

Influence of Collaboration Management Strategy on the Magnitude of Conflicts in National Registration Bureau in Busia County

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of collaboration management strategy on the magnitude of conflicts in national registration bureaus in Busia County. Guided by the contingency theory of management, the study was conducted through cross sectional survey research design. The study area was Busia County. The target population was 183 employees while the sample size of 132 employees. Data was collected using questionnaires. Data was analyzed using Descriptive statistics .The study established that collaboration management strategy have significant influence on the magnitude of conflicts in national registration bureau in Busia County.

Keyword: collaboration, conflict

1. Background of the study

Heinz-Jurgen (2006) posit that conflict is a the clashing of interests on values of some duration and magnitude between at least two parties (organized groups, states, groups of states, organizations) that are determined to pursue their interests and win their cases. It is necessary to properly manage conflicts because according to McNamara (2010), without proper social arrangement or resolution, conflicts can result in stress or tensions among stakeholders. Collaboration is a method of conflict management in which, a person tries to collaborate with the other person (Felix, 2006).

Gurr (2006) on the other hand view collaboration as assertive or co-operative (teamwork). He argues that collaboration is a road not often traveled as it can be long, and requires some skill and effort. He argues that collaboration is about assuming positive intent and seeing things from all sides, in detail. It entails about acknowledging and accepting differences, and exploring alternative solutions that meet everyone's needs and concerns. As he points out, collaboration is a useful conflict management strategy when the issues are important to everyone, and all sides need to be committed to the solution.

According to Dan (2006), collaborating is cooperating with the other party to understand their concerns and expressing one's own concerns in an effort to find a mutually and completely satisfactory solution (win-win). They view accommodation as allowing the other person's needs to be met, usually at the expense of one's own. This is a useful conflict management strategy if one does not care about the issue, or if one has little power in the relationship or situation.

Collaboration or win-win strategy focuses on working together, especially where the conflict and the parties are of valued importance (Slocum & Hellriegel, 2007). Mayer (2010) points out that collaboration strategy to work, it requires that both aggrieved parties need to work together so as to come up with an amicable solution to their. McNamara (2010) reiterates that collaboration strategy is ideal when the goal is to meet as many current needs as possible by using mutual resources, or to cultivate ownership and commitment. But like all other strategies of conflict management, collaboration is effective when applied in the right situations.

Ramsbotham et al (2011) also view collaborating as is both assertive and cooperative, and further argue that collaboration is an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution which fully satisfies the concerns of both persons – through includes identifying the underlying concerns of the two individuals and finding an alternative which meets both sets of concerns. According to Ramsbotham et al. (2011) collaboration is useful

when other's lives are involved; when one does not want to have full responsibility; or when there is a high level of trust. It is also recommended where there is need to gain commitment from others; and work through hard feelings or animosity. They however recommend that the best decisions are made by collaboration. However, as Aldag and Kuzuhara (2015) points out, collaborating takes time, and many conflict situations are either very urgent or too trivial to justify the time it takes to collaborate.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Busia County, Kenya. Busia County was chosen because as compared to its neighboring administrative areas, it had relatively higher conflicts in the last decade (GOK, 2009), and this makes it stand out as a special case.

2.1 Research design

This study was conducted through a cross sectional survey research design as an overall strategy. Surveys do not manipulate variables nor arrange for events to happen, but focuses only on conditions or relations that exist, opinions held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing (Sekaran, 2006).

2.2 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised the 183 employees in the ten national registration bureaus in Busia County (Ministry of interior, immigration department 2013/2014 Financial Returns)

2.3 Sample size

The sample comprised 132 respondents in the 10 national registration bureaus in Busia County. The sample had been determined according to Krejcie and Morgan (2006) tables of samples.

2.4 Sampling technique

This study employed purposive, stratified, and simple random sampling techniques to select the individual members of the sample.

2.5 Data collection

Data was collected using questionnaires techniques from employees in national registration bureaus in Busia County.

3. Findings

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of collaboration management strategy on the magnitude of conflicts in national registration bureaus in Busia County. Collaboration was measured through assertiveness and teamwork by employees. Respondents were asked to rate the procedures used to control conflict on by checking the Likert rating scale. The results of the analyses are summarized in Table 3

Table 3

Summary of Magnitude of Conflict based on Status of Collaboration Strategy

Collaboration	N	Magnitude of Conflict (%)	S	Percent - N
High	3	57.96	17.13	28.28
Moderate	3	59.45	15.29	32.64
Low	4	65.38	13.34	38.40
Total	10	61.50	15.20	100.00

Note. S = standard deviation.

Table 4.4 shows the average magnitude of conflict in the 10 registration bureaus surveyed. It indicates that the magnitude of conflict in national registration bureaus high on collaboration strategy (M = 57.96%, S = 17.13) was lower than the magnitude of conflict in registration bureaus moderate (M = 59.45%, S = 15.29) or low (M = 65.38%, S = 13.34) on collaboration strategy as conflict management strategy. It was deduced from these results that use of collaboration strategy influences the magnitude of conflicts in national registration bureaus in Busia County, and that the higher the use of collaboration strategy, the lower the magnitude of conflicts.

The table indicates that there is a significant difference between the averages of magnitude of conflict in national registration bureau with high, moderate and low use of collaboration strategy. The study therefore

established that collaboration strategy has a significant influence on the magnitude of conflict in national registration bureaus in Busia County, and the higher the use of collaboration the lower the conflicts in the registration bureau. The high rate of conflict in national registration bureaus in Busia County can therefore be attributed to under use of collaboration by management of the county.

This finding supports the views of Koopman (2008) that collaboration is one of the best methods of conflict management. The strength of collaboration as a conflict control technique is in its capacity to ensure that the needs of all parties involved in the conflict are satisfied, and its effort to ensure that the needs of every person involved is taken into account before the final decision is made. As Gurr (2006) points out, and as this study has established collaboration is assertive, this makes it the road to be traveled as it assumes positive intent and sees things from all sides, and in detail.

Conclusion.

The study established that collaboration management strategy has significant influence on the magnitude of conflict in national registration bureaus in Busia County. Based on the positive results, the department of national registration bureau is recommended to conduct regular management training seminars to educate employees on conflict management strategies and their strengths and weaknesses as well as where and when they can be used. Otherwise, the tendency to underutilize this technique will continue and this is not healthy for the national registration bureaus as was found. This was due to failure of employees who do not correctly diagnose a conflict to determine the right method for resolution. The study recommends that department of national registration bureau immediately develop a manual for identification of conflicts and appropriate resolution technique to be utilized. This study was localized in national registration bureaus in Busia County, yet conflicts are widespread and cover all national registration bureaus in Kenya. The study recommends that a study be conducted in all registration bureaus across Kenya and across levels of registration in Kenya.

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