



**EFFECTS OF GRIEVANCE HANDLING PROCEDURE ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN KENYA: A CASE OF KENYA NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS**

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**Accepted: October 19, 2015**

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**ABSTRACT**

In resolving grievances, aggrieved employees will file their dissatisfaction through grievance procedure and their immediate managers or supervisors are responsible to take action within period given. Grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions. This study sought to fill the existing research gaps by conducting a study to establish the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with special focus on Kenya National Union of Teachers. This study adopted a descriptive survey. The population for this study was employees of Kenya National Union of Teachers head office in Nairobi. There are a total of 106 employees in Kenya National Union of Teachers head office in Nairobi. Sampling frame was the list of employees working in all level of management. Stratified random sampling was applied to select 53 respondents as the sample population. Data was collected using structured questionnaires. The questionnaires were tried out. The study administered the questionnaire individually to all respondents of the study. Data collected, was tabulated and analyzed for purpose of clarity, using SPSS version 20 software. Data was presented using tables, and pie charts to make them reader friendly. In addition, a multiple regression was used to measure the quantitative data and was analyzed using SPSS too. The study revealed that there were avenues present to address grievances in Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study also found that grievance capturing systems positively influence conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers. From the findings, the study concludes that grievance capturing systems plays role in conflict management in Kenya. Effective grievance handling process helps to improve conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study also found that grievance handling process positively influence conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers.

**Key Words:** *Grievance, Conflict Management*

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## INTRODUCTION

Grievance is defined as any dissatisfaction regarding work and workplace filed by an employee formally to his or her immediate supervisor (Rose, 2004). An organization establishes a grievance procedure to give an avenue to the employee to file his or her dissatisfactions. The establishment of grievance procedure is in line with the principle of “due process” (Mante-Meija & Enid, 2001) which guarantees the application of procedural justice and ethical decision making in an organization. Besides the establishment of grievance procedure resolving employees’ dissatisfaction fairly, the behaviour of personnel who handle grievances also brings effect to the employees’ satisfaction on the result of grievance resolution. Managers will handle grievances referred to them based on their personality reference.

Issues of grievances are normally associated with dissatisfaction among employees which are related to working procedure, working facilities (Bean, 2004), confusions on provisions stated in company’s policy (Ayadurai, 2006) and the violation of provisions in terms and conditions of employment stated in collective agreement (Salamon, 2010). In resolving grievances, aggrieved employees will file their dissatisfaction through grievance procedure and their immediate managers or supervisors are responsible to take action within period given. This procedure is important to deny the construction of employees’ dispute (Rose, 2004). Settling grievances as near as its origin is important in order to deny the construction of employees’ disputes. Therefore, immediate supervisors are responsible to settle the grievance as they are the nearest personnel that represent managerial team. The argument on the vital role played by supervisors in

managing employees’ grievances paralleled that of past studies. Study made by Rollinson, *et.al* (2006) has identified that complaints are quite common and only extends to taking-up a matter informally with a supervisor. As maintained by Catlett and Brown (1990), there are a number of decisions making points in the grievance handling process that potentially involve the supervisor.

Conflict management is a concept which is composed of two constructs, namely, conflict and management. Conflict shall be detailed later whereas management maintains that the activities of an organization are accordingly coordinated, planned and executed in a manner which produces the required and expected results. Good management is able to provide the communities with services and products which they have paid for (Stevenson, 2009). Stevenson (2009) continues to state that “in every case, the operations manager must coordinate the use of resources through the management process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling.” When these processes have been accordingly achieved, then proper management is resultant. Management is the process which is conducted by a single entity, usually at the top of the organization, in order to address the complexity of the organization in performing its different activities which are intended for the improvement of the quality of life of the communities.

The teachers of this country were subjected to different terms and conditions of service by the many employers they belonged to. The employers who included missionaries and local councils never allowed them to meet and exchange views. This kept them totally ignorant

as regards to their rights and therefore were seriously exploited by their masters. Despite the fact that they were kept in the dark, they slowly learned the need to form organizations still based on religious sect organized to the highest at provincial level. However by 1934 Messrs. James Gichuru and Eluid Mathu formed a teacher's organization known as Kenya African Teachers Union (KATU). This Union eventually fizzled away under the pressure of powers of the time. This was because it was very difficult to organize an effective national organization of workers at that time because of communication problems. It was not until the early fifties, when Makerere and Kagumo Colleges produced a higher caliber of teachers, which teachers organizations began coming up because these teachers communicated after training and hence learnt of the diversity of their terms and conditions of service.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The grievance procedure is often lauded as one of the most significant innovations in industrial relations (Gordon and Miller, 2004). Grievance procedure assumes a compliance role by ensuring that both parties adhere to and respect the collective agreement (Lewin and Peterson, 2008). Employees' union utilize the grievance process to pressure management for strategic purposes (Lewin and Peterson, 1988). These could include the numerous filing of certain grievances as a negotiation tactic prior to the beginning of the negotiations for the new collective agreement or the overloading of the grievance procedure as a pressure tactic in response to a unilateral management initiative. The grievance procedure helps indirectly to improve relations between the parties to the collective agreement (Thomson, 2004).

Grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions (Lewin, 2003). Individual workers enjoy free choice in the filing of grievances and may therefore independently choose whether to grieve a particular issue. The grievance procedure serves as a forum for the communication of information (Lewin, 2003). It is through the grievance process that management is made aware of actual or potential problems in the workplace and this information enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action. The grievance procedure's provides a peaceful means to reduce the pressures and fears of employees and to settle workplace disputes without stoppage of work or resort to economic sanctions (Lewin, 2003).

The Kenya National Union of Teachers has been at the fore front for a long time in fighting for the rights of Kenyan teachers both in primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions. However, there has been some quiet discontent among the employees in the way matters of conflict management have been handled within the organization. Currently according to the union's ICT data center, there have been several internal complaints noted in the annual performance appraisal documents for employees that have gone unresolved leading to some employees leaving the organization while others have contemplated doing so. This problem emanates from the failure of the top management in addressing pertinent issues that affect the welfare of the employees if and when they arise (HR department, 2014).

To the researcher knowledge there is limited empirical evidence on the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya. This study seeks to fill the existing research gaps by conducting a study to

establish the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with special focus on Kenya National Union of Teachers.

### **Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study was to establish the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with special focus on Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: To find out the grievance capturing systems and grievance handling process and its effect on conflict management in Kenya

### **Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions

- i. What are the effects of grievance capturing systems on conflict management in Kenya?
- ii. To what extent does grievance handling process affect conflict management in Kenya?

### **Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out within the Kenya National Union of Teachers. Since it has a countrywide network of branches, the geographical scope of the study was at the head office in Nairobi considering employees in various departments. The study was limited to effect of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with specific focus on the Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study sought to determine the effect of grievance capturing systems, grievance handling process and its effects on conflict management in Kenya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Contingency Theory**

Derr (1975) opined that Contingency Theory is one of the conceptual tools useful for managing organizational conflicts. He stated that there are three major conflict management approaches from which an intervener can draw to formulate an approach appropriate for resolving a dispute: collaboration, bargaining and power play. The appropriate use of these methods depends on the individual and organizational state. *Collaboration* involves people surfacing their differences (get them out in the open) and then work on the problems until they have attained mutually satisfactory solutions. This approach assumes that people will be motivated to expend the time and energy for such problem-solving activity. *Bargaining* on the other hand assumes that neither party will emerge satisfied from the confrontation but that both, through negotiation, can get something they do not have at the start, or more of something they need, usually by giving up something of lesser importance. One party generally wins more than the other; by the skillful use of tactical trades, he can get the maximum possible from the other side. Third approach is *Power Play*, which differs from the other two approaches because its emphasis is on self-interest. Whereas, in *collaboration* and *bargaining* the two sides come together to try to resolve their problems, when power is the dominant mode, the actions are unilateral or in coalitions acting unilaterally. Contingency theory is used in this study to establish the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with special focus on Kenya National Union of Teachers.

**Equity Theory**

The equity theory offers a process to help us understand how the distribution of incentives can affect employee performance. According to Fadil *et. al.* (2005), for equitable and fair distribution of rewards, the reward must be given according to the individual contribution. Adams (1965), as cited in (Kealesitse, 2009) describes the rewards system as a social relationship. The relationship is only considered fair if the perceived contribution of the employee matches their rewards. Most importantly, employees make comparisons on the rewards they receive for the contribution they put forth with other employees in a similar job environment. (Skiba, and Rosenberg 2011).

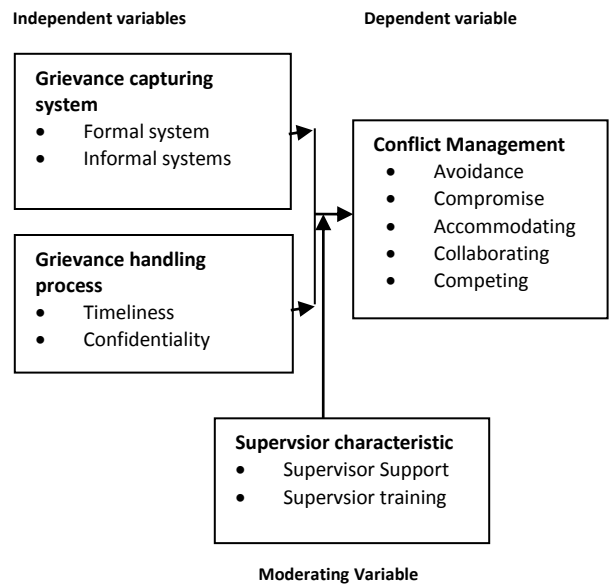
Another important factor is what the employee does to reduce the feeling of inequity. The individual will most likely diminish their level of effort in cases where little effort is required for reward or vice versa where more effort is required. (Fadil, *et. al.* 2005).

These actions are carried out in order to reduce inequity and bring about equilibrium (Fadil, *et. al.* 2005; Kealesitse, 2009).

According to Fadil, *et. al.*(2005) equal distribution of rewards based on individual contribution is likely to promote harmony, loyalty and solidarity among team members as opposed to general distribution of rewards with no consideration of individual contribution. Equal distribution of rewards without paying attention to contribution can lead to demotivation and frustration of workers (Artka, Kumruzaamman, and Ali, 2012). Recently however, the application of the theory has been put to question mainly due to high levels of unemployment. (Skiba and Rosenberg,2011).This situation has led to individuals who perceive that their contribution

is not equitably rewarded not to attempt to minimize the level of inequality as the theory suggests. The individuals fear that if they try to reduce inequity then they are likely to lose their jobs and livelihood (Skiba, and Rosenberg, 2011).

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**

**Conflict Management**

The establishment and continuous existence of organization through the realization of set goals and objectives requires the continuous and effective functioning of its material input with the human element being indispensable. However, the human elements required to facilitate goals attainment often engage in disagreement and variance over factors such as interest, views, style of management among others. The reactionary effect is due to the perceived incompatibilities resulting typically from some form of interference or opposition is term conflict. Azamosa (2004) observed that conflicts involve the total range of behaviours and attitudes that is in opposition between owners/managers on the one hand and

working people on the other. It is a state of disagreement over issues of substance or emotional antagonism and may arise due to anger, mistrust or personality clashes. Irrespective of the factors resulting in conflict, it has been observed that industrial conflicts produce considerable effects on organisations and should be consciously managed as much as possible.

For people to progress at work and other aspect of life, there must be cooperation which is essential to ensure task attainment and stability in life. However, it would be wrong to reach the conclusion that cooperation is good while conflict is bad, this is because both concepts are pervasive and co-exist in our social life. Conflict is inevitable given the wide range of goals for the different stakeholder in the organization and its absence signifies management emphasizes conformity and stifles innovation. Rahim (2001) opined that conflict may be interpersonal or inter group with Interpersonal conflicts occurring between a supervisor and his subordinate or between two individuals at the same level of the organizational hierarchy. Inter group conflicts often occur between two trade unions, between two departments or between management and workers while attempting to implement the policies and programme of the organization

### **Grievance Capturing System**

Grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions (Lewin, 2003). Individual workers enjoy free choice in the filing of grievances and may therefore independently choose whether to grieve a particular issue. Shop stewards and other union officials enjoy a

degree of individual choice when deciding how to respond to an employee grievance.

The grievance procedure serves as a forum for the communication of information (Lewin, 2003). It is through the grievance process that management is made aware of actual or potential problems in the workplace and this information enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action. A further benefit to management is that the information is provided by workers and the costs of processing the grievance at the early stages of the procedure is often borne by the union. Management need only decide on its response to the grievance, which may range from initial rejection, rejection after investigation, initial acceptance or acceptance after investigation. Moreover, Lewin (2003) argues that when management takes corrective action in response to a grievance it is presumed to enhance worker productivity and commitment to the employer.

There are benefits for the union, as well. The grievance procedure may facilitate the enhancement of union solidarity by developing employee loyalty. The interests of union officials are served since the processing of employee concerns convinces the union membership that their leaders are doing their jobs and this assists in their re-election, (Lewin and Peterson, 2008). Through specifying the grievance procedure in the collective agreement, disputes arising during the life of the collective agreement are resolved through a grievance procedure which has been mutually supported by both parties and that fits the organization, management and union. The existence of arbitration represents a key component of this process, since the neutral arbitrator, shared arbitration costs between the parties, and the acceptance of the arbitrator's

decision as final accord closely with civil norms of equity and fairness.

### **Grievance Handling Process**

The grievance handling process may help indirectly to improve relations between the parties to the collective agreement (Thomson, 2004). The grievance process can act as a 'diagnostic device' whereby both parties can be made aware of underlying problems in the workplace with a view to improving the situation. As well, it can provide a medium of communication and consultation. 'Not only do the two sides exchange a good deal of information about their plans, hopes, and feelings in the course of discussing grievances, but such discussions can provide a basis for a positive policy of consultation, especially if regular grievance meetings are held' (Thomson, 2004). Furthermore, due to the need for considerable consistency in resolving workplace disputes, the presence of a grievance procedure can significantly improve the quality of decision making.

Senior management also benefits because the process represents an excellent means for achieving consistency in policy formulation and application and can ensure compliance with corporate policy by middle management and supervisors since their decisions are subject to the grievance procedure and will be reviewed by their superiors. As well, the grievance procedure saves senior management's time and energy since the procedure 'weeds out' issues of local or less importance at the lower levels and funnels upwards only those issues of major importance, while still providing them with ultimate control and coordination of the organization. Moreover, the placing of senior management at the apex of the appeal procedure serves to confirm and support the

existing power structure (Thomson and Murray, 2006).

### **Empirical Review**

There are styles for handling conflict, namely, collaborative style, avoidance style, accommodation style and compromise style. These conflict handling styles are discussed in this section.

**Collaborative style:** Collaborative style of conflict management is also called the mutual problem solving which involves bringing together the conflicting parties in order to work out their problem in a joint situation. This "will often require the two groups to mutually determine how they will resolve their own conflict. Through this process of sharing concerns and communicating with each other, mutual problem solving often brings about intergroup harmony" (Hodgetts, 2003). Hodgetts (2003) defines that "sometimes goals desired by two or more parties cannot be reached without the cooperation of those involved: this is when collaboration can be effective." Collaboration style to conflict management entails that inputs from both the conflicting parties are required in order for a conflict to be resolved. This is because "collaboration calls for all parties to work out their differences and to realize that without full cooperation all of them will fail" (Hodgetts, 2003).

**Avoidance style:** The avoidance style for handling conflict is the process of treating complaints as if they do not exist. In this context, the managers do nothing when conflicts occur and hope they will resolve themselves as time goes by. Avoidance style of conflict management could be applied by managers when they are faced with a problem and have not yet gathered enough information



about it. Avoidance provides them with time to collect the information necessary for the solution of the problem (Deutsch, 2005). The avoidance style in conflict management is necessary especially when employees do nothing towards settling their disputes and expect managers to settle them on their behalf. Whitemyer (2005) advises that in a situation like this, managers must select to do nothing instead. Managers spend most of their time dealing with subordinates' problems. "If managers never allow employees to work out conflicts among themselves, they'll never meld into a high-performing unit" (Whitemyer, 2005).

**Accommodation style:** The accommodation style for handling conflict seems to be very effective because it is highly featured with consensus. The accommodative style means that one party satisfies the interests of the other party at his/her own expense (Squelch & Lemmer, 2004). Managers who manage conflict by means of an accommodation style tend to put aside what they think is important. They do not propose their own professional points of view, but tend to ensure that others' points of view are espoused (Mostert, 2008). Accommodation is a common soft response, when one party adjusts to the position of the other without seeking to serve his/her own interests in the relationship (Bodine & Crawford, 2006).

**Compromise style:** Whitfield (2004) has explained the compromise style of conflict management by stating that in it the "inventive and forward looking negotiators have often increased the size of the cake so that both parties were able to get a bigger slice." In this analysis therefore, both the conflicting parties to a problem become satisfied. A compromise

conflict resolution management style entails that both the opposite parties become satisfied with a conflict resolution which was arrived at. Hodgetts (2003) has mentioned that "when each party gives up something and no one group is the clear winner, compromise occurs." Managers need to be confrontational during the conflict management process. Confrontation is used when conflicting parties are asked to meet and try to resolve their conflicts in a face-to-face basis. "This confrontation method is one of the most successful approaches to conflict resolution because it concentrates on solving the problem directly rather than trying to bypass it or to smooth over the issues" (Hodgetts, 2003). "Compromise involves each side emerging as the big winner.

#### **Critique**

Effective conflict management ensures the smooth functioning of the organization. Conflict is neither good nor bad. Conflict can be a positive force that facilitates needed change. Whitfield (2005) identified the positive aspects of conflict when he wrote that conflicts enable us to learn something more about ourselves, conflicts bring about the greatest acts of courage and heroism, conflicts resolution displays our human potential, and that the need to resolve conflicts has a tendency of bringing people together because "communities can be brought together in a unique way when the people concerned have a common purpose."

In this context therefore, the appearance of a conflict in a situation becomes in itself a mortar or glue that holds people together. Conflict is necessary in every organization because it "is absolutely necessary. Without it we just

couldn't get the job done" (Whitfield, 2004). Functional conflict is a positive conflict because it is associated with progress and achievement. Positive conflict is according to Deutsch (2005) called an approach-approach in which an individual is faced with two positive valences of approximately equal strength to choose from. This is not a problematic type of conflict.

### Research Gaps

Grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions (Lewin, 2003). Individual workers enjoy free choice in the filing of grievances and may therefore independently choose whether to grieve a particular issue. The grievance procedure serves as a forum for the communication of information (Lewin, 2003).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey. Kothari, (2004) describes descriptive research as including survey and facts finding enquiries adding that the major purpose of descriptive research is description of affairs as it exists at present. A case study research design was adopted. According to Kothari, (2006) a case study design is a way of organizing data and looking at the object to be studied as a whole, a case study makes a detailed examination of a single subject or a group of phenomena. Case approach helps to narrow down a very broad field or population into an easily researchable one, and seeks to describe a unit in details, in context and holistically, (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The study hence considers case study design suitable since data was gathered from a single source; Kenya National Union of Teachers

and used to represent, the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya. The method of data collection was tested for validity and reliability, conditions which according to Kothari, (2006) must be present in descriptive studies.

### Population

A population is defined as a complete set of individuals, cases or objects with some common observable characteristics, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The population for this study were the employees of Kenya National Union of Teachers head office in Nairobi. There are a total of 106 employees in Kenya National Union of Teachers head office in Nairobi.

### Sampling Techniques

Stratified random sampling was applied in carrying out the study as per the departments, a sample of 50% of the total population was used therefore 53 respondents constituted the sample population for the study, according to Gay 1983 as cited by Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) suggests that for descriptive studies at least 10% - 20% of the total population is enough. Stratified random sampling ensures inclusion, in the sample, of sub groups, which otherwise would be omitted entirely by other sampling methods because of their small number of population, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

**Table 1: Sample Population**

Level	Frequency	Proportion	Sample
Senior employees	17	0.5	9
Middle level employees	32	0.5	16
Low level employees	57	0.5	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>		<b>53</b>

### Principle Research Tools

Data was collected using structured questionnaires. Structured questionnaires refer

to questions which are accompanied by a list of all possible alternatives from which the respondents select the answer that best describe their situation, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Structured questions are easier to analyze since they are in the immediate usable form, (Orotho and Kombo, 2002). Likert type of scale was used; for example beside each statement presented below, please indicate whether you are extremely satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied. Questionnaires were administered to the respondent to complete the questions themselves. The questioners were hand-delivered to them. Secondary data was collected through reviews of both empirical and theoretical data from books, journals, magazine and the internet.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The questionnaires were administered individually to all respondents of the study. The study exercised care and control to ensure all questionnaires issued to the respondents were received, and to achieve this, the study maintained a register of questionnaires, which was sent, and later received. The questionnaire was administered using a drop and pick later method.

**Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret. Such data must be cleaned, coded, key punched into a computer and analyzed, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Data collected, was tabulated and analyzed for purpose of clarity, using SPSS version 20 software. It is a computer program used for statistical analysis and has the ability to handle statistical presentation with array of formulas for ease of interpretation. Data was presented

using tables, and pie charts to make them reader friendly.

Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis; content analysis was used to test data that is qualitative in nature or aspect of the data collected from the open ended questions. This study was interested in establishing the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with special focus on Kenya National Union of Teachers

In addition, a multiple regression was used to measure the quantitative data and was analyzed using SPSS too. Grievance Handling Procedure X (independent variables) and Conflict Management Y (dependent variable). The regression equation is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon$$

Where Y is the dependent variable (Conflict Management),  $\beta_0$  is the regression constant,  $\beta_1$ , and  $\beta_2$ , are the coefficients of independent variables,  $X_1$  is Grievance capturing system and  $X_2$  is Grievance handling process.

**PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION**

**Response Rate**

The study targeted a sample size of 79 respondents from which 71 filled in and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 89.9%. This response rate was satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. The response rate was representative

**4.3 Reliability Analysis**

**Table 2: Reliability Coefficients**

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Grievance Capturing Systems	0.809	11
Grievance Handling Process	0.769	9

A pilot study was carried out to determine reliability of the questionnaires. Reliability

analysis was subsequently done using Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency by establishing if certain item within a scale measures the same construct. Table 2 shows that grievance capturing systems ( $\alpha=0.809$ ), then grievance handling process ( $\alpha = 0.769$ ). This illustrates that all the two scales were reliable as their reliability values exceeded the prescribed threshold of 0.7.

### Demographic Information

The study sought to determine the gender of the respondent. From the findings, the study revealed that majority of the respondent as shown by 54.9% were males whereas 45.1% of the respondent indicated that they were female.

The study requested the respondents to indicate their age, from the findings the study established that the respondents were aged between 26 years to 56 years. This shows that all age groups were represented in this study. On the length of service, the study found that respondent had served in the organization for 2 to 23 years. This depicts that respondent had served for a long time in the organization to understand it and give credible information to the study.

### Study Variables

#### a) Grievance Capturing Systems

On whether the organization have any avenue through which grievances are addressed. The study found that majority of the respondent 88.75% indicated that there were avenue through which grievances were addressed, whereas 11.3% were of the contrary opinion. This is an indication that there were avenues to address grievances in Kenya National Union of Teachers.

**Table 3: Effects of avenues for addressing grievances on resolving conflicts**

Statements	No Extent	Little Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Very Great Extent	Mean	Std Deviation
In KNUT, the availability of avenues for addressing grievances help in resolving conflicts	0	0	10	33	28	4.254	0.988
In KNUT, employees make use of the established grievance handling process	0	1	11	29	30	4.239	0.969
In KNUT , supervisors are empowered by the organization to handle employee grievances	0	0	8	30	33	4.352	1.070
The involvement of the supervisor in grievance handling has assisted in managing conflict in the organization	0	0	12	28	31	4.268	0.983
In KNUT, supervisors assist employees in handling grievances	0	0	9	27	35	4.366	1.086

From the findings on the respondent rating various statements relating to the effects of avenues for addressing grievances on resolving conflicts in the organization, the study found that majority of the respondent rated the following statement to a great extent in Kenya National Union of Teachers ; supervisors assist employees in handling grievances as shown by a mean of 4.366, supervisors are empowered by the organization to handle employee grievances as shown by a mean of 4.352, the involvement of the supervisor in grievance handling has assisted in managing conflict in the organization as shown by mean of 4.268, the availability of avenues for addressing grievances help in resolving conflicts as shown

by mean of 4.254 and employees make use of the established grievance handling process as shown by mean of 4.239. These findings concur with Uline et al (2003), who argued that a collaborative relationship enables parties in a conflict to take advantage of differences and use them as strengths. The study established that grievances would be captured better within the organization, through presence of neutral arbitration process, through fairness in the process.

**Table 4: Effects of grievance capturing systems on conflict management**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Deviation
In KNUT, grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions	0	1	19	41	10	3.845	0.938
In KNUT , grievance procedure serves as a forum for the communication of information	0	0	2	48	21	4.268	1.211
In KNUT , it is through the grievance process that management is made aware of actual or potential	0	0	11	44	16	4.070	1.039

problems in the workplace							
In KNUT , the information received by management through the grievance process enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action	0	2	8	36	25	4.183	0.979
The grievance management system in KNUT is fair and leads to my commitment to the organization	2	5	14	20	30	4.254	0.801

The study sought to determine the extent to which respondent agreed or disagreed with some statements relating to effects of grievance capturing systems on conflict management in their organization. The study findings showed that the respondents agreed with the statements that grievance procedure serves as a forum for the communication of information, as shown by a mean of 4.268, the grievance management system is fair and leads to their commitment to the organization, as shown by a mean of 4.254, the information received by management through the grievance process enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action, as shown by a mean of 4.183, management is made aware of actual or potential problems in the workplace through the grievance process, as shown by a mean of 4.070 and grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions, as shown by a mean of 3.845. These findings were

found to be consistent with Lewin (2003), who argues that when management takes corrective action in response to a grievance it is presumed to enhance worker productivity and commitment to the employer.

**b) Grievance Handling Process**

On whether the organization has a grievance handling process that is timely and which allows for confidentiality, the study found that majority of the respondent 94.4% indicated that there was a grievance handling process, whereas 5.6% were of the contrary opinion. This is an indication that there was a grievance handling process that is timely and which allows for confidentiality, in Kenya National Union of Teachers.

received by management through the grievance process enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action

The grievance management system in KNUT is fair and leads to my commitment to the organization	0	0	4	15	52	4.676	1.564
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**Table 5: Effects of grievance capturing systems**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std deviation
In KNUT , the grievance handling process is timely and allows for confidentiality	0	0	3	42	26	4.324	1.143
In KNUT ,the grievance handling process is effective in managing conflict in the organization	0	0	2	40	29	4.380	1.164
In KNUT , the existence of a grievance handling process is made known to all employees	0	0	7	44	20	4.183	1.086
In KNUT ,the information	0	2	6	36	27	4.239	1.025

The study sought to determine the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagree with some statements relating to effects of grievance capturing systems on conflict management in their organization. From the study findings, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that grievance management system in KNUT is fair and leads to their commitment to the organization, as shown by a mean of 4.676. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents agreed with the following statements on the effects of grievance capturing systems in KNUT: the grievance handling process is effective in managing conflict in the organization, as shown by a mean of 4.380; the grievance handling process is timely and allows for confidentiality, as shown by a mean of 4.324, the information received by management through the grievance process enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action, as shown by a mean of 4.239, and that the existence of a grievance handling process is made known to all employees, as shown by a mean of 4.183. These findings were found to be consistent with those of Staudohar (2007) who asserted that grievance handling process serves as a force against arbitrary or discriminatory unilateral

actions and as a mechanism for the 'equitable and just interpretation' and application of the negotiated collective agreement.

**Table 6: Effects of Grievance Handling Process**

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std deviation
The grievance handling process helps to improve employee relations in KNUT	0	0	3	22	46	4.606	1.397
In KNUT, the presence of a grievance handling procedure significantly improves the quality of decision making.	0	0	4	38	29	4.352	1.117
In KNUT, the presence of grievance handling process enables management to promptly identify and resolve conflicts as soon as they arise	0	0	5	39	27	4.310	1.092
In KNUT, placing of senior management at the apex of the appeal procedure serves to confirm and support the existing power structure.	0	1	5	38	27	4.282	1.070

The study further sought to determine the respondents' opinion on some statements relating to effects of grievance handling process on conflict management in their organization.

From the findings, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the grievance handling process helps to improve employee relations in KNUT, as shown by a mean of 4.606. Majority of the respondents agreed with the following statements that in KNUT, the presence of a grievance handling procedure significantly improves the quality of decision making, as shown by a mean of 4.352, the presence of grievance handling process enables management to promptly identify and resolve conflicts as soon as they arise, as shown by a mean of 4.310, and that placing of senior management at the apex of the appeal procedure serves to confirm and support the existing power structure, as shown by a mean of 4.282. These findings were found to be consistent with those of Thomson and Murray (2006), who said that the placing of senior management at the apex of the appeal procedure serves to confirm and support the existing power structure.

**c) Conflict Management**

**Table 7: Level of grievance handling system**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std deviation
In KNUT, conflicts are well managed thus bringing together the conflicting parties	0	0	6	24	41	4.493	1.244
In KNUT, employees freely communicate with each other thus enhance	0	0	5	30	36	4.437	1.161

intergroup harmony							
The management at KNUT works with employees to find solutions that fully satisfies the concerns of both employer and employee	0	0	10	41	20	4.141	1.009
In resolving conflicts, the management at KNUT neglects their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the employee	22	30	8	10	1	2.127	0.292
The management at KNUT allows a give and take position while resolving conflicts	0	4	9	27	31	4.197	0.964
While resolving conflicts, the management at KNUT do not listen to the opinion of workers	15	49	6	1	0	1.901	0.569
In KNUT, there are times that the management ignores complaints from employees	3	46	2	20	0	1.962	0.543

The study further sought to determine the respondents' opinion on some statements relating to the level of grievance handling system in their organization. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that in KNUT, conflicts are well managed

thus bringing together the conflicting parties, as shown by a mean of 4.493, employees freely communicate with each other thus enhance intergroup harmony, as shown by a mean of 4.437, the management allows a give and take position while resolving conflicts and works with employees to find solutions that fully satisfies the concerns of both employer and employee, as shown by a mean of 4.197 and 4.141 respectively. Majority of the respondents disagreed on the following statements that in KNUT; the management neglects their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the employee, as shown by a mean of 2.127, there are times that the management ignores complaints from employees, as shown by a mean of 1.962 and that management do not listen to the opinion of workers, as shown by a mean of 1.901. These findings depicts that the management in Kenya National Union of Teachers listens to the opinions of the workers and it does not ignore complaints from employees. These findings were found to be consistent with those of Thomson (2004), who argued that the grievance handling process may help indirectly to improve relations between the parties to the collective agreement.

**Table 8: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2.688	2	0.672	3.215	.003 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	14.003	69	0.209		
Total	16.691	71			

From the ANOVA statics in Table 4.20, the processed data, which is the population parameters, had a significance level of 3% which shows that the data is ideal for making a conclusion on the population parameters as the value of significance (p-value ) is less than 5%. The calculated value was greater than the



critical value (3.215>2.37) an indication that there were significant difference between the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, and grievance capturing systems and grievance handling process. The significance value was less than 0.05 indicating that the model was significant.

**Table 9: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
	1 (Constant)	1.388	0.587	.222	2.365
Grievance Capturing Systems	.512	0.199	.222	2.573	.031
Grievance Handling Process	.334	0.071	.172	4.704	.012

The established regression equation was

$$Y = 1.388 + 0.512 X_1 + 0.334 X_2$$

From the above regression equation, it was revealed that holding grievance capturing systems and grievance handling process to a constant zero, effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, would stand at 1.388. A unit increase in grievance capturing systems would lead to increase in the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, by a factor of 0.512, a unit increase in grievance handling process would lead to increase in the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, by a factor of 0.334, The study further revealed that grievance capturing systems and grievance handling process, were statistically significant to affect the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, as

all the p value (sig) were less than 5%. The study also found that there was a positive relationship between effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya grievance capturing systems and grievance handling process.

### Correlation Analysis

**Table 10: Correlations coefficient**

		CM	GCS	GHP
CM	Pearson Correlation	1	.764	.634
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.302	.926
GCS	Pearson Correlation	.764	1	.594
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.302		.070
GHP	Pearson Correlation	.634	.594	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.926	.070	

On the correlation of the study variables, the researcher conducted a Pearson Product Moment correlation. From the findings on the correlation analysis between conflict management and various grievance handling procedure, the study found a positive correlation between conflict management and grievance capturing system as shown by correlation coefficient of 0.764, association between conflict management and grievance handling process was found to have positive relationship as shown by correlation coefficient of 0.634.

### SUMMARY OF FINDING

#### Grievance Capturing Systems

The first objective of the study was to find out the grievance capturing systems and their effects on conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study revealed that there were avenues present to address grievances in Kenya National Union of Teachers.

The findings revealed that in Kenya National Union of Teachers; supervisors assist employees in handling grievances, supervisors are empowered by the organization to handle employee grievances, the availability of avenues for addressing grievances help in resolving conflicts and employees make use of the established grievance handling.

On the effects of grievance capturing systems on conflict management in Kenya, the study revealed that grievance procedure serves as a forum for the communication of information, the grievance management system is fair and leads to their commitment to the organization, the information received by management through the grievance process enables the enterprise to diagnose the problems and take corrective action, management is made aware of actual or potential problems in the workplace through the grievance process, and grievance procedures enable individual employees or union officials to challenge management over a wide range of wage and working conditions.

### **Grievance Handling Process**

The second objective of the study was to examine the grievance handling process and its effects on conflict management in Kenya. The study established that there was a grievance handling process that is timely and which allows for confidentiality, in Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study revealed that in Kenya National Union of Teachers, grievance management system is fair and leads to their commitment to the organization, the grievance handling process is effective in managing conflict in the organization, the grievance handling process is timely and allows for confidentiality, the information received by management through the grievance process enables the enterprise to diagnose the

problems and take corrective action and that the existence of a grievance handling process is made known to all employees.

On the effects of grievance handling process on conflict management in Kenya, the study revealed that the grievance handling process helps to improve employee relations, the presence of a grievance handling procedure significantly improves the quality of decision making, the presence of grievance handling process enables management to promptly identify and resolve conflicts as soon as they arise and that placing of senior management at the apex of the appeal procedure serves to confirm and support the existing power structure.

### **Conflict Management**

The study revealed that in Kenya National Union of Teachers, conflicts are well managed thus bringing together the conflicting parties, employees freely communicate with each other thus enhance intergroup harmony, the management allows a give and take position while resolving conflicts and works with employees to find solutions that fully satisfies the concerns of both employer and employee. The study also revealed the management do not neglect their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the employee, there are no times that the management ignores complaints from employees and that management do listen to the opinion of workers. The findings further revealed that grievance handling procedure in Kenya National Union of Teachers is fair.

### **Conclusion**

The study revealed that there were avenues present to address grievances in Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study also found that grievance capturing systems positively influence conflict management in Kenya

National Union of Teachers. From the findings, the study concludes that grievance capturing systems plays role in conflict management in Kenya.

Effective grievance handling process helps to improve conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study also found that grievance handling process positively influence conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers. From the finding the study concludes that effective grievance handling process helps to improve conflict management in Kenya.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends that there is need for an effective grievance handling procedure, as this will positively influence conflict management in Kenya.

The study found that grievance capturing systems play a significant role in ensuring conflict management in Kenya National Union of Teachers. Therefore the study recommends that organizations in Kenya should develop a grievance capturing system, which will provide a peaceful means to reduce the pressures and fears of employees, as well as enable them settle workplace disputes without stoppage of work or resort to economic sanctions.

The study recommends that the Kenyan organizations should ensure grievance handling processes are effective enough in terms of being timely and confidential. This will ensure conflict management since corrective action

will be taken in response to a grievance, and hence enhance worker productivity and commitment to the employer.

### **Suggestion for Further Research**

The study sought to establish the effects of grievance handling procedure on conflict management in Kenya, with special focus on Kenya National Union of Teachers. The study recommends that future researchers should perform a longitudinal study to check the trends in adoption of a successful grievance handling procedure on conflict management. This is because this study was done in one period of time.

Additionally, the research was confined to KNUT, an organization that provides basic services. There is need to replicate the same study in other areas of the economy so as to check whether the same results would hold. Such areas maybe those in the manufacturing sector so as to engage a varied calibre of clientele. The study also suggests that further research be done on the challenges affecting the implementation of grievance handling procedure in organizations. This study also recommends that an in-depth study should be done on the effects of grievance handling procedure on employee performance. Future research should determine effects of grievance handling procedure on employee performance in a larger sample incorporating branch offices of an organization with a wide network in selected counties in Kenya.

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