have met understand or view things differently. For instance when you apologise to a student when you bump into them by mistake they do not take the apology or blow something small out of proportion.*

Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions or additional information pertaining to the research topic?

Interviewee: *I think English should be implemented as the country's second language which assists in teaching students at a younger age for better communication since the country's education system is international attracting students from across the globe who speak English. Another thing is that the institution should strive in giving international students a platform to express themselves more especially when it comes to airing out their grievances because we are not being heard. I feel that all the students should be treated equally hence no favouritism to the Turkish students in the institution.*

Interview 24

Gender: M

Nationality: Palestinian

Age: 20

Interviewer: Have you encountered any sort of conflict before in the institution?

Interviewee: *Yes I have encountered conflict.*

Interviewer: Where did you encounter this conflict?

Interviewee: *At the International Office.*

Interviewer: What sort of conflict did you encounter?

Interviewee: *It was a personal in nature where I had an argument with an employee over my payment of fees and registration.*

Interviewer: In your opinion, do you think that the conflict was influenced by the cultural differences that exist? If Yes: Why do you say so? No: What do you think influenced the conflict?

Interviewee: *No: I feel the issue that made us conflict as because the institution has a weak system hence being unable to see my payment in their system caused me to get frustrated hence we clashed.*

Interviewer: What cultural differences do you feel influence conflict in the institution?

Interviewee: *In my opinion, I feel that Body language and Gestures, Dressing and Gender roles.*

Interviewer: Do you think that culture plays a role in influencing conflicts amongst people or groups? Yes/No: Please explain why?

Interviewee: *No: I say so because for me I enjoy meeting people from diverse cultures and learning from them about their cultures hence creating friendships with them.*

Interviewer: What cultural factors do you think influence conflicts within the institution?

Interviewee: *In my opinion, Religion, Communication (Language) and Values influence conflict.*

Interviewer: Why do you think the cultural factors you selected are the most influential in conflicts?

Interviewee: *Being a Muslim I was brought up in a family with strict religious beliefs and conforming to the religion requirements. Being in this institution I have noticed most people with the same religious beliefs as mine are not serious and do not follow our religious beliefs which prompts me in having clashes with others. Due to the Turkish people being unable to speak much English it has really affected the communication I have with them in the institution hence causes a barrier in communicating and understanding each other. Everyone has different values that they have hence a time we tend not to get along with one another because we see things differently.*

Interviewer: Have you encountered conflict due to these cultural factors? Yes/No: Please can you explain?

Interviewee: *Yes: I have moral values that I cannot be in contact with a female unless we married or intake or prohibited substances hence it contradicts with what others value. I find it difficult because I do not see moral values between males and females in the country which goes against my upbringing cultural values.*

Interviewer: Do you think other than cultural factors, the differences in personalities that people have influence conflict in the institution? Yes/ No: Explain.

Interviewee: *Yes: This is because we all have different personalities and I myself am a quiet person which may not be understood by a talkative person which may influence the rise in a clash occurring.*

Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions or additional information pertaining to the research topic?

Interviewee: *Encourage their local students and staff members in speaking English for easier communication with international students. The university management should embed a culture that accommodates all people from all over the world without discrimination or judgement hence acceptance that we all different because of our cultural backgrounds.*