

Sociopolitical Conflict and Workforce Productivity: A Case Study of Group Banana in Cameroon

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Abstract: *This study examines the relationship between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity in Group Banana, Cameroon. Using a case study design and a structured questionnaire administered to 30 employees, the research analyzed the effects of sociopolitical violence on productivity indicators. Descriptive and inferential statistics, including Chi-square analysis, revealed that incidents such as ghost towns and gunfire significantly correlate with reduced organizational output. The findings highlight both the psychological and operational implications of conflict on workforce performance and suggest that addressing sociopolitical tensions is critical to sustaining productivity. The study also offers strategic recommendations for government and company management to mitigate the effects of conflict and safeguard employee welfare.*

Keywords: External Interpersonal Conflict, Organizational Productivity, Sociopolitical Conflict

1. Introduction

Conflict is inevitable due to the immense social interaction which occurs within and without an organization (Shetach, 2012). Conflict encompasses social and business life; it is found everywhere. Conflict can be perceived as a reality of social life which exists at all levels of society; it is as old as human society. Interpersonal conflict is identified as one of the main stressors in the workplace, strongly linked to the impairment of employees' psychological and physical health. In addition, interpersonal conflict (for example, the sociopolitical conflict or external interpersonal conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions - NWSW) has been identified as a determinant of workplace injuries and other costs related to reduced quality, loss of skilled employees, restructuring inefficiencies, decreased motivation and productivity, absenteeism rates, and employee turnover (Brockman, 2014). When two or more people, countries, nations and groups disagree with some topics then conflicts may occur because of the difference in ideas, behaviors, perceptions, interests, attitudes, politics (Afzal, Khan and Ali, 2009). Conflict thus occurs due to tensions between individuals and society, poor governance, historical background, and socioeconomic condition (Moily, 2008). Also, difference in personality backgrounds, functional interdependence, autonomy, and status arise conflicts (Agwu 2013). However, conflict management influences whether the outcome of conflict will be positive or negative on productivity. The World Bank Group (2020) made a strong commitment to address the development challenges related with fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) as part of its corporate goals. It situated the challenge at the core of its poverty reduction focus, especially since extreme poverty is rising in fragile countries (Cuaresma et al., 2018). By 2030, it is estimated that over 50 percent of the world's extreme poor will live in fragile and conflict affected situations (FCSs). Achieving development outcomes in FCV countries is also critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. On average, only 18 percent of FCV countries are on track to achieve unmet needs targets in goals 1 to 7 and 11 (Samman et al., 2018). External interpersonal conflict can negatively affect organizational productivity which is the capacity of a business to produce desired results with a minimum expenditure of resources (time, money, human resources).

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) (2015), productivity is the effective use of innovation and resources to increase the value-added content of goods and services. In this vane, an employee who works in an insecure and life-threatening environment may not be punctual, committed and enthusiastic to work. When conflict occurs, people are worried, time is wasted and productivity decreases. If conflict is neglected, relations between the workers become strained and the business suffers. Thus, managing conflict can boost morale and enhance organizational productivity.

2. Literature Review

Organizational Conflict (OC)

According to Ololube (2019), OC is a state of conflict that manifest as a result of perceived ideas, values and interests within and between formal organizational structure and power, including the individuals and groups affected. To be a part of an organization or to do business is to be in conflict. Conflict is built into organizational life. OC is part of the life any organization if individuals compete for jobs, resources, power, recognition and security. In addition, dealing with conflicts is a great challenge to management. It is important to view conflict not a negative but positive way. Conflict is defined as a disagreement, a battle or to be at odds. To say the least, OC is as a result of differences in opinions or ideas. OC occur when ever two or more employees see things from different perspectives, given their education, background, upbringing, knowledge of the issue, beliefs, time of day, mood, etc. (Olukayode, 2015). OC is the differences that exist between needs, values, and interests of employees in organizations. Conflict can be constructive, and it can be destructive. The distinction is based on how the conflict is managed. Conflict cannot always be avoided. Many positive outcomes can result from working through conflict. Properly managed conflict can help in bringing constructive change. Conflict is any situation in which two or more parties feel themselves in opposition. OC arises as a result of interpersonal processes that occur as a result of disagreements over the organizational goals or the strategies to accomplishing the goals. Therefore, OC may be seen as expressed struggle between at least two or more interdependent parties that perceive differences in the perception of organizational goals, the scarce resources, and

the interferences from the rival parties in achieving organizational goals. More so, OC are disagreement between two or more employees or team members. Conflict occurs because people do not always agree – on goals, issues, perceptions, and the like - and because people inevitably compete. In addition, Osabiya (2015) described conflict as a manifestation of difference between two or more persons or groups characterized by tension, disagreement, emotion, or polarization, where bonding is broken or lacking. Nwuche and Amah (2016) stated that OC manifest in a variety of ways: employees may emanate following competition with one another, jealousy, shouting at one another, or withdraw from organizational performance. According to Osabiya (2015), OC has traditionally been seen as opposing interests that evolve following scramble for scarce resources, goal divergence and frustration. It often or might likely occurs in a situation called mixed-motive relationships, where employees have competing and cooperative interests. The competing elements here create the conflict and the cooperating elements create the incentives to bargain to reach an agreement. There are different forms of interpersonal organizational conflict. They include:

Intra-Organizational Conflict (Internal Interpersonal Conflict): Refers to conflict that occur within an organization. Internal interpersonal conflict is the conflict between two or more individuals working together in groups or crew. Alternatively, internal interpersonal conflict is that which occurs within the organizational people. It is subdivided into vertical and horizontal conflicts.

- 1) **Horizontal Conflict:** Indicates that there can be conflict between two functional groups at the same hierarchical level. It can happen because of various reasons, such as shared resources and interdependency, and goal incompatibility. Horizontal (lateral or worker to worker) conflict occurs between the individuals at the same level; it occurs mostly among employees on the same hierarchy; this conflict is part of life and it is present in every organization (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2011). Nistorescu as cited in Tabitha and Florence (2019), views horizontal conflict as a means through which a person or a sector prevents another from achieving the desired goal. He asserts that if not checkmated early, it could lead to dangerous situations in future that will affect organizational effectiveness. For example, at times, the resources, such as printers, may be used by different departments at the same time, leading to a long queue of documents to be printed. This may delay operations. Similarly, any mismatch in data and figures of the reports that are shared by two interdependent departments may also lead to conflict. Likewise, the goals of one department may interfere with the goals of another department, leading to goal incompatibility and conflict.
- 2) **Vertical Conflict:** Refers to the conflict between different hierarchical levels, such as between a superior and subordinates. Vertical conflict happens between different hierarchy levels. Vertical conflict can occur because of inadequate or ineffective communication and distorted perceptions. For example, if a superior delegates some responsibilities to the subordinates but fails to give clear instructions then a conflict may arise between the

subordinates and the supervisor regarding the responsibilities.

Inter-Organizational Conflict: Refers to the conflict occurring between two or more organizations. Organizations belonging to same industry may indulge in unethical practices and unhealthy competition because of inter-organizational conflict.

External interpersonal conflict

It takes place with the people or group outside the company or organization. It can be subdivided into micro level or national conflict and macro level or international conflict (Brainly, 2019; Beyond Intractability, 2013). Micro level or national conflict occurs between the people who live within the domestic territory of a country; for example, the sociopolitical conflict in the Northwest and Southwest (NWSW) regions and the post-election violence in Cameroon. Attempts to find a solution to the sociopolitical conflict, including through the Grand National Dialogue from September 30 to October 4, 2019, have generated proposed actions and steps designed to decrease tensions and address Anglophone grievances. A roadmap toward a mediated peace has, however, yet to materialize, and the undesired consequences of the conflict on businesses is likely to grow exponentially the longer it takes to find a solution. The long-term decline in gross domestic product (GDP) could have a catastrophic impact on household welfare in the two affected regions. A protracted conflict is also likely to have dire consequences for the financial sector and could cause prolonged displacement. In addition, a protracted conflict is likely to affect Cameroon's international reputation as well as its long-term development prospects (The World Bank, 2021). Macro-level conflict or international conflict is that which extends and reaches to international front or with foreign country people.

Organizational Productivity

Organizational productivity is the effective use of innovation and resources to increase the value-added content of goods and services (International Labor Organization, 2015). In this vane, an employee who works in an insecure and life-threatening environment may not be punctual, committed and enthusiastic to work. The International Labor Organization (2015), emphasized that to improve productivity, the owner of a business can do two things: increase the output without changing the input (making and selling more goods/services); decrease the input without changing the output (reducing the costs of the resources like labor, land, energy, buildings and materials used in the business). The output you get from any particular input is the productivity of that input. The productivity of your business, therefore, indicates the degree to which your resources (input) are put to good use. By increasing your productivity, you improve your business performance and therefore, increase your profits (ILO, 2015). Zheng et al (2010), opined that productivity generally determines the policy objectives of the organization or the extent to which organizational goals are realized. Productivity is sometimes used to replicate all-inclusive performance of an organization because it is broader compared to other concepts of organizational performance. Ability to execute a function with optimal levels of input and output determines the productivity of any organization (Amin & Shila, 2015).

Business environment is highly dynamic and ever changing due to globalization, any organization that wants to be relevant and gain competitive advantage must enhance their organizational productivity. Employee productivity and morality are affected by the effectiveness of performance and reward management of an organization (Yazici, 2008). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, remunerations and rewards are the factors affecting productivity (Khan et al., 2010). Employee motivation is the most influential factor of productivity (Kulchmanov & Kaliannan, 2014). Raza (2012), highlighted the need to find ways to improve productivity so employees can perform better. Based on the above studies and to the best of my knowledge, attention has not been given to intrapersonal conflict as a factor that can influence productivity at work. Improving employee skills and providing trainings are other factors that maximize productivity (Nielsen, 2013). In addition, Euske and Lebens (2006) argued that productivity of employees is not only financially dependent, but also non-financially dependent, which supports the achievement of organizational objectives. Productivity is an element of capacity and inspiration, where capacity contains the skills, an asset required to carry out assignments. While an inspiration is depicted as an internal power that drives individuals to act towards something. It is also said that employees are more susceptible to turnovers if they are unsatisfied and therefore losing motivation to show good performance. A happy and satisfied worker has higher productivity and it is easier for the management to motivate high performers to reach organizational goals (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2007). Bellet et al.'s (2019) findings from a study on the relationship between positive affect and productivity at a large telecommunications company revealed a positive impact on sales performance, which is driven by changes in labor productivity; in other words, it showed that employee's happiness is most important and more closely related to sales. The study concluded that if the employees are happy at work, their productivity and efficiency will be more. However, the researchers said nothing about external interpersonal conflict and how it affects organizational productivity.

Theoretical Grounding

The Social Identity Theory (SIT) of Tajfel and Turner (1979) introduces the notion of ingroup (us) and outgroup (them) and asserts that there is a tendency for members of ingroup to have more favorable views of their ingroup over the outgroup—ingroup favoritism or ingroup bias. The mere awareness of the presence of an outgroup is enough to catalyze intergroup competitive or discriminatory response of an ingroup. Once acknowledged, there is possibility for conflict, competition, or discrimination to occur. A designation more pointed than ingroup and outgroup is between a dominant group and subordinate groups, respectively thought to be superior or inferior in status—status or prestige being the outcome of intergroup comparison. The theory posits that social identity is the outcome of three distinct processes executed in series: social categorization, social identification, and social comparison. Armed with group categorization and identification with one or more groups, individuals then turn to intergroup social comparison. An individual strives to achieve and maintain positive social identity, and a positive social identity mainly depends on favorable intergroup comparison. Groups become rivals and comparison leads to competition or even conflict. The SIT is related to this study,

the external interpersonal conflict (the sociopolitical conflict in the NWSW) is as a result of the rivalry and comparison between the Cameroon Government and the separatists. The separatists esteem that they are being marginalized by the government and are seeking independence to the extent of forming rival government factions in exile and by attacking state owned companies and their workers; one of which is the Group Banana in Tiko.

External Interpersonal Conflict and Organizational Productivity

The World Bank's (2021) study assessed the impact of the sociopolitical crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions (NWSW) of Cameroon on economic and social outcomes in the NWSW, the Littoral and West regions, and at the national level, by constructing a historical counterfactual (or reference scenario) analysis and using a computable general equilibrium (CGE) model to assess the conflict's short-term effects. Results show that the crisis has prevented the Cameroonian economy from taking full advantage of the relatively favorable global context preceding the COVID-19 outbreak, which included a moderate rise in global prices for some of Cameroon's key agricultural exports, including cocoa, coffee, and bananas. Tax revenue trends confirm this decline in economic activities, and the crisis has affected the implementation of public investments. The financial sector has also been impacted by the disruption and insecurity, and employment fell as a result of the violence and the collapse of economic activity. According to the CGE model results, the tax revenue collected by the government in 2019 was 4.8 percent lower than it would have been without the crisis.

Leinyuy's research (2024) aimed at studying the impact of the Anglophone Crisis on the socio-economic activities of the people of Cameroon: case of Bamenda 3 subdivision by employing the descriptive survey design, it was found that the crisis had a direct or indirect impact on the Socio-economic activities of the people of the NWSW regions of Cameroon: case of Bamenda 3 subdivision that has had a great effect on Education, Economic productivity and Cultural heritage.

Chung's study (2020) sought to look at the impact of the armed conflict in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon on the Cameroon Development Corporation by using public policy theories to establish a link between government defense strategies or sector development policies and agro-industrial development. The results indicate that due to the armed conflict in the English-speaking regions (NWSW), the CDC has incurred major damages: loss in human capital, drop in production capacity, heavy financial loss and equipment damages. The results also show that, the survival of the CDC depends mainly on strategic options to be taken at two separate levels including: political options by conflicting parties - the government and separatist fighters on the one hand, and on the other, options taken by the CDC at both managerial and technical levels.

Monono and Funwie (2023) conducted a quantitative study to investigate the effects of socioeconomic and political crisis on the corporate finance of banking institutions in Cameroon using the quantitative approach and analyzed their data using regression analysis. The result shows that there are significant effects of conflicts on capital structure, deposit account and

bank loans. But there was an insignificant effect of socio-economic and political crisis on dividend policy.

Several areas of conflict and organizational productivity are underexplored or yet to be explored. The missing gaps encompass the fact that few studies had been undertaken in the agro-industrial. Hence, there was a need to do research in this sector on external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity. Most of the studies in the literature were not undertaken in the agroindustry; so, they lack external validity in the Group Banana (GB).

Context and Statement of the Problem

Sociopolitical stability is fundamental to ensure organizational productivity. But, in Group Banana of the CDC, a new threat of shutdown was looming as 5 of its workers were killed in an attack claimed by separatists on February 10, while 44 others were injured and rushed to a hospital in Tiko (Business in Cameroon, 2023). The laborers working under the Group Banana were returning from the plantation when the gunmen ambushed and opened fire. Just when people thought the situation was under control and that peace was gradually returning, especially after Group Banana was able to resume operations; the new attack struck fear, anger and frustration into workers again (The Guardian Post, 2023). This is the unfortunate situation (external interpersonal conflict or sociopolitical conflict) that truly extends its consequences on productivity (CDC, 2018; Jeun Afrique, 2019; La Tribune Afrique, 2019). As a result, the CDC – second employer after the civil service of Cameroon, exported 15,402 tons of bananas between January and November 2021, six (6) times less than performance over the same period in 2017. Furthermore, several workers of the company were being attacked and traumatized by the separatist fighters; their fingers were cut – off, they were severely beaten and received ongoing threats intended to halt operations (Jeun Afrique, 2019). This could have a negative relationship with the productivity of Group Banana. In this vane, conflict management requires a critical consideration of the sociopolitical conflict which could facilitate organizational productivity. From the foregoing, it was necessary to examine the relationship between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity in Group Banana. This justifies the assumption that a significant relationship exists between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity.

Research Objective

To determine if there is a significant relationship between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity.

Research Question

Is there a significant relationship between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity?

Research Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity.

3. Methods

We used the case study design because the research was carried out in one company. Secondly, in order to gather primary data, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design - a form of descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data for systematic description of existing situation or phenomenon. Data were successfully collected from 30 persons to find out the manifestation of conflict and effect on organizational productivity.

Population and Sample

The population consisted of all employees in Group Banana of the CDC. A simple random sampling technique was used to choose the sample for the study, by taking care to ensure the representation of the various backgrounds of respondents in the sample. Aspects such as age groups, gender, position, longevity of service were considered. The sample of the study consisted of 30 employees from Group Banana. Among the 30 respondents sampled for the study, 43.3% (13) are below 30 years of age, 36.7% (11) fall within the age range of 40-49 and 16.7% (5) are 50 years and above. With reference to gender, majority 63.3% (19) are male and 36.7% (11) are female. In terms of longevity in service, 33.3% (10) of the respondents have work for 5 to 10 years, another 33.3% (10) for above 15 years, 23.3% (7) for 11-15 years and 10.0% (3) for less than 5 years. Finally, based on position in the organisation, 23.3% (7) are accountants, 10.0% (3) are overseers, 6.7% (2) are watchmen and 3.3% (1) of equal weight are administrative clerk, building foreman, cleaner, driver, drug management clerk, electrician, finance clerk, G/L, harvester, head of section, inventory officer, MC, messenger, sales clerk, security guard, store keeper, TMC, and typist.

Instrument of data Collection

The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire (see Table 1). 30 copies of the questionnaire were administered and returned. The instrument was partitioned into 4 sections; section A contained personal data of the respondents. While sections B to D contained the items to answer the questions raised. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researcher. Test-retest technique was utilized; the questionnaire was administered to some sample of ten employees in Group Banana. After one month interval the same questionnaire was readministered to the same set of employees. The reliability analysis of all the variables was very satisfactory; the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient value ranged from 0.902 to 0.949. The overall reliability coefficient value was 0.965 which is above the acceptable threshold of 0.7.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis Report of the Questionnaire

Variables	Cronbach Alpha Coefficients	Variance	No of items
Intrapersonal conflict and organizational productivity	.949	.055	5
Internal interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity	.902	.221	5
External interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity	.920	.093	5
Overall reliability analysis value	.965	.094	15

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Setting

This research was conducted to investigate if there is a significant relationship between intrapersonal conflict and organizational productivity in Group Banana, Tiko between the years 2023 and 2025. The Group Banana is an agro-industrial branch of the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) that grows, processes and sells top grade edible banana in the local and international markets. The plantations of the group cover a total area of 4,525 hectares. It operates at Tiko, Southwest region in Cameroon. But Group Banana is facing a serious productivity crisis due to the sociopolitical conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions, that expose its employees to conditions of insecurity (Business in Cameroon, 2023; The Guardian Post, 2023).

Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Data collected for the study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistical tools used were frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Mean was used to assess the level of impact of the indicators of the different conflict type on organizational productivity. The standard deviation was also used to determine the level of dissimilarity or similarity in the responses of the participants. The Chi-Square Goodness of fit test was also used to determine inferentially which of the indicators do impact organizational productivity more. All statistics were presented at 95 percent confidence interval (CI) and findings using tables and charts. Finally, we adopted a continuing personal commitment to act ethically, encourage ethical behavior in those with whom we collaborated, and consult where appropriate concerning ethical issues (like informed consent and confidentiality) towards research participants.

4. Findings

External Interpersonal Conflict and Organizational Productivity

With reference to how often the respondents experience external interpersonal conflict (see Table 2), 60.7% (17) experience it sometimes while 21.4% (6) experience it all the times and 17.8% (5) not at all. 6.7% (2) of respondents did

not respond to the question leaving us with a valid sample of 28. The mean value of 2.04 on a scale of 1-3 is high. The standard deviation value of 0.637 relatively low implies that the respondents do not differ much in their opinion.

The findings (see Table 3) showed that more of respondents 50% (14) opined gunshots, bombing and burning sometimes affect organizational productivity while 17.9% (5) said all the times and another 17.9% (5) not at all. Similarly, more of respondents 46.4% (13) also indicated that intimidation, verbal and physical abuse affect organizational productivity while 14.3% (4) said all the times and 17.9% (5) not at all. In the same trend, more+ of respondents 46.4% (13) also indicated that road blocks affect organizational productivity while 10.7% (3) said all the times and 21.4% (6) not at all. Also, 39.3% (11) of respondents also indicated that ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts affect organizational productivity while 42.9% (12) said all the times and 14.3% (4) not at all. Finally, 32.1% (9) of respondents indicated that killing affect organizational productivity while 7.1% (2) said sometimes and 35.7% (10) not at all. Comparatively and cumulatively, ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts 82.2% (23) was reported more to affect organizational productivity, followed by gunshots, bombing and burning 67.9% (19), intimidation, verbal and physical abuse 60.7% (17), road blocks 57.1% (16) and lastly, killing 39.2% (11). In overall, 42.9% of respondents opined that external interpersonal conflict sometimes affects organizational productivity, 18.6% reported at all time, 21.4% not at all and 17.1% uncertain. The effect of external interpersonal conflict on organizational productivity is above average with an overall mean value of 1.63 on a scale of 1-3.

Table 2: Experience of External Interpersonal Conflict by Workers in Group Banana

How often do you experience external interpersonal conflict?	Frequency	Percentage
All the times	6	21.4
Sometimes	17	60.7
Not at all	5	17.8
Total	28	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Table 3: Symptoms of External Interpersonal Conflict and Effect Organizational Productivity

How often does each of the following symptoms of external interpersonal conflict affect organizational productivity?	All the times	Sometimes	Not at all	No response	Mean	Std. Deviation	Total
Road blocks	3 (10.7%)	13 (46.4%)	6 (21.4%)	6 (21.4%)	1.46	.962	28
Intimidation, verbal and physical abuse	4 (14.3%)	13 (46.4%)	5 (17.9%)	6 (21.4%)	1.54	.999	28
Killing	2 (7.1%)	9 (32.1%)	10 (35.7%)	7 (25.0%)	1.21	.917	28
Gunshots, bombing and burning	5 (17.9%)	14 (50.0%)	5 (17.9%)	4 (14.3%)	1.71	.937	28
Ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts	12 (42.9%)	11 (39.3%)	4 (14.3%)	1 (3.6%)	2.21	.833	28
Multiple response	26 (18.6%)	60 (42.9%)	30 (21.4%)	24 (17.1%)	1.63	.929	140

Source: Field Study, 2025.

The Chi-Square test results (Table 4) were statistically reliable for the study because none of the cells involved have frequency count less than 5. In otherwords, zero (0) cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.5. The findings showed that Gunshots, bombing and burning, and ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts have a significant relationship with organizational productivity (p -value < 0.05) while road blocks, intimidation, verbal and physical abuse and killing

appear not to be significantly related to organizational productivity (p -value > 0.05). Among the two indicators of external interpersonal conflict that had a significant relationship with organizational productivity, ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts came first ($\chi^2= 12.286$), with a high mean value of 2.21 on a scale of 1-3, followed by gunshots, bombing and burning ($\chi^2= 9.429$) with a mean value of 1.71 on a scale of 1-3.

Table 4: Test Statistics for the Relationship between External Interpersonal Conflict and Organizational Productivity

	Road blocks	Intimidation, verbal and physical abuse	Killing	Gunshots, bombing and burning	Ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts
Chi-Square (χ^2)	7.714 ^a	7.143 ^a	5.429 ^a	9.429 ^a	12.286 ^a
Df	3	3	3	3	3
<i>p</i> -value	.052	.067	.143	.024	.006

Source: Field Study, 2025.

5. Discussion

Here, the results, implications and limitations of the study are discussed and future research is proposed. The conclusion made aligns with the research hypothesis - designed to determine whether external interpersonal conflict has a significant relationship with organizational productivity. The findings reveal that a significant relationship exists between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity. These findings are consistent with previous studies (Leinyuy 2024; Monono & Funwie 2023; World Bank 2021; Chung 2020). In this vane, Leinyuy (2024) found that the conflict had a direct or indirect impact on the Socio-economic activities of the people of the NWSW regions of Cameroon: case of Bamenda III subdivision that has had a great effect on Education, Economic productivity and Cultural heritage. Also, Monono and Funwie (2023) found that there are significant effects of conflicts on capital structure, deposit account and bank loans. Further still, the World Bank (2021) realized that the sociopolitical conflict in the NWSW has prevented the Cameroonian economy from taking full advantage of the relatively favorable global context preceding the COVID-19 outbreak, which included a moderate rise in global prices for some of Cameroon's key agricultural exports, including cocoa, coffee, and bananas. Tax revenue trends confirm this decline in economic activities, and the crisis has affected the implementation of public investments; the tax revenue collected by the government in 2019 was 4.8 percent lower than it would have been without the crisis. Finally, Chung (2020) realized that because of the armed conflict in the English-speaking regions, the CDC has incurred major damages: loss in human capital, drop in production capacity, heavy financial loss and equipment damages.

In science particularly organizational Psychology, this research will help readers acquire further knowledge on external interpersonal conflict (the case of the sociopolitical conflict in the NWSW) and organizational productivity. The study will help readers to know the new relationships that have been established between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity in the banana industry. The study may result to further research on conflict and organizational performance in the banana industry and others. Moreover, this research can be replicated in the banana industry to test its internal validity or in different industries to test its external validity.

In terms of policy and practice, the research can help the managers, administrators – members of government and the separatists to implement the recommended conflict management strategies. In this vane, Cameroon government could continue to exert more effort to find ways and means of having inclusive dialogue with the separatist leaders to help resolve the ongoing sociopolitical crisis; policy makers could

adjust or formulate personnel policies such as general policies that deal with the basic structure, philosophy and rules of the organization; management could consider recruiting mental health personnel, provide fair remuneration, and create good communication channels.

6. Limitations and Further Research

This research was limited only to the banana group and not the entire CDC and may have implications for generalization of the results to the entire enterprise etc. The research was also limited only to external interpersonal conflict; it did not explore whether internal interpersonal conflict has an influence on (or relationship with) organizational productivity. However, we encourage further research in the above directions. In addition, a comparative study should be undertaken to analyze the impact of internal interpersonal conflict on organizational productivity.

7. Conclusion

From the above findings, it can be concluded that there is significant relationship between external interpersonal conflict and organizational productivity. In detail, the findings show that Gunshots, bombing and burning, and ghost towns, lockdowns and boycotts have significant relationship with organizational productivity (p -value < 0.05) while road blocks, intimidation, verbal and physical abuse and killing appear not to be significantly related to organizational productivity (p -value > 0.05). This indicates that a poorly managed external interpersonal conflict can have a negative relationship with organizational productivity meanwhile a properly managed external interpersonal conflict can be positively related to organizational productivity.

8. Recommendations

On grounds of the results this study, it is suggested that the sustainability of Group Banana is primarily contingent on two strategic options that should be should be implemented, involving political efforts from conflicting parties (government and separatist fighters) and managerial options by the Group Banana. Politically, the government of Cameroon should continue to exert effort to find ways and means to have inclusive dialogue with the separatist leaders to resolve the ongoing sociopolitical conflict which is badly affecting the group's productivity.

At the managerial level, mental health personnel should be recruited. To ensure proper running and optimum productivity, staff welfare should be considered by hiring mental health experts such as clinical psychologists who can manage cases of trauma stemming from the conflict. Also, good channels of communication should be created. Management should create more channels (like WhatsApp

groups) and organization policies of communication with employees. To avoid rumor mongering and zones of insecurity, appropriate systems should be developed for information dissemination to all employees. Furthermore, management should regularly modify personnel policies to motivate the employees. Policies that fairly compensate employees for their work and efforts should be developed. Fair compensation is necessary to reduce frustration and dissatisfaction among the workforce. Finally, management should organize training workshops on interpersonal conflict management for the staff of the organizations.

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