

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE INFLUENCE OF CONFLICTS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS IN THE OFFINSO MUNICIPALITY



**A Project Report in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of
Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for award of the Masters of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, PETER KWASI SARPONG, declare that this project report, with the exception of quotation and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for other degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of project report as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. KOFI ASIAMAH YEBOAH

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

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DEDICATION

To my parents Mr. and Mrs. Arthur, Rev. Sr. Steve Mariet Amponsah, and the Aboagye and family.



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of conflict in senior high schools in the Offinso Municipal. The objectives of the study were to identify the causes of conflict in Senior High Schools, find out the effects of conflicts on teachers performance and to determine the strategies put in place for resolving conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality. The study employed a descriptive survey design using questionnaire to collect data. The target population for the study was 266 which consisted of 12 headmasters and assistant headmasters and 254 teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select all the 12 headmasters and assistant headmasters while simple random sampling was used to select 127 teachers totalling 139 respondents for the study. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study found among others that inter-personal, intra-personal and role conflict were types of conflict in organization. Also limited resources and goal difference were causes of conflict in senior high schools. Improvement in cooperation, quality of decisions and future communications are positive effects of conflict. Physical withdrawal of people and decrease in productivity were negative effects of conflict. It is recommended based on the findings that heads of educational institutions should avoid discrimination and favoritisms among staff in the course of their administrative roles to reduce conflicts among their staff.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study and organization of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

Schools are also places where students interact with one another, their teachers and educational administrators (Batton, 2002). In schools, just like in life, conflict is unavoidable. Schools are prone to conflicts and breakdown in communication, especially, in an age where all role-players are aware of their rights.

According to Bodtker (2001), conflict comes about as a result of an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other. Thus, conflict occurs when two or more values, perspectives and opinions are contradictory in nature and have not been aligned or agreed upon yet. These include: within oneself when you are not living according to one's values; when values and perspectives are threatened; or discomfort from fear of the unknown or from lack of fulfillment. Conflicts are caused by a number of issues that create tension between and among people.

The absence of conflict usually signals the absence of meaningful interaction. Deutsch and Coleman (2000) posit that conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. However, the authors assert that the manner in which conflict is handled determines whether it is constructive or destructive. Schools as institutions in their own right have administrators

who are tasked with the responsibility of maintaining school stability in order to achieve institutional goals. Conflicts in public Senior High Schools in Ghana are on the rise in recent times (Musembi & Siele (2004). Musembi and Siele (2004) further asserted that the government was concerned over the disturbances in learning institutions where in some cases students have burnt down school properties and even attacked teachers. This mainly arises due to unresolved conflicts between the students, teachers and schools' administrators.

Conflict arises in institutions among groups because of the scarcity of freedom, position, and resource. People who value independence tend to resist the need for independence and, to some extent, conformity within a group. People who seek power therefore struggle with others for position or status within the group. According to Wehrich (1992), conflict is part of organisational life and may occur between individuals and a group and among groups.

Conflict is often seen as fighting and disruption by many people. However, Jones (2003) noted that conflict in itself need not be a problem; it is the hostility that is usually seen as the harmful aspect of conflict. A conflict that prevents the achievement of organisational objectives is negative and seen as dysfunctional conflict and leads to hostility causing physical and psychological withdrawal of people, property damage, physical injury, streets anxiety and negative interpersonal attitude, while that which supports the achievement of organisational objective is functional which in turn builds self-image, encourages recognition, improves status and respect, develops assertive principles and helps to clear the air in organizations.

Conflict resolution is the process of attempting to resolve a dispute or a conflict. Successful conflict resolution occurs by listening to and providing opportunities to meet the needs of all parties and to adequately address interests, so that, each party is satisfied with the outcome (Weaver, 2003).

Bodine, Crawford, and Schrupf (1994) listed three problem-solving methods of conflicts: negotiation, mediation, and consensus decision-making that are important to include in conflict resolution measures. Negotiation is a problem-solving process in which the two parties in the dispute meet directly with each other to resolve it without the assistance of others. Mediation is a problem-solving process in which the two parties in the dispute meet directly with each other to resolve the dispute assisted by a neutral third party or mediator.

Consensus decision making is a group problem solving process in which all of the parties in the dispute meet to collaboratively to resolve the dispute by creating a plan of action that all parties will support. A neutral party may be involved in facilitating the process. By using these three conflict resolution methods, conflict in Senior High Schools can be resolved between Senior High School administrators, teachers and students to improve performance (Bodine & Crawford, 1998). The researcher therefore sought to investigate the influence of conflict in Senior High Schools of the Offinso Municipality.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the school setting, conflict can occur between administrative staff and teachers, students and among teachers causing disruptions or complete halt to effective teaching and learning. The occurrence of conflict among teachers can have devastating effect on not

only the school's primary business of teaching and learning but also the school's academic calendar.

Senior High Schools in the Offinso South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana have had its fair share of school versus student and teacher versus teacher conflicts. These phenomena have ranged from mild students agitations about foods served in school canteens, the attitudes of some teachers and dislike of certain school rules and regulations and conflict among teachers due to petty disagreements which have led to amicable settlements or agreeable outcomes. Senior High School in the study area has on several of occasions been able to control students and teachers conflicts that could have led to destructive agitations. A senior high school in the study area was also closed down temporarily in the middle of the academic year due to conflicts between the school and some of its students which led to violent agitations. A wide range of the literature on conflict portray conflict to be negative or dysfunctional, effect predominantly in terms of suppression, violence, stagnation, and autocracy (Pondy, 2000). Conflict deeply affect ones emotions breeding competition and rivalry leading to low productivity on people performance.

Globally, positive or functional aspect of conflict on performance is one area that has not received much attention regarding empirical studies. Until empirical studies are conducted to establish the causes, factors and measures for resolving it amicably, the problem would persist and might even degenerate. The researcher want to fill this gap in literature to intensify the knowledge and understanding of conflict as not always bad but that it has its functional aspect and how it can be resolved amicably to improve performance

in the educational sector. This has motivated the researcher to find out the positive effect of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the kinds of conflict prevalent in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.
2. find out the causes of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.
3. find out the influence of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.
4. determine conflict resolution measures used to manage conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the kinds of conflict is prevalent in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?
2. What are the causes of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?
3. What effects do conflicts have on the performance of teachers in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?

4. What measures are used to manage conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study would be significant from the following perspective:

The findings would help the school management to determine suitable ways in dealing with conflict in educational sector.

The study would provide the government and policy makers with in depth knowledge on how to resolve conflicts to increase performance of the educational institutions.

The study would also serve as blueprint for the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service to develop various strategies in managing conflicts in the various educational institutions. The study would serve as a reference material to researchers who would want to conduct similar studies on the effects of conflict.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The was limited to headmasters and teachers in all the three public Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipal of the Ashanti region of Ghana due to inadequate financial resources. Some of the respondents initially were not willing to participate in the study as they thought that it was a waste of time as they would not be paid for their services but the purpose of the study was explained further for them to freely participate. These limitations nevertheless, the researcher was able to collect the necessary data for the study.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to headmasters and teachers in all the three public Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipal of the Ashanti region of Ghana. Therefore, the findings of the study may not be generalized to all the Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into five major chapters. Chapter one dealt with the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study and organization of the study.

Chapter two also dealt with the review of literature on what other researchers and writers on the subject have written. Chapter three dealt with the methodology of the study which consisted of the research design, study population, sample and sampling procedures, research instrument, reliability and validity of the instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical consideration. Chapter four focused on the results and discussions of the data collected for the study. Chapter five presented the summary of major findings, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review. The review focuses on the following areas: the introduction, theoretical framework, concept of conflicts functional and dysfunctional conflicts, universal conception of conflict, causes, types, and effects of conflicts areas of conflict, characteristics of conflict, nature of conflicts in institutions, conflict resolution, goals of conflict resolution education programs, resolution of conflicts in schools and conflict resolution and conflict management. .

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The contingency theory of strategic conflict management, which began as an elaboration, qualification, and extension of the value of symmetry, has, over the last decade, come into its own and emerged as an empirically tested perspective. Contingency theory argued that the complexity in strategic communication was best represented by a continuum of stance, not by a limited set of models of excellence (Fisher & Keashly, 1988).

This meta-theoretical analysis, while acknowledging the inspiration of the excellence theory, celebrates the maturing of the contingency theory by consolidating the development and advances the theory has made since 1997; documents the discoveries that have either added new insights to the theory or refuted postulations; charts the streams of research that have been extended and expanded from the original framework; and records the ongoing dialogue the theory has offered to the field to continually challenge prevailing presumptions and presuppositions (Pang, Jin & Cameron, 2007).

Contingency theory in conflict resolution was pioneered by Fisher and Keashly (1988). In brief, the theory, which comes mainly from institutional psychology, is that, at different points during a conflict different types of third party intervention are more or less effective. Research from institutional psychology analogously applied to deep-rooted conflicts suggests moments at which substantive issues (interests) are most salient whereas at other times miscommunication and misperceptions block attempts to resolve. The assumption is that subjective elements get worse as conflict escalates.

Fisher and Keashly (1988, p. 34) summarized their argument as: “a contingency approach to third party intervention is based on the assessment that social conflict involves a dynamic process in which objective and subjective elements interact over time as the conflict escalates and de-escalates. Depending on the objective-subjective mix, different intervention will be appropriate at different states of the conflict”.

Even though, Fisher (1993) did, in a later article, consider human needs approach as the basis of analytical problem solving, this seems to have been a brief foray and later work discusses a contingency approach without reference to basic human needs. Where Fisher does engage other proponents, he seems to view needs-based problem-solving as part of a broader peace-building process and separates conflict resolution from a needs approach: The analysis of protracted inter-group conflicts as rooted in denial of basic human needs explains why such disputes defy traditional methods of conflict management and resolution (Fisher, 1993). Fisher places needs-based 'peace-building' within a contingency framework as, activities designed to improve the relationship and meet the basic needs of the parties, in order to de-escalate the conflict and render it amenable to peacemaking. Peace building can then take its place as the essential bridge between

peacekeeping and peacemaking. Conflict resolution in an institution practice depends on a circumstance, that is, a contingency. Contingency theory recognizes the influence of given solution on institutional behaviour patterns. There is no one best way to do things. It is difficult in determining all relevant contingency factors and showing the relationship can be very complex.

Contingency theory recognizes the influence of given solution on institutional behaviour patterns. There is no one best way to do resolve conflict. The study sought to find out the influence of conflict and measures to control it which is based on contingency as there is no one way of resolving conflict. There are so many strategies to resolve conflict. The contingency relates well with the study as it seeks to find out the effects of conflict on the performance of teachers.

2.2 Concept of Conflicts

Conflict abounds in every organization of human endeavor including educational institutions of which senior high schools in the Offinso Municipality are not an exception. The word conflict has been defined by various writers in diverse ways. Pang, Jin and Cameron (2007) define conflict as an interactive opposing behavior between two or more people, institutions or systems over incompatible goals, interests, scarce resources, values, belief system, power and prestige, nature of relationship as well as performance. Baron (1990) also defines conflict as a situation in which someone believes that his or her own needs have been denied. Again, he stated that conflict is a state of discord caused by the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. This view is supported by Fisher (1990) who defined conflict as an incongruity of goals or values between two or

more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other.

In the view of Robbins and Judge (2011) conflict is defined as a process where one party perceives that another party has negatively affected or is about to negatively affect something that the first party cares about. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2010) also posited that conflicts are particular disagreements that occur between two or more members in a particular time. The authors further revealed that organizational conflict is the clash that occurs when the goal directed behavior of a group blocks or thwarts the goals of another. To Johns (1988) conflict is a process of antagonism that occurs when one person in organizational sub-unit frustrates the goal attainment of another. Conflict then involves the joint occurrence of antagonism and blocked goals. Antagonism may involve both attitude and behaviors. With respect to the attitudes, the conflicting parties may develop a dislike for each other; see each other as unreasonable, and develop negative stereotypes of their opposites. With respect to the behaviors, the opposing parties may resort to name calling, sabotage or even physical aggression. Frustrated goals often mean that mutual assistance between the conflicting parties is low. Instead of adding each other in goal attainment, each party views its loss as the others gain. Therefore, conflict is characterized by high antagonism and low mutual assistance.

Conflicts are a disruptive clash of interest and objectives between individuals, between individuals and groups, or among groups (Bittel, 1985). The essence of conflict then is disagreement and incompatibility. A significant fact of life is a presence of conflict in many forms and at various levels of strength. Conflict is pervasive in all human experience. Bittel (1985) argues that it is actually human to quarrel and complain and that

when many people must work together conflict is inevitable. Accordingly, a small amount of conflict can be a good thing. Whenever two or more persons have some mutual interest, an organization, in effect, exist. And whenever an organization exists, there is the potential for conflict resulting from myriad causes. Conflict is not necessarily inevitable in every situation, but with the numerous differences among individuals, both in how they perceive and in the strength of their needs, conflict among human beings is likely to be common in organizations. Johns (1988) indicated that conflict is present in the following events:

Two or more parties compete with each other to cause the conflict. Winning the conflict becomes more important than developing a good solution to the problem at hand. The parties begin to conceal information from each other, or to pass distorted information. Each group becomes more cohesive. Deviants who speak of conciliation are punished, and strict conformity is expected. Contact with the opposite party is discouraged except under formalized restricted conditions. While the opposite party is negatively stereotyped, the image of one's own position is boosted. On each side, more aggressive persons who are skilled at engaging in conflict may emerge as leaders.

From the literature so far reviewed on the definitions of conflicts, globally, the researcher deduced that people had the perception that conflict has only the connotation of being bad, and has a destructive effect on the individuals and groups involved. Nonetheless, some scholars view conflicts not only to be dysfunctional but also functional. Pondy (2000) stated that the absence of conflict may indicate autocracy, uniformity, stagnation and mental fixity. Tjosvold (2003) in addition to this statement argued that conflict is not the opposite of cooperation but a mechanism that allows individuals to perceive benefits of cooperative work. Butler (2001) also was in support that conflict is ubiquitous not

necessary dysfunctional and can be required to defy and stimulate people to perform. Furthermore, Rahim (2010) supported the idea that interpersonal conflict can be classified as functional as the presence of conflict may be indication of democracy, diversity, growth and self-actualization. In fact, research has shown that successful groups exhibit much conflict (Johnson & Johnson, 2007). All these definitions are relatively related in the sense that, whichever definition one agrees with, there is bound to be words like dispute, disagreement, opposition and so on. These words give conflict a confrontational connotation about its effects. In the context of this study, all the different definitions are applicable in a school setting where conflicts can have major negative consequences, especially on the performance of students.

In this regard, Cole (1998) states that conflict is a condition that arises whenever the perceived interests of an individual or a group clash with those of another individual or a group in such a way that strong emotions are aroused and compromise is not considered to be an option. Meek, Heit and Page (2005) describe conflict as a disagreement between two or more people or between two or more choices. Hart (2001) also states that conflict is a state of opposition, disagreement or incompatibility between two or more people or groups of people which is sometimes characterized by physical violence or assault.

It can therefore be concluded that, conflict can be seen as a contest of opposing forces or power, a struggle to resist or overcome. Conflict also exists whenever incompatible perception, thought or emotions within or between individuals or groups occur.

2.3 Functional and Dysfunctional Conflicts

Conflict is not all that bad; it has its positive and negative face. Amason (1996) posits that there are essentially two types of conflict in organizations. To him, not all conflicts are bad. In fact, some types of conflict encourage new solutions to problems and therefore enhance creativity in the organization. In these cases, school heads will want to encourage functional conflict. Thus, school heads should stimulate functional conflict and prevent dysfunctional conflict. This is important to conflict management. Nonetheless, the difficulty lies in trying to tell the difference between functional and dysfunctional conflicts. The consequences of conflict can be positive or negative.

Functional conflict is a healthy, constructive disagreement between two or more people. Functional conflict can produce new ideas, learning and growth among individuals. When individuals engage in constructive conflicts, they develop a better awareness of themselves and others. In addition, functional conflict can improve working relationships, because when two parties work through their disagreements, they feel they have accomplished something new altogether. By releasing tensions and solving problems in working together, morale is improved. Functional conflict can lead to innovation and positive change for the organization. This is because it tends to encourage creativity among individuals. This positive form of conflict can result into increased productivity. The need to recognize functional conflict is that it is often cognitive in origin, that is it arises from someone challenging old policies or thinking of new ways to approach issues.

Dysfunctional conflict on the other hand is an unhealthy, destructive disagreement between two or more people. Its danger is that it takes the focus away from the work to be done and places it on the conflict itself and the parties involved. Excessive conflict drains

energy that could be used more productively (Amason, 1996). The need to recognize a dysfunctional conflict is that it is often emotional or behavioral. Disagreements that involve personalized anger resentment directed at specific individuals rather than specific ideas are dysfunctional. Individuals involved in dysfunctional conflict tend to act before they think, and often rely on threats, deception and verbal abuse to communicate. In dysfunctional conflict, the losses to both parties may exceed any potential gain from the conflict (Amason, 1996).

Differentiating good conflict from a bad one is not easy. The school head must look at the issue, the context of the conflict, and the parties involved. The following questions can be used to diagnose the nature of the conflict a headmaster/mistress faces in the school:

- i. Are the parties approaching the conflict from a hostile standpoint?
- ii. Is the outcome of the conflict likely to be a negative one for the school?
- iii. Do the potential losses of the parties exceed any potential gains?
- iv. Is energy being diverted from goal accomplishment?

If most of the answers to these questions are in the affirmative, then the conflict is probably dysfunctional. After the school head has diagnosed the types of conflict, he/she can either work to resolve it if it is dysfunctional or stimulate it if it is functional. One occasion in which school head should work to stimulate conflict is when they suspect their group is suffering from group thinking. When a group fails to consider alternative solution and become stagnant in its thinking, it might benefit from healthy disagreement. Team's exhibiting symptoms of group thinking should be encouraged to consider creative problem solving and appoint a devil's advocate to point out opposing perspectives.

2.4 Universal Conception of Conflict

The universal conception of conflict is a brief attempt to analyze causes of conflict in organization other than the school, and beyond national work cultures. Nonetheless, the analysis has some resemblance to causes of conflict in the school. Large transactional corporations employ many different ethnic and cultural groups. In these multi-ethnic corporations the widely differing cultures represent vast differences among individuals, so the potential for conflict increases. Nelson and Quick (1977), has identified five dimensions along which cultural differences may emerge. These are as follows:

- i. Individualism/collectivism
- ii. Power distance:
- iii. Uncertainty avoidance:
- iv. Masculinity/feminity: and
- v. Long-term/short-term orientation.

These cultural differences have many implications for conflict management in organizations. Individualism means that people believe that their individual interests take priority over society's interests. Collectivism, in contrast, means that people put the good of the group first. For example, the United States is a highly individualistic culture, whereas Japan is very collectivist culture. The individualism/collectivism dimension of cultural differences strongly influences conflict management behaviour. People from collectivist cultures tend to display a more co-operative approach to managing conflict.

Nelson and Quick's second dimension of cultural differences is power distance. In cultures with high power distance, individuals accept that people in organizations have varying levels of power. In contrast, in cultures with low power distance, individuals do

not automatically respect those positions of authority. For example, the United States is a country of low power distance whereas Brazil is a country with a high power distance. Differences in power distance can lead to conflict. Imagine a United States (US) employee managed by a Brazilian supervisor who expects differential behaviour. The supervisor would expect automatic respect based on legitimate power. When this respect is not given, conflict would arise. Uncertainty avoidance varies by culture. In the US, for example, employees can tolerate high levels of uncertainty. Nonetheless, employees in Israel tend to prefer certainty in their work settings. A US-based multi-national firm might run into conflicts operating in Israel. Supposed such a firm were installing a new technology, its expatriate workers from the United States would tolerate the uncertainty of the technological transition better than would their Israel co-workers, and this might lead to conflicts among the employees (Nelson & Quick, 1977)

Masculinity versus femininity illustrates the contrast between preference for assertiveness and material good versus preferences for human capital on quality of life. The United States is a masculine society, whereas Sweden is considered a feminine society (Nelson & Quick, 1977). Adjustment to the assertive interpersonal style of U.S. workers may be difficult for Swedish co-workers. Conflicts can also arise between cultures that vary in their orientation of values .China for example, have long-term orientation; hence the Chinese prefer values that focus on the future, such as saving and persistence. The United States and Russia in contrast, have short-term orientations. These cultures emphasize values in the past and present, such as respect for tradition and fulfillment of social obligations. Conflicts can arise when managers such as school heads fail to understand the nature of differences in values. An organization whose workforce consists

of multiple ethnicities and cultures holds potential for many types of conflict because of the sheer volume of individual difference among workers. The key to managing conflict in a multicultural workforce is understanding cultural differences and appreciating their values.

2.5 Types of Conflict

Dirks and Parks (2003) identified four types of conflict namely: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Intragroup, Intergroup and role conflicts. These types of conflicts are explained in the following sections.

2.5.1 Intrapersonal conflict

Dirks and Parks (2003) point out that intrapersonal conflict occurs within a person and that one can experience intrapersonal conflict with respect to the amount of resources one has by hearing internal voices that disagree. In agreement with this assertion, Orlich and Collaham (2001) explain that in intrapersonal conflict the individual tries to reconcile conflict within his or her own value structure. Similarly, Hart (2001) observes that conflict may not only take a toll on one's physical body but it often occupies one's thoughts and causes a great deal of emotion.

Dirks and Parks (2003) also agree that intrapersonal conflict occurs within an individual and can involve some form of goal or cognitive conflict. They argue that intrapersonal conflict occurs when a person's behaviour results in positive and negative outcomes or incompatible outcomes. An example is where a person has the option to choose a job in a government organisation that does not pay well but has future security or

take a job from a private company that pays well but does not provide any future security. Such a choice could lead to intrapersonal conflict.

2.5.2 Interpersonal Conflict

Dirks and Parks (2003) refer to interpersonal conflict as clashes that involve two or more individuals who perceive each other as being in opposition to preferred outcomes (goals) and or attitudes, values or behaviours. Similarly, Nelson-Jones (1995) indicates that interpersonal conflict is a situation in which one or both individuals in a relationship are experiencing difficulty in working or living with each other. Expanding on this point, Nelson-Jones states that interpersonal conflict usually occurs when due to differences or incompatibilities, needs, goals or styles clash. Similar to this assertion is Orlich and Collaham observation (2001) that in interpersonal conflict the values of different individuals or groups openly clash.

Mcshane and Glinow (2000) are of the view that inter-personal conflict occurs between two or more people. It normally arises as a result of two or more people competing for the same job, position or for limited resources. According to Mcshane and Glinow (2000), the most commonly cited reasons for inter-personal conflict in organizations are personality differences, perceptions, clashes of values and interests, power and status differences, and scarce resources.

2.5.3 Role conflict

Role conflict involves very real differences in role definitions, expectations or responsibilities between individuals who are interdependent in a social system (Coleman & Fisher-Yoshida, 2004). According to the authors, if there are ambiguities in role

definitions in an institution or unclear boundaries of responsibilities, then the stage is set for interpersonal friction between the persons involved.

According to Bodtger (2001), conflicts are often misdiagnosed as interpersonal conflict rather than role conflict, and resolution are then complicated and misdirected. The emotional intensity is often quite high in role conflict since people are directly involved as individuals and there is a strong tendency to personalize the conflict (Fisher, 2000).

2.5.4 Inter-group conflict

Fisher maintained that inter-group conflict occurs between collections of people such as ethnic or racial groups, departments or levels of decision making in the same institution, union and management. Filippo and Waal (2000) contend that competition for scarce resources is a common source of inter-group conflict, and societies have developed numerous regulatory mechanisms, such as collective bargaining and mediation, for dealing with inter-group conflict in less disruptive ways. Social-psychological processes are very important in inter-group conflict (Fisher, 1990). This means that group members tend to develop stereotypes (oversimplified negative beliefs) of the opposing group, tend to blame them for their own problems (scape-goating), and practice discrimination against them.

These classic symptoms of inter-group conflict can be just as evident in institutions as in race relations in community settings. Inter-group conflict is especially tense and prone to escalation and intractability when group identities are threatened (Fisher, 2000). The author further contended that the costs of destructive inter-group conflict can be extremely high for a society in both economic and social terms. Multi-party conflict occurs in societies when different interest groups and institutions have varying priorities over resource management and policy development.

Davidson and Wood (2004) assert that these complex conflicts typically involve a combination of economic, value and power sources. This complexity is often beyond the reach of traditional authoritative or adversarial procedures, and more collaborative approaches to building consensus are required for resolution (Cormick et al., 1996). International conflict occurs between states at the global level. Competition for resources certainly plays a part, but value and power conflict are often intertwined and sometimes predominate. The differences are articulated through the channels of diplomacy in a constant game of give and take, or threat and counter threat, sometimes for the highest of stakes. Mechanisms of propaganda can lead to many of the same social psychological distortions that characterize interpersonal and inter-group conflict (Fisher, 2000).

2.5.5 Intra-Group/Personal Conflict

Dirks and Parks (2003) explain that intragroup conflict is a clash among some or all of a group's members which often affects the group's progress and effectiveness. In a classroom situation, an intragroup conflict may occur within members of a class where pupils sit in close proximity and interact with each other. Such conflict can also occur among the staff of schools who have different views on the kind of measures appropriate for punishing students. In this case, some teachers may support the use of corporal punishment while others may support other milder forms of punishment for misbehaviour.

Nelson and Quick (2000) stated that there are several types of intrapersonal conflict, some of which are: inter-role, intra-role and person-role conflicts. They define role as a set of expectation placed on an individual by others. The person occupying the focal role is the role incumbent and the individuals who place expectations on the person are role

senders. On the various types of intrapersonal conflict, they explain inter-role conflict as one that occurs when a person experiences conflict among multiple roles in his or her life. It often arises when a person receives conflicting messages from role senders as to how to perform a certain role.

2.6 Causes of Conflict

Causes of conflict are various and numerous. Literature has given a lot of causes of conflict, but in the context of this study, a few of the causes are explained in the following section.

2.6.1 Communication Failures

It is obvious that breakdown in communication due to distortion or absolute lack of communication often leads to conflict in the schools. McNamara (2007) is of the opinion that Communication barriers such as physical separation and language can create distortion in messages and these can lead to conflicts. Another communication barrier that can engender conflict is value judgement, in which a listener assigns a worth to a message before it is received. For example, suppose a team member who is a chronic complainer enters the headmaster's or headmistress' office, the headmaster/mistress is likely to devalue the message before it is even delivered. Many other communication barriers can lead to conflict.

2.6.2 Goal Incompatibility

Out of necessity, organization's members frequently pursue goals that are somewhat different from one another, thus setting the stage for potential conflicts. For example, a headmaster who practices strong autocratic leadership may see himself in conflict with his teacher and students who believe in democratic principles.

Again, when two parties in an organization must work together but cannot agree on how to do so, this causes conflict as a result of goal incompatibility or divergence. For instance, when the headmaster of a Junior High School and district director or circuit supervisor have different procedures on how mainstreaming issues must be settled, goal differences occur. Often these types of conflict occur because individuals or group do not have knowledge or another one's objectives (Fisher & Keashly, 1988).

2.6.3 Authority Relationships

Mankoe (2007) posited that the nature of traditional boss-employee relationship brings to mind a vision of a hierarchy or of a boss who is superior to the employee, For many employees, this relationship is a comfortless one, because another individual has right to tell them what to do. Some people resent authority more than others and obviously this creates conflicts. In addition, some bosses are more autocratic than others and this compounds the potential for conflict in the relationship. As organizations move forward the team approach and empowerment, there should be less potential for conflict from authority relationships.

2.6.4 Use of Scarce Resources

Possibilities of conflict expand when there are limited resources such as office space, equipment teaching and learning material, classrooms, and laboratories, operating funds, pay allocations, etc. Indeed, anytime multiple parties must share resources there is potential element for conflict. This is enhanced when the shared resources become scarce. One resource often shared by school units or department can lead to misunderstanding in one way or the other and therefore the rise of conflict. For example, the school head as well as departmental heads and individual teachers and even students depend upon the secretarial staff for paper work. It is not uncommon for a secretary to support ten or more units taking into consideration the work load involved. Each of these units believes that its work is the most important. This puts pressure on the secretarial staff and could lead to potential conflict in prioritizing and scheduling work in the school as in Mankoe (2007).

2.6.5 Task Interdependence

Two types of interdependence are particularly prone to conflict. One is sequential interdependence in which one individual or work unit is heavily dependent on another. For example, in a boarding school, waiters generally are more reliant on cooks to finish good meal in a timely manner to both staff and students.

Staff conflicts also often arise because staff members frequently are dependent upon the line to implement their ideas. The second form of task interdependence is reciprocal interdependence in which individuals or units are mutually interdependent. For example the school bursar depends on the school matron and her purchasing staff to provide specification of food items to be purchased for a term which includes their prices

so that the actual amount of cash is released for that purpose. If this is not done to the satisfaction of the other party, conflict arises.

2.6.6 Personality Trait

Individuals do not leave their personality characteristics at the doorstep when they enter the workplace. Personality conflicts are realities in organizations. To expect that you will like all of your co-workers may be a naive expectation, as would be the expectation that they will also like you.

Tjosvold (1998) stated that personality trait that many people find difficult to deal with is abrasiveness. An abrasive person is one who ignores the interpersonal aspects of work and the feeling of colleagues in the school. Abrasive individuals are often achievement-oriented and hard workers, but their perfectionist, critical style often leaves others feeling unimportant. This style creates stress and strain for those around the abrasive person.

In addition, differences in personality, experience temperament and values make frequent conflicts likely. For example, a hardworking headmaster may find it difficult to cope with or tolerate a sluggish and absentee teacher in the administrative and the teaching/learning processes.

Moreover, the workforce in school is composed of individuals with varied level of skills and abilities. Diversity in skills and abilities may be positive for the school, but it also holds potential for conflicts, especially when jobs are interdependent. Experienced, competent teachers may find it difficult to work alongside new and unskilled recruits. Teachers and other workers in the school can become resentful when their new school head

knows a lot about managing people but is unfamiliar with the peculiar and practical administrative process involved in the day to day work procedures.

2.6.7 Values and Ethics

Differences in values and ethics can be a source of disagreement in the school. For example, older teachers value school loyalty and probably would not take sick leave until they are ill. However, young teachers value mobility, and therefore cherish the concept of ‘‘mental health days’’ or calling in sick to get away from work. (Nelson & Quick, 1977). This may not be true for all teachers and workers, but it illustrates those differences in values and ethnics can lead to conflict.

Most people have their own sets of values and ethics. The extent to which they apply these values and ethics in the workplace varies. Some people have strong desires for approval from others and will work to meet other’s ethical standard and strongly apply their own ethical standards. Still others operate seemingly without regard to ethics or values. When conflict over values or ethics do arise, heated disagreement is common because of the personal nature of the differences (Wehrich, 1992).

2.7 Areas of Conflict

Conflict is prevalent in public senior high schools across the nation. Several techniques have been developed for use with adolescents in an attempt to teach conflict resolution skills (Coffman, 1988; Lyon, 1991 & Zhang, 1994). In an empirical study conducted by Zhang (1994), the intervention model of constructive resolution and cooperative learning were implemented and tested at three high schools. During the test, one high school received training in constructive conflict resolution. Another high school

received both constructive conflict resolution and cooperative learning. The last high school received only cooperative learning. The constructive conflict resolution training consisted of four general areas of instruction. Such instructions include violence prevention, basic negotiation skills, and application of negotiation skills and basic mediation skills (Zhang, 1994). The cooperative learning technique used required the implementation of four elements, namely, positive interdependence (the students must perceive that they sink or swim together); individual accountability for mastering the material skills needed to analyze how the group can improve cooperation (Zhang, 1994).

The results of the study showed that an improvement in conflict management increased social support, decreased victimization, enhanced positive life attitudes and a sense of personal control over one's fate with the implementation of constructive conflict resolution. In another study, adolescents who had been in several fights in the past but who were showing signs of improvement were assigned to an eight hour workshop to teach conflict resolution (Lyon, 1991). Each student wrote down responses, relations, and feelings to various conflicts. Everyone then role played each situation. Following each scenario the group discussed the role play. All participants answered a questionnaire about conflict to help the counselor understand the students' individual attitudes. The counselor then began modeling less drastic solutions to each scenario. Role reversals, skits and simulations were techniques used to teach conflict resolution. The students were also taught how to evaluate verbal and non-verbal communication. After the workshop, each student met with the counselor for follow-up sessions once a week for four weeks.

Lyon (1991) observed that a major commitment must be made between students and the counselors if the programme is to be successful. A successful mediation team was

also implemented at Mt. Diablo High. Talking to the peer mediation teams was an alternative for students facing suspension. In this test, all the students participating in the study received 20 hours of training in the following areas: communication skills including attending, squaring, eye contact and reflective and active listening; non-listening techniques; decoding verbal and non-verbal messages; use of open ended questioning; refraining from blocking; feeling questions; problem-solving; examining feelings; brainstorming; and generating multiple solutions. The results reveal that with the implementation of the teams, the high school went from being the lowest ranked high school in terms of suspensions and fighting to being average in the district.

Coffman (1988) presented three conflict resolution strategies for those adolescents whose parents are divorced. The strategy is divided into four sessions of 50 minutes. During the first session the person needs to admit that a conflict exist; realize what resolution style is being used, and become less impulsive in managing conflict (Coffman, 1988). In subsequent questions the following guidelines were presented: Describe the situation as he or she stated. Describe the feelings regarding the conflict. Formulate and describe a situation acceptable to everyone. Agree upon the desired challenges necessary: Construct a detailed agenda with follow-up plans and specify dates for accomplishing the activities (Coffman, 1988).

2.8 Characteristics of Conflict

Conflict has some distinctive features for easy identification. As indicated by Wilmot and Hocker (1998), conflict is characterized by the following features:

Apart from intrapersonal conflict which occurs within one's self, conflict usually requires two people or groups.

Conflict inherently involves some sense of struggle or incompatibility or perceived differences among values, goals or desires.

Action, whether overt or covert, is a key to conflict. Until an action or expression occurs, conflict is latent, lurking below the surface.

Power or attempt to influence inevitably occurs within conflict.

2.9 Nature of Conflicts in Institutions

Roloff (1987) argued that institutional conflict occurs when members engage in activities that are incompatible with those of colleagues within their network, members of other collectivities, or unaffiliated individuals who utilize the services or products of the institution. This definition can be broadened by conceptualizing conflict as an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities, that is, individual, group, institution, and so on. According to Coffman (1988), calling conflict an interactive process does not preclude the possibilities of intra-individual conflict, for it is known that a person often interacts with self. Obviously, one also interacts with others.

Davidson and Wood (2004) assert that conflict may occur when a party is required to engage in an activity that is incongruent with his or her needs or interests, when a party holds behavioural preferences, the satisfaction of which is incompatible with another person's implementation of his or her preferences and also when a party wants some mutually desirable resource that is in short supply such that the wants of everyone may not

be satisfied fully. Davidson and Wood (2004) further assert that conflict may also occur when a party possesses attitudes, values, skills, and goals that are salient in directing his or her behaviour but are perceived to be exclusive of the attitudes, values, skills, and goals held by the other(s), when two parties have partially exclusive behavioural preferences regarding their joint actions and when two parties are interdependent in the performance of functions or activities. This definition is much more inclusive, which implies that conflict can relate to incompatible preferences, goals, and not just activities. It should be recognized that in order for conflict to occur, it has to exceed the threshold level of intensity before the parties experience (or become aware of) any conflict. This principle of conflict threshold is consistent with Baron's (1990) contention that opposed interests must be recognized by parties for conflict to exist.

2.10 Effects of Conflict

Conflict is like a double edged sword and so has equally positive and negative implications. Mankoe (2007) confirms this opinion when he claims that, in everyday life, there has traditionally been emphasis on the negative and dysfunctional aspects of conflict. He explains that the definition of conflict as the existence of incompatible goals thought or emotions may portray at once that all conflict are bad and therefore exert negative impact on organisational ineffectiveness. Conflicts can be positive, negative, or balanced. Afful-Broni (2007) also opines that as incredible as it may seem at sight, conflict is not always a negative phenomenon. There are positive effects of conflicts; for the purpose of the study the writer briefly reviews literature on both positive and negative impact of conflict in order

to equip administrators with the strengths and weakness of conflict so they could effectively discharge their responsibilities.

2.10.1 Positive effect of conflict

Mankoe (2007) contend that, conflict in organisations can be a positive force. He explained further that the creation and/ or resolutions of conflicts often lead to constructive problem solving. The need to resolve conflict can cause people to search for ways of how to do things. The conflict resolution process is often stimulus for positive change within an organisation and the search for ways to resolve conflict may not make changes more acceptable. Afful-Broni (2007) expresses some ways in which conflict impacts positively on organisations such as the school. A unit, section, or department, which may have been overlooked over certain issues, could use conflict to call attention to their plight. It also produces changes in the established ways of doing things thereby enhancing group restructuring. Conflict further present opportunities for issues to be clarified redefined and sharpened. He further explains that conflict improves the decision making process in the schools as stakeholders who were formerly involved in deliberations or in the taking of decisions that affect their lives may now be included.

Undeniably it is a fact that when parties go through the bitter experience together and they are able to resolve it and come together they experience some sense of cohesion within which they realise what they have lost and understand each other. In support of the positive elements Zikmann (1992) writes that, “Effectively managed conflict can help identify previously undetected problems and attitudes. They can also clarify uncertainties and improve overall cooperation”. (p. 34).

2.10.2 Negative effects of conflicts

Nelson-Jones (1995) explains that not only can conflict in the workplace cause great stress and unhappiness but it also can lower outputs and in extreme cases, bring strikes. Furthermore, Barker and Gum (1994) emphatically state that many times, in the midst of conflict, opposing individuals or groups will put their own interests or goals above those of the organisation, resulting in the lessening of the organisation's effectiveness.

Owens (2001) also opines that frequent and powerful conflict can have a devastating impact on the behaviour of people in an organisation in that conflict often develops into hostility which also causes people to withdraw both physically and psychologically. In a school situation, physical withdrawal can take the form of absence, tardiness and turnover which is often written off by laziness on the part of the teacher. Psychological withdrawal can also take the form of alienation, apathy and indifference. On this score, Jorgensen and Henderson (1990) add that though a solution may be reached in conflict resolution, the means of gaining the solution may cause pain to the people involved and general weakening of relationships.

Contributing to the adverse effects of conflict, Ozigi (1977) assert that conflict can lead to outright hostile or aggressive behaviour such as mob action, property damage and minor theft of property. They explain that in some cases, the frustrated individual may direct aggression against the person or object perceived to be the cause of the conflict. In other instances, Ozigi (1977) say that aggression may be displayed towards a person who is not directly involved in the situation. For instance, a teacher may display aggression on a pupil who is not directly involved in a conflict between the child's parent and the teacher by inflicting various forms of punishments on the pupil. Whetten and Cameron (2005)

conclude that most people have ample evidence that conflict often produces harmful results because some people have a very low tolerance for disagreement (whether it is a result of family background, cultural values or personality characteristics) and that interpersonal conflict saps their energy and demoralizes their spirits.

It can be deduced from the discussion that the notion that conflict has negative effects and thus, should be eliminated does not wholly give the right impression. It is seen from the literature cited that in modern times, conflict has been given a different dimension resulting in the idea that conflict is neither inherently good nor bad but simply inevitable wherever people are found. It should be accepted that too much conflict can have adverse effects on individuals, groups and organizations because conflict resolution involves using up productive time and scarce resources, and diversion of energies that could more constructively be used elsewhere. On the other hand, little or no conflict in an organisation for instance can also be a negative sign as it can lead to apathy and lethargy, and provide little or no impetus for change and innovation. Conflicts may be beneficial if they are used as instruments for change or innovation. As seen from the discussion, conflicts can improve relationships and the quality of decision making in an organisation if they are managed constructively.

It is also evidently clear that some conflict situations produce nothing positive and that conflict may have either positive or negative consequences for individuals, organisations and the society depending on its frequency and how it is managed. As people try to settle conflicts with physical reactions which produce negative outcomes like hitting, kicking and scratching which hurt people, such physical reactions may be interpreted as a means of finding solution to the problems. These however, tend to be damaging to

relationships while violence may lead to more violence. Another negative effect of conflict is that emotions are sometimes so strong that some people want to strike at the other person. Whether conflict can produce positive or negative effects depends on how that conflict is tackled or the strategy used to settle or resolve the conflict. Even though it may be obvious that conflict often comes with a cost what may not be known is the extent to which this cost may go. Experts in the field of conflict however, establish that, it has a devastating impact on any given society. Appreko (2008) identified the effects of conflict as mutual suspicions and distrust, destruction of life and property, destruction of infrastructure, general security, internal displacement and destruction of the economy. Mintah (2008) contended that, conflict may lead to the destruction of lives properties displacement of people, dissipation of resources poverty slow pace of development and hatred.

Afful-Broni (2007) in supporting the crusade of trumpeting the negative effects of conflict came up with the following negative results of conflict. These include; break in communication, suspicion and mistrust, weakening of family spirits loss of valuables, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis. Owens (2001) cited in Mankoe (2007) observes that frequent and powerful conflicts can have a devastating impact upon the behaviour of people in organizations. He further explains that conflict often develops into hostility which also causes people to withdraw both physically and psychologically. A further exposition on this assertion is that in the school situation physical withdrawal takes the form of absenteeism, tiredness and negative turnover which is often written off by administrators as laziness on the part of teachers which leads to poor performance on pupils/student's academic work. Psychological withdrawal takes the form of alienation, apathy and indifference.

A critical examination of the above submission portrays conflict as an unworthy course and should not be entertained by any serious minded human being. Even though positive characteristics have been well established, the repercussions outweigh the positives and are so devastating.

2.11 Conflict Resolution

According to Hoy and Miskel (2005), conflict situation offers everyone an opportunity to choose the conflict management or response style appropriate for the conflict. Wheeler (1995) says that the key to effective conflict preservation and management is the choice of appropriate conflict management style. To Wheeler, although people have favourite styles they use in conflict situations, they are capable of choosing a different style when it is due. In the opinion of Owens (2001), because it is not always likely for one to control the source of conflict, it is paramount that one sticks to how to respond to conflict in a more acceptable and responsible manner. Similarly, Hoy and Miskel (2005) agree that in order to manage conflict between others effectively, it is important to be aware of the early warning signs of conflict and the causes of disagreements.

Wheeler (1995) has identified five types of conflict management styles which are described as co-operative or collaborative problem solving, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising. These are explained as follows:

2.11.1 Collaborating

According to Wheeler, this style enables people to work together so that everyone can win. In using this style people try to find a solution that will help everyone meet their

interest and help everyone maintain a good relationship. This is in line with McNamara (2007) explanation that the collaborative style involves a behaviour that is strongly cooperative and assertive which reflects a win-win approach to resolving conflict. Furthermore, Nelson-Jones (1995) says that the collaborative approach enables both parties to work as a team to prevent unnecessary conflict and also to arrive at mutually satisfactory solution in real conflict; thus, neither of them attempts to impose his or her interest on the other. Additionally, Malcolm (1980) says that the approach assumes that each of the parties is prepared to work on their inner difficulties to ensure peaceful conflict resolution. Whetten and Cameron (2005) contend that this approach, which is sometimes referred to as the “problem solving” mode, attempts to address fully the concerns of both parties so that both of them can feel that they have won the case. They are of the view that people who use the collaborative style are highly assertive with regards to reaching their goals but have a great deal of concern for the other person.

2.11.2 Competing

According to Bodtker (2001), choosing a competitive style to resolve a conflict means a person is putting his or her interest before everyone else’s interest. As Wiston (1997) indicates, people who adopt a competitive style try so hard to get what they want that they end up ruining friendships or relationships. In the view of Nelson-Jones (1995), there is always a winner and a loser with the competing style which allows one party to adopt the “I win-you lose” approach to resolving the conflict and so does all in his or her power to win the conflict. For instance, one party’s tactics may include manipulation, not telling the whole truth, not admitting mistakes and sending negative verbal, voice and body messages. This is what Cannie, Sasse and CFCS (2002) explain as “going all out to win

the conflict”. Olson and DeFrain (2001) have observed that those who employ the competitive style of conflict resolution tend to be aggressive and uncooperative, perusing personal concerns at the expense of the other and in effect, such people try to gain power by direct confrontations and try to win without adjusting their goals and desires in light of the other person’s goals and desires.

2.11.3 Compromising

Compromise is as an agreement in which people concur to accept less than they originally wanted. People who rely on the compromising style to resolve conflict find it necessary to satisfy some of their interests but not all of them; and such people are likely to say “let us split”. Whetten and Cameron (2005) posit that compromise is an attempt to have a partial satisfaction for both parties in the sense that both receive the proverbial “half loaf...” and this compels both parties to make sacrifices to obtain a common gain.

2.11.4 Avoiding

Hoy and Miskel (2005) refer to the avoiding approach as a method of dealing with conflict from a safe emotional distant. As with viewing a distant mountain range, the specific details get lost the farther away one is. In the same way emotional distancing as part of the avoiding approach may mean that there is difficulty in emphasizing or putting on another’s shoe. This brings in Wheeler’s (1995) notion that people who choose the avoiding style do not normally get involved in a conflict because such people tolerate whatever their opponent does in order to escape conflict. Bettmann and Moore (1994) emphasize that the avoiding style involves a behaviour that is unassertive and uncooperative, as a result an individual chooses this style to stay out of conflict, ignore

disagreements, or remain neutral. The avoiding approach might reflect a decision to let the conflict work itself out, or it might reflect an aversion or tension and frustration.

2.11.5 Accommodating

To Cannie, Sasse and CFCS (2002), the accommodating style means surrendering one's own needs and wishes to please the other person. According to Olson and DeFrain (2001), people who opt for an accommodating style deny themselves to put their interest last and let others have their way. Many times, they say, such people believe that keeping a good relationship is more worthwhile than anything else. In accordance with this notion, Whetten and Cameron (2005) maintain that the accommodating style satisfies the other party's concerns while neglecting one's own. They conclude that the difficulty in habitual use of the accommodating style is that it emphasizes preserving a friendly relationship at the expense of critically appraising issues and protecting personal rights.

In explaining the accommodating approach, Dirks and Parks (2003) indicate that this style involves a behaviour that is cooperative but not assertive and which may mean an unselfish and a long term strategy to encourage others to cooperate or submit to the wishes of others. They assert that accommodators are usually favourably evaluated by others but are also perceived as weak and submissive.

It could be deduced from the conflict resolution styles enumerated that avoiding or ignoring conflict does nothing to improve the situation because when conflict is driven underground, it only grows and will stay underground until it is so intense that an explosion may be the next step. It is also seen that collaboration and compromise are the most productive forms of addressing conflict because there is not a winner or loser but rather a working together for the best possible solution. On the other hand, those who adopt a

competitive style try so hard to get what they want that they ruin friendships or relationships. It is also evident that individuals who opt for the accommodating approach deny themselves to contain conflict for the benefit of others. When conflict occurs, people most commonly employ one or a combination of these conflict response styles and generally respond to conflict using what skills they have learned and moreover, are most comfortable with. Like parenting where most people receive no formal instruction but engage in it on the basis of what has been modeled for them in the past, so do people learn how to resolve conflict through experiencing one or more of these problem-solving styles in use. This implies that people have options for managing or resolving conflicts. The decision to maintain good relationships after conflict is perhaps, the best option. This is also probably the best option for resolving conflicts in the school system in order to sustain interpersonal relationships to ensure effective teaching and learning.

2.12. Goals of Conflict Resolution Education Programmes

Four broad goals are discernible through the conflict resolution education (CRE) literature. Each goal suggests outcomes that may be monitored to evaluate CRE effectiveness. They are as follows:

2.12.1 Create a Safe Learning Environment

In the 1990s, one of the National Education Goals of USA stated, “all schools in America will be free of drugs, violence and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol, and will offer a disciplined environment that is conducive to learning” (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

In response to that goal, Congress passed the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994, which funded the Safe and Drug-Free Schools unit in the U.S. Department of Education. Since its inception, that office has sought to develop, implement, and monitor initiatives that can help create safe learning environments in schools. Among those initiatives are conflict resolution education programs (Cuervo, 2003). Programs that emphasize this goal are interested in the following kinds of outcomes: decreased incidents of violence; decreased conflicts between groups of students, particularly intergroup conflicts based on racial and ethnic differences and decreased suspensions, absenteeism, and dropout rates related to unsafe learning environments.

2.12.2 Create a Constructive Learning Environment

Teachers and administrators know that learning cannot take place without a constructive learning environment for students: one with a positive climate, effective classroom management, and a respectful and caring environment where children feel safe to share ideas and feelings (Lieber, 2003). Teachers often wrestle with classroom management and classroom discipline, especially in urban education environments. For this goal expected outcomes include: improved school climate, improved classroom climate, increased respectful and caring environment, improved classroom management, reduced time that teachers spend on disciplinary problems in the classroom and increased use of student-centered discipline

2.12.3 Enhance Students' Social and Emotional Development

At the heart of all Conflict Resolution Education (CRE) is the hope of helping children to develop as better people – to be more socially and emotionally competent so

that they can lead happier lives and contribute more positively to society (Cuervo, 2003). If this is achieved, the logic is that other CRE goals will also be accomplished (Lantieri, 2001).

It is in the pursuit of this goal that CRE programs most often overlap with social and emotional learning programs (Lieber, 2003). When CRE is effective in achieving this goal, the benefits include outcomes like these: increased perspective taking; improved problem-solving abilities; improved emotional awareness and emotional management; reduced aggressive orientations and hostile attributions and increased use of constructive conflict behaviors in schools and in home and community contexts.

2.12.4 Create a Constructive Conflict Community

Cuervo (2003) argues that creating a constructive conflict community requires developing and advocating for social justice. The author posit that a constructive conflict community is also one in which there is a shared responsibility for social ills and social accomplishments. In such a community, destructive conflict is seen as something the community needs to address. This is one of the basic assumptions underlying the notion of restorative justice approaches to CRE. Whittal (2003) assert that success in creating a constructive conflict community would be evident in outcomes including the following: increased parental and community involvement in school affairs; increased links between school CRE and community CRE efforts and decreased community tension and violence.

2.13 Resolution of Conflicts in Schools

The chief executive or a school manager, that is, the principal, is responsible for the overall institution, control and maintenance of standards in the school (McNamara,

2007). A principal is therefore, a manager of school and is accountable for that happens in the school. He is in charge of a community of variety of staff and students and it is to her/him that they look up to for guidance and direction (Iravo, 2002). Kochhar (1988) emphasizes the importance of the principal whom he notes is the key cornerstone in the arch of school management and has the steering wheel in his hands. Kochhar asserts that the principal should be a group leader who knows how to involve people, arrange conditions and initiate process that bring out the best in each participant, that is the school personnel who include employees (teachers, non-teaching staff), and the students.

The principal stimulates the teamwork, co-ordinate their efforts, plans what to do, directs the finding of solutions to common problems of the institute and evaluates performance to get reason for failure or success. Ozigi (1977) emphasizes that, the school reputation largely depends on the principal who can make or mar the school. Kochhar (1988; 125) continues to assert that schools are bad or good, in a healthy or unhealthy, mental, moral and physical condition flourishing or perishing, as the principal is capable, energetic, of high ideals or the reserve. Schools rise to fame or sink to obscurity as greater or lesser principals have charge of them. It is said the school is as greater as the principal because everything in the school, the plant, the staff, the curriculum, methods and techniques of teaching among other human relationship, bear the impress of his/her personality and the way conflict resolutions are handled.

The principal or the head occupies a very significant office in any educational system. To be effective the head needs, among others: drive, energy, vision, personality and management in conflict resolution technique. Institutions, especially large and complex ones employ different groups of people who have to be coordinated in the best

way possible in order to achieve both individual and Institutional goals. This means that the management has to create an environment in which members can cooperate with each other. However, work groups usually have a tendency to compete for limited resources, power and status, to the extent of disrupting the cooperative efforts. Besides internal conflict, management also faces conflict from external forces. These may include government, trade unions and economic conditions (Van, 1989).

To Griffin (1994), a principal's public and professional reputation will depend more on the standard of stability in his school than on any other single factor that is, good stability brings good results in every field of school endeavour. A principal who lets any form of conflict out of his hands is risking trouble. Should an instance of mass conflict occur, the wise principal will resist the temptation to find a scapegoat, be it the Ministry of Education, the board of governors, politicians, parents and staff, but will instead take a long hard look at his own conflict management methods. If his school becomes unstable in any way, then it implies that, foundations of management in conflict resolution were not established in the school, and the blame for this is his/hers.

2.14 Conflict Resolution and Conflict Management

Conflicts may be resolved or managed. A conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur (Deutsch, 1973). An activity that is incompatible with another activity is one that prevents, blocks, or interferes with the occurrence or effectiveness of the second activity. According to Coffman (1988), conflict resolution is solving the problem so the conflict is ended. Conflict management is handling the conflict so that it is under control. Conflicts are constructive to the extent that they result in an agreement that allows all

participants to achieve their goals; strengthen the relationship among participants, and strengthen the ability of participants to resolve their future conflicts constructively (Deutsch, 1973; Johnson & Johnson, 2006).

Constructive or destructive outcomes resulting from conflict depends largely on the context in which the conflict occurs. In situations dominated by cooperation, conflicts tend to be viewed as problems to be solved. Individuals tend to communicate effectively, accurately perceive the other person and his or her position, trust and like the other, recognize the legitimacy of the other's interests, and focus on their own and others' well being. In situations dominated by competition, conflicts are viewed as win-lose situations. Individuals tend to focus on gaining an advantage at the expense of others, communicate misleading information, misperceive the other person's position and motivation, be suspicious of and hostile toward others, and deny the legitimacy of others' goals and feelings. Conflict is an inevitable phenomena that occurs in every part of our daily life, whether within or outside of the organizational context. Conflict has captured a tremendous amount of attention from both academic scholars and practitioners, as they found increasing conflict in and among organizations (Gibson & Callister, 2010). Researchers have noted numerous studies of conflict bringing positive results; however, other studies have demonstrated the opposite results. Contributing to the conflicting research results is the absence of productive conflict management skills that impact on the outcomes of conflict (Rahim, 2011).

The focus of conflict researchers have not been on determining the causes of conflict. Various factors contribute to setting the stage for conflict to emerge. Dirks and Parks posited that the interdependence of the disputants, with actual or perceived

differences in goals, values, or aims, who view the other party as potentially interfering with the attainment of those goals, values, or aims lead to conflict in the workplace (Dirks & Parks, 2003). Putnam and Poole (1987) viewed the competition for resources, coordination of systems, work distribution, and participation in decision making as key factors to conflict in organizations. The rising conflicts between departments within organizations are attributed to the increasing strains produced by resource and workflow interdependence between departments and differences in their short-term objectives and their desires for autonomy (Nauta & Sanders, 2001).

Conflict management researchers suggest that conflict is a multidimensional construct (Jehn, 1992). Conflict can be a benefit or a detriment, which depends largely on the type of conflict and how it is managed (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). Researchers have identified several different types of conflict, which resulted in a proliferation of terminology with significant conceptual overlap (Dirks & Parks, 2003). In particular, one distinguishable type of conflict (e.g., interpersonal, relational, affective, and emotional conflict) induced negative results, whereas another distinguishable type of conflict (e.g., task, debate, substantive, and cognitive conflict) promoted positive outcomes (Dirks & Parks, 2003). They argue that there is consistency in conflict style across types of conflict and these types very much influence conflict management styles (Sternberg & Soriano, 1984). Among them, Kilmann and Thomas' (1975) two-dimensional model of conflict management and Rahim's (1983) dual concern model are the most widely used models. However, research findings have been conflicting. De Dreu and Weingart's (2003) meta-analysis found the same significant relationship between both types of conflict and conflict

outcomes. They concluded that both types of conflict were disruptive and the classification was not so useful.

Conflict itself cannot bring useful functions or harmful outcomes to organizations, instead the conflict outcomes depend on the employee's personal awareness and acknowledgment of the value of conflict and conflict management skills (Rahim, 2011). Essentially, conflict has no direct relationship to positive or negative outcomes. The positive results of conflict result from the use of appropriate conflict management skills and the negative results of conflict come from the use of inappropriate conflict management skills (Barki & Hartwick, 2001). Research indicates that high performance employees know how to manage conflict so that conflict makes a positive contribution, while less effective employees avoid conflict or allow it to produce negative consequences that in turn produce poor work performance. Researchers have noted numerous studies of conflict bringing positive outcomes; however, other studies have demonstrated negative results (Rahim, 2011).

Contributing to the conflicting research results is the absence of effective conflict management skills impact upon the outcomes of conflict. Poor conflict management skills cause conflict escalation and negative results. Managing conflict in a way to reduce its destructive effects while capitalizing on and enhancing its productive effects is critical to organizations. Researchers have studied a multitude of mechanisms to manage conflict productively in business environment (Stewart & Barrick, 2000). Johnson, Johnson, and Tjosvold (2000) demonstrate the open-minded discussion of conflicting perspectives for mutual benefit, labelled constructive controversy, is an effective way to manage conflict effectively in order to capitalize on the potential positive outcomes of conflict (De Dreu &

Gelfand, 2008). According to Covey (2002), the following approaches can be used to resolve conflict: arbitrations, mediation, reconciliation, bargaining, problem solving, and peacekeeping. Any of these can come through the use of force.

Covey (2002) articulates three strategies for peaceful conflict management between and among aggrieved parties. They include mediation, arbitration and reconciliation and each of these strategies can be used to resolve conflict among and between aggrieved parties. He explains that the mediation strategy of conflict resolution basically seeks to provide a voluntary framework for dispute settlement between warring parties in dispute. The parties select a third party who acts as a mediator or a facilitator. The mediator has no power to provide the outcome. The parties determine the outcome of the mediation process by mutual agreement. If the mediation process fails, the parties in dispute are free to withdraw from the process, launch legal proceedings at any time or turn to one or more arbitrations. Covey (2002) explains the arbitration strategy unlike mediation is a private process between the aggrieved parties in dispute. The arbitration is more formal than the mediation process. It has an element of extra-judicial approach to dispute settlement. The warring parties choose a neutral third person to become the arbitrator to solve the dispute. The arbitrator is expected to be neutral and knowledgeable. He is expected to follow and apply the rules, guidelines and procedures defined and agreed upon by the parties involved in the dispute. The parties in the dispute must agree on the place of the arbitration, the use of language and application of rules and laws during the arbitration process. The outcome of the arbitration process is binding to both parties.

The third strategy, which is reconciliation by Covey presupposes the willingness of the conflicting parties to settle and resolve their differences with a view to restore and

harmonize their relationships. The primary goal of the reconciliation process is to restore a peaceful relationship between the conflicting parties and to create a new order based on consensus and key values, which encourage and promote cooperation among parties in conflict. The reconciliation process therefore attempts to adjust and change the embedded values and attitudes of the conflicting parties and steer them towards a shared common vision based on shared common identity. It tries to overcome the conflicting parties fear, anger and revengefulness towards each other it is fundamentally crucial however the parties in dispute acknowledge that they both have problems and should be willing to resolve through peaceful means.

The reconciliation process merely assists them to jointly analyse the conflict, acknowledge the injustices it has caused and agreed to build bridges between them through healing process, forgiveness and moral responsibility. According to McPheat (2008), as a manager one can spend a significant amount of time focusing on how to deal with conflict as it arises. No two situations are going to be alike so you will find a grasp upon a handful of different beneficial than not. There are mirages of ways to deal with conflicts but here are few McPheat (2008) suggested:

Avoid the conflict: this according to McPheat (2008) seems as though not a strategy at all but if you are consciously monitoring a conflict while avoiding it you will be able to intervene when necessary. To him avoidance tends to work very well if two employees are involved in a simple disagreement and are likely to come to their own conclusion without help.

Find a compromise: This is meeting with both parties to understand their points of view and figure out what each one can give up in order to make each one happy. Each

should find resolution to be palatable in some way or form they will each be forced to stand down on issues while maintaining their position on others but no one person will be forced to completely give up on his or her own idea.

Stage of confrontation: According to McPheat (2008) this stage can be scary and stressful but sometimes allowing all parties involved in a conflict to air their views is enough to make the conflict go away. Everyone will have to verbalise their position and reasoning, this gives each participant enough information to come and agree upon a logical conclusion. Confrontation should be used carefully however, as some individuals will perceive the situation as a personal attack and walk away feeling hurt.

Technique for avoiding and resolving conflicts include; meet conflict head-on, set goals, plan for and communicate frequently, be honest about concerns, agree to disagree, understand that healthy disagreement would build better decisions. Get individual's ego out of management style. Let your team create: people will support what they help create. Discuss differences in values openly continually stress the importance of the following policy- communicate honestly and avoid playing 'gotcha' type games. Provide more data and information than is needed. Develop a sound management system.

Another strategy in conflict management is to seek consensus. Balance power is one tactic for building a sense of fairness. Finding the appropriate way to resolve conflict over an issue is another. Leaders that manage conflict effectively use a two-step process called consensus with qualification. It works as these executives talk over an issue and try to reach consensus. If they cannot, the most relevant senior manager makes the decision guided by input from the rest of the group.

How does consensus with qualification create a sense of fairness? A body of research on procedural justice shows that the process fairness which involves significant participation and influence by all concerned, is enormously important to most people. Individuals are willing to accept outcomes they dislike if they believe the process by which those results come about was fair most people want their opinions to be considered seriously but willing to accept that those opinions cannot always prevail. That is precisely what occurs in consensus with qualification.

According to Cuervo (2003), conflict resolution is a process of attempting to resolve a dispute or a conflict. Successful conflict resolution occurs by listening to providing opportunities to meet each side's needs, and adequately address their interests so that they are each satisfied with the outcome. Conflict practitioners talk about finding the win- win outcome for parties involved. In the win-lose dynamic found in most conflicts. Whiles conflict resolution engages conflict; once it has already started conflict prevention aims to end conflicts before they start or lead to verbal physical or legal fighting or violence.

Conflict itself has both positive and negative outcomes. Practitioners in the field of conflict resolution aim to find ways to promote the positive outcomes and minimise the negative outcomes. Roloff, stressed again that there are debates in the field of conflict work as to whether all conflicts can be resolved, thus making the term conflict resolution one of the contention. Other common terms include conflict management, conflict transformation and conflict interventions. Conflict management can be the general process by which the parties towards conclusion manage conflict; however, it is also referred to as a situation where conflict is deliberate Person, social and organisational tool, especially used by

capable politicians and other social engineers. Conflict resolution process can vary. However group conflict involves two or more groups with opposing views regarding specific issues. This last, but though is quite not entirely demanded if the outside is well respected by the opposing parties. These methods all require third party intervention, a resolution method which is direct between the parties with opposing views in negotiation. According to Mankoe (2002), conflict management consists of interpersonal styles, negotiating strategies and structural interventions that are designed to avoid unnecessary tension, or to reduce excessive conflicts.

2.15 Summary of Literature

The study has so far reviewed related literature on conflicts in organizations. Interpersonal conflict occurs when two people have incompatible needs, goals, or approaches in their relationship. Conflict between opposing motives or ideas in your mind is shown by your internal dialogue and is at the intrapersonal level. Inter-group conflict also occurs between collections of people such as ethnic, or racial groups, departments or levels of decision making in the same institution, union and management.

Intragroup conflict is also a clash among some or all of a group's members which often affects the group's progress and effectiveness. In a classroom situation, an intragroup conflict may occur within members of a class where pupils sit in close proximity and interact with each other. Role conflict also involves very real differences in role definitions, expectations or responsibilities between individuals who are interdependent in a social system.

It was revealed that conflict in organisations can be a positive force and that the creation and/ or resolutions of conflicts often lead to constructive problem solving. The need to resolve conflict can cause people to search for ways of how to do things. Afful-Broni (2007) outlines some ways in which conflict impacts positively on organisation such as the school. A unit section or department, which may have been overlooked over certain issues, could use conflict to call attention to their plight.

Undeniably it is a fact that when parties go through the bitter experience together and they are able to resolve it and come together they experience some sense of cohesion within which they realise what they have lost and understand each other.



CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methods and techniques used in gathering data for the study. It discussed the research design, the population, sample and sampling technique, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher used descriptive survey design using a quantitative approach for the study. According to Gay and Airasian, (2003) descriptive survey is concerned with conditions that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs and attitude that are held, processes that are on-going and trends that are developing. The descriptive survey design method deals

with questions concerning what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Ary, Jacobs & Razevieh, 1990).

Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) describe descriptive survey design as that method that involves asking a large group of people questions about a particular issue. Information is obtained from a sample rather than the entire population at one point in time which may range from one day to a few weeks. According to Amin (2005), this is one of the most commonly used research methods in social sciences, and it is used to gather data from a sample of a population at a particular time.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993), quantitative research is the systematic scientific investigation of quantitative properties and phenomena and their relationships. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and use mathematical models, theories and/or hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena.

3.2 Population of the Study

Sekaran (1981) postulates that, population of a research study is any group of individuals that has characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The target population for the study was 276 headmasters, assistant headmasters and teachers in the three Senior High School in the Offinso Municipality. The accessible population of the study was 276 consisting of 12 headmasters and assistant headmasters and 254 teachers of Senior High School in the Offinso Municipality. All the three schools have varied teacher population due to classrooms available for various courses offered and student population.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

3.3.1 Sampling Technique

Howit and Cramer (2011) stated that the quality of a piece of research does not only stand or fall by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted. To get an appropriate sample size for the study, an updated list of all the teachers in the three public senior high schools was obtained from the Offinso Municipal Director of Education.

The researcher used purposive sampling to select all the 12 headmasters and assistant headmasters in the 3 senior high schools. Amin (2005) posits that purposive sampling is appropriate in situations where respondents are targeted due to their position, expertise, situation, and so on. Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to select 50% of the total teacher population of 254, getting a total sample of 139 respondents for the study.

Babbie and Butto (2001) suggested that if the population is few hundred a 40% or more sample size will do; if several hundred a 20% sample size will do; if a few thousand a 10% sample size will do; and if several thousand a 5% or less sample size will do. It is a basic principle of statistical sampling that a conclusion may be drawn from a large population of data based on a relatively small sample taken from that data, with a certain degree of statistical confidence. The lottery method of the simple random sampling technique was used to select the 127 teachers for this study because it allows participants equal probability of selection and thus avoids bias. In all, a total of 139 respondents

comprising 127 teachers and 12 headmasters and their assistants were selected for the study.

3.3.2 Sample

According to Creswell (2005) a sample is the set of actual participants that are drawn from a larger population of potential data sources.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The researcher used questionnaire as the data collection instrument. White (2005) opined that, questionnaire is instrument designed to collect data for decision making in research. A questionnaire is a printed self-report form designed to elicit information that can be obtained through the written responses of the subjects. The information obtained through a questionnaire is similar to that obtained by an interview, but the questions tend to have less depth (Burns & Grove, 1993). Closed ended questionnaire was used to collect data for the study.

The questionnaire was a self-administered tool designed by the researcher. It was a 4-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree) in which higher score indicate more perceived positive responses.

The questionnaires were structured into four sections in accordance with the four research objectives of the study. Section A dealt with the demographic characteristic of the respondents. Section B focused on types and causes of conflict. Section C dealt with influence of conflict. Section D also covered measures to manage conflict.

The use of the questionnaire gave flexibility to respondents to answer the questions at their own time and convenience. The questionnaire included a paragraph explaining the

purpose of the study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to all the 139 respondents.

3.6 Pre -Test

A pilot test was conducted to make sure the research instruments were valid and reliable. The purpose for piloting the instrument was to get the bugs out of the instrument so that the respondents in the study area will experience no difficulties in completing the questionnaire and also enable one to have preliminary analysis to see whether the wording and format of questions is appropriate (Bell, 2008).

The questionnaire was pre-tested on 20 teachers in Aduman Senior high school which was outside the study area. Respondents were conveniently selected as statistical conditions are not necessary in the pilot study (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The purpose of the pre-test was to allow the researcher to make the necessary changes to items which were inappropriate and also determine the level of ambiguity of the questions for the necessary corrections to be made.

3.6.1 Validity and Reliability

Validity

The validity of an instrument is the degree to which it measures what it is intended to measure (Polit & Hungler, 1993). Content validity refers to the extent to which an instrument represents the factors under study. The relevance of the questionnaire items was established by giving the instrument to the supervisor of this work and other experts in research to scrutinize the items for proper construction.

Reliability

Reliability is the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure (Polit & Hungler, 1993). To determine the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was administered on the same group of respondents twice in the pilot study and given two week grace period between the first and second test and the coefficient of reliability from the two tests correlated. The reliability test yielded Cronbach alpha of 0.86, indicating that reliability was high. Almost all the items in the questionnaire had multiple scores and therefore, the Cronbach Alpha was considered appropriate to use. Ary Jacobs and Rezzavieh (1990) noted that Cronbach Alpha is used when items have multiple scores.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher sought permission from the Offinso Municipal Director of Education for permission to carry out the study after the University approved of the research topic. The researcher was given the permission to conduct the study after which the researcher paid a working visit to the sampled population. The questionnaires were then administered to the respondents upon the approval of the headmasters of the sampled senior high schools in the study area.

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to solicit information from the respondents. The respondents were given two weeks to respond to the questionnaire.

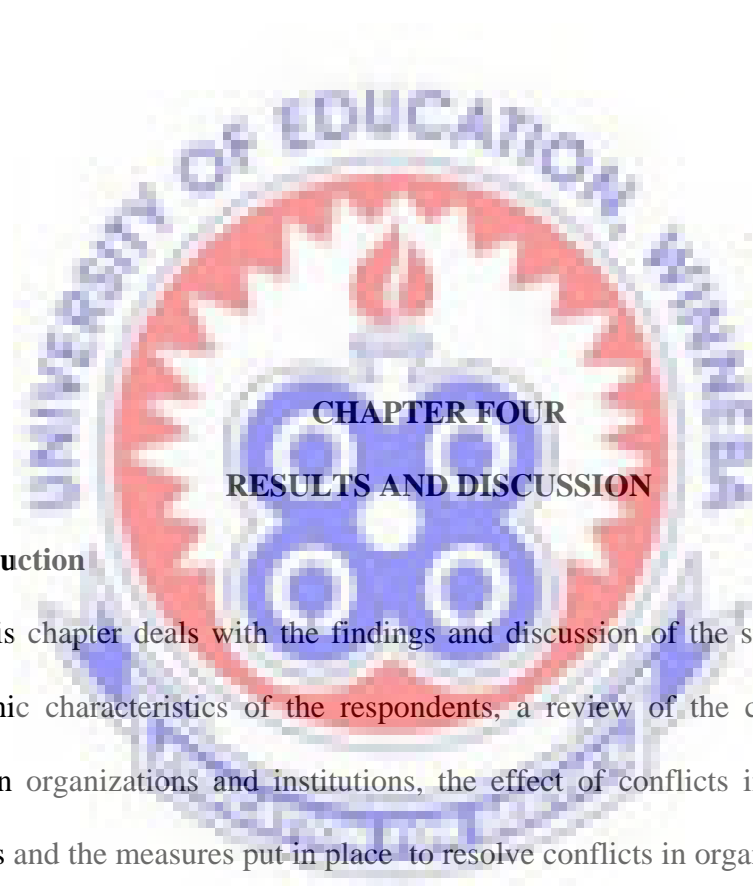
3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

The data was cleaned with the aim of identifying mistakes and errors which may have been made and blank spaces which have not been filled. A codebook for the questionnaire was prepared to record the responses. The data was computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software package. The data was analyzed with descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages to answer all the research questions.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

All human institutions have some ethical issues to observe. Divulging of information by employees that can affect the institution is among several ethical issues relating to staff of the selected schools. These were addressed by first explaining the essence of the study to the respondents. The anonymity of the respondents was considered by ensuring that their names and other information that could bring out their identities were not disclosed in the data collected.

Respondents were further assured of their personal protection as they were given the liberty to opt out if they were not interested in the study exercise. The respondents were further assured of confidentiality of the information provided and that the study findings were to be used for academic purposes only. Respondents were assured that the information they would give would be used for academic purposes only. These ethical issues were ensured in the introductory note of the questionnaire.



4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the findings and discussion of the study and covers the demographic characteristics of the respondents, a review of the causes and types of conflicts in organizations and institutions, the effect of conflicts in organizations and institutions and the measures put in place to resolve conflicts in organizations to improve performance.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents which include their age, gender, highest educational qualification and length of service are presented in Table 4.1

-4.4.

Table 4.1 Gender of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	78	56
Female	61	44
Total	139	100

Table 4.1 indicates that 78 (56%) of the respondents were males while 61 (44%) were females, meaning that males who participated in the study were more than their female counterparts.

Table 4.2 Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21-30 years	25	18
31-40 years	39	28
41-50 years	42	30
51-60 years	33	24
Total	139	100

On the age of respondents, the study indicated that 25 (18%) of them were between the ages of 21-30 years, 39 (28%) of them were between the ages of 31-40 years, 42 (30%) of them were between the ages of 41-50 years while 33 (24%) of them were between the ages of 51-60 years. The result means that the respondents were matured enough to participate in the study.

Table 4.3 Highest Qualification of Respondents

Highest Qualification		
PGDE	42	30
Bachelor's Degree	63	45
Master's Degree	34	25
Total	139	100

On respondents highest educational qualifications, 42 (30%) of them were holders of the PGDE, 63 (45%) of them were holders of the Bachelor's Degree while 34 (25%) of them were holders of the Master's Degree.

Table 4.4 Length of Service of Respondents

Length of Service		
1-5 years	28	20
6-10 years	34	25
11-15 years	46	33
16-20	22	16
21 years and above	9	6
Total	139	100

On respondents length of service, 28(20%) of them had been in the service for between 1-5 years, 34 (25%) of them had been in the service for between 6-10 years, 46 (33%) of them had been in the service for between 11-15 years, 22 (16%) of them had been in the service for between 16-20 years while 9 (6%) of them had been in the service for 21 years and above. The results indicate that seasoned and experienced educational professional participated in the study.

4.2 Answers to the research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the types and causes of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?

Table 4.5 Types of Conflict in Senior High Schools

Statement	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Inter-personal	68(49)	47(34)	24(17)	-
Intra-personal	54(39)	60(43)	25(18)	-
Inter groups	45(32)	76(55)	18(13)	-
Intra groups	67(48)	72(52)	-	-
Role conflict	65(47)	52(37)	22(16)	-

Table 4.5 shows that 68 (49%) of the respondents strongly agreed that inter-personal conflict is one of the types of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 47 (34%) of the

respondents agreed while 24 (17%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that inter-personal conflict is one of the types of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result corroborates that of Filippo and DeWaal (2000) that interpersonal conflict occurs when two people have incompatible needs, goals, or approaches in their relationship. The authors further indicated that communication breakdown is often an important source of interpersonal conflict and learning communication skills is valuable in preventing and resolving such difficulties. At the same time, very real differences occur between people that cannot be resolved by any amount of improved communication.

Cooper and Schindler (2003) argued that personality conflict refers to very strong differences in motives, values or styles in dealing with people that are not resolvable. For example, if both parties in a relationship have a high need for power and both want to be dominant in the relationship, there is no way for both to be satisfied, and a power struggle ensues.

Again, 54 (39%) of the respondents strongly agreed that intra-personal conflict is also one of the types of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 60 (43%) of the respondents agreed while 25 (18%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that intra-personal conflict is one of the types of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result agrees with Davidson and Wood (2004) that conflict between opposing motives or ideas in your mind is shown by your internal dialogue and is at the intrapersonal level. Beyond that, the primary concern here is with social conflict, that is, conflict between people whether they are acting as individuals, as members of groups, or as representatives of institutions or nations.

Also, 45 (32%) of the respondents strongly agreed that inter groups conflict is another type of conflict in Senior High Schools, 76 (55%) of the respondents agreed while 18 (13%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that inter groups conflict is one of the types of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result confirms that of Fisher (2000) that inter-group conflict occurs between collections of people such as ethnic or racial groups, departments or levels of decision making in the same institution, union and management. Filippo and Waal (2000) contend that competition for scarce resources is a common source of inter-group conflict, and societies have developed numerous regulatory mechanisms, such as collective bargaining and mediation, for dealing with inter-group conflict in less disruptive ways. Social-psychological processes are very important in inter-group conflict (Fisher, 2000).

Besides, all the respondents 139 (100%) strongly agreed and agreed that intra groups conflict is a major type of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result means that intra groups conflict is one of the types of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result concurs with Dirks and Parks (2003) who explained that intragroup conflict is a clash among some or all of a group's members which often affects the group's progress and effectiveness. In a classroom situation, an intragroup conflict may occur within members of a class where pupils sit in close proximity and interact with each other. Such conflict can also occur among the staff of schools who have different views on the kind of measures appropriate for punishing students.

Finally, 65 (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed that role conflict is one of the types of conflicts that occur in Senior High Schools, 52 (37%) of the respondents agreed while 22 (16%) of the respondents disagreed. Role conflict involves very real differences

in role definitions, expectations or responsibilities between individuals who are interdependent in a social system (Coleman & Fisher-Yoshida, 2004). According to the authors, if there are ambiguities in role definitions in an institution or unclear boundaries of responsibilities, then the stage is set for interpersonal friction between the persons involved.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?

Table 4.6 Causes of Conflict in Senior High Schools

Statement	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Limited resources	48(35)	66(47)	25(18)	-
Goal difference	51(37)	73(52)	15(11)	-
Values and ethics	69(50)	54(39)	16(11)	-
Communication failures	63(45)	57(41)	19(14)	-
Task interdependence	37(27)	73(52)	18(13)	11(8)
Authority relationship	40(29)	74(53)	17(12)	8(6)

Table 4.6 shows that 48 (35%) of the respondents strongly agreed that limited resources is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 66 (47%) of the respondents agreed while 25 (18%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that limited resources is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result is in line with Mankoe (2007) that the possibilities of conflict expand when there are limited resources such as office space, equipment, teaching and learning material, classrooms, and laboratories, operating funds, pay allocations, and others. Indeed, anytime multiple parties share resources there is potential element for conflict. This is enhanced when the shared resources become scarce (Mankoe, 2007).

Also, 51 (37%) of the respondents strongly agreed that goal difference is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 73 (52%) of the respondents agreed while 15 (11%) of them disagreed. The result means goal difference is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result agrees with Fisher and Keashly (1988) who indicated that out of necessity, organization's members frequently pursue goals that are somewhat different from one another, thus setting the stage for potential conflicts. For example, a headmaster who practices strong autocratic leadership may see himself in conflict with his teachers and students who believe in democratic principles.

Again, when two parties in an organization must work together but cannot agree on how to do so, it causes conflict as a result of goal incompatibility or divergence. For instance, when the headmaster of a Junior High School and district director or circuit supervisor have different procedures as how mainstreaming issues must be settled, goal differences occur (Fisher & Keashly, 1988).

Besides, 69 (50%) of the respondents strongly agreed that values and ethics is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 54 (39%) of the respondents agreed while 16 (11%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that values and ethics is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result is in tandem with Nelson and Quick (1977) that differences in values and ethics can be a source of disagreement in the school. For example, older teachers value school loyalty and probably would not take sick leave until they are ill. However, young teachers value mobility, and therefore cherish the concept of ‘‘mental health days’’ or calling in sick to get away from work (Nelson & Quick, 1977). This may not be true for all teachers and workers, but it illustrates that those differences in values and ethnics can lead to conflict.

In addition, 63 (45%) of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of communication is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 57 (41%) of the respondents agreed while 19 (14%) of the respondents disagreed. It is obvious that breakdown in communication due to distortion or absolute lack of communication often leads to conflict in the schools. The result means that lack of communication is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result supports McNamara’s (2007) assertion that communication barriers such as physical separation and language can create distortion in messages and these can lead to conflicts. Another communication barrier that can engender conflict is value judgment in which a listener assigns a worth to a message before it is received. For example, supposing a team member who is a chronic complainer enters the headmaster’s or headmistress’ office, the headmaster/mistress is likely to devalue the message before it is ever delivered.

Furthermore, 37 (27%) of the respondents strongly agreed that task interdependence is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 73 (52%) of the respondents agreed, 18(13%) of the respondents disagreed while 11(8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result means that task interdependence is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result conforms to the statement by Dirks and Parks (2003) that two types of interdependence are particularly prone to conflict. One is sequential interdependence in which one individual or work unit is heavily dependent on another. For example, in a boarding school, waiters generally are more reliant on cooks to finish good meal in a timely manner to both staff and students.

The second form of task interdependence is reciprocal interdependence in which individuals or units are mutually interdependent. For example the school bursar depends on the school matron and her purchasing staff to provide specification of food items to be purchased for a term which includes their prices so that the actual amount of cash is released for that purpose. If this is not done to the satisfaction of the other party, conflict arises (Dirks & Parks, 2003).

Finally, 40 (29%) of the respondents strongly agreed that authority relationship is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools, 74 (53%) of the respondents agreed, 17 (12%) of the respondents disagreed while 8(6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result means that authority relationship is one of the causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools. The result agrees with Mankoe (2007) who posited that the nature of traditional boss-employee relationship brings to mind a vision of a hierarchy or of a boss who is superior to the employee, For many employees, this relationship is a comfortless one, because another individual has right to tell them what to do. Some people resent

authority more than others and obviously this creates conflicts. In addition, some bosses are more autocratic than others and this compounds the potential for conflict in the relationship. As organizations move forward the team approach and empowerment, there should be less potential for conflict from authority relationships.

Research Question 3: What influence do conflicts have on Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?

Table 4.7 Positive influence of Conflicts

Statement	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Improves cooperation	54(39)	76(55)	9(6)	-
Improve quality of decisions	48(34)	72(52)	19(14)	-
Improve future communications	36(26)	78(56)	25(18)	-
Encourages respect for individual opinions	54(39)	68(49)	17(12)	-
Inspire creativity and productivity	51(37)	71(51)	17(12)	-
Improve the quality of service delivery	28(20)	83(60)	18(13)	10(7)

Table 4.7 shows that 54 (39%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a positive effect of conflict is that conflict when resolved amicably improves cooperation, 76 (55%) of the respondents agreed while 9 (6%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that conflict when resolved amicably improves cooperation. Also, 48 (34%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a positive effect of conflict is that conflict when resolved amicably improves quality of decisions, 72 (52%) of the respondents agreed while 19 (14%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that conflict when resolved amicably improves quality of decisions.

Again, 36 (26%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a positive effect of conflict is that conflict when resolved amicably improves future communications, 78 (56%) of the respondents agreed while 25 (18%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that conflict when resolved amicably improves future communications. Besides, 54 (39%) of them strongly agreed that a positive effect of conflict is that conflict when resolved amicably encourages respect for individual opinions, 68 (49%) of the respondents agreed while 17 (12%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that conflict when resolved amicably encourages respect for individual opinions.

Moreover, 51 (37%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a positive effect of conflict is that conflict when resolved inspires creativity and productivity, 71 (51%) of the respondents agreed while 17 (12%) of the respondents disagreed. The result means that conflict when resolved amicably inspires creativity and productivity. Finally, 28 (20%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a positive effect of conflict is that conflict when resolved amicably improves the quality of service delivery, 83 (60%) of the respondents agreed, 18 (13%) of the respondents disagreed while 10 (7%) of the respondents strongly

disagreed. The result means that conflict when resolved amicably improves the quality of service delivery.

The entire results in Table 4.7 are in conformity with Mankoe (2007) who contended that, conflict in organisations can be a positive force. He explained further that the creation and/ or resolutions of conflicts often lead to constructive problem solving. The need to resolve conflict can cause people to search for ways of how to do things. Afful-Broni (2007) outlines some ways in which conflict impacts positively on organisation such as the school. A unit section or department, which may have been overlooked over certain issues, could use conflict to call attention to their plight. He further explains that conflict improves the decision making process in the schools as stakeholders who were formerly involved in deliberations or in the taking of decisions that affect their lives may now be included.

Undeniably it is a fact that when parties go through the bitter experience together and they are able to resolve it and come together they experience some sense of cohesion within which they realise what they have lost and understand each other. In support of the positive elements Zikmann (1992) writes that, effectively managed conflict can help identify previously undetected problems and attitudes. They can also clarify uncertainties and improve overall cooperation.

Table 4.8 Negative influence of Conflict

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Physical withdrawal of people	41(29)	72(52)	18(13)	8(6)

Decrease in productivity	55(40)	68(49)	16(11)	-
Violent behavior	48(35)	63(45)	28(20)	-
Waste of resources	61(44)	78(56)	-	-
Lack of cooperation	48(35)	77(55)	14(10)	-
Loss of lives and properties	63(45)	53(38)	23(17)	-

Table 4.8 shows that 41 (29%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a negative effect of conflict is that conflict when not resolved amicably lead to physical withdrawal of people, 72 (52%) of the respondents agreed, 18 (13%) of the respondents disagreed while 8 (6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. Also, 55 (40%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a negative effect of conflict is that conflict when not resolved amicably lead to decrease in productivity, 68 (49%) of the respondents agreed while 16 (11%) of the respondents disagreed.

Again, 48 (35%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a negative effect of conflict is that conflict when not resolved amicably lead to violent behavior, 63 (45%) of the respondents agreed while 28 (20%) of the respondents disagreed. Besides, all the respondents 139 (100%) strongly agreed that a major negative effect of conflict is that conflict when not resolved amicably lead to waste of resources.

Additionally, 48 (35%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a negative effect of conflict is that conflict when not resolved amicably lead to lack of cooperation, 77 (55%) of the respondents agreed while 14 (10%) of the respondents disagreed. Finally, 63 (45%) of the respondents strongly agreed that a negative effect of conflict is that conflict when

not resolved amicably leads to loss of lives and properties, 53 (38%) of the respondents agreed while 23(17%) of the respondents disagreed.

The entire results in Table 4.5 corroborates that of Owens (2001) that frequent and powerful conflict can have a devastating impact on the behaviour of people in an organisation in that conflict often develops into hostility which also causes people to withdraw both physically and psychologically. In a school situation, physical withdrawal can take the form of absence, tardiness and turnover which is often written off by laziness on the part of the teacher.

It can be deduced from the discussion that the notion that conflict has negative effects and thus, should be eliminated does not wholly give the right impression. It should be accepted that too much conflict can have adverse effects on individuals, groups and organizations because conflict resolution involves using up productive time and scarce resources, and diversion of energies that could more constructively be used elsewhere. On the other hand, little or no conflict in an organisation for instance can also be a negative sign as it can lead to apathy and lethargy, and provide little or no impetus for change and innovation. Conflicts may be beneficial if they are used as instruments for change or innovation. As seen from the discussion, conflicts can improve relationships and the quality of decision making in an organisation if they are managed constructively.

It is also evidently clear that some conflict situations produce nothing positive and that conflict may have either positive or negative consequences for individuals, organisations and the society depending on its frequency and how it is managed. Afful-Broni (2007) in supporting the crusade of trumpeting the negative effects of conflict came

up with the following negative results of conflict. These include; break in communication, suspicion and mistrust, weakening of family spirits loss of valuables, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis. Owens (2001) cited in Mankoe (2007) observes that frequent and powerful conflicts can have a devastating impact upon the behaviour of people in organizations.

Research Question 4: What measures are used to manage conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality?

Table 4.9 Measures used to Manage Conflicts

Statement	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Collaboration	62(45)	56(40)	21(15)	-
Competition	47(34)	72(52)	13(9)	7(5)
Accommodation	58(42)	67(48)	14(10)	-
Compromising	56(40)	83(60)	-	-
Avoidance	38(27)	76(55)	25(18)	-

Table 4.9 indicates that 62 (45%) of the respondents strongly agreed that collaboration is a measure used to manage conflicts, 56 (40%) of the respondents agreed while 21 (15%) of the respondents disagreed. The result agrees with Wheeler (1995) that this style enables people to work together so that everyone can win. In using this style people try to find a solution that will help everyone meet their interest and help everyone maintain a good relationship. This is also in line with McNamara (2007) explanation that the collaborative style involves a behaviour that is strongly cooperative and assertive which reflects a win-win approach to resolving conflict. Furthermore, Nelson-Jones (1995) says that the collaborative approach enables both parties to work as a team to prevent unnecessary conflict and also to arrive at mutually satisfactory solution in real conflict; thus, neither of them attempts to impose his or her interest on the other. Additionally, Whetten and Cameron (2005) contend that this approach, which is sometimes referred to as the “problem solving” mode, attempts to address fully the concerns of both parties so that both of them can feel that they have won the case.

Also, 47 (34%) of the respondents strongly agreed that competition is also a measure used to manage conflicts, 72 (52%) of the respondents agreed, 13 (9%) of the respondents disagreed while 7 (5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The result supports Bodtke (2001) that choosing a competitive style to resolve a conflict means a person is putting his or her interest before everyone else’s interest. As Wiston (1997) indicates, people who adopt a competitive style try so hard to get what they want that they end up ruining friendships or relationships. In the view of Nelson-Jones (1995), there is always a winner and a loser with the competing style which allows one party to adopt the “I win-you lose” approach to resolving the conflict and so does all in his or her power to

win the conflict. For instance, one party's tactics may include manipulation, not telling the whole truth, not admitting mistakes and sending negative verbal, voice and body messages.

Again, 58 (42%) of the respondents strongly agreed that accommodation is another measure used to manage conflicts, 67 (48%) of the respondents agreed while 14 (10%) of the respondents disagreed. The result is in line with Cannie, Sasse and CFCS (2002) that the accommodating style means surrendering one's own needs and wishes to please the other person. According to Olson and DeFrain (2001), people who opt for an accommodating style deny themselves to put their interest last and let others have their way. Many times, they say, such people believe that keeping a good relationship is more worthwhile than anything else. In accordance with this notion, Whetten and Cameron (2005) maintain that the accommodating style satisfies the other party's concerns while neglecting one's own. They conclude that the difficulty in habitual use of the accommodating style is that it emphasizes preserving a friendly relationship at the expense of critically appraising issues and protecting personal rights.

In explaining the accommodating approach, Dirks and Parks (2003) indicate that this style involves a behaviour that is cooperative but not assertive and which may mean an unselfish and a long term strategy to encourage others to cooperate or submit to the wishes of others. They describe that accommodators are usually favourably evaluated by others but are also perceived as weak and submissive.

Furthermore, all the respondents 139 (100%) strongly agreed and agreed that compromising is a major measure used to manage conflicts. The result is in conformity with Whetten and Cameron (2005) who posited that compromise is an attempt to have a partial satisfaction for both parties in the sense that both receive the proverbial "half loaf..."

and this compels both parties to make sacrifices to obtain a common gain. Compromise is as an agreement in which people concur to accept less than they originally wanted. People who rely on the compromising style to resolve conflict find it necessary to satisfy some of their interests but not all of them; and such people are likely to say “let us split”.

Finally, 38 (27%) of the respondents strongly agreed that avoidance is another measure used to manage conflicts, 76 (55%) of the respondents agreed while 25 (18%) of the respondents disagreed. The result agrees with Hoy and Miskel (2005) who referred to the avoiding approach as a method of dealing with conflict from a safe emotional distant. As with viewing a distant mountain range, the specific details get lost the farther away one is. In the same way emotional distancing as part of the avoiding approach may mean that there is difficulty in emphasizing or putting on another’s shoe. This brings in Wheeler’s (1995) notion that people who choose the avoiding style do not normally get involved in a conflict because such people tolerate whatever their opponent does in order to escape conflict.



The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central shield with a red and white sunburst design. The shield is set against a blue background with a white border. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA' is written around the perimeter of the emblem.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary of the findings of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research work.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of conflict management on the performance of teachers in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. find out the types of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.
2. find out the causes of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.
3. find out the influence of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

4. determine conflict resolution measures used to manage conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

The study employed the descriptive survey design using questionnaire to collect data. The target population for the study consisted of all the 266 headmasters, assistant headmasters and teachers in the three (3) Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality namely Dwamena Akenten Senior High School, St. Jerome Senior High School and Namong Senior High School.

Purposive sampling was used to select all the 12 headmasters and assistant headmasters in the 3 senior high schools. Simple random sampling was used to select 50% of the total teacher population of 254, getting a total sample of 139 respondents for the study.

5.2 Main Findings

The study found that, inter-personal, intra-personal, inter groups, intra groups and role conflict are all types of conflict in organization. Also limited resources goal difference, values and ethics communication failures, task interdependence and authority relationship are also causes of conflict in organizations.

The study further discovered that improvement in cooperation, improvement in quality of decisions, improvement in future communications, encouragement of respect for individual opinions, inspiration of creativity and productivity and improvement in the quality of service delivery are all positive effects of conflict.

The study again revealed that the negative effect of conflict are physical withdrawal of people, decrease in productivity, violent behavior, waste of resources, lack of cooperation and loss of lives and properties.

The study also discovered that collaboration, competition, accommodation compromising and avoidance are all measures used to manage conflicts in organizations.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings, it is concluded that conflict is like a double edged sword and so has equally positive and negative implications. In the school conflicts are not only dysfunctional but it has functional aspect as well.

It is further concluded that there are some causes of conflicts in schools. Significant among them are inter-personal, intra-personal, inter groups, intra groups, limited resources goal difference, values and ethics communication failures and task interdependence.

If conflicts are effectively and efficiently managed in the schools setting, it can lead to improvement in cooperation, quality of decisions, future communications, respect for individual opinions, inspiring creativity and productivity and improvement in the quality of service delivery and subsequently, improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

It is also concluded that conflict has its negative effect. Notable among them are physical withdrawal of people, decrease in productivity, violent behavior, waste of resources, lack of cooperation and loss of lives and properties.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the study recommends the following:

1. Heads of educational institutions should avoid discrimination and favoritisms among staff in the course of their administrative roles to reduce conflicts among their staff.
2. So far as conflict is inevitable in every social institution, heads of educational institutions should find effective ways of managing conflicts when they occur initially to avoid its escalation.
3. Heads of educational institutions especially, senior high schools should as a matter of fact always guard against some of the causes of the conflicts to minimize its occurrence in the school.
4. The Ghana Education Service should organize regular in service training, workshops and seminars on the types of conflict in organizations and their management for heads of educational institutions to build their capacity enable them resolve and manage conflicts amicably.
5. The Ghana Education Service should organize workshops and seminars on the positive and negative effects of conflict in organizations for heads of educational institutions.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

The study was conducted to find out the effect of conflict on the performance of teachers in public Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality, so further study should

be carried out to investigate the effect of conflict on the performance of teachers in Senior High Schools in the remaining districts, municipals and metropolis of the Ashanti Region. Further study should also be carried out to investigate the effect of conflict on the performance of teachers in private Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality.

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APPENDIX A

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central blue gear-like design with four circular elements. The emblem is surrounded by a red border with white stars. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA' is written in blue around the top and sides of the emblem.

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS
INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting a study on the effect of conflicts on the performance of teachers in Senior High Schools in the Offinso Municipality in partial fulfillment for the award of the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership. In this respect, you have been selected to take part in the study.

I would therefore be very grateful if you could give your candid opinion while responding to the attached questionnaire which has been designed to collect the needed information for the study.

Please be informed that your responses to the questionnaire would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

PETER KWASI SARPONG

(POST GRADUATE STUDENT)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE RESPONDENTS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Please respond to all the questions as frankly as possible. Tick [] the appropriate box for your answer.

1. What is your age?

a). 21- 30 []

b). 31- 40 []

c). 41- 50 []

d). 51- 60 []

1. What is your gender?

a). Male []

b). Female []

3. What is your highest educational qualification?

a). Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE]

b). Bachelor’s Degree []

c). Master’s Degree []

4. How long have you been teaching?

a) 1-5 years

b) 6-10 years

c) 11-15 years

d) 16-20 years

e) 21 years and above

SECTION B –TYPES AND CAUSES OF CONFLICTS

TYPES OF CONFLICTS

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [√] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Disagree, 4= Strongly Disagree, as sincere as possible.

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
5	Prevalence of inter-personal				
6	Prevalence of intra-personal				

7	Prevalence of inter groups				
8	Prevalence of intra groups				
9	Prevalence of role conflict				

CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [✓] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: 1= **Strongly Agree**, 2= **Agree**, 3= **Disagree**, 4= **Strongly Disagree**, as sincere as possible.

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
10	Sharing of limited resources				
11	Goal difference of the organization				
12	Values and ethics of the organization				
13	Communication failures in the organization				
14	Task interdependence in the organization				
15	Authority relationship in the organization				

SECTION C: EFFECTS OF CONFLICTS

Positive effects of conflicts

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [√] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: 1= **Strongly Agree**, 2= **Agree**, 3= **Disagree**, 4= **Strongly Disagree**, as sincere as possible.

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
16	Conflicts when resolved amicably improves cooperation				
17	Conflicts when resolved amicably improve quality of decisions				
18	Conflicts when resolved amicably improve future communications				
19	Conflicts when resolved amicably encourages respect for individual opinions				
20	Conflicts when resolved amicably inspire creativity and productivity				
21	Conflicts when resolved amicably improve the quality of service delivery				

Negative effects of conflict

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [√] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: 1= **Strongly Agree**, 2= **Agree**, 3= **Disagree**, 4= **Strongly Disagree**, as sincere as possible.

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
22	Conflicts brings about physical withdrawal of people				
23	Conflicts can bring about decrease in productivity				
24	Conflicts can bring about violent behavior				
25	Conflicts can results in waste of resources				
26	Conflicts can results in lack of cooperation				
27	Conflicts can results in loss of lives and properties				

SECTION D: SOME MEASURES USED TO MANAGE CONFLICTS

Please, respond to the statements by ticking [√] the number on the 4-point likert scale using the following keys: 1= **Strongly Agree**, 2= **Agree**, 3= **Disagree**, 4= **Strongly Disagree**, as sincere as possible.

Measures used to Manage Conflicts

	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
34	Collaboration is a conflict resolution measure				
35	Competition is a conflict resolution measure				
36	Accommodation is a conflict resolution measure				
37	Compromising is a conflict resolution measure				
38	Avoidance is a conflict resolution measure				