

DIALOGUE AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION AT RONGO UNIVERSITY, KENYA

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Abstract

The need to embrace dialogue is a better approach in conflict resolution and should be encouraged towards a transformed society. This study investigates dialogue as a management tool for conflict resolution at Rongo University. It raises the need for knowledge of what dialogue is, competence in how to employ dialogue and its use for it to be a tool in conflict resolution. Employees move beyond any one individual's understanding to gain new insights and create new ideas in ways that cannot be achieved individually. It describes the dialogue process and explores how it shifts both individuals and a group to a collective, shared understanding. In dialogue all parties involved are givers and takers, dialogue can be carried out at different levels at which participants are influenced or influence others. The results to the study will help reduce conflict at Rongo University by employing correct communication systems in handling conflicts which will improve the relationship existing among employees. The study was anchored by dialogue theory and was guided by the following objectives; to identify the importance of dialogue in conflict resolution at Rongo University, investigate the requirements for dialogue in conflict resolution at Rongo University and examine if dialogue can be used as a sustainable management tool in conflict resolution at Rongo University. Results indicated that some of the approaches used in conflict resolution were due to delays, fear of dialogue, and insensitivity of management. The conclusion from the study was that dialogue had not been fully embraced and lack of dialogue was due to the attitude that has developed over time. Employees have not been adequately informed on the importance of embracing dialogue as a better approach to conflict resolution.

Keywords: *conflict resolution, dialogue, Kenyan public universities*

INTRODUCTION

Dialogue is a discussion to exchange proposals and ideas as a key means of resolving conflicts at various levels. Conflicts exist at individual level, wider level and in organizational level. Symmetrical conflict involves similar parties on an even level. Predisposing factors for conflict are basically jealousy and envy. Asymmetrical conflict occurs between dissimilar groups in which parties take on top-dog/underdog relation. This translates to minorities versus majorities, upper class and lower class. Conflicts occur due to scarce resources, communication, frustration, individual differences, clash of values and priorities, insecurity, ideological

(generational) differences, propaganda which is deliberate misinformation as a weapon which leads to distortion of perceptions, intentions and interest. It breeds enemy image that contributes to prejudices, hatred and hostility. Dialogue can be preventive against propaganda, enemy images and threats.

Conflict resolution ensures there is peace through dialogue thus promoting reconciliation and understanding the losers' voice. Dialogue tracks root causes and unfulfilled needs to transform perceptions and relationships with a view of preventing recurrence. Conflict resolution can be handled through different approaches like mediation, negotiation or arbitration and at times people are forced to accept what is not favourable to them. Any dialogue involves different parties whereby each party must adjust to their terms to enable them reach an agreement (Wosyanju & Ayieko).

It is important to engage in peace education as it is both holistic in nature and oriented toward social change and transformation. Transformation implies to deep change affecting ways of thinking, views, behaviours, values, relationships, and social structures (Jenkins, 2008). It is aimed at teaching individuals the information, attitudes, values, and behavioural competencies needed to resolve conflicts without violence to build and maintain mutually beneficial harmonious relationships. (Alderson, 2014) it is the manifestation of an integral culture of body, vitality, mind, intellect and spirit. These elements constitute each person without any discrimination of race, caste, creed, language, nationality and other differences.

For any dialogue to take place there must be a preparation by parties beforehand, planning for the main issues and know the subject of discussion. Proper and appropriate language must be used, understand each other and be willing to negotiate, listen, have goodwill and most important is being honest in addressing issues. For any amicable solution to be reached such skills are necessary for the involved individuals. Dialogue acts as a weapon that enables any communication progress well without much interruptions. Parties involved must agree and understand the reason why they are having dialogue, different views, areas where they disagreed, information available and what the possible hindrances are (Heathershaw, 2007). It is important as it guards against exploitation and manipulation. The study seeks to investigate how dialogue can be used as a management tool for conflict resolution at Rongo University.

Through the element of understanding the environment and the interactions, one can generally identify the effective mechanism to provide a better weapon for conflict resolution. An observation of the habits and culture seems to show that for a long time, any actor who wants to intervene in conflict resolution should favour dialogue. This is a major tool in governance, it helps make rules or mechanisms to resolve conflicts. Problems associated with institution management have been of great concern especially with conflict resolution methods used. In view of Kenyan education system, various enactments serve as guidelines for management and supervision of educational institutions. Most educational institutions have been less successful in resolving conflicts (Discipline, Schools, Education, Science, & Technology, 2001). Because of this, conflict situations in learning institutions, have been affected and performance compromised thus the need for dialogue. The practice of dialogue as a means of conflict resolution has proved the best way to resolve conflict and that is why the study focused on Rongo University.

Rongo University

Rongo University is a public university that was established by the Excellency President Mwai Kibaki, through Legal Notice No.70, Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 51 on 17th June, 2011. It is located on Kitere Hill, 8 kilometers from Rongo Town, and 2.5 kilometers off Kisii – Migori Highway. Rongo University was

established as a constituent College of Moi University and awarded chartered by Honourable Uhuru Kenyatta the 4th President of the Republic of Kenya on 7th October, 2016.

To achieve the University vision, mission and uphold its core values, it maintains education and leadership guidelines in its overall governance, strategy and planning. The mission of the university is to provide high quality education through teaching, research, community service and nurturing innovative graduates. The university is committed to nurturing and delivering quality, demand driven academic programmes and carrying out research and extension related activities. All these are aimed at improving local and national socio-economic status and well-being of the Kenyan people. The university has six teaching schools; Scholl of Arts and Social Sciences, Business and Human Resource Development, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Studies, Science, Technology and Engineering, Information Communication and Media Studies and last School of Education. The university has made excellent progress in promoting mutual responsibility with all public especially participating in corporate social responsibility with the community. It has built progress and brought together universities existing policies, commitments, strategies and delivery plans. It is committed to making a positive impact through outstanding performance by surpassing the target set and ensuring quality standards.

Statement of the Problem

Cooperation and change are possible effects of dialogue, rather than integral part of dialogue as a form of communication. Rongo University like any other university experiences conflicts due to some factors like communication issues and scarce resources. Another problem is failed attempt by the University to go back to the roots on how conflict was managed earlier. Dialogue as a form of communication requires listening and speaking not having an agreement goal but process that involves asking questions. Rongo University have knowledge and competence on dialogue and the questions come if this knowledge has reached out all employees and if it is practiced. If it has not reached out, why not embrace it? I argue that professionals on dialogue from Rongo University reflect knowledge of what dialogue is, skill on how to employ it within its requirements, limitations and adherence to its use.

Dialogue is a wonderful and powerful way of bringing oppressed people to talk, it has no right or wrong answers or questions, everybody can participate, and it can give the speechless a voice, and through that create empowerment. The use of force in conflict resolution has worsened things. Lots of working hours have been lost as a result of conflict, increased misunderstanding, compromised production, hatred, increased tension, bitterness, hostility, lack of trust and anger are a result of conflict. Management and employees could come together and have a good dialogue in order to gain a proper understanding of wants and expectations, as this will be a better conflict resolution mechanism for all. Dialogue is the way of overcoming inferiority and the only way to do that, is to bring together the powerful and the powerless.

Higher learning institutions have continued experiencing conflicts (Onsarigo, 2007). Conflict is truly neutral and can be positive (Vardi & Weitz, 2003). The university management and its employees could come together and have a good dialogue in order to gain a proper understanding of wants and institutions expectations.

Objectives of the Study

1. Identify the importance of dialogue in conflict resolution at Rongo University.
2. Investigate the requirements for dialogue in conflict resolution at Rongo University.

3. Examine if dialogue can be used as a sustainable management tool in conflict resolution at Rongo University

Significance of the Study

The research serves as an eye opener to the management of higher learning institutions on the need to embrace dialogue. Other organizations will benefit once they embrace dialogue fully in conflict resolution, which will create harmony and improve organizations performance and image. The results to the study will help reduce conflict at Rongo University by employing correct communication systems in handling conflicts which will improve the relationship existing among employees. This improves institutions image, performance and attain its objectives. Management ought to adopt measures that can minimize conflicts by ensuring awareness is created on dialogue.

The importance of this study was focused to management of both private and public universities as it provides the required information on dialogue in conflict resolution in university management. Also it will help management of organizations and government ministries especially the ministry of education, in their bid to deal with conflict and improve security and education standards in the country.

METHODOLOGY

Research design applied in this study is descriptive study. The researcher also applied case study because of dealing with a single case, looking at a specific number of participants in the University. According to (Opie, 2004) the purpose of the case study is to maximise understanding of one phenomenon to provide greater insights into an issue. Case study offers a way of exploring complex social units with numerous variables of potential importance in understanding the given phenomenon. This gives value to my study where the complex nature of a phenomenon like resolving conflicts through dialogue is examined. Case study approach was chosen to help find out how dialogue can be used as a management tool for conflict resolution at Rongo University.

Population targeted consisted of staff with a total staff population of 500 according to Rongo University human Resource, 2017. The sample was 217 applying the Morgan & Krejcie statistical table for determining sample size. It involved all teaching and non-teaching staff. Hence, the study targeted participants who were known to have the information that served the purpose of this study, by virtue of their stations and duties. Information was best collected through questionnaires which were ideal for collecting the data.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

a) Importance of Dialogue

According to the findings, it was revealed that dialogue is important in conflict resolution. Employees considered dialogue as an important element in the institution as it is the mostly used when there are issues to be ironed out.

Organization Success

Literature reviewed showed that dialogue led to the success of the organization. Therefore, the study sought employees' opinion regarding the success using dialogue in resolving conflicts. The findings are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Organization Success

Success	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	105	56
No	82	44
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

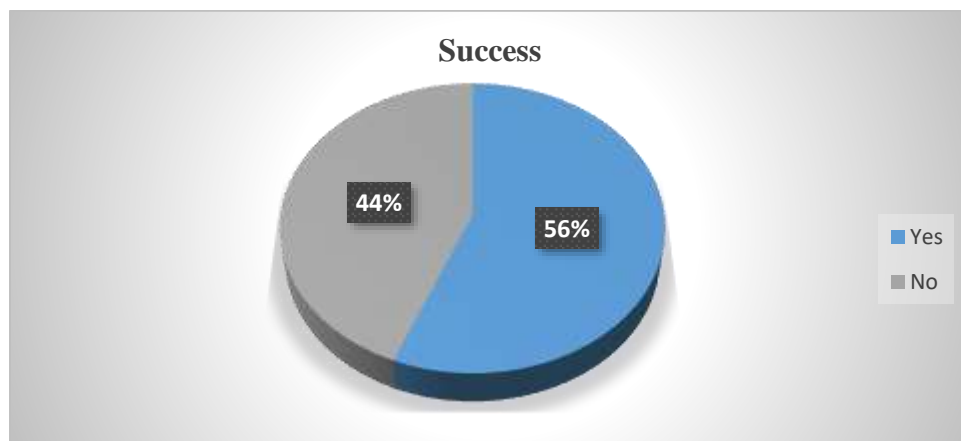


Figure 1: Organization Success

The findings show that 95(56%) employees perceive dialogue is applied more often at Rongo University. Only 8% see that sometimes dialogue is applied in conflict resolution.

Findings shows that 105(56%) said that there was bound to be success in the university while 82(44%) said that it was not contributing to organization success. The success is characterised by enhanced production presented in Table 2.

Enhanced Production

Where there is peace there is production, many employees agreed that dialogue improves production by applying best opportunities to achieve the objectives

Table 2: Enhanced Production

Production	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	107	57.2
Agree	80	42.8
Disagree	0	0
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

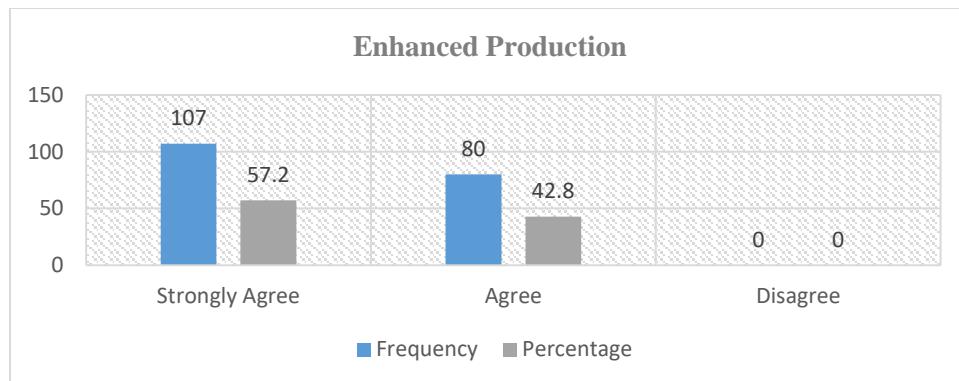


Figure 2: Enhanced Production

The findings on table 2 on production showed 107(57.2%) strongly agreed that dialogue enhanced production. 80(42.8%) said dialogue helped in better production. When there is good coexistence and work is done well, then there is better production and great service delivery.

Good Working Relationship and Peaceful Environment

Conflicts that are not handled well, creates divisions leading to poor relationships. With good knowledge on dialogue and applying professionalism in a respectful way enhances better working relationship.

Table 3: Improved relationship

Good Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	177	94.7
Agree	10	5.3
Disagree	0	0
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

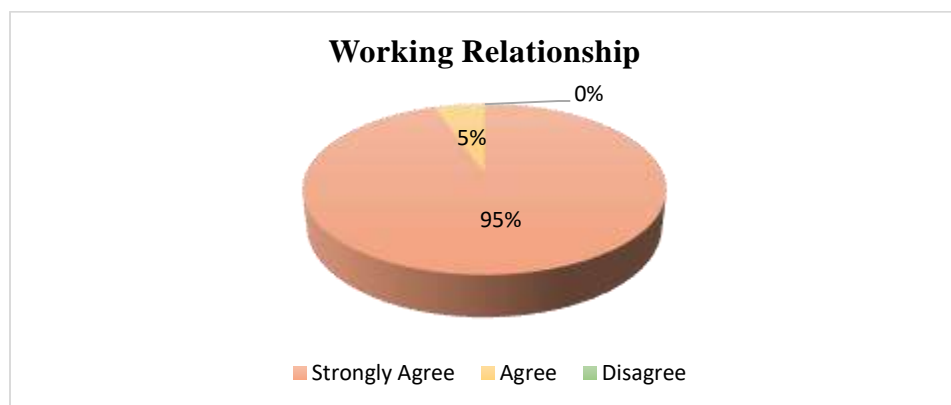


Figure 3: Working Relationship

On the findings in table 8, the study showed that 177(94.7%) strongly agreed dialogue enhanced good relationship among employees while 10(5.3%) said stronger relationship is built when there is peace. All agreed that it was important to resolve conflicts at Rongo University to embrace good relationship.

Better Understanding

Workers learn how their fellow employees feel and think, as well as how to interact with each other. Involved parties take a more detailed look at situations and consider other possible solutions.

Table 4: Better Understanding

Understanding	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	97	51.9
Agree	90	48.1
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

From the findings, good understanding is important as indicated by 97(51.9%) of the respondents, while 90(48.1%) responded by saying how dialogue can bring harmony by understanding each other. No one can work alone without involving others in achieving organization’s goal.

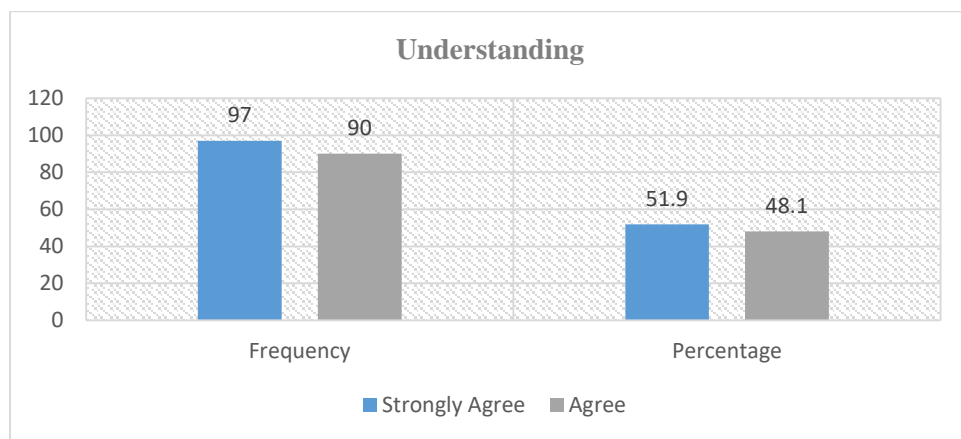


Figure 4: Understanding

Organization Transformation

Dialogue is important in transforming the organization yet conflict is expensive. It leads to employees who, instead of working, are participating, avoiding, or trying to manage pointless conflicts with others. Trained employees are expensive to replace. When customers and sales are lost, replacement is not easy.

Table 5: Organization Transformation

Transformation	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	155	82.9
Agree	32	17.1
Disagree	0	0
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

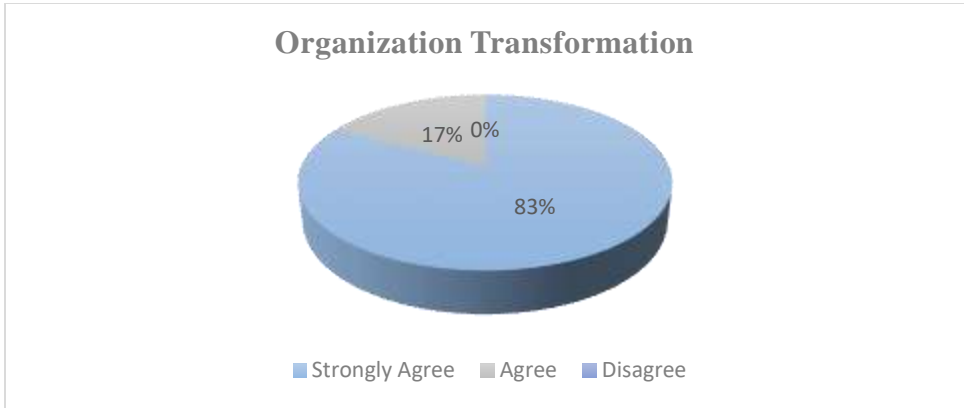


Figure 5: Organization Transformation

The result of the study in table 5 on transformation revealed 155(82.9%) of employees said the use of dialogue in conflict resolution led to organization transformation at work place. Where conflict is resolved amicably, employees enjoy working and this was shown by the respondents.

Mutual Trust

Trust is very important in life and nothing is good when people trust each other. If the university employs dialogue and achieve the organization success and the result becomes positive, then trust is built day by day.

Table 6: Mutual Trust

Consistency	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	118	63.1
Agree	69	36.9
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

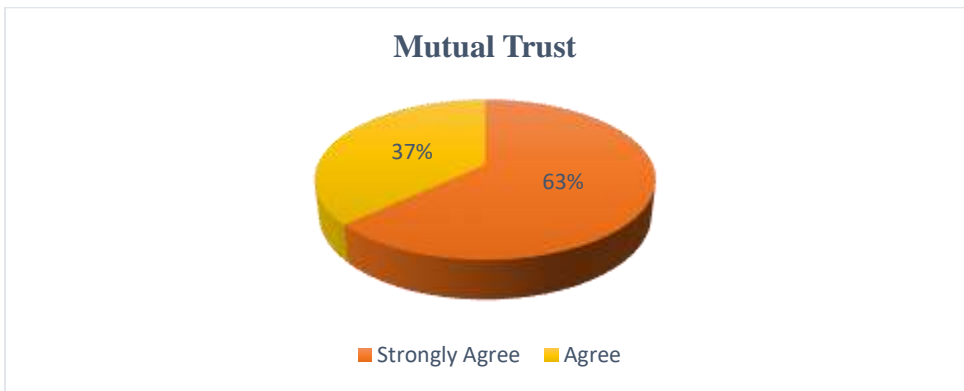


Figure 6: Mutual Trust

The findings on table 6 showed that 118(63.1%) of respondents said dialogue builds trust as parties have to trust each other while 69(36.9%) doubted the trust that exists in organizations.

Better communication

Dialogue leads to communication and effective communication is a major solution to conflict resolution, it helps people understand why and how it should be carried out. With constant communication to employees to get updates on what is required it becomes apparent that employees are always at par with information.

Table 7: Communication

Communication	Frequency	Percentage
Very Satisfactory	86	46
Satisfactory	36	19.2
Unsatisfactory	5	2.7
To improve	60	32.1
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

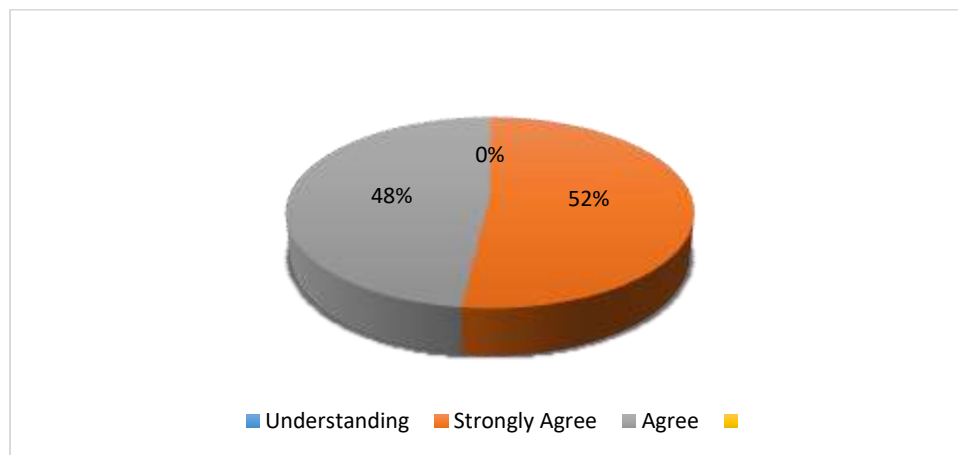


Figure 7: Communication

Based on the findings on table 15, 86(46%) noted the importance of dialogue in communication as very satisfactory mechanism in conflict resolution. 36(9.2%) were satisfied with communication. Only 5(2.7%) didn't agree with communication as a way of conflict resolution. It was noted that 60(32.1%) dialogue improvement.

b) Requirements for Dialogue in Conflict Resolution

Successful dialogue requires the will, time, safe spaces, credible convener, equity, transparency/honesty, respect, listening and speaking. Dialogue requires the will to enter into dialogue. A successful dialogue process always implies some sort of willingness to learn. Dialogue thus requires a degree of openness to others and oneself. Openness includes allowing emotions, along with reflections, stories and faith, thus making space for 'the whole person. Majority of staff believe that dialogue is key to conflict resolution. It is well noted that nothing can take place without dialogue as it is the beginning of all peaceful coexistence. Where conflict is successfully managed, it significantly increases the likelihood that the process will indeed lead to the creation of a group of people that possess the valuable experience of dialoguing and have come to value close links with the other side.

Table 8: Willingness

Willingness	Frequency	Percentage
Required	172	92
Not required	5	2.7
undecided	10	5.3
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

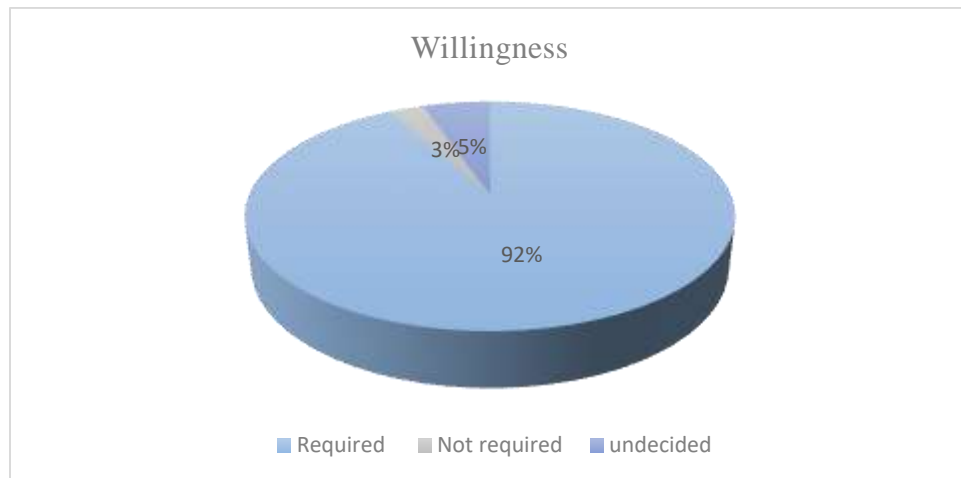


Figure 8: Willingness

Almost all 172(92%) of the respondents said willingness in dialogue is mandatory. 5(2.7%) noted there was no need to have the will to dialogue and 10(5.3%) were undecided. Willingness to dialogue is key to conflict resolution.

Listening

Management and employees should learn to listen to each other more. People talk, think, communicate and listen to each other’s opinion in order to get a better solution that would favour all the parties.

Table 9: Listening

Listening	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	137	73.3
No	50	26.7
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

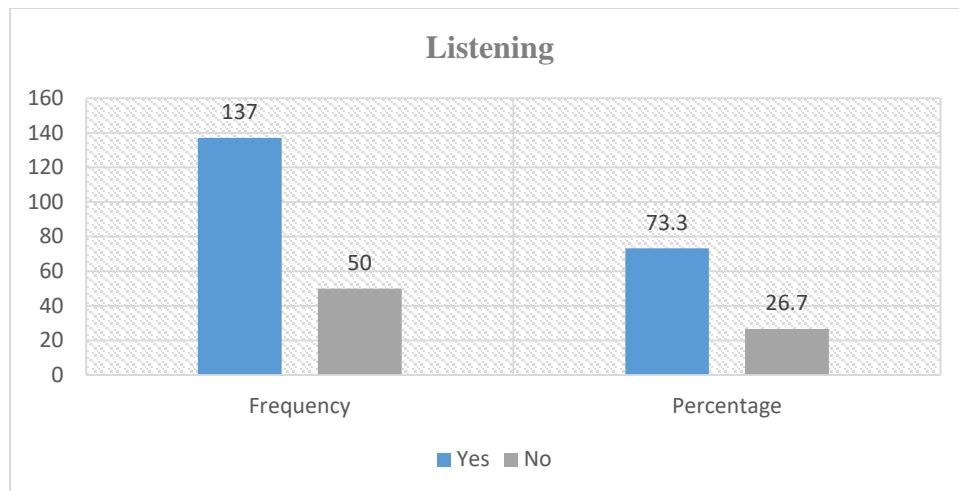


Figure 9: Listening

Majority of the respondents 137(73.3%) noted that listening is crucial in any dialogue while respondents acknowledged dialogue does not only entail learning but listening as well. 50(26.7%) said there was no need to be keen on listening to participate in dialogue.

Respect

Respect is two way traffic where parties have to respect each other and each other’s opinion for a better dialogue.

Table 10: Respect

Respect	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfactory	120	64
Satisfactory	67	36
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)



Figure 10: Respect

The respondents indicated that 120(64%) were really satisfied with respecting each other, while 67(36%) were satisfied meaning respect is important in any dialogue process.

Table 11: Safe place/space

Safe Space	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	130	70
Disagreed	57	30
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

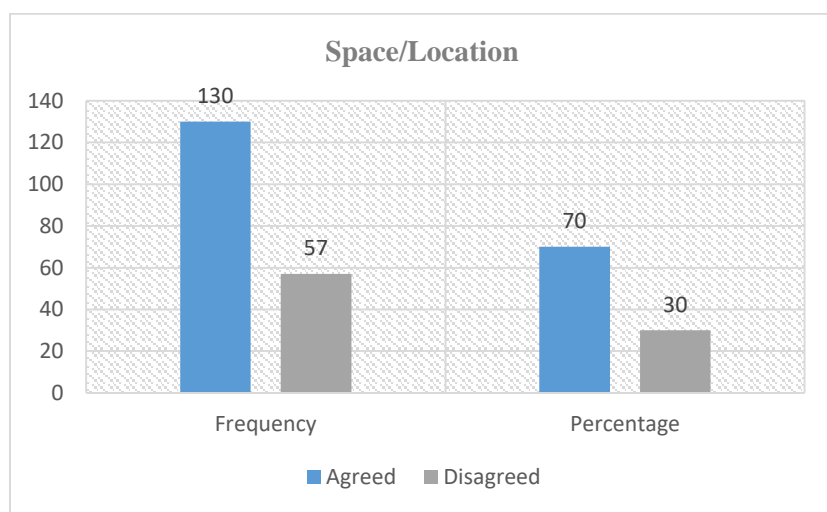


Figure 11: Safe Space

Almost all respondents 130(70%) noted the importance of having dialogue in a safe place is important to work without disturbance. While 57(30%) said there was no need of looking at place where dialogue took place. The result implies that the place where dialogue is held plays an important role as they dialogue to help in conflict resolution that would help the institution. This shows that place is very important factor to hold dialogue in order to have a successful dialogue for a better solution.

Skills

It is important for administrators to ensure proper service delivery by people with proper skills, skills are necessary in the area of conflict resolution because no organization can survive without conflicts, it brings or creates a conducive working environment to employees. Know how on conflict resolution is very crucial for any management, it makes people learn and know how to handle issues as they come.

Table 12: Skills

Skills	Frequency	Percentage
Very Necessary	176	94.1
Necessary	10	5.3
Not necessary	1	0.5
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

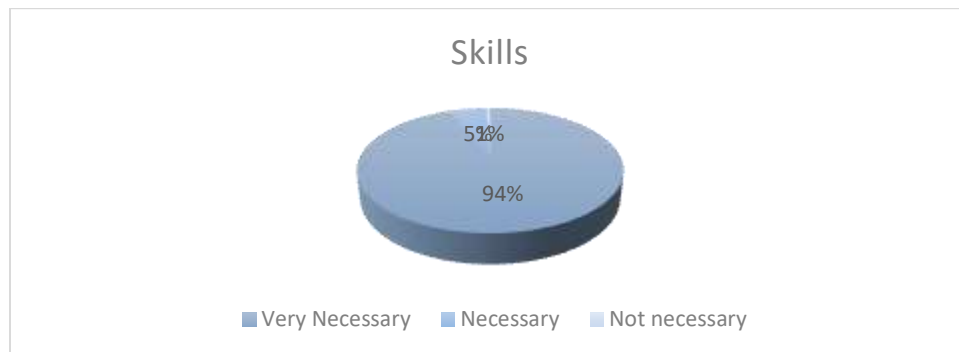


Figure 12: Skills

Findings showed that 176(94.1%) respondents noted skills are important aspect in conflict resolution. 10(5.3%) saw the necessity while 1(0.5%) said there was no need of having the skill in dialogue. It shows that almost all respondents noted the importance of having critical skills in dialoguing.

Transparency/Honesty

It is upon management to create a formal and fair grievance handling procedure. These reduce bad interpretations and can prevent negative views from escalating

Table 13: Transparency/Honesty

Transparency/Honesty	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	172	92
Agree	15	8
Disagree	0	0
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

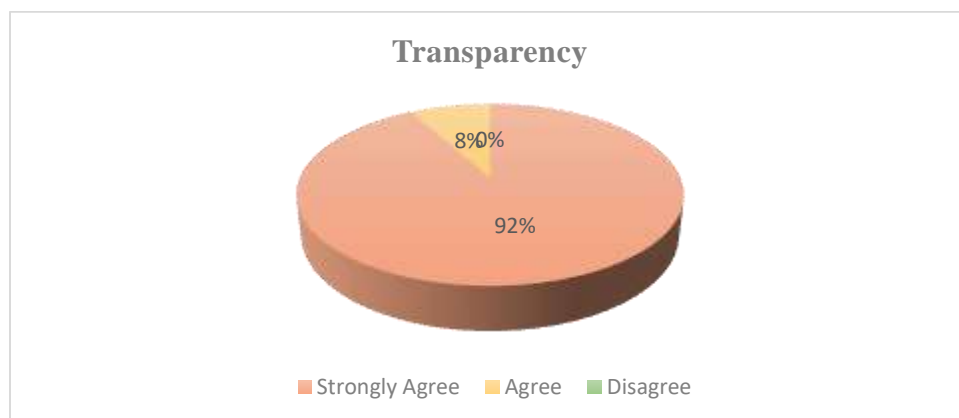


Figure 13: Transparency

Findings revealed 172(92%) of respondents strongly feel it is important to be honest in dialogue process. Only 15(8%) felt the need and it indicates that all agree that it is important to be transparent when having dialogue. Transparency improves trust parties have for each other, which leads to clear dialogue and a better resolution.

Credible Convener

A credible convener is of utmost importance, one who can lead dialogue to a positive conclusion. It is important to secure the participation of the employees to avoid the perceptions of biasness. The convener must be respected by majority of citizens and should not have any conflict of interest.

Table 14: Convener

Convener	Frequency	Percentage
Necessary	177	94.7
Not necessary	10	5.3
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

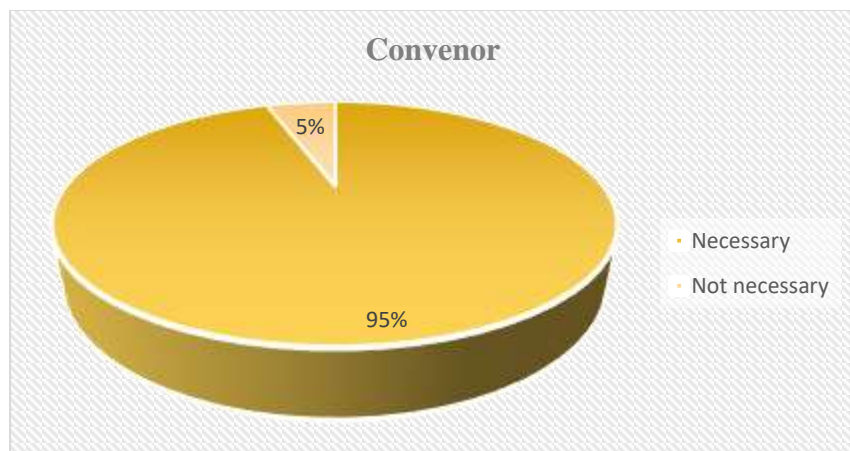


Figure 14: Credible Convener

Almost all respondents 177(94.7%) noted the importance of having a convener in any dialogue, while 10(5.3%) said there was no need for a convener. Without a credible convener in a dialogue process, only chaos would emerge. A convener knows what is required and the direction to be followed in order to reach a positive conclusion.

Resources

No institution can service without resources, be it financial, personnel, or material all are necessary for growth.

Table 15: Resources

Resources	Frequency	Percentage
Financial	172	92
Personnel	10	5.3
Material	5	2.7

Total	187	100
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Source: Field Data (2017)

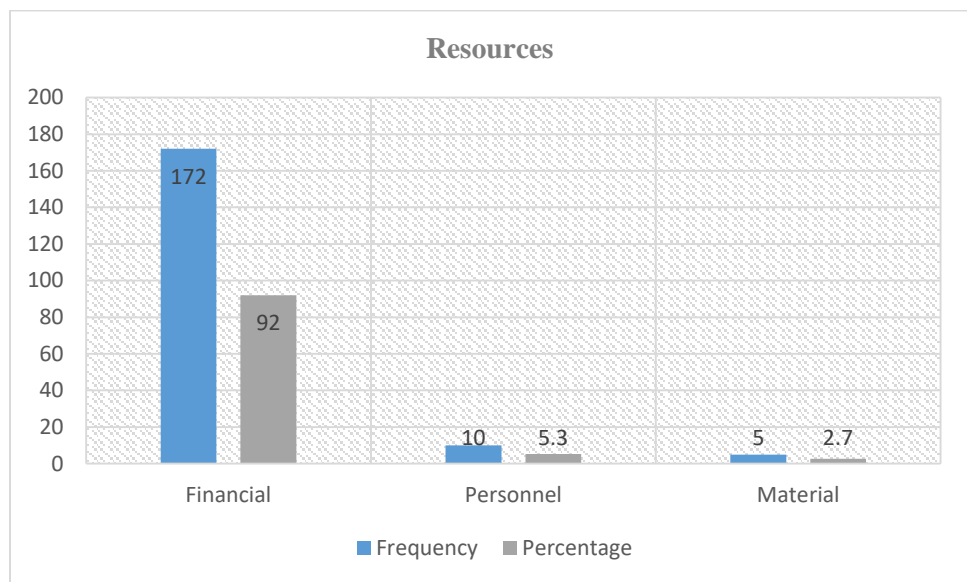


Figure 15: Resources

According to respondents views 172(92%) noted the need to have finances in order to hold the dialogue process. 10(5.3%) said personnel are required and 5(2.7%) saw the need of materials to be used. With finances an institution can get the personnel and material required.

c) Dialogue as a Sustainable Tool for Conflict Resolution

Dialogue often has positive connotations. Dialogue implies a willingness to be persuaded by arguments, it has the power to undo and remake any existing social consensus. It is important as the involved parties are in constant communication with one another. Dialogue can be seen as a mutual truth. Parties must become open to the idea of changing perspectives based on what conflicting partners shared. Dialogue outcome is to create new human and political capacities to solve problems. Dialogue is one of the major mechanisms applied in conflict resolution in order to prevent more confrontation. There are unions representing all cadres of staff that can help in conflict resolution if it affects a given employee.

Long Lasting Change

In any organization, there must be a long lasting solution that can be used in order to sustain the credibility of the organisation. Dialogue can be used as a sustainable tool in conflict resolution, where it can bring change to the whole organization for a longer period.

Table 16: Change

Change	Frequency	Percentage
Necessary	157	84
Not necessary	30	16
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

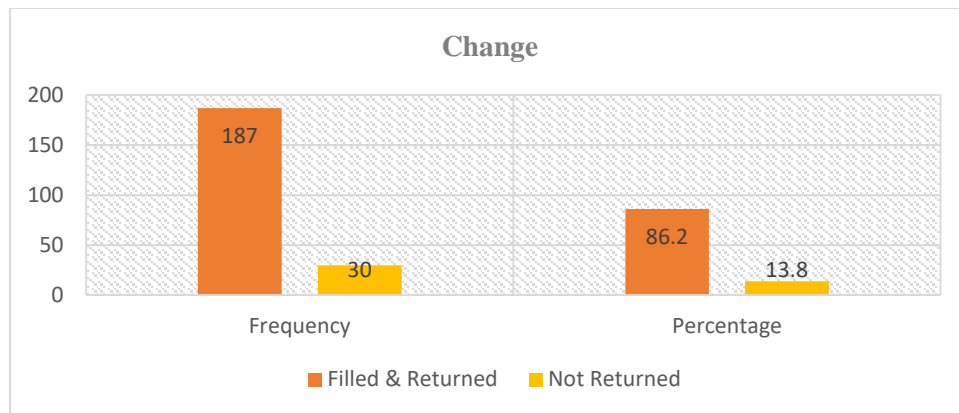


Figure 16: Change

Almost all respondents 157(84%) noted there was need for a long lasting solution to bring change in the institution, while 30(16%) didn't see the need for change. People fear change because of the unknown, but majority preferred dialogue as a sustainable tool.

Adaptability

Adaptability is a sustainable measure for conflict resolution, a question arose if dialogue as a tool in conflict resolution a contribution or an obstacle to adaptability. The goal, characteristics and requirements of dialogue are qualities that contribute to adaptability. Through understanding all sides of a situation, it is good to be equipped to take innovative and inclusive responses to a changing environment.

Table 17: Adaptability

Adaptability	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfactory	110	59
Unsatisfactory	77	41
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

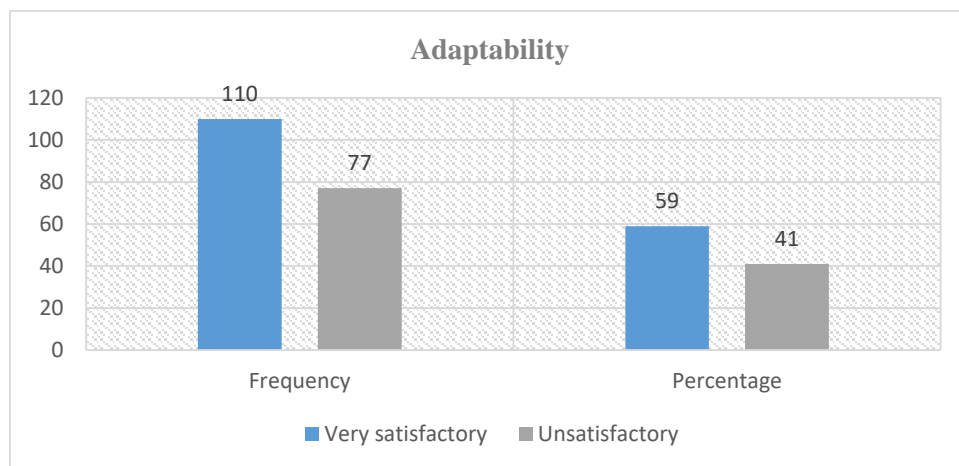


Figure 17: Adaptability

Results show that 110(59%) employees are able to adapt to the long lasting change that is positive to all, while 77(41%) were not satisfied with the issue of adaptability in the solutions made.

Positive Connotations

Dialogue always is implied as having a positive meaning that can be beneficial to all. Organizations always focus on positivity in order to get the best of all. It is an important aspect in conflict resolution.

Table 18: Positive Connotations

Change	Frequency	Percentage
Necessary	157	84
Not necessary	30	16
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

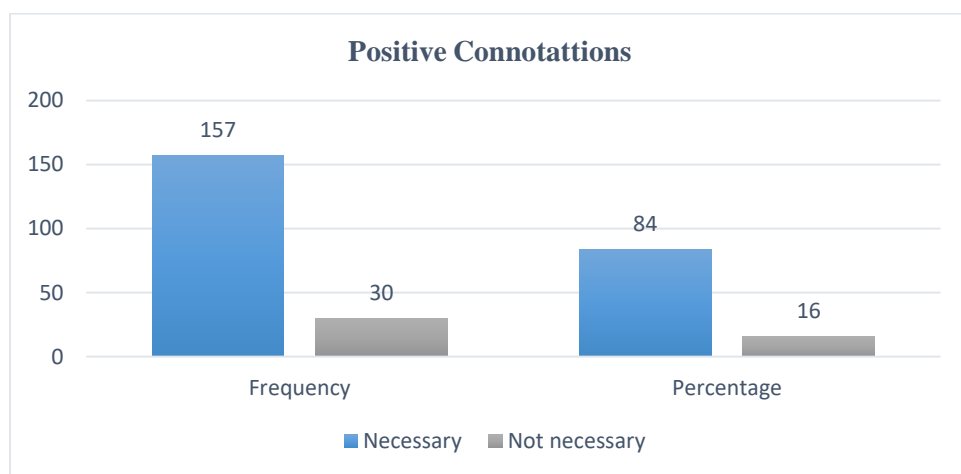


Figure 18: Positive Connotations

The results given by respondents 157(84%) show that positivity in any undertaking is important, only 30(16%) noted the difficulty of being positive. Some never accept until and when there is an outcome to believe the positive connotations, but it is always good to have a positive connotation for a long lasting solution.

Policies

It was important that laying proper policies to all staff so that they are well informed of the structures in place, failure to which leads to serious destruction. It is important to create awareness on all the procedures for rules and regulations to be followed to avoid inconveniences. Policies are formulated and followed to the latter for effective University operations.

There are Collective Bargaining Agreements used wherever there is a problem with staff and management. The unions are represented by KUDHEIHA, KUSU and UASU. The set rules and regulations must be followed to the latter for better quality service.

Table 19: Policies

Policies	Frequency	Percentage
Good	30	16
Bad	35	18.7
To improve	122	65.2
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

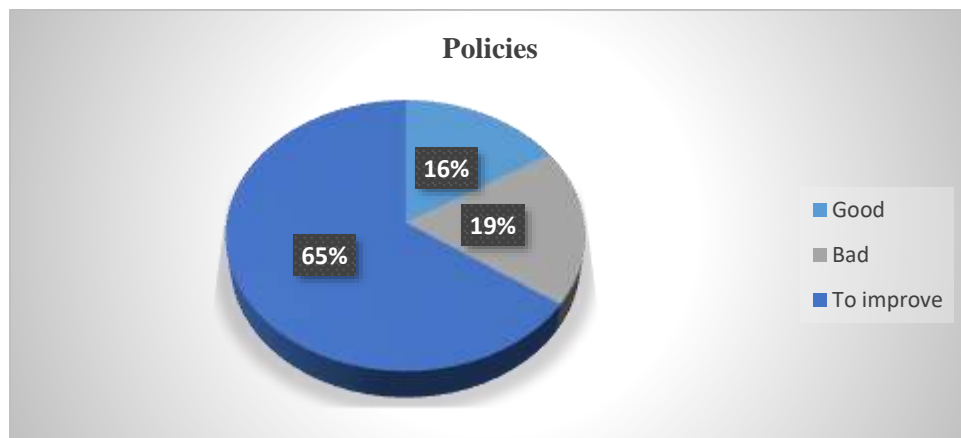


Figure 19: Policies

The findings presented on table 19, showed that 16% agreed that policies are required 65.2% respondents agreed that improvement was required. 18.7% were dissatisfied and pointed out that the policies were not good.

Inclusive Process

Dialogue is inclusive where there is participation by various individuals. It is one way to resolve conflicts. This is done in order to ensure that all cadres are represented in the dialogue process to avoid biasness.

Table 20: Inclusivity

Inclusivity	Frequency	Percentage
Most often	170	91
Often	11	5.9
Quite often	6	3.2
Never	0	0
Total	187	100

Source: Field Data (2017)

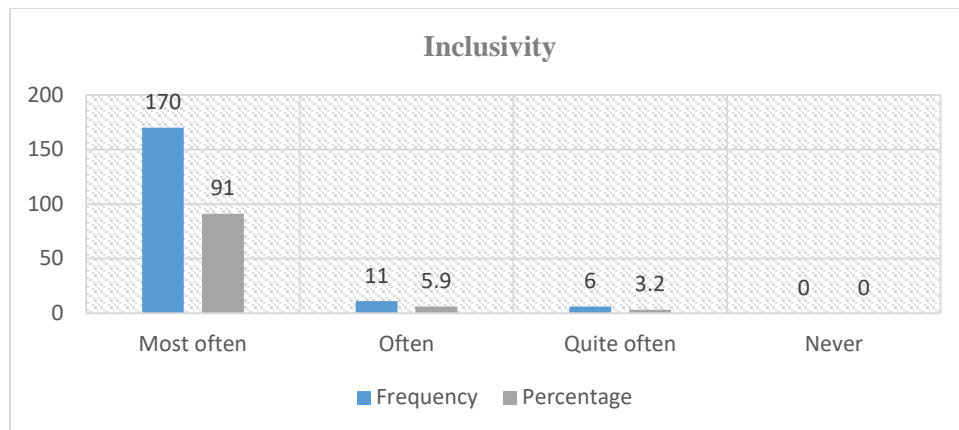


Figure 20: Inclusivity

Findings 170 (91%) show that participation is practised most often, while 11(5.9) is done often 6(3.2%) said it is done quite often. This shows that there is inclusivity that leads to a lasting solution as when all dialogue and come up with a solution, it becomes binding to all parties. This shows that dialogue is a sustainable tool in resolving conflicts.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This part presents the summary of the findings of the study on dialogue as a management tool for conflict resolution at Rongo University. The chapter also gives the major conclusions of the study, recommendations and suggestions for further studies. The study involved participation of employees of Rongo University as key informers who provided information to the research. Their participation rate in the study was equal and therefore the findings of the study have a balanced bearing.

The aim of the research was to develop on a theoretical framework defining dialogue as a specific form of communication. It emerged from the assumption that dialogue can be a tool in conflict resolution. To inform and challenge the assumption data was collected from employees of Rongo University. Further, I developed and analysed dialogue as a tool in conflict resolution. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the key findings in relation to the aim of the study and literature in the discipline of dialogue and conflict resolution in general and particularly the area of dialogue as a management tool of conflict resolution. Dialogue is the conversation taking place between people with an aim of getting a peaceful satisfying and long lasting solution.

The study carried out answered the research questions by the researcher which were: why is dialogue important in conflict resolution at Rongo University? What are the requirements for dialogue in conflict resolution at Rongo University? Can dialogue be a sustainable tool in conflict resolution? If conflict is not realized, it will prevail. Management can establish better ways of handling conflicts fairly and in a confidential way. Through this, there will be better work conditions and equality to all employees. Any good people management has to provide a good and positive work environment and handling conflict without postponing.

Summary of Findings

The study revealed that dialogue is important in conflict resolution. It enhances good relationship among employees, builds trust, creates safety, enhances peace as well as it builds awareness. It leads to better

production, and quality service thus leading to achievements of organizational goals. Employees noted that dialogue is about expanding capacity for attention, awareness and learning with and from each other with an aim of getting a better solution. Dialogue helps parties develop a new, shared meaning and understanding of the other, from other's perspective. Employers' main objective is to deliver by ensuring good and healthy place of work for all employees. Their main responsibility is to ensure conflict is well handled and does not affect institutions outcome and relationships among employees.

Requirement is referred to as something needed and wanted, while condition refers to the quality of the dialogue. Dialogue as a form of communication require more elements than having a dialogical attitude and a culture. The requirements for dialogue include will, time, safe spaces, equity, trust, listening, respect, transparency/honesty and speaking. Dialogue thus requires a degree of openness to others and oneself. Listening in dialogue is key. All concur that there are procedures for conflict resolution. Conflict is inevitable and having the resolution skills is important to the university administration. Time is further a requirement, time for dialogue process, both during and after the dialogue. Dialogue is an effective process that helps discover meanings and creates harmony. It is important for employers to ensure quality prevails and good practice where staff understand conflict. Open communication and understanding encourages a pool of trust and respect to the institution and society at large.

Safe space is crucial for dialogue. Whether the process takes place in a framework of secrecy or openness affects its importance. Equity is further a requirement that can be related to weak framing, where everybody has the equal possibility and time to speak. Transparency in dialogue and participation. A credible convener is of utmost importance, one who can lead dialogue to a positive conclusion. It is important to secure the participation of the employees to avoid the perceptions of biasness. Clear rules and procedures should be followed to the latter. Being honest in any dialogue is important because that is what will lead to better conclusion. Dialogue can be a part of the elastic elements holding the web together, which allows it to take a blow without breaking. Dialogue brings a long lasting change that is beneficial to all by ensuring all is acceptable. Dialogue acknowledges one another's humanity. In any dialogue, there must be a long term solution that will prevail with or without the parties. To find long-lasting solution there must be patience and modesty. It helps maintain tolerance, respect good understanding and freedom to think. Dialogue is like a bridge building long lasting trust and understanding.

To bring about sustainable change, people have to develop a sense of joint ownership of the process and become stakeholders in identifying new approaches to address common challenges. Dialogue recognizes one another's humanity. Participants must be willing to show empathy toward one another, recognize differences as well as areas of common ground, and demonstrate a capacity for change. Dialogue stresses a long-term perspective. I rally the case to reclaim dialogue as number one strength in meeting with conflict, anguish, violence and hatred. I believe that the power that lies within dialogue can contribute to radical change.

Conclusion

The study investigated dialogue as a conflict resolution tool of management at Rongo University. An institution cannot run smoothly without any conflict, it was important to study how dialogue is important in conflict resolution at Rongo University.

In the study, dialogue was seen as a major tool of resolving conflict by building and strengthening relationship and understanding. Dialogue builds trust, focus on how one experienced conflict instead of debate, with trust, circles of communication are expanded. Society is dependent on trust and trust is often low in conflict areas.

Expanding trust is thus building peace in the minds of individuals from the bottom-up. Society becomes more comprehensive and accessible with trust, as we have access to more people and thus more liberty in the institution. Dialogue has contributed to peacebuilding and calms down conflicts, it creates mobility, visibility and builds relationships. It can lead to a review of victim-aggressor perceptions as it opens up the possibility to see both parts as victims. Dialogue nuances attitudes by listening to the other's stories. Through dialogue, the person becomes visible, not just as a representative of the enemy, but as a human. The view of victim-aggressor can in turn lead to cooperation to improve the conditions for both parts, taking a win-win approach to each other.

Dialogue is associated with the satisfaction of the results from teamwork. It finds truth, binding people together, brings people into alignment on goals and strategies to gain more and achieve better results. Dialogue creates safety when one is listened to, as well as builds awareness. People come together to work out conflicts through dialogue, results in treating others with respect and humbleness. Dialogue represents a mobility of perspective as dialogue creates movement where debate makes people freeze in their position.

The study further revealed that dialogue cannot succeed without the necessary requirements. Requirements necessary for dialogue further serve as environments in which the elements can occur. An effect of understanding others can in favourable conditions such as openness and self-criticism, lead to better understanding of oneself, as we realize how we are similar and different from others. There needs facilitation by a good facilitator, facilitating therefore requires humbleness, as not wanting to control the dialogue process requires a unique will to listen and a view on humanity based on the outmost respect for the uniqueness of individuals. The facilitator is the role model for the dialogue group, without such an integrity the facilitator can make things worse. Dialogue is not something everyone can do, it is a mindset and an attitude towards life.

Dialogue's main attribute is listening. The objective of listening before speaking is to understand the other better. Following listening, the focus in dialogue is to openly share one's own point of view. As dialogue is a reflective form of communication, changing one's opinion through internalizing thoughts, considerations and impressions from communication is seen as strength. Dialogue thus requires a degree of openness to others and oneself. Openness including allowing emotions, along with reflections, stories and faith, thus making space for the whole person. Dialogue is viewed as an attitude and a culture as requirements for facilitating dialogue as a form of communication. If attitude and culture are not in place, communication through dialogue will then be impaired. Developing an attitude of openness and curiosity, and a culture where we admit that we do not know everything, thus in itself requires enormous efforts.

Dialogue is seen as a sustainable tool in conflict resolution and should be practiced more often in order to gain the objectives of the university. Dialogue as a form of communication with the goal of understanding can be a sustainable tool in conflict resolution without limiting the process of dialogue. A tool is something used to do what is necessary to achieve an aim, dialogue can be said to be a tool, specifically a communication tool. Within the tool dialogue, there are further tools such as asking questions and active listening. It is an instrument for reconciliation and peace. Dialogue is an effective tool to address challenges faced by societies in the 21st century, considering the possible effects of dialogue, it could in favorable conditions be an effective tool in conflict resolution.

Dialogue being an important aspect in conflict resolution if well explored can have a long and positive effect to the university. The findings to this study may further provide a basis for introduction of clear conflict resolution strategies used in implementation of policies. This Thesis would therefore be an important reference

text for scholars, policy makers and practitioners in dialogue, conflict, and Conflict handling. Management should try and ensure that whatever triggers conflict should be dealt with in time. Communication problem, can lead to conflict, clear, concise, accurate, and timely communication of information will help ease both the number and the extent of conflict.

Recommendations

The study has so far understood the objectives studied on dialogue as having significant impact on conflict resolution at Rongo University. However, a lasting solution should be achieved since the university is still growing. This calls for every stakeholder to take his/her role seriously in ensuring that dialogue is practised to the latter in order to achieve success. Therefore, the study makes the following recommendations:

- (i) Employees of Rongo University need to embrace dialogue for success of the university. It is important to create awareness and acceptance that conflict exists and if dialogue is engaged, it will bring harmony to the organization. In relation to findings, it is important to embrace dialogue in order to invest in the importance of using dialogue as a tool in conflict resolution. Better working conditions, improved production and a better image and reputation will be maintained if dialogue is well applied.
- (ii) Dialogue requires participants to commit themselves to listen, reflect and question with a curious mindset to seek shared understanding. The university should ensure efficiency in service delivery and good organization relation thus turning conflicts into better opportunities that can make a difference.
- (iii) It is important to listen and respond with empathy, be involved, ask other person's opinions, ideas and thoughts and maintain and affirm self-esteem. Commitment is important to achieve the required objective in dialogue.
- (iv) It is important that communication reach the necessary participants. Workplace that is respectful, courteous, fair and values individual differences is a core aspect of building a positive workplace culture. Managing equity and diversity is a key component of managing workers and by focusing on building a positive and respectful culture, the university should promote and motivate employees to perform better. University, management should promote a fair and better work environment for all staff. Supervisors should maintain open communication to enable participation by other staff.
- (v) Dialogue requires various things to succeed, it is therefore the responsibility of the university to avail the necessary facilities during dialogue. Especially resources including financial, personnel and material. The best results in dialogue can only be achieved when the right things are done on time. There must be enough time for the dialogue process and should not be done in haste. The University through the various committees come up with a long lasting solution on how conflicts can be handled before they escalate to an impossible state.
- (vi) Rongo University should work out the best ways to get a sustainable change, people have to develop a sense of joint ownership of the process and become stakeholders in identifying new approaches to address common challenges. Participants must be willing to show empathy towards one another, recognize differences as well as areas of common ground and demonstrate a capacity for change.

Suggestions For Further Study

My motivation for the research topic is thus connected with a professional interest to continue working with dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution.

The study further suggests research to be done on:

- (i) The impact of dialogue in an organization.
- (ii) The study be replicated in other areas including other learning institutions and perhaps more organizations not necessarily dealing with academic matters.
- (iii) Better ways of handling conflicts in learning institutions.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

Objective	Contribution
Importance of dialogue	<p>Dialogue is important as humans are in constant communication with one another.</p> <p>Dialogue builds trust and can be very effective in the growth of an organization and can be considered as the best in conflict resolution as long as it is handled well.</p> <p>Dialogue unites as it opens the possibility to share a common experience of listening to one another, with people we might be very different from.</p>
Requirements for dialogue	<p>Dialogue as a mutual process requires both listening and speaking.</p> <p>Dialogue should be handled in a favourable environment to give positive results. Willingness, credible and humble convener, respect, resources and transparency were the most valued during the dialogue process.</p>
Dialogue as a sustainable tool	<p>Dialogue is thus a tool for understanding which can be used as a tool in conflict resolution. Dialogue can be a sustainable tool in conflict resolution as it can contribute well to adaptability.</p> <p>Dialogue is described as a form of communication and can be used as a tool. A tool highlights dialogue as something useful.</p>

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