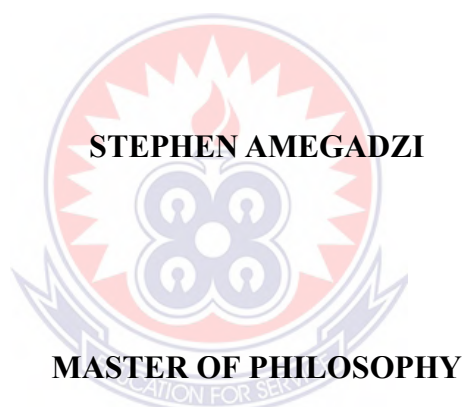


**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**AN ASSESSMENT OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS AMONG  
TEACHERS IN SELECTED BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE EFFUTU  
MUNICIPALITY, GHANA**



**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**



**AN ASSESSMENT OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS AMONG  
TEACHERS IN SELECTED BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE EFFUTU  
MUNICIPALITY, GHANA**



**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in  
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of  
the degree of Master of Philosophy  
(Human Rights, Conflict and Peace Studies)**

**CENTRE FOR CONFLICT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE STUDIES  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**JANUARY, 2025**

All material contained within the thesis, including without limitation text, logos, icons, photographs and all other artwork, unless otherwise stated, is copyright material of University of Education, Winneba. Use may be made of any material contained within the thesis for non-commercial purposes from the copyright holder. Commercial use of material may only be made with the express, prior, written permission of University of Education, Winneba.

Copyright © University of Education, Winneba



## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I, Stephen Amegadzi, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another 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 Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Prof. George Hikah Benson (Ph.D)

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

To my wife, Vida Korantengmaa-Manu and my son, Isaac Desiderius Amegadzi.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my deepest gratitude to the Almighty God for granting me the strength and wisdom to successfully complete this thesis. May His name be exalted.

I extend profound appreciation to my dedicated supervisor, Prof. George Hikah Benson (Ph.D) of the University of Education, Winneba. His unwavering support, encouragement, and commitment to guiding this thesis to meet the required standards are truly commendable. I pray for God's abundant blessings upon him.

I am deeply thankful for the immense contributions and support from the Headteachers and staff of the underlisted schools; Don Bosco 'B' JHS, Winneba Presby Primary School, Ensuaikyir Methodist Primary School and Akosua Village M/A Basic School. Their time and assistance were instrumental during the data collection process, may God abundantly bless them.

Special acknowledgment go to lecturers and staff members of the Centre for Human Rights, Conflict and Peace Studies, for the various support, tutoring and advice given to me throughout the period of my studies of the programme.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to Dr. Charles Ohene Amoh, the Central Regional Executive Security of the National Peace Council, whose continued support, guidance and prayers aided me throughout the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
ABSTRACT	xii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Purpose of the Study	9
1.4 Objectives of the Study	9
1.5 Research Questions	10
1.6 Significance of the Study	10
1.7 Delimitation	11
1.8 Limitations of the Study	11
1.9 Definition of Terms	12
1.10 Organization of the Study	12
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Conceptual Review	13
2.2.1 Conflict Management	14

2.2.2 Causes of conflict among teachers	22
2.2.3 Role of teacher unions in conflict management	37
2.2.4 Effectiveness of Conflict Management Mechanisms	62
2.3 Conceptual Framework	65
2.3.1 Conflict management assessment framework	66
2.4 Theoretical Review	68
2.4.1 Social conflict theory	69
2.4.2 Structural-functional theory	73
2.4.3 Application of theories to the study	76
2.5 Chapter Summary	79
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS</b>	<b>81</b>
3.0 Introduction	81
3.1 Research Philosophy	81
3.2 Research Design	82
3.3 Research Approach	83
3.4 Study Area	84
3.4.1 Education in Effutu Municipality	84
3.4.2 Population of the Study	85
3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedure	86
3.6 Instrumentation	87
3.7 Data Sources	88
3.8 Data Collection Procedure	88
3.9 Data Analysis	89
3.10 Credibility	90
3.11 Trustworthiness	93





3.12 Ethical Considerations	94
3.13 Positionality	95
3.14 Chapter Summary	95
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS</b>	<b>97</b>
4.1 Introduction	97
4.1.1 Themes Generated	97
4.2 Sources of Conflict	99
4.2.1 Allocation and Workload Issues	99
4.2.2 Leadership Practices	104
4.2.3 Interpersonal Issues	110
4.2.4 Communication Problems	115
4.3 Effects of Conflict	119
4.3.1 Academic Performance	119
4.3.2 Teacher Morale and Motivation	123
4.3.3 Emotional and Psychological Well-being of Students	127
4.4 Conflict Management	132
4.4.1 Formal Mechanisms	132
4.4.2 Informal Mechanisms	136
4.5 Challenges in Conflict Management	141
4.5.1 Systemic barriers	141
4.5.2 Stakeholder Dissatisfaction	146
4.6 Chapter Summary	151

<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>153</b>
5.1 Introduction	153
5.2 Summary of Key Findings	153
5.3 Conclusion	155
5.4 Recommendations	157
5.5 Areas for Future Research	159
REFERENCES	161
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE	169
APPENDIX B: INTRODUCTORY LETTER	172



## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
3.1: Tabular Presentation of Population Sample	87
4.1: Themes Generated	99



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
2.1: Conflict Management Assessment Framework	66
3.1: Map of Effutu Municipality	85



## ABSTRACT

This study examines conflict management mechanisms among teachers in basic schools within Effutu Municipality, Ghana, with the aim of identifying the causes of conflict, assessing their impacts on academic performance, and evaluating the effectiveness of current strategies. The study underpinned by the conflict resolution and organisational behaviour theories. Additionally, the research employs a qualitative methodology, gathering data through semi-structured interviews with teachers and school administrators. The findings highlight that conflicts often arise from factors such as poor communication, resource competition, role ambiguity, and leadership inefficiencies. These issues negatively affect teacher morale, diminish collaboration, and disrupt the educational environment, leading to lower student performance. Existing conflict management mechanisms, such as administrative interventions and informal mediation, are inconsistently applied, undermining their potential effectiveness. The study emphasises the need for structured and sustainable conflict resolution frameworks that promote collaboration and reduce tensions among teaching staff. It recommends comprehensive training in conflict resolution for school leaders, the implementation of clear communication protocols, and the development of professional development programs to address role-related issues. These measures aim to foster a more harmonious working environment, improve teacher morale, and enhance academic outcomes for students.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Teacher Collaboration, Educational Performance, Qualitative Research, Effutu Municipality.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The diversity of humankind is among its most remarkable traits worldwide. Relationships are characterised by a variety of needs, worldviews, and ethical stances, as well as distinct ways of being, thinking, and living. Interpersonal conflicts are defined as tensions resulting from differing interests or perspectives. These tensions are a natural part of human relationships and can arise in a variety of social settings, including schools.

To Robbins (2000), conflicts cannot cease to exist, as they are intrinsic to human beings, forming an integral part of their moral and emotional growth. Likewise, they exist in all schools. The school is inserted in a space where the conflict manifests itself daily and assumes relevance, being the result of the multiple interpersonal relationships that occur in the school context.

Conflicts could be viewed as the interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposition of goals, aims, and views, and who see the other party as potentially interfering with the realization of these goals (Putnam & Poole, 1987). In addition, conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals (Austey, 1952). Further, Deustch (1973:10) revealed that “conflict exists whenever an action by one person or a group prevents, obstructs, interferes with, injures or in some way makes less likely the desired action of another person or a group”.

Another definition of conflict is a type of behaviour which occurs when two or more parties are in opposition or battle because of a perceived relative deprivation from the activities of or interacting with another person or group” (Litterer, 1966, p). all other things being equal, there is bound to be conflict whenever individuals struggle for incompatible goals. This conflict does not occur in a vacuum, it takes place in the environment. This can include places such as the home, school, community, and organization, among others. It could therefore be deduced that conflict is natural in every society, between or among individuals and social units. It may either be desirable since it can precipitate desired personal, social or institutional change or can be catastrophic if not well managed.

Most domain scholars agree that conflicts, no matter where they occur, are sources of discomfort, even though Robbins and Stuart-Kotze (1986) believed that conflict in an organization can be a positive force. They forcefully argued that functional conflict supports the goals of the organization. Further, conflict is a positive force and contends that conflict causes people to seek effective ways of dealing with it resulting in improved organizational functioning concerning cohesiveness, clarified relationships and clearer problem-solving procedures. However, Robbins (2000) also described conflicts as dysfunctional because they lead to outright hostility and people exhibit aggressive behaviour, and the like.

Agreeing with Robbins (2000), Donnelly, Gibson, and Ivancevich (1992) perceive conflict as something which must be avoided. According to them, disagreements can cause the group to be ineffective and fragmented. The personality clash happens not only between superiors and subordinates but also among members of groups. Conflicts are also sources of organization ineffectiveness. For the organization to

function well to achieve its goals there is the need for people working within it to work and see each other as partners in development.

More importantly, people in conflict situations need opportunities for resolution if there is no social order, growth, or social development. Conflict resolution practitioners perform the task of assisting parties in moving from crises, through conflict management, to a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matters at issue between or among the conflicting parties. In addition, conflict management can be regarded as a type of philosophy and a set of skills that often serve as assistance to individuals and groups to better appreciate, understand and deal with conflict as it arises in all aspects of their lives (Moran, 2001).

Subsequently, one can find it helpful to regard conflict as a set of divergent aims, methods or behaviours. The degree of divergence determines the severity and duration of conflict and affects the likelihood of successful resolution of conflicts. Conflict resolution creates a state of uniformity or convergence of purpose or means. At its simplest, conflict resolution usually refers to the process of identifying and then addressing the needs of all parties involved in a conflict so that they are satisfied with the outcome (University of Colorado, 2008).

In the school set-up, many interpersonal conflicts arise when one person finds another person's behaviours irritating, unpleasant or uncomfortable in one way or the other (Nelson & Quick, 1997). It could be realized that conflict occurring in school is latent and exists because of divergent views and the incompatibility of those views. Conflict can occur within an individual, between individuals, among faculty members, between groups within the larger faculty, and between the school leadership and central administration, among others.



Conflict is a daily occurrence in the administration and management of schools, and since every conflict must not be allowed to persist, it must be resolved. This means that conflict resolution is one of the most frequent functions the school administrator is expected to perform (Mankoe, 2007). This notwithstanding, many people in leadership positions are not aware of the available means of resolving conflicts in school settings. This further compounds the situation and may subsequently lead to inactivity. With this as the background, this study seeks to investigate the sources of conflicts among teachers in Junior High Schools and what the key stakeholders do to resolve conflicts in such schools in the Effutu district.

According to Awan and Anjum (2015), properly managed conflict promotes open communication, collaborative decision-making, regular feedback, and timely resolution of conflict. Open communication and collaboration open doors for new ideas/initiatives and create harmonious relationships at the workplace, which can positively affect employee morale. Continuous feedback and timely resolution of conflict can potentially improve employee job satisfaction and performance.

Awan et al (2015) argue that a negative work environment that does not promote conflict resolution can lead to poor employee behaviour and job performance. Any unresolved conflict promotes dysfunctional communication and poor behaviour among staff. Poor behaviour exhibited by one employee has the potential to affect the total employee morale, leading to low production. According to Dana (2000), conflict is not just an annoyance. It costs money and those costs can be calculated, in terms of wasted time, bad decisions, and lost employees. In the healthcare sector, patients' health and even their lives can be affected by unmanaged conflict. The same thing can be said in the educational sector where students suffer because of unmanaged conflict, especially between employees and the employer (GES).

Awan and Ahson (2015) contend that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of people working together and should be kept at a manageable level where it will not disorganize the activities of the organization towards the accomplishment of its objectives. They plead that conflict may also be beneficial to the organization where it brings about a radical change in the organizational power structure, current interaction pattern and entrenched attitude and can lead to an increase in productivity. While some conflicts are functional others are not. It can also negatively affect the organization when it is associated with decreased employee satisfaction, insubordination, decreased productivity, and leads to economic loss, and fragmentation to mention but a few. According to Lebas and Euske (2006), performance is a set of financial and non-financial indicators which offer information on the degree of achievement of objectives and results. According to Babin and Boles (2000), employee performance is about directing and supporting employees to work as effectively and efficiently as possible in line with the needs of the organization. This includes job satisfaction, commitment and perceived psychological contract.

It must be observed that the above factors have led labour unions to embark upon plenty of actions just to have their issues resolved. However, these actions negatively affect the productivity of the organisations that experience this. The study therefore seeks to determine the causes, and effects of conflict and how it can be resolved.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Conflicts in educational settings have resulted in unfavorable interactions between teachers and students, learners and school administrators, teachers and school administrators, and the community. A power struggle has occasionally broken out in schools as a result of conflicts. Teaching and learning as well as the overall setting of

the school have been disrupted by this state of affairs. Some conflicts have resulted in physical damage to school buildings and the deaths of some students (Mankoe, 1990).

According to Ogosia (2009), for there to be a positive culture of teaching and learning in schools, the environment must be secure, well-organized, and supportive of learning. Conflicts are an inevitable aspect of life, and as such, they are an inevitable component of school life. The school community needs to develop the ability to resolve conflicts constructively. The environment in schools would be more pleasant for everyone if members in an educational setting learn how to handle issues of misunderstanding. In such a setting, teachers and students can each spend more time instructing and learning. According to Adeyemi (2009), many instructors think that student behaviour has an Effecton academic performance. Education professionals have always been conscious of negative behaviour (Collard, 2003; Abosede, 2006). School administrators must pay heed to this call because studies (such as Lynch, 2000; Onoyume, 2007) reveal that when conflict is not satisfactorily handled or when there is an excessive delay in the resolution of conflict, properties, lives, and academic hours of unthinkable scale are lost. Prolonged conflict resolution has disrupted school schedules, which has had adverse financial and emotional consequences.

Conflict resolution as a component of the social studies and Religious and Moral Education (RME) curricula in Ghana's basic schools does not appear to have placed enough emphasis on the methods or approaches that school administrators, teachers, and students in public basic schools can use to resolve conflicts in the classroom and the school environment. This is not to suggest that the prevalence of conflict in public basic schools may be attributed to a lack of training in conflict resolution (Mankoe, 1990). However, an absence of training in conflict resolution is a disadvantage to the

people elevated to headship. The fact that there is a large percentage of school heads, instructors, and students who have received no training in conflict resolution shows a dearth of individuals who can handle conflict in the school system. In light of this scarcity, there is a strong case to be made that conflict situations in public Basic schools partly cause administrators, instructors, and students' unnecessary strain (Mankoe, 1990). Social conflicts in educational institutions require moral authority and leadership integrity to resolve them, according to a prior empirical study by Onsarigo (2007) that sought to identify factors influencing conflicts in institutions of higher learning. However, Onsarigo's study was unable to identify the conflict resolution strategies that public basic school should adopt to resolve conflict in the school environment so that it does not recur. Additionally, Gyan and Tandoh-Offin (2014) sought to determine whether or not the Traditional Disciplinary Committee used by the school management in conflict resolution has been successful in resolving Teacher-Teacher conflict, Teacher-Student conflict, and Headteacher-Teacher conflict so that new models could be used to supplement or completely replace the old system to improve institutional performance. According to the study findings, using the Traditional Disciplinary Committee (TDC) as a method of conflict resolution by school administration has not been successful in public basic schools in the Greater Accra Metropolis.

Also, literature on students' violence or conflicts in the Effutu municipality focused on the causes and approaches to interschools sports conflicts in public basic schools. However, the sources and mechanisms or approaches that are used by students and school authorities in managing and resolving other sources and causes of conflicts in public basic schools in the region were neglected (Marfo et al, 2019; Marfo et al, 2018).

Despite, significant interventions made by major stakeholders in education to manage and resolve conflicts in public basic schools in Ghana, there is still spate of students' violence or conflicts in public Basic Schools in the Effutu municipality of Ghana, which have been reported by media outlets. On 20th November 2014, students of Winneba Secondary embarked on a peaceful protest on what they described as an astronomical increment of school fees without prior engagement and approval with their parents. However, the students peaceful protest became chaotic when personnel of the Ghana Police Service allegedly invaded the girl's dormitory and started beating the riotous students' following a call made to them by the school administrators to go to the school and restore order. This angered the students to retaliate leading to the destruction of school properties and injuring of the protested students' (Joy online, November 20, 2014).

Consequently, a report by Citi News on 29th January, 2018, indicated how students of Winneba Secondary went on rampage supposedly in protest against school authorities. The report stated that students acted in protest against a disciplinary measure imposed on one of them, by a friend of a teacher of the school, who had accompanied the teacher to the premises that night. The report further, stated that the visiting friend of the teacher went as far as lashing the student for a "misbehaviour" improper dressing, a situation that angered the students' who reacted in a violent manner (Citi News, January 29, 2018). More so, students of Winneba Secondary on 30th May, 2019, embarked on a riot when school authorities seized their mobile phones through a roll call by the school authorities. The students' started riots by assaulting the teacher on duty for reporting them to the school authorities to seize their phones (Modern Ghana, May 30, 2019) Apart from these media reports on student violence in public Senior High schools in the Effutu municipality there is limited data on the sources of

conflicts aside the interschools sports causes of conflicts in public Basic schools in the region and the mechanisms or approaches that are used by the students and school administrators to manage and resolve conflicts in the schools.

Hence, this study was undertaken to explore the understanding of the students and school administrators about conflict resolution, the sources of conflict and the mechanisms that are used by the students and school administrators of the selected public Basic Schools in the Effutu municipality of Ghana to resolve conflicts.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the understanding of students and school administrators about conflict resolution, the sources of conflict and the mechanisms that are used by the students and school administrators of the selected public senior high schools in the Upper West region of Ghana to resolve conflicts.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This research sought to:

1. Explain the causes of conflict among teachers in Effutu Municipality.
2. Examine the effect of conflict among teachers on academic performance in Effutu Municipality.
3. Identify the conflict management mechanisms used in Basic schools within Effutu Municipality.
4. Assess the effectiveness of the conflict mechanism used to resolve conflict in basic schools within Effutu Municipality.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the causes of conflict experienced among teachers at Basic Schools in Effutu Municipality?
2. How does conflict among teachers affect academic performance in Basic Schools within Effutu Municipality?
3. What conflict management mechanisms are used to resolve conflict among Basic School teachers in Effutu Municipality?
4. How effective are the conflict management mechanisms used to resolve conflict among Basic School teachers in Effutu Municipality?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study, which aims to provide significant data regarding conflict resolution in schools, will be very beneficial to the administration of both private and public senior high schools. In turn, this will assist all stakeholders in public schools in deciding how best to resolve disputes within the school system. In their efforts to address conflict in schools and raise educational standards, the management of organizations and government bodies for education will find the study to be crucial.

The study will also help the Ministry of Education create a curriculum that can be used to improve stakeholder capacity in conflict management and resolution in public Basic schools in the Effutu municipality and, by extension, the entire nation regarding understanding conflict resolution and the suitable resolution mechanism(s) to resolve or handle conflicts in schools. The study is valuable because it addresses the areas or sources and the underlying cause(s) of institutional conflict and provides solutions to



improve stability in both educational institutions and public organizations that are prone to disputes of all kinds.

### **1.7 Delimitation**

The study was delimited to the staff of the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S). It was further delimited to only the staff of Basic Schools in Effutu municipality. The variables concerned in the study includes, conflict, conflict resolution, productivity, and job performance.

The study only used qualitative methods (interviews) and exclude quantitative methods. The study only examined a specific context (school community), conflict in other places like the home is not included.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

There were some difficulties for the researcher while conducting this study, this comprised of time limitations, and accessibility of information sources, among others. For instance, some of the participants complained about the sophisticated nature of the interview guide vi-a-vis and the short period given to respond to them. As a result of this, some participants adopted indifferent attitudes towards responding to them. Another problem encountered in the field had to do with some teachers' or head teachers' reluctance to cooperate due to suspicion that disclosing information would lead to some of their colleagues being sanctioned.

To ensure that these constraints did not adversely affect the study, the participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Also, the fact that the study was mainly for academic purposes encouraged them. Again, reasonable time was allowed for the participants to fill out the interview.



## 1.9 Definition of Terms

Operationalized terms and concepts used in this study have been explained to avoid any ambiguity.

**Conflict:** Refers to all kinds of opposition or antagonistic interaction (Armstrong, 2009).

**Staff:** A group of persons, such as employees, charged with carrying out the work of an establishment or executing some undertaken.

**Conflict Resolution:** Conflict management is the ability of an organisation to identify the sources of conflict and put strategic measures in place to minimize or control it (Armstrong, 2006).

**Conflict management:** This is the process of working with parties in a conflict with the aim to reducing the negative consequences of the conflict.

**Conflict Prevention:** This is the act of identifying the warning signs that will lead to conflict and stopping a disagreement from ensuing.

## 1.10 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, which gives a general overview of what the research topic is about, the second chapter embodies the Literature Review and Conceptual Issues, the third chapter focuses on the Methodology of the Study, the fourth chapter concentrates on the Data Presentation and Discussion and the fifth chapter dwells on the summary of the Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the literature on conflict management in educational settings. The chapter aims to understand the complex nature of conflicts among teachers by examining their causes, impacts on academic performance, and the mechanisms used to manage them. First, it addresses the conceptual aspects, including definitions and the roots of conflicts. Then, it moves to an analysis of the impacts, particularly how these conflicts affect teaching and learning. Various conflict management mechanisms are discussed, highlighting both formal and informal approaches used in schools. The chapter also includes a theoretical review, discussing relevant theories that underpin the study. These theories provide insights into how conflicts are managed in educational settings. This literature review will serve as a foundation for analyzing the data and findings in the later chapters.

#### 2.2 Conceptual Review

This section explores the fundamental ideas of conflict, its causes, and the various mechanisms used to manage and resolve it. Conflict is a multifaceted issue that arises from diverse sources, including interpersonal tensions, resource allocation, and administrative decisions. These elements not only disrupt the educational environment but also affect teacher morale and student performance. Effective conflict management is essential to maintain a stable and productive school atmosphere. Various strategies are employed to address conflicts, ranging from formal administrative interventions to informal peer mediation. By examining these concepts, the review provides a comprehensive foundation for analyzing how conflicts emerge and are managed within the school context. This analysis is crucial for identifying the

most effective approaches to conflict resolution. This ensures that educational institutions can function smoothly and fulfill their mission of providing quality education.

### **2.2.1 Conflict Management**

Conflict management refers to the systematic process of addressing and resolving disputes within an organization or between individuals to achieve a peaceful and constructive outcome. The concept encompasses a range of techniques and approaches aimed at minimizing the negative effects of conflict while enhancing its potential to drive positive change. According to Rahim (2002), conflict management involves the –design of effective strategies that ensure the resolution of conflicts in ways that support and preserve relationships, promote cooperative behaviors, and enhance the overall functioning of groups or organizations.” This definition highlights the importance of maintaining relational dynamics while addressing disagreements. Additionally, conflict management is not solely about resolving disputes but also about creating conditions that prevent unnecessary conflicts from arising. Scholars like Thomas and Kilmann (1974) emphasize that conflict management requires a delicate balance between assertiveness and cooperativeness, tailoring strategies to the specific context and individuals involved.

The scope of conflict management is broad, extending across various levels of interaction, including interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup conflicts. Each level presents unique challenges and necessitates distinct strategies for effective management. At the interpersonal level, conflict management focuses on addressing misunderstandings, power dynamics, and emotional responses that may escalate disagreements. Techniques such as active listening, empathy, and negotiation are often

employed to de-escalate tensions and foster mutual understanding (Fisher et al., 1981). In contrast, intragroup conflict management involves navigating conflicts within a team or organizational unit, where competing interests, role ambiguities, and resource allocation issues often surface. Jehn (1995) suggests that well-managed intragroup conflicts can lead to enhanced group cohesion and creativity, whereas poorly managed conflicts may result in reduced group performance and morale. Furthermore, intergroup conflict management addresses disputes between different groups or organizations, often requiring mediation, arbitration, or other formal conflict resolution mechanisms to achieve a resolution that is acceptable to all parties involved.

The dynamic nature of conflict management demands a continuous assessment of the evolving circumstances surrounding the conflict. Strategies must be adaptable, taking into consideration the cultural, social, and organizational contexts in which the conflict occurs. The effectiveness of conflict management strategies is often contingent upon the willingness of parties to engage in open dialogue and the capacity of leaders to facilitate constructive discussions. As Lewicki et al. (2010) note, successful conflict management is not merely about resolving the issue at hand but also about fostering an environment where conflicts can be transformed into opportunities for growth and improvement. This perspective underscores the dual role of conflict management in both mitigating the negative impacts of conflict and harnessing its potential to drive organizational development and innovation.

### **2.2.1.1 Approaches to conflict management**

Approaches to conflict management encompass a range of strategies designed to prevent, address, and resolve disputes (Amsler et al., 2020). Conflict management, in

this context, according to Proksch (2016) refers to the systematic techniques employed to handle disagreements effectively, ensuring that they do not escalate into more significant issues that disrupt the learning environment. The approaches to conflict management can be categorized into preventive strategies, reactive strategies, and post-conflict resolution, each serving a distinct role in maintaining harmony within schools. These approaches are rooted in a deep understanding of the dynamics of conflict, drawing on insights from various scholars who have examined the nature and management of conflict in different settings.

Hietanen-Kunwald and Haapio (2021) go on to explain that preventive strategies are designed to minimize the likelihood of conflict arising in the first place. These strategies often involve creating a supportive and inclusive school environment where open communication and mutual respect are encouraged. Deutsch (1973) suggests that preventive strategies are most effective when they focus on building positive relationships among students, teachers, and administrators. This involves fostering a culture of cooperation, where individuals feel valued and heard, thereby reducing the potential for misunderstandings or grievances to develop. Furthermore, preventive strategies may include the implementation of clear policies and procedures that outline acceptable behavior and the consequences of violations. By establishing expectations and norms, schools can proactively address potential sources of conflict before they escalate into disputes.

For Dignath et al. (2015), Reactive strategies, on the other hand, are employed once a conflict has already emerged. These strategies focus on addressing the immediate issue at hand, often through mediation, negotiation, or other forms of intervention. The work of Thomas and Kilmann (1974) highlights the importance of selecting the

appropriate conflict-handling mode based on the situation. Their conflict mode instrument identifies five distinct styles—competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating—each with its strengths and weaknesses. In the school context, the choice of strategy may depend on the nature of the conflict, the parties involved, and the desired outcome. For instance, a collaborative approach may be favored in situations where maintaining long-term relationships is crucial, whereas a competitive approach may be more appropriate when a quick resolution is needed to prevent further disruption.

A key aspect of reactive strategies is the role of the mediator or conflict resolution specialist in facilitating dialogue between the conflicting parties. Johnson and Johnson (1996) underscores the importance of effective communication in resolving conflicts, noting that the mediator's ability to encourage open and honest discussion can significantly influence the outcome. In educational settings, this may involve bringing together students, teachers, and parents to discuss the issue, identify underlying concerns, and work towards a mutually acceptable solution. By focusing on the interests rather than the positions of the parties involved, mediators can help to de-escalate tensions and promote understanding.

Post-conflict resolution strategies are concerned with the aftermath of a conflict and the steps taken to ensure that similar issues do not arise in the future. These strategies often involve reflection, evaluation, and the implementation of measures to prevent recurrence. According to Mayer (2000), post-conflict resolution is an essential component of the conflict management process, as it provides an opportunity for learning and growth. In schools, this may involve conducting debriefing sessions with the parties involved to discuss what went wrong, what was learned, and how similar

situations can be avoided in the future. Additionally, schools may implement restorative practices, which focus on repairing relationships and restoring a sense of community following a conflict. This approach, as described by Zehr (2002), emphasizes accountability, healing, and the reintegration of individuals into the school community.

Comparing preventive and reactive strategies reveals important differences in their focus and application. Preventive strategies are proactive, aiming to create conditions that reduce the likelihood of conflict, while reactive strategies are responsive, addressing conflicts as they arise. The former requires ongoing effort and commitment to fostering a positive school climate, whereas the latter demands quick thinking and adaptability in the face of a dispute. Yet, both are essential components of a comprehensive conflict management approach, as they address different aspects of the conflict continuum. The integration of these strategies within schools ensures that conflicts are managed effectively at all stages, from prevention to resolution.

Contrasting post-conflict resolution with the other two approaches highlights its unique role in the conflict management process. Unlike preventive and reactive strategies, which focus on managing conflict as it occurs, post-conflict resolution is concerned with the long-term implications of conflict and the steps taken to prevent its recurrence. This approach recognizes that conflict can have lasting effects on relationships and the school environment, and it seeks to address these effects through reflection and restorative practices. While preventive and reactive strategies are essential for managing conflict in the moment, post-conflict resolution provides a broader perspective that ensures ongoing peace and harmony within the school community.



The application of these approaches in schools requires a deep understanding of the specific context in which the conflict occurs. Factors such as the school's culture, the nature of the student population, and the resources available for conflict management all play a role in determining the most appropriate strategies. As noted by Bush and Folger (1994), the success of conflict management approaches in schools depends on the extent to which they are tailored to the unique needs of the school and its community. This highlights the importance of flexibility and adaptability in conflict management, as strategies must be adjusted to fit the specific circumstances of each conflict.

Incorporating insights from academic literature into the discussion of conflict management approaches in schools underscores the complexity and multifaceted nature of the process. Scholars such as Deutsch (1973) and, Thomas and Kilmann (1974) have contributed to a deeper understanding of how conflicts can be managed effectively in educational settings. Their work emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that integrates preventive, reactive, and post-conflict resolution strategies, ensuring that conflicts are not only resolved but also used as opportunities for learning and growth.

#### **2.2.1.2 Conflict management in schools**

Conflict management within educational institutions presents a complex yet essential challenge, given the diverse and dynamic nature of the school environment. The interplay of various stakeholders—students, teachers, administrators, and parents—creates a multifaceted landscape where conflicts are inevitable. Addressing these conflicts with appropriate strategies is crucial for maintaining a positive educational atmosphere. The particularities of school settings demand a nuanced approach,



wherein conflict management strategies must be adaptable, culturally sensitive, and cognizant of the developmental stages of students. One of the fundamental aspects of conflict management in schools is the emphasis on communication and mediation. Research underscores the importance of open dialogue as a means to de-escalate potential conflicts before they become more severe. The process of mediation, especially when involving peer mediators, has been shown to be particularly effective in schools. Peer mediation programs, which train students to assist their peers in resolving disputes, foster a culture of empathy and understanding within the student body. These programs not only resolve immediate conflicts but also contribute to the development of students' interpersonal skills, preparing them for future interactions beyond the school environment. Thus, integrating peer mediation into school conflict management frameworks offers both immediate and long-term benefits (Johnson & Johnson, 1996).

In addition to mediation, the role of the school administration is critical in conflict management. School leaders must be proactive in creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment where all students feel valued and respected. This involves the implementation of clear policies that address bullying, discrimination, and other forms of conflict. Moreover, administrators must ensure that these policies are consistently enforced. Inconsistent application of rules can lead to feelings of injustice, which may exacerbate conflicts. Therefore, the consistent and transparent enforcement of policies is a cornerstone of effective conflict management in schools (Smith & Sandhu, 2004). Furthermore, the integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) into the curriculum serves as a preventive measure against conflicts. SEL programs teach students critical skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy. These skills are essential for managing emotions and understanding others' perspectives,

thereby reducing the likelihood of conflicts arising. Evidence suggests that students who participate in SEL programs exhibit lower levels of aggression and higher levels of prosocial behavior, which directly contributes to a more harmonious school environment (Durlak et al., 2011). The inclusion of SEL within the academic curriculum thus represents a strategic approach to conflict management, addressing the root causes of conflict by equipping students with the tools necessary for peaceful interaction.

Additionally, it is important to recognize the cultural and socio-economic diversity within schools, which often serves as a backdrop for conflicts. Students from different backgrounds may have varying communication styles, values, and expectations, which can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. Culturally responsive conflict management strategies are essential in addressing these challenges. This involves not only being aware of cultural differences but also actively incorporating diverse perspectives into conflict resolution processes. Teachers and administrators must be trained to recognize and respect cultural differences, ensuring that conflict management approaches are equitable and inclusive. Such strategies help bridge the gap between different cultural groups within the school, promoting a sense of unity and mutual respect (Gay, 2002). Also, it must be acknowledged that conflict management in schools is not a one-size-fits-all solution. The dynamic nature of school environments requires a flexible approach, where strategies are continuously evaluated and adapted to meet the changing needs of the student population. Continuous professional development for educators in conflict management techniques, combined with regular assessments of the school climate, is essential for sustaining an effective conflict management framework. By fostering an environment where conflicts are addressed proactively and constructively, schools can create a

culture of peace and cooperation that extends beyond the classroom (Osterman, 2000).

### **2.2.2 Causes of conflict among teachers**

Recent empirical studies (Bazemore, 2020; Foghang & Titanji, 2022) on the causes of conflict among teachers highlight several key factors contributing to tensions in educational environments. These include issues such as lack of emotional intelligence (EI), role ambiguity, poor communication, personality clashes, and inadequate support from both colleagues and management. Emotional intelligence, in particular, plays a significant role in conflict management among teachers, with studies suggesting that teachers with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle conflicts effectively, thereby reducing the overall incidence of disputes in the classroom and among peers. Workplace stress, driven by factors like heavy workload, lack of autonomy, and interpersonal conflicts, is another major cause of discord among teachers. Studies have shown that these stressors can lead to negative outcomes such as presenteeism, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction, further exacerbating conflicts within educational institutions. Furthermore, conflict management styles employed by teachers can also influence the frequency and intensity of conflicts. For instance, a preference for authoritarian conflict management strategies often leads to increased tensions and dissatisfaction among colleagues. These findings underscore the importance of developing supportive work environments, improving communication, and fostering emotional intelligence to mitigate conflicts among teachers.

**2.2.2.1 Internal Factors:** This refers to situations within the school setting that triggers conflict.

#### **2.2.2.1.1 Interpersonal relationships**

One key factor influencing these conflicts is the level of emotional intelligence (EI) among teachers. Studies, such as the one conducted by Brackett et al. (2011), demonstrate that teachers with higher EI are more adept at managing their emotions and navigating complex interpersonal dynamics, which in turn reduces the likelihood of conflicts. The objective of this study was to explore the relationship between teachers' EI and their ability to foster positive relationships within the school environment. The findings revealed that teachers who scored higher on EI scales were less likely to engage in conflicts with colleagues, suggesting that EI is a crucial component in maintaining a harmonious workplace.

In addition to emotional intelligence, personality traits have also been identified as contributing factors to interpersonal conflict among teachers. For instance, the study by Dolev and Leshem (2017) examined how differences in personality traits among teachers could lead to misunderstandings and friction in professional relationships. The objective of this study was to assess the effect of personality differences on the frequency and intensity of conflicts in schools. The findings indicated that teachers with contrasting personalities often found it challenging to work collaboratively, which led to increased conflict. The study emphasized the importance of recognizing and accommodating different personality types in the workplace to minimize conflicts.

Communication issues further exacerbate interpersonal conflicts among teachers. Inadequate or unclear communication often leads to misunderstandings, which can

escalate into disputes. According to Travers (2017), poor communication among teaching personnel is a frequent cause of stress and conflict. The study aimed to identify the specific communication barriers that contribute to conflicts and to propose strategies for improving communication in schools. Findings from this research indicated that teachers who were unable to communicate effectively with their peers were more likely to be involved in conflicts. The study recommended the implementation of professional development programs focused on enhancing communication skills to reduce the incidence of conflicts.

Also, the lack of support from colleagues and school administration has been shown to significantly contribute to interpersonal conflicts among teachers. A study by Camacho et al. (2021) explored the effect of perceived support on teacher relationships and conflict. The study aimed to understand how the presence or absence of support systems affected teachers' interactions with their colleagues. The findings suggested that teachers who felt unsupported were more prone to experiencing stress and frustration, which often manifested as conflicts with peers. The research highlighted the need for schools to foster supportive environments through mentorship programs and team-building activities to reduce conflicts and promote collaboration among teachers.

#### **2.2.2.1.2 Workload and role ambiguity**

Pan et al. (2023) expanded the existing understanding of teacher workloads within the framework of the job demand-resource theory. By analyzing data from Taiwanese lower secondary school teachers in the TALIS 2018 survey through structural equation modeling, the study revealed critical findings regarding the effect of workload on teacher well-being. Specifically, it was determined that teacher training

preparedness exerted both a direct positive effect on well-being and an indirect effect mediated by teaching and student behavior workloads. Conversely, perceived autonomy among teachers, while not directly influencing well-being, was indirectly associated with it through the teaching workload. Furthermore, a negative correlation was identified between teaching and student behavior workloads and overall well-being. By positioning workload as a mediator, the study provided new insights into the intricate dynamics between job demands, resources, and well-being in the teaching profession.

Thompson et al. (2023) addressed the global issue of teacher workload and its link to attrition by emphasizing the necessity of comprehending the nature, quantity, and intensity of teachers' work as a foundational step toward formulating effective solutions. Previous research predominantly focused on the quantity rather than the intensity or quality of work, which this study aimed to rectify. Utilizing the Teacher Time Use app, a tool designed to capture teachers' subjective experiences of time, the study offered a comprehensive analysis of workload and intensity. The findings indicated that the app enabled efficient and non-intrusive tracking of teachers' work, thus providing a clearer understanding of the tasks that constitute teachers' workloads and the subjective experience of work intensification. The study underscored the need for a more detailed empirical comprehension of the layering and multitasking inherent in teachers' work, positing that the Teacher Time Use app serves as a valuable instrument for documenting and representing the multifaceted nature of teachers' work and time management.

Gul et al. (2021) investigated university teachers' perceptions of how workload impacts their time management skills. The study employed a descriptive survey

methodology, collecting data from 100 faculty members across 25 departments in the universities of Malakand and Swat. The analysis indicated that university teachers generally maintained positive perceptions regarding their workload, with aspects such as working hours, job satisfaction, assigned responsibilities, and job content being managed effectively. Teachers demonstrated a capacity for regular workload management, responsibility fulfillment within stipulated timeframes, and subject content mastery, which in turn mitigated workload-related stress. Additionally, positive perceptions were also observed in relation to time management skills, including scheduling, planning, managing paperwork, handling interruptions, and prioritizing tasks. However, it was also concluded that an increase in workload inversely impacted teachers' time management abilities.

Sana and Aslam (2018) explored the relationship between role ambiguity, role conflict, and work-family conflict among college and university teachers, with a focus on the predictive roles of role ambiguity and conflict concerning work-family conflict (WFC). Utilizing a sample of 200 teachers, the study employed the Role Ambiguity Scale, Role Conflict Scale, and Work-Family Conflict Scale to gather data. The findings demonstrated a positive relationship between work-family conflict and both WFC and family-to-work conflict. Additionally, a positive association was identified between role ambiguity and work-to-family conflict, while a negative association was observed between role conflict and WFC. The study further highlighted that role ambiguity significantly predicted WFC, whereas role conflict was inversely related to it. Gender and marital status also played significant roles, with male and married teachers scoring higher on role ambiguity compared to their counterparts. These results were discussed in terms of their practical and research implications.



Hanna et al. (2019) conducted a comprehensive overview of the components of teacher identity as measured in quantitative studies, focusing on the psychometric quality of these instruments. The review encompassed studies published in English between 2000 and 2018, identifying 59 components across 20 studies. Through substantive analysis, the components were categorized into six main domains: Self-image, Motivation, Commitment, Self-efficacy, Task perception, and Job satisfaction. Although the psychometric properties of the measurement instruments were generally found to be acceptable to good, the review highlighted several conceptual and methodological issues that require further resolution. The results from this systematic overview contribute to the ongoing efforts to operationalize the complex construct of teacher identity more effectively. Overall, this literature review collectively underscores the multifaceted nature of workload and role ambiguity in educational contexts, highlighting the complex interplay between job demands, resources, well-being, time management, and identity formation among teachers. The findings from these studies provide valuable insights that can inform future research and practice aimed at addressing the challenges faced by educators.

#### **2.2.2.1.3 Resource allocation and competition**

Fatima et al. (2019) provided a nuanced examination of the behavioral outcomes arising from workplace ostracism among university teachers in Pakistan. The study identified both positive and negative consequences of ostracism, revealing that while teachers employed resource investment strategies to enhance their performance and mitigate ostracism, prolonged exposure led to intentions of withdrawal and decreased job performance. This study illuminated the dual-edged nature of resource allocation, where efforts to reintegrate into the workplace coexist with potential declines in well-being if ostracism persists.



Transitioning from the internal dynamics of resource allocation to the external pressures of competition, Cook (2018) explored how charter school competition influenced resource distribution within traditional public school districts (TPSDs). The study revealed that competition prompted TPSDs to redirect funds from instructional expenditures to capital construction projects, thereby altering the composition of resources. This shift occurred despite a lack of response in collectively bargained teacher salaries, with reductions in instructional spending primarily due to decreased teacher employment. Thus, while Fatima et al. focused on individual resource strategies in response to ostracism, Cook (2018) highlighted how external competition can reconfigure institutional resource priorities, often at the expense of instructional quality.

Lundström and Holm (2011) offered a complementary perspective by analyzing the effect of market competition on teachers' work in Swedish upper secondary schools. The findings underscored that market competition not only intensified teachers' workloads but also reshaped their professional identities, compelling them to adopt a more market-oriented approach. This shift was characterized by an increased focus on marketing tasks, which blurred traditional professional boundaries. The study problematized the notion that competition inherently enhances educational quality, contrasting with Cook's (2018) findings by questioning whether competitive pressures truly improve teacher performance and student outcomes. Here, Lundström and Holm's (2011) work bridges the individual and institutional responses discussed by Fatima et al. and Cook (2018), suggesting that competition's effect on resource allocation and teacher roles is multifaceted and context-dependent.

Moving to the context of stress management, Ogbeide and Enabunene (2023) explored the relationship between stress and teacher performance in Nigerian secondary schools. The study revealed that high levels of stress, exacerbated by inadequate stress management techniques, directly impacted teachers' productivity, which in turn affected student outcomes. This focus on stress as a factor influencing teacher performance and resource utilization contrasts with the competitive pressures discussed by Cook (2018) and Lundström and Holm (2011). While the latter studies emphasized external competition as a driver of resource reallocation, Ogbeide and Enabunene (2023) highlighted the internal challenges posed by stress, suggesting that resource allocation strategies must also account for the psychological well-being of educators.

In a different but related vein, Aliyyah et al. (2020) examined the strategies employed by outstanding teachers in Indonesia to succeed in competitive teaching environments. The study identified a blend of intrinsic competencies and external support systems as critical factors in these teachers' success. This finding parallels the resource investment strategies observed by Fatima et al. and the external competitive pressures discussed by Cook (2018) and Lundström and Holm (2011), yet it places a stronger emphasis on the supportive role of institutional and community networks in fostering excellence. The mutual synergy among stakeholders, as highlighted by Aliyyah et al. (2020), presents a counterpoint to the adversarial nature of competition discussed in earlier studies, suggesting that collaborative resource allocation can be as important as competitive strategies in enhancing teacher performance.

Finally, Ferguson et al. (2017) added another layer to the discussion by examining the role of social supports in managing teacher stress. The study found that the frequency

and type of social support utilized by teachers varied depending on the specific stressor, with those relying on friends for support showing lower career commitment and intent. This finding connects back to the stress management challenges highlighted by Ogbeide and Enabunene (2023), underscoring the importance of social resources in mitigating the negative effects of stress on teacher performance. Ferguson et al.'s work thus complements the broader discussion on resource allocation by emphasizing the significance of social networks as a non-monetary resource that can influence teacher well-being and professional outcomes.

This literature review underscores the complex interplay between resource allocation, competition, stress management, and teacher performance. The studies collectively reveal that resource allocation, whether in response to internal challenges such as ostracism and stress or external pressures such as market competition, significantly influences both the behavior of individual teachers and the strategic decisions of educational institutions. These findings highlight the need for a holistic approach to resource management that considers both the competitive landscape and the well-being of educators.

**2.2.2.2 External Factors:** These are conditions outside the immediate school environment that contribute to conflict.

#### **2.2.2.2.1 Policy and administrative decisions**

Foy et al. (2019) explored the intricate relationships between social support, work-life conflict, job performance, and workplace stress within an Irish higher education institution. Using a robust combination of reward imbalance theory, expectancy theory, and equity theory, the study utilized multiple linear regression analysis to examine data from an organizational stress screening survey. The results indicated

that social support significantly reduced workplace stress, while work-life conflict exacerbated it. Additionally, a negative correlation was found between job performance and workplace stress. These findings underscore the critical role of social support in mitigating workplace stress, suggesting that institutional policies should prioritize the development of supportive work environments to enhance employee well-being and performance. This study highlights the need for educational leaders to implement strategies that balance work and life, thus reducing stress and improving job performance.

In contrast to Foy et al. (2019), Oduro et al. (2024) focused on the effect of teacher autonomy, disciplinary climate, and teacher-student relationships on job satisfaction in South African lower secondary schools. Utilizing self-determination theory as a framework, the study analyzed data from the OECD 2018 TALIS survey, revealing that teacher autonomy and positive school climate factors significantly contribute to job satisfaction. Unlike the workplace stress focus of Foy et al. (2019), Oduro et al. (2024) emphasized job satisfaction, illustrating that autonomy and a supportive school climate are pivotal in fostering teacher commitment and persistence in the profession. The findings suggest that educational policies should not only address workplace stress but also actively promote teacher autonomy and engagement in policy discussions to enhance overall job satisfaction.

Peng et al. (2022) expanded upon the relationship between teacher autonomy and well-being by investigating its effect on mental health through teaching efficacy and job satisfaction. The study employed a chain mediation model to analyze data from Chinese primary and secondary school teachers, revealing that teaching efficacy and job satisfaction mediate the positive effects of autonomy on mental health. This aligns

with Oduro et al. (2024), who also found autonomy to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction. However, Peng et al. (2022) extended this understanding by demonstrating the importance of teaching efficacy and job satisfaction as intermediary factors that enhance the mental health of teachers. The implications for policy and administrative decisions are clear: promoting teacher autonomy not only improves job satisfaction but also has a broader effect on mental health, suggesting a need for holistic approaches in policy development.

Te Braak et al. (2022) provided a methodological critique by comparing survey-based estimates of teacher working hours with time-diary methods, revealing significant discrepancies in accuracy. The study, which involved a large-scale diary study of 7,486 teachers, highlighted the potential biases in commonly used survey methods. While Foy et al. (2019), Oduro et al. (2024), and Peng et al. (2022) focused on the outcomes of administrative decisions on teacher well-being and job satisfaction, Te Braak et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of accurate data collection methods for informing policy decisions. The study's findings suggest that to develop effective policies, accurate and reliable data on teacher working conditions are essential, reinforcing the need for methodological rigor in educational research.

Moore (2019) contributed to the discussion by examining the role of support programs and working conditions in the retention of beginning teachers in high-poverty school districts in North Carolina. The study identified key components of support programs, such as mentorship and professional development, as critical factors in retaining new teachers. This focus on teacher retention complements the findings of Foy et al. (2019) and Oduro et al. (2024), who emphasized the importance of supportive environments for reducing stress and enhancing job satisfaction. Moore

(2019) further suggested that targeted support for beginning teachers could address high attrition rates, particularly in challenging environments. The study underscores the necessity for policies that provide comprehensive support to novice teachers, thereby improving retention and overall educational outcomes.

Weldon (2018) addressed the issue of teacher attrition in Australia, challenging commonly cited statistics by highlighting the lack of robust evidence and the dynamic nature of attrition rates. Weldon proposed a typology for understanding teacher exits, suggesting that attrition is not always negative or solely due to the school environment. This perspective adds a critical dimension to the discussions by Foy et al. (2019), Oduro et al. (2024), and Moore (2019), who focused on the factors influencing teacher retention and job satisfaction. Weldon's (2018) work calls for a more nuanced understanding of teacher attrition, advocating for a careful examination of the reasons behind teacher exits to inform more effective policy interventions.

Collectively, these studies highlight the complex interplay between policy decisions, administrative strategies, and their effect on teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and retention. The research emphasizes the need for supportive policies that consider the multifaceted nature of teacher experiences, from managing workplace stress and promoting autonomy to ensuring accurate data collection and addressing teacher retention challenges. By integrating these insights, policymakers and educational leaders can develop more effective strategies to enhance the quality of education and support the professional well-being of teachers.

#### **2.2.2.2.2 Community and parental involvement**

Cai et al. (2022) investigated the role of the professional community in enhancing teacher engagement within the framework of conservation of resources theory. The study, conducted among 1,123 primary and secondary school teachers in China, utilized covariance structural modeling to analyze the interplay between shared norms, collective responsibility, collaboration, reflective dialogue, and teacher self-efficacy. The findings revealed that shared norms and collective responsibility were fundamental in predicting collaboration, which subsequently enhanced reflective dialogue. Teacher self-efficacy was found to partially mediate the effects of these professional community dimensions on work engagement. This study underscores the importance of fostering a strong professional community, suggesting that such a community provides valuable organizational and social resources that can bolster teachers' personal resources, ultimately leading to increased work engagement. The results indicate that school leaders should prioritize the cultivation of shared norms and collective responsibility to create a growth-oriented school culture that not only promotes collaboration but also enhances teacher confidence and commitment.

Building on the theme of teacher engagement and well-being, Pearson and Moomaw (2005) explored the relationship between teacher autonomy and various outcomes, including on-the-job stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism. The study found that increased curriculum autonomy was associated with decreased on-the-job stress, although it had little effect on job satisfaction. On the other hand, general teaching autonomy was positively related to empowerment, professionalism, and job satisfaction, and inversely related to stress. This contrasts with Cai et al. (2022), who emphasized the role of collective responsibility and shared norms within a professional community. Pearson and Moomaw's findings suggest that while

professional community elements are critical, individual autonomy also plays a vital role in reducing stress and enhancing professional satisfaction, pointing to the need for a balanced approach in policy-making that values both community involvement and individual autonomy.

Murphy (2020) extended the discussion of community involvement by examining the relationship between sense of community and job satisfaction among middle school teachers in an urban school district. The study, guided by McMillan and Chavis' sense of community theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, revealed that a strong sense of community was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. This finding aligns with the results of Cai et al. (2022), which highlighted the importance of collaborative professional communities. However, Murphy (2020) focused more on the social interactions within the educational setting and how these interactions contribute to a supportive environment that enhances job satisfaction. The study emphasizes the importance of fostering a sense of community in schools, particularly in urban settings where teachers may face unique challenges, suggesting that such efforts can lead to improved job satisfaction and, potentially, reduced attrition rates.

Parental involvement, as another dimension of community engagement, was examined by Mafa and Makuba (2013) in a qualitative study focused on the role of parents in their children's education. The study, conducted with primary school teachers in three schools, found that while teachers recognized the benefits of parental involvement, actual levels of involvement were low. Barriers such as lack of resources and ineffective communication strategies were identified as significant hindrances. This contrasts with the focus on professional communities within the school as discussed by Cai et al. (2022) and Murphy (2020), expanding the discussion to



include the broader community outside the school. Mafa and Makuba (2013) concluded that strengthening home-school ties and improving communication with parents are crucial steps toward enhancing parental involvement, which is essential for student success.

Bostic et al. (2023) further explored the effect of teachers' sense of community on their work engagement and the subsequent effects on children's social, emotional, and behavioral development in early childhood education (ECE) settings. The study found that collegiality among teachers was negatively associated with children's anger-aggression, while work engagement was negatively associated with children's anxiety-withdrawal. Interestingly, involvement-influence was positively associated with children's anger-aggression, suggesting that while collegial support is beneficial, increased responsibilities might have unintended negative consequences on classroom dynamics. This study complements the findings of Cai et al. (2022) and Murphy (2020) by emphasizing the importance of supportive workplace relationships in enhancing teachers' effectiveness, but it also introduces a cautionary note about the potential downsides of increased involvement without adequate support.

Finally, Appiah-Kubi and Amoako (2020) addressed the issue of parental involvement in children's education, particularly in the context of rural and urban communities. The study identified motivating factors for parental involvement, such as the belief that participating in their children's education is part of their parental duty. However, barriers such as economic pressures and low self-esteem due to illiteracy were also highlighted. This study aligns with the findings of Mafa and Makuba (2013) regarding the challenges of parental involvement but also offers insights into the cultural and socioeconomic factors that influence parents' ability to engage in their children's

education. The findings suggest that to increase parental involvement, schools need to address these barriers by providing support and resources that empower parents to participate more actively in their children's education.

The studies reviewed highlight the critical role of community and parental involvement in education. Whether through professional communities within schools, as discussed by Cai et al. (2022) and Murphy (2020), or through parental engagement, as examined by Mafa and Makuba (2013) and Appiah-Kubi and Amoako (2020), it is clear that fostering strong, supportive relationships is essential for both teacher engagement and student success. The research suggests that educational policies and practices should aim to strengthen these connections by promoting collaboration, enhancing communication, and addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by both teachers and parents.

### **2.2.3 Role of teacher unions in conflict management**

Teacher Unions are organizations within labour under Ghana Education service who promotes and protects the interest and welfare of teachers.

#### **2.2.3.1 Teacher unions as advocates**

Paddy and Jarbandhan (2014) critically examined the role of teacher unions in South Africa, particularly in the context of basic education quality. The study, based on perceptions gathered through literature analysis and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders from two secondary schools in Soweto, revealed a complex relationship between teacher unions and educational outcomes. The findings indicated that while teacher unions aim to protect the rights of their members, they may inadvertently impede the government's efforts to improve education quality. This is primarily due to unions' tendencies to protect members deemed insubordinate and infringe upon

learners' rights. The study raises critical questions about the balance between safeguarding teachers' rights and ensuring a conducive learning environment, suggesting that teacher unions, in their advocacy roles, might sometimes conflict with the broader educational objectives set by the government.

Msila (2022) provided a contrasting perspective by exploring the potential positive role of teacher unions in historically black schools in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province. Unlike Paddy and Jarbandhan's (2014) findings, this case study demonstrated that strong union activity, when aligned with school management, can significantly enhance educational outcomes. The study highlighted that in schools where principals were active members of powerful unions, a collaborative relationship between unions and school management contributed to improved learner success and school effectiveness. This suggests that teacher unions, when meaningfully integrated into the school leadership structure, can play a pivotal role in fostering a supportive environment that promotes both teacher fulfillment and student achievement. The findings challenge the notion that union activity is inherently disruptive, instead proposing that unions can be instrumental in driving positive change when their goals align with those of school leaders.

Cowen and Strunk (2015) offered an extensive review of over three decades of research on teachers' unions in the United States, focusing on their role as potential rent-seekers in the K-12 educational system. The review found that teacher unionization and union strength are generally associated with increased district expenditures and higher teacher salaries, particularly for experienced teachers. However, the effect of unions on student outcomes was found to be mixed, with evidence suggesting insignificant or modestly negative effects. This aligns with the

rent-seeking hypothesis, where unions primarily focus on securing benefits for their members rather than improving educational outcomes. The study also highlighted the significant role of unions in the political arena, suggesting that their influence extends beyond immediate educational contexts and into broader policy discussions.

Maharaj and Bascia (2021) explored the strategic positions of teacher unions in relation to educational reform across three Canadian provinces: British Columbia, Ontario, and Alberta. The study identified that teacher unions adopt varying stances—ranging from resistance to accommodation—depending on the nature of government reforms and the context within which these reforms are introduced. The findings suggested that unions' strategies are rational and often necessary responses to protect the interests of educators. This perspective complements the insights provided by Cowen and Strunk (2015), as it highlights that unions' resistance to certain reforms may not always be detrimental but can be a calculated approach to ensure that reforms do not undermine teachers' working conditions or professional autonomy. The study underscores the importance of understanding the contextual factors that shape union strategies, particularly in relation to the complex dynamics of educational reform.

Zhu (2019) added another layer to the discussion by examining the effect of collective bargaining by public-sector unions on school district resource allocation and student achievement. Using panel data from 1960 to 1990, the study found that unionization did not have a significant effect on student outcomes or school budgets. While unions might influence the sources of revenue, their overall effect on educational effectiveness was found to be minimal. This finding contrasts with the concerns raised by Paddy and Jarbandhan (2014) about unions potentially hindering educational progress, suggesting instead that unions may not significantly alter the trajectory of

educational outcomes. Zhu's study calls for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which unions influence public education, particularly in terms of resource allocation and its direct effect on student achievement.

Han and García (2023) focused on the relationship between teacher unions and teacher stress in the United States, finding that stronger unions are associated with lower levels of teacher stress. Using a nationally representative dataset, the study employed principal factor analysis and multilevel linear modeling to assess the effect of union membership and contractual status on stress levels. The results indicated that legislative changes weakening union strength led to significant increases in teacher stress, particularly among male, experienced, more qualified, and STEM-subject teachers. This finding adds a critical dimension to the discussion, as it highlights the protective role that unions can play in safeguarding teachers' mental health and well-being. Unlike the mixed or neutral effects on student outcomes observed in other studies, Han and García's research underscores a clear benefit of strong unions in reducing workplace stress, which could have indirect positive effects on educational quality.

#### **2.2.3.2 Effectiveness of union interventions**

Han (2019) conducted a comprehensive analysis of how teachers' unions influence teacher well-being across different legal contexts. By utilizing a district-teacher matched dataset, the study employed a multifaceted approach, including comparisons across state laws, union-nonunion differentials within the same legal environment, and a natural experiment involving unexpected legal changes that restricted collective bargaining. The findings indicated that union effects on teacher outcomes vary significantly depending on the legal environment. Notably, even in the absence of

formal bargaining rights, union membership and meet-and-confer arrangements positively impacted teachers' compensation and overall well-being. Additionally, the study found that restrictive public policies limiting bargaining rights significantly decreased teacher compensation, highlighting the critical role that unions play in protecting and advancing the interests of teachers even under challenging legal conditions.

Building on these findings, Han and Keefe (2023) examined the effect of teachers' unions in Southern U.S. states where collective bargaining is prohibited. The study used propensity score matching to assess union strength through meet-and-confer status and union density within districts. The results demonstrated that strong unions are associated with better teacher compensation and employment conditions, even in environments hostile to formal labor-management relations. Moreover, the study revealed that districts with robust unions experienced higher dismissal rates for underperforming nontenured teachers and lower attrition rates for qualified teachers. This suggests that, despite legal constraints, unions effectively advocate for teachers by enhancing working conditions and improving the quality of education through the retention of high-performing educators.

Han (2020) further explored the relationship between teachers' unions and teacher turnover, emphasizing the trade-off between teacher pay and employment conditions. The study found that highly unionized districts tend to dismiss more low-quality teachers while retaining high-quality ones. This outcome is attributed to the higher wages negotiated by unions, which incentivize districts to scrutinize teacher performance during probationary periods. Consequently, unions contribute to raising the overall quality of teaching by reducing the attrition of effective teachers and

improving educational outcomes. This finding underscores the dual role of unions in both safeguarding teacher interests and enhancing the quality of education by ensuring that only competent educators remain in the profession.

In a related study, Han (2023) analyzed how teachers' unions influence teacher attrition, with a particular focus on gender and subject differences. Using nationally representative, district–teacher matched data, the study employed a multilevel linear model and leveraged natural experiments to identify union effects. The findings revealed that unions significantly reduce teacher attrition, particularly among female teachers and those in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects. However, legal changes that restrict collective bargaining rights were found to increase attrition rates, especially in critical subject areas like STEM. This study highlights the importance of unions in retaining teachers in high-demand fields, suggesting that weakening union power could exacerbate shortages in key subject areas and undermine educational quality.

Odoziobodo (2015) provided a historical analysis of the prolonged industrial action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria in 2013. The study examined the factors that led to the strike, emphasizing the role of conflict resolution and integrity in labor disputes. The analysis revealed that the failure of the Nigerian Federal Government to honor agreements signed with ASUU was a major cause of the strike, which paralyzed academic activities for five months. The study argued that for conflict resolution to be effective and sustainable, it requires a commitment to integrity and adherence to agreements by all parties involved. This case study underscores the broader implications of union interventions in labor disputes,

particularly the importance of maintaining trust and honoring commitments to prevent protracted conflicts that can have severe consequences on the educational system.

The effectiveness of union interventions varies significantly depending on the legal and institutional context, but the overall evidence suggests that unions play a crucial role in advocating for teachers' rights, improving working conditions, and enhancing educational outcomes. Han's studies collectively highlight the multifaceted effect of unions, demonstrating that even in environments with legal restrictions, unions can still exert a positive influence on teacher well-being, compensation, and retention. Meanwhile, Odoziobodo's (2015) historical analysis of the ASUU strike illustrates the importance of integrity and adherence to agreements in resolving labor disputes, suggesting that successful union interventions depend not only on legal frameworks but also on the commitment of all parties to uphold their obligations. These insights are critical for policymakers and educational leaders as they navigate the complexities of labor relations in the education sector.

**2.2.4 Effects of conflict on academic performance:** These seeks to espouse how the conflict experienced among teachers affects teaching and learning.

**2.2.4.1 Direct effect on teaching and learning:** Under these, the researcher's attention is much focused solely on classroom conditions.

#### **2.2.4.1.1 Teacher absenteeism and turnover**

Utami and Harini (2019) examined the critical role that teachers play in achieving national education goals, emphasizing that teachers' work productivity is central to the success of educational institutions. The study highlighted that job satisfaction significantly impacts teacher productivity, which in turn influences absenteeism and



turnover. Drawing on previous research, the authors noted that satisfied teachers are more likely to be productive and committed to their roles, which reduces absenteeism and turnover. The study identified various factors contributing to job satisfaction, including school policy, supervision, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. These findings underscore the importance of creating supportive work environments to enhance teacher satisfaction, thereby reducing absenteeism and turnover rates, which are crucial for maintaining a stable and effective teaching workforce.

Kraft et al. (2016) explored the relationship between school organizational contexts, teacher turnover, and student achievement in New York City middle schools. Through factor analysis, the study identified four key dimensions of school climate: school leadership, academic expectations, teacher relationships, and school safety. The research found that improvements in these areas were independently associated with reductions in teacher turnover. Moreover, increases in school safety and academic expectations were linked to gains in student achievement. This study suggests that improving school climate not only reduces teacher turnover but also enhances student learning outcomes. The findings align with those of Utami and Harini (2019) by highlighting the critical role of a supportive and well-organized school environment in retaining teachers and promoting student success.

Bonsu et al. (2023) focused on the effects of teacher absenteeism on student academic performance in Ghanaian Junior High Schools. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, using quantitative data to establish a correlation between teacher absenteeism and student performance in English and Mathematics, and qualitative interviews to explore the underlying reasons for absenteeism. The results indicated that higher levels of teacher absenteeism were associated with lower student

performance. Interviews revealed that absenteeism was often due to teachers' involvement in further education programs, lack of passion for the job, and economic difficulties. This study echoes the findings of Utami and Harini (2019) regarding the effect of job satisfaction on absenteeism, and it underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as performance-based incentives and improved working conditions, to reduce absenteeism and its negative effect on student achievement.

#### **2.2.4.1.2 Disruptions to classroom environment**

Harter (2021) investigated the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on student engagement and the student-teacher relationship by comparing in-person and remote learning environments in Illinois public schools. The study utilized student survey data to analyze differences in engagement and relationships across these two formats, employing Wagner et al.'s (2006) 4 C's model. The results indicated significant differences, with in-person learning fostering higher levels of student engagement and stronger student-teacher relationships compared to remote learning. This study highlights the challenges posed by remote learning environments, which may disrupt the classroom environment by reducing student engagement and weakening the critical relationship between students and teachers. The findings suggest that maintaining strong student-teacher connections is essential for effective learning, and that disruptions to this relationship can have lasting negative effects on educational outcomes.

Xu et al. (2023) applied Reeve's four-dimensional student engagement framework to medical education, examining how different types of engagement (behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic) influence learning outcomes. The study found that emotional and cognitive engagement were the most effective in promoting learning

outcomes, particularly in terms of knowledge retention and application. In contrast, behavioral and agentic engagement had negative effects on learning outcomes. These findings suggest that while active participation is generally encouraged, not all forms of engagement equally contribute to learning success, and some may even disrupt the learning process. The study provides valuable insights for educators in designing instructional strategies that prioritize the types of engagement most conducive to effective learning, thereby minimizing disruptions to the classroom environment.

Sanjaya et al. (2022) explored the effect of conflict resolution learning models and portfolio assessment on students' civic education outcomes in Indonesia. The quasi-experimental study revealed that students who were taught using conflict resolution models performed better than those who were taught using conventional methods. However, the study found no significant difference between students assessed with portfolio assessments and those assessed with objective assessments. These results suggest that incorporating conflict resolution into the curriculum can enhance student learning outcomes by creating a more engaging and participatory classroom environment. The study contributes to the broader understanding of how different instructional approaches can either mitigate or exacerbate classroom disruptions, emphasizing the importance of adopting innovative teaching strategies to improve educational outcomes.

Thapa and Cohen (2023) discussed the importance of school climate improvement as a holistic approach to fostering safe, supportive, and engaging learning environments. The study emphasized that a positive school climate is associated with resilience, social and emotional learning, and overall student well-being. By promoting a sense of belonging and competence, as well as realistic goal-setting, a healthy school

climate can prevent disruptions in the classroom and support positive youth development. The authors argued that using school climate data to engage students, parents, and school personnel in continuous improvement efforts is an effective strategy for creating resilient and effective educational environments. This approach aligns with the findings of Xu et al. (2023) and Sanjaya et al. (2022), which also highlight the critical role of engagement and supportive environments in minimizing disruptions and enhancing student learning outcomes.

#### **2.2.4.1.3 Effects on teacher morale and effectiveness**

Foghang and Titanji (2022) explored the causes and effects of interpersonal conflicts among teachers in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in the North West Region of Cameroon. The study, which utilized qualitative research methods, revealed that interpersonal conflicts stemmed from various teacher-related, school-related, and leadership-related factors. These conflicts were found to have predominantly negative effects, diminishing teachers' commitment, productivity, and overall effectiveness. The research highlighted that such conflicts adversely affect the broader school environment, including school leadership, student achievement, and institutional effectiveness. The authors emphasized that unresolved interpersonal conflicts could severely disrupt the smooth functioning of educational institutions. The study recommended that school administrators receive specialized training in conflict management and that regular workshops and seminars be conducted to enhance teachers' and principals' skills in managing conflicts within schools. These recommendations are crucial for improving teacher morale and maintaining a positive school climate.

Göksoy and Argon (2016) provided additional insights into the dynamics of school conflicts by focusing on teachers' perspectives in Bolu, Turkey. The study identified various causes of conflicts, including differences in opinion, ideological clashes, and lack of communication. Teachers reported that these conflicts led to negative emotions such as stress, disappointment, and a general lack of motivation. Additionally, conflicts were found to result in reduced teacher morale, decreased job satisfaction, and lowered performance levels. However, the study also noted that some conflicts could have positive outcomes, such as fostering better communication and leading to organizational improvements when managed effectively. The findings underline the importance of addressing conflicts proactively to prevent their escalation and to preserve teacher morale and effectiveness. Like Foghang and Titanji (2022), this study emphasizes the need for effective conflict resolution strategies to maintain a healthy school environment.

Ali et al. (2019) examined the link between negative teacher-teacher interactions and their effect on teacher-student relationships, particularly focusing on the consequences for students' psychological health and educational outcomes in higher education institutions in Punjab, Pakistan. The study employed path analysis to demonstrate that incivility and discontent among faculty members contributed to a conflict-inducing attitude, which in turn led to negative behaviors towards students. These hostile attitudes were found to adversely affect students' psychological well-being and academic performance. The research suggested that improving teacher-teacher interactions could significantly enhance teacher-student relationships, thereby positively influencing students' learning experiences. This study underscores the broader implications of teacher morale on student outcomes, indicating that

maintaining positive interpersonal relationships among faculty is essential for fostering a supportive educational environment.

Mallik (2023) explored the perceptions of students regarding positive and negative teacher-student relationships (TSR) and their influence on classroom engagement and academic progress in Bangladesh. The mixed-methods study revealed that students who perceived their relationships with teachers positively exhibited higher levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement in the classroom, which correlated with improved academic achievement. Conversely, negative perceptions of TSR were linked to lower engagement and poorer academic outcomes. The study also noted that for some students, TSR perceptions did not significantly affect their engagement or academic performance, suggesting variability in how students respond to teacher interactions. Mallik's (2023) findings contribute to the understanding of the crucial role that teacher-student relationships play in shaping students' academic experiences and outcomes, further emphasizing the importance of teacher morale and effectiveness in educational settings.

Worthy of note, Foghang and Titanji (2022) and Göksoy and Argon (2016) both emphasize the detrimental effects of unresolved conflicts among teachers on their commitment and productivity, which in turn affects the overall school environment. Ali et al. (2019) and Mallik (2023) extend this discussion by linking the quality of teacher relationships, both among themselves and with students, to student psychological health, classroom engagement, and academic achievement. Collectively, these findings underscore the critical need for effective conflict resolution strategies and the cultivation of positive teacher-student and teacher-teacher relationships to enhance teacher morale, effectiveness, and educational

outcomes. This body of research provides valuable insights for educational leaders and policymakers in their efforts to create supportive and effective learning environments.

**2.2.4.2 Indirect effect on students:** The students' personality and how the said conflict among their teachers affects their cognitive domain is mainly considered here.

#### **2.2.4.2.1 Psychological effects on students**

Huang et al. (2024) investigated the occupational well-being of Chinese middle school teachers and its correlation with teachers' basic psychological needs satisfaction and teaching quality, as guided by the dual-factor model of mental health. The study utilized data from the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018, identifying four distinct occupational well-being profiles through latent profile analysis. These profiles were found to be differentially associated with teachers' satisfaction of basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—and their teaching quality, which included clarity of instruction, cognitive activation, and classroom management. The findings suggest that teachers' well-being significantly influences their ability to meet students' psychological needs and provide high-quality instruction. Consequently, this has a direct effect on students' mental health and learning outcomes. The study emphasizes the importance of supporting teachers' psychological well-being as a means to enhance the overall educational experience for students.

Widlund et al. (2024) explored the stability and change in motivational profiles of adolescent students in mathematics during their final year of comprehensive education and how these profiles relate to educational outcomes and emotional distress. Using a person-centered approach grounded in the situated expectancy-value theory, the study



identified four motivational profiles among students: Positively ambitious, Struggling ambitious, Indifferent, and Maladaptive. The findings indicated that students in the Positively ambitious profile performed well academically and experienced low levels of emotional distress, while those in the Maladaptive profile showed poor academic performance and high levels of distress. Importantly, the study revealed that students who experienced high math-related costs, despite having positive value beliefs, also suffered from significant study-related exhaustion and depressive symptoms. This suggests that psychological stressors, even among motivated students, can lead to negative educational outcomes, highlighting the need for schools to address these stressors to support student well-being and academic success.

Payne (2022) conducted a qualitative study at an East of England university to explore the perceptions of both students and staff regarding the support provided by teaching staff to students struggling with mental health issues. The study revealed that while students often turned to teaching staff for support, many staff members felt ill-equipped to handle such responsibilities effectively. Both groups identified a need for improved mental health literacy among staff, particularly in terms of understanding, skills, and attributes necessary for providing adequate support. The findings underscore the importance of integrating mental health support into the university curriculum and providing staff with the necessary training to assist students, which could help mitigate the psychological effects on students and contribute to a healthier campus environment.

Yao et al. (2021) explored the perceptions of Chinese primary and secondary school teachers, known as *ban zhu ren*, regarding student mental health and their responses to perceived mental health issues. Through semi-structured interviews with 27 *ban zhu*



*ren* from Zhejiang and Anhui provinces, the study found that many teachers misinterpreted common adolescent behaviors—such as inattention, social difficulties, and excessive gaming—as signs of mental illness. The lack of mental health training among these teachers often led to inappropriate interventions, with a majority of teachers hesitant to refer students for professional help due to concerns about stigmatization. This study highlights a critical gap in mental health education for teachers, suggesting that without proper training, teachers may inadvertently exacerbate students' psychological challenges by misidentifying and mishandling behavioral issues. The findings suggest the need for enhanced mental health training for teachers to better support students and reduce the indirect negative psychological effects on students.

Huang et al. (2024) and Widlund et al. (2024) highlight how both teacher and student well-being are intricately linked to educational outcomes, with negative psychological states leading to poorer academic performance and greater emotional distress. Payne (2022) and Yao et al. (2021) emphasize the critical role of teacher training in mental health literacy to better support students, suggesting that inadequate preparation in this area can lead to detrimental outcomes for students. These findings advocate for comprehensive mental health support systems within educational institutions, which include both student and teacher well-being as central components of the educational process.

#### **2.2.4.2.2 Long-term academic consequences**

Ciuladiene and Kairiene (2017) explored the dynamics of teacher-student conflicts and their long-term effect on the educational process, focusing on how such conflicts are resolved and their implications for the student-teacher relationship. Using a case

study approach, the research examined 30 student participants who recalled past conflicts with teachers during their school years. The study identified a range of conflict resolution strategies employed by both teachers and students, including dominating, integrating, accommodating, and avoiding behaviors. The findings revealed that while some conflict resolution strategies, such as integration and compromise, could maintain or even strengthen the student-teacher relationship, others, like domination and avoidance, often led to a breakdown in communication and a negative long-term effect on the student's academic engagement. This study underscores the importance of effective conflict resolution in educational settings, suggesting that unresolved or poorly managed conflicts can have lasting detrimental effects on students' academic trajectories by diminishing their motivation and engagement in the learning process.

Blazar and Kraft (2017) examined the broader effects of teachers on students, extending beyond standardized test scores to include impacts on students' self-efficacy, happiness, and behavior in the classroom. The study highlighted that teachers who are effective in improving students' test scores also tend to positively influence students' attitudes and behaviors. These findings suggest that high-quality teaching has a multidimensional impact, fostering both academic achievement and the development of positive student attitudes and behaviors. The study reinforces the notion that teaching practices which provide emotional support and foster a well-organized classroom environment are crucial not only for immediate academic success but also for the long-term development of students' attitudes toward learning. This holistic approach to teaching is essential for cultivating students who are not only academically proficient but also emotionally and behaviorally equipped to succeed in future educational endeavors.

Rabiner et al. (2016) investigated the long-term academic consequences of attention difficulties in early grades, particularly focusing on how the timing and persistence of these difficulties affect academic performance. The study classified children into groups based on the presence of attention problems in first and second grade and tracked their academic achievement in reading and math through the K-5 interval. The findings revealed that children who exhibited persistent attention problems across both grades experienced significant declines in academic performance compared to their peers. In contrast, those whose attention problems emerged only in second grade showed better academic outcomes, similar to those of children without attention problems. This study highlights the critical importance of early identification and intervention for attention difficulties to prevent long-term academic declines. The results suggest that the persistence and timing of attention problems are key factors in determining their effect on a child's educational trajectory, emphasizing the need for timely and sustained support for students with attention challenges.

These studies underscore the significant long-term academic consequences that stem from various student-teacher interactions and student behavioral issues. Ciuladiene and Kairiene (2017) emphasize the importance of effective conflict resolution in maintaining positive student-teacher relationships, which are crucial for sustaining student engagement and academic success. Blazar and Kraft (2017) highlight the multifaceted effect of high-quality teaching on both academic achievement and the development of positive student behaviors and attitudes, suggesting that teaching practices that foster a supportive and well-organized classroom environment are essential for long-term student success. Rabiner et al. (2016) provide insight into the lasting academic effects of attention difficulties, particularly the importance of early and consistent intervention to mitigate their effect on educational outcomes. Together,

these findings offer valuable guidance for educators and policymakers aiming to enhance the long-term academic success of students through targeted interventions and supportive teaching practices.

**2.2.5 Conflict management mechanisms:** These are the mitigating factors in controlling the conflict.

**2.2.5.1 Formal mechanisms:** This refers to statutory and documented conflict management procedures.

#### **2.2.5.1.1 Administrative interventions**

Obizue et al. (2020) conducted a descriptive survey to explore effective conflict management strategies for improving secondary school administration in Imo State, Nigeria. The study involved 482 principals from secondary schools across six educational zones. The research revealed that negotiation was the most effective conflict management strategy among those studied. The findings emphasized the importance of training school principals in conflict management to enhance administrative service delivery. The study highlighted that properly managed conflicts could lead to improved school administration, suggesting that educational authorities should prioritize the development of conflict resolution skills among school leaders to ensure better governance and more harmonious school environments.

Yusuf and Ibrahim (2019) as well examined the relationship between conflict management strategies and administrative effectiveness in tertiary institutions in Sokoto metropolis, Nigeria. Using a correlational survey design, the study found a significant relationship between strategies such as dialogue, competition, prevention, and communication, and the effectiveness of administration. The authors

recommended institutionalizing dialogue as a primary conflict management strategy, as it promotes collaboration and reduces crises, thereby enhancing administrative effectiveness. This study underscores the importance of proactive conflict resolution strategies in maintaining a stable and effective academic environment, where dialogue is particularly emphasized as a tool for fostering understanding and cooperation among staff.

Balay (2006) focused on understanding the conflict management strategies of school administrators and teachers in primary schools in East Anatolia, Turkey. The study identified that administrators are more likely to employ avoiding and compromising strategies compared to teachers. The findings also revealed that these strategies, along with competing behaviors, were more prevalent in private schools than in public schools. The study suggests that the type of school (private vs. public) influences the choice of conflict management strategies, with private school environments encouraging more collaborative and competitive approaches. This research highlights the need for context-specific conflict management strategies that align with the unique challenges and dynamics of different educational settings.

Additionally, Larasati and Raharja (2020) discussed the role of conflict management in enhancing school effectiveness, using a qualitative approach to review existing empirical findings. The study found that conflict, when managed effectively, could stimulate creativity, adaptation, and innovation within schools. The authors argued that conflict should not always be viewed negatively, as it has the potential to drive positive change and improve the overall effectiveness of educational institutions. They recommended adopting various conflict management styles, depending on the specific circumstances, to maintain harmony and achieve educational goals. The study

emphasizes the constructive potential of conflict, suggesting that schools should embrace conflict as an opportunity for growth and development rather than merely a challenge to be mitigated.

Further, Ntho-Ntho and Nieuwenhuis (2016) explored the underutilized concept of mediation as a conflict resolution strategy in South African schools, particularly in the context of religious conflicts. The study revealed that school principals often resisted or ignored new religion policies, largely due to a lack of awareness or training in mediation techniques. The authors advocated for the popularization of mediation as a leadership strategy, suggesting that it could serve as an effective tool for resolving conflicts in a manner that is both amicable and sustainable. This study highlights the need for educational leaders to be trained in mediation and conflict resolution, particularly in diverse and potentially contentious environments such as those involving religious differences.

Coupled with, Buenaño et al. (2022) implemented a school mediation program in secondary schools in Ambato, Ecuador, to address the issue of violence among adolescents. The study, part of a larger research project, utilized a quasi-experimental design to evaluate the effectiveness of mediation strategies in reducing bullying and promoting a culture of peace. The results showed significant improvements in students' understanding of conflict and empathy, with a marked increase in the use of dialogue to resolve conflicts. The study concluded that such mediation programs should be integrated into the educational system on an ongoing basis, with support from both the Ministry of Education and school authorities. This research underscores the effectiveness of structured mediation programs in creating safer and more

supportive school environments, thereby reducing conflict and enhancing students' social skills.

In the same vein, Smith (2024) investigated the effectiveness of a virtual social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum in teaching conflict resolution skills to adolescents in an urban New York City school. The study found that SEL instruction significantly improved participants' emotional intelligence and reduced aggressive behaviors, suggesting that SEL programs can be a valuable tool in addressing both academic and social challenges faced by students. The research highlighted the importance of integrating SEL into the curriculum to help students develop practical conflict resolution skills, which are essential for their overall success. This study adds to the growing body of evidence supporting the inclusion of SEL in educational settings as a means to foster a more positive and productive school climate.

Shanka and Thuo (2017) examined conflict management strategies in government primary schools in the Wolaita zone, Ethiopia. The study identified several effective strategies, including building leadership skills, following rules and regulations, and embracing change. The research emphasized the importance of understanding the sources of conflict and providing opportunities for staff development to enhance conflict resolution capabilities. The findings suggest that school leaders should be proactive in managing conflicts by fostering open communication, involving staff in decision-making processes, and continuously developing their leadership skills. This study reinforces the idea that effective conflict management is critical to maintaining a healthy and productive educational environment.

In retrospect, Obizue et al. (2020) and Yusuf and Ibrahim (2019) highlight the importance of training school leaders in conflict resolution strategies, with a particular



focus on negotiation and dialogue. Balay (2006) and Larasati and Raharja (2020) underscore the need for context-specific approaches to conflict management, noting that effective conflict resolution can lead to increased creativity and innovation. Ntho-Ntho and Nieuwenhuis (2016) and Buenaño et al. (2022) advocate for the use of mediation programs to prevent and resolve conflicts, particularly in schools facing significant social challenges. Finally, Smith (2024) and Shanka and Thuo (2017) emphasize the value of integrating SEL and leadership development into school curricula to equip both students and staff with the skills necessary to navigate conflicts constructively. Collectively, these studies provide valuable insights into how administrative interventions can be designed and implemented to foster a more harmonious and effective educational environment.

#### **2.2.5.2 Informal mechanisms**

Fetzer (2014) explored the complexities of implementing peer mediation programs within the context of alternative education. Through critical discourse analysis, the study highlighted the disconnect between the positive discourse surrounding peer mediation and its actual utilization within the school. Despite favorable views from both students and faculty, the program was minimally used, largely due to a lack of structural support at multiple levels. Moreover, the study revealed that peer mediation in its current form did little to challenge existing power structures within the school, instead serving as a public relations tool rather than a transformative educational practice. These findings suggest that without sufficient structural backing and a genuine commitment to empowering students, peer mediation programs may fail to achieve their intended outcomes and instead perpetuate existing inequalities within the educational system.



As well, Ibarrola-García (2023) provided a systematic review of studies on school mediation, focusing on its educational benefits for teacher mediators, student mediators, and the students who are mediated. Using the PRISMA method, the review synthesized findings from 32 studies published between 2000 and 2020, examining the Effect of school mediation across several dimensions: interpersonal emotional, personal emotional, cognitive-moral, and social. The review found that school mediation generally had a positive personal impact, increasing the likelihood that participants would engage constructively in conflict resolution. This suggests that school mediation can be an effective tool for fostering emotional intelligence and constructive behavior among students, contributing to a more peaceful school environment. However, the review also highlights the need for ongoing evaluation and support to ensure that mediation programs are implemented effectively and that their benefits are fully realized.

Alternatively, Zuure (2014) investigated the effectiveness of peer mediation in resolving interpersonal conflicts among students at A.M.E Zion Girls Senior High School in Ghana. The study employed an action research design, using interviews, questionnaires, and observations to gather data from 60 students. The findings indicated that students valued their involvement in peer mediation, particularly when it related to issues directly affecting them. The study implemented the intervention through a “Peace Club” and recommended the establishment of similar structures in schools across Ghana. The research emphasized the importance of student participation in conflict resolution, suggesting that when students are actively engaged in the process, they are more likely to find meaning in the intervention and contribute positively to resolving conflicts. The study highlights the potential of peer mediation

to improve social relationships and academic performance by addressing interpersonal conflicts in a constructive manner.

White et al. (2013) further evaluated a professional learning approach using a core team (CT) model to develop collaborative conflict resolution processes in primary schools. The study involved 13 schools, with 10 participating in the program and 3 serving as a control group. The findings indicated that participants in the program were more likely to apply collaborative conflict resolution models and reported greater knowledge and skills compared to the control group. Additionally, teachers in the program schools taught more hours of conflict resolution curriculum, which was associated with increased student understanding and use of cooperative methods. The study supports the effectiveness of the CT model in fostering a cooperative approach to conflict resolution within schools, suggesting that professional development for teachers can significantly enhance the implementation and effect of conflict resolution programs. The research also highlights the role of self-efficacy in successful program implementation, indicating that teachers who feel confident in their ability to teach conflict resolution are more likely to do so effectively.

The insight from Fetzer (2014) and Zuure (2014) both emphasize the importance of structural support and student involvement in the success of peer mediation programs, while Ibarrola-García (2023) underscores the positive personal and social impacts of mediation. White et al. (2013) further demonstrate the effectiveness of professional development models in enhancing the implementation of conflict resolution programs in schools. Collectively, these studies suggest that while informal mechanisms like peer mediation hold significant potential for improving school environments, their

success depends on adequate support, effective implementation, and active participation from all stakeholders.

#### **2.2.4 Effectiveness of Conflict Management Mechanisms**

On this subject, Ajmal et al. (2024) investigated the role of student feedback as an evaluation tool for enhancing teaching performance, emphasizing the importance of incorporating students' perspectives to improve educational practices. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to assess how feedback can inform instructional strategies and support conflict resolution in educational settings. By focusing on aspects such as clarity, motivation, and the overall learning environment, the study highlighted the value of understanding students' perceptions in conflict management. The findings suggest that feedback mechanisms not only improve teaching effectiveness but also contribute to the resolution of conflicts by fostering a more transparent and communicative educational environment. This aligns with the broader need for effective conflict management strategies that prioritize open communication and responsiveness to stakeholders' concerns.

Building on the theme of feedback, Kutasi (2023) provided a systematic literature review on the Effectof feedback on student performance and development. The study emphasized the role of feedback in enhancing learning outcomes, noting that timely and constructive feedback can significantly improve student engagement and retention of material. In the context of conflict management, feedback serves as a crucial tool for addressing misunderstandings and fostering a collaborative atmosphere. The study proposed a model of feedback that highlights the characteristics and conditions necessary for it to be effective, suggesting that

feedback, when used appropriately, can act as a preventive mechanism against conflicts by clarifying expectations and resolving issues before they escalate.

Aggrawal and Magana (2024) introduced a conflict management training approach grounded in transformative learning principles and simulated through a learning management module (LLM). The study focused on how this training impacted students' confidence in managing conflicts within team-based projects. The findings revealed that most students increased their confidence in conflict resolution by adopting collaborative, compromising, and accommodative approaches. This training approach underscores the importance of experiential learning in conflict management, as it allows participants to practice and refine their skills in real-time scenarios. The study highlights the effectiveness of structured training programs in equipping individuals with the necessary tools to manage conflicts proactively, thereby reducing the likelihood of disputes disrupting educational or professional activities.

Furthermore, Bloxham (2008) offered a polemical discussion on the tension between assessment for learning and assessment of learning, particularly in the context of teacher education. The paper argued that assessment practices could be a source of conflict among various stakeholders, including students, educators, and regulatory bodies. This conflict arises from differing expectations and purposes associated with assessment. Bloxham emphasized the need for a balanced approach that addresses both the formative and summative aspects of assessment, suggesting that well-designed assessment practices can mitigate conflicts by aligning the goals of different stakeholders. This perspective aligns with the broader discussion on conflict management, where clarity and alignment of expectations play a crucial role in preventing and resolving disputes.

Alongside, Nese et al. (2020) examined the effectiveness of online professional development (PD) as an alternative to traditional in-person training, particularly in its ability to meet the needs of educators and school personnel. Through focus groups, the study gathered feedback on how online learning modules could be tailored to address specific school contexts and conflict resolution needs. The findings indicated that online PD offers flexibility and customization, making it a valuable tool for addressing the diverse needs of educators. In terms of conflict management, the ability to tailor training to specific scenarios enhances the relevance and applicability of the content, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of the intervention. This study highlights the potential of online PD to provide targeted support for conflict management, particularly in resource-constrained environments.

On the other hand, Ghaffar (2009) explored the nature of conflicts in schools, identifying common causes and conflict management strategies such as mediation, negotiation, avoidance, and collaboration. The study emphasized that conflicts in schools are inevitable due to the inherent diversity of human interactions, but how these conflicts are managed determines whether they have positive or negative outcomes. Ghaffar's analysis reinforces the idea that conflict management is not a one-size-fits-all solution; rather, it requires a nuanced understanding of the specific context and dynamics at play. Effective conflict management strategies must be adaptable, allowing educators to choose the most appropriate approach based on the situation. This perspective is critical in understanding the broader implications of conflict management mechanisms in educational settings, where flexibility and responsiveness are key to maintaining a harmonious environment.

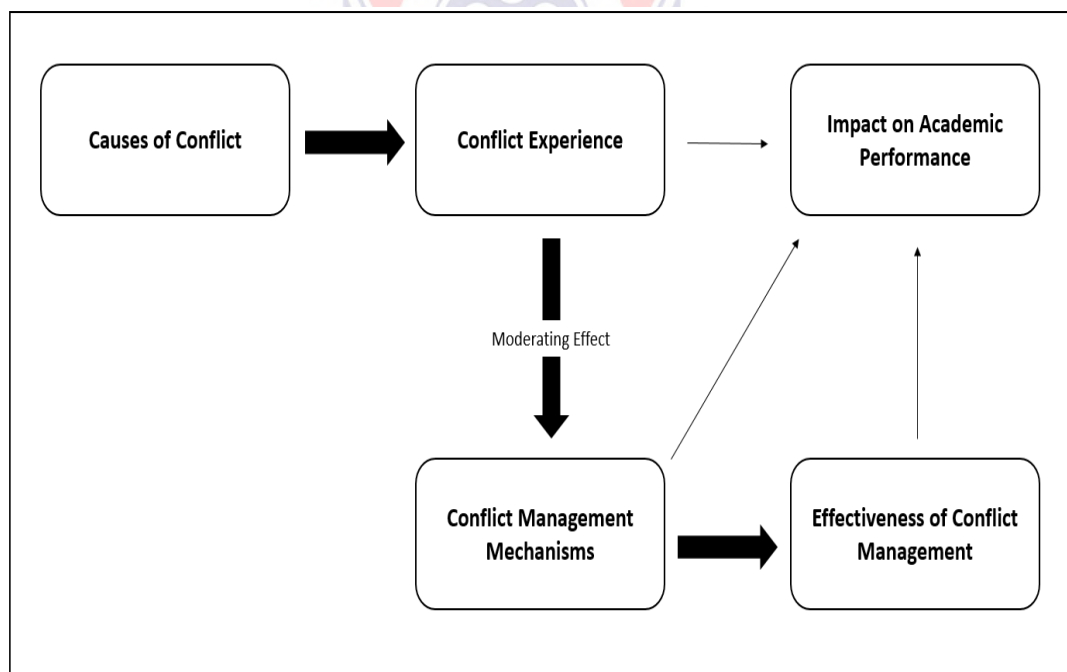
The studies reviewed emphasize the multifaceted nature of conflict management mechanisms in educational settings. Ajmal et al. (2024) and Kutasi (2023) highlight the importance of feedback as both a tool for enhancing educational practices and a preventive mechanism for conflicts. Aggrawal and Magana (2024) demonstrate the effectiveness of transformative learning approaches in building conflict resolution skills, while Bloxham (2008) and Nese et al. (2020) discuss the role of assessment practices and professional development in mitigating conflicts. Ghaffar (2009) underscores the importance of context-specific strategies, emphasizing that successful conflict management requires adaptability and a deep understanding of the underlying causes of disputes. Together, these studies provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of various conflict management mechanisms, offering valuable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers seeking to create more effective and peaceful educational environments.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study connects the main elements of conflict causes, impacts, and management. It highlights the role of internal factors, like interpersonal relationships and workload, alongside external influences such as policy decisions. These elements contribute to conflicts among teachers. The framework also considers how these conflicts directly and indirectly effect academic performance, affecting both teachers and students. Additionally, it outlines various conflict management mechanisms, including formal approaches like administrative interventions and informal methods such as peer mediation. By linking these components, the framework offers a structured approach to understanding the origins of conflicts, their consequences on education, and the strategies used to address them. This will guide the analysis and interpretation of the study's findings.

### 2.3.1 Conflict management assessment framework

The Conflict Management Assessment Framework (see Figure 1 below) developed for this study is a comprehensive model that explains the relationships between various factors contributing to conflict. It goes on to iterate the experience of conflict itself, its effect on academic performance, and the effectiveness of management mechanisms designed to resolve such conflicts. This framework is predicated on the understanding that conflicts in educational settings arise from a multitude of causes. This includes interpersonal relationships, workload distribution, resource allocation, leadership styles, and communication barriers. These factors, identified as the *Causes of Conflict*, are the independent variables that directly lead to *Conflict Experience* among teachers. The experience of conflict, which serves as a mediating variable in this framework, represents the extent and nature of conflicts that teachers encounter within their professional environment.



**Figure 2.1: Conflict Management Assessment Framework**

**Source: Researcher's Own Construct, (2024).**



As the teachers experience these conflicts, the effects are felt across different facets of the educational process, most notably in the academic performance of students. The *Effect on Academic Performance* is the dependent variable in this framework, signifying how the presence of conflicts among teachers can detrimentally affect student outcomes. Academic performance may be impacted in various ways, such as through increased teacher absenteeism, decreased teacher motivation, and challenges in classroom management, all of which can contribute to a decline in student grades and overall educational achievement. The framework underscores the direct correlation between the experience of conflict and its negative ramifications on academic performance, making it imperative to understand and address the root causes of such conflicts.

To mitigate the adverse effects of conflicts on academic performance, the framework introduces *Conflict Management Mechanisms* as moderating variables. These mechanisms encompass a range of strategies and interventions that schools can employ to manage and resolve conflicts effectively. Examples of these mechanisms include mediation by school administration, peer resolution methods, the involvement of external parties such as educational authorities, and the provision of training in conflict resolution for teachers. The framework posits that these mechanisms play a critical role in either exacerbating or alleviating the effect of conflicts on academic performance, depending on how effectively they are implemented. The moderating effect of conflict management mechanisms suggests that even in the presence of significant conflict experiences, the negative outcomes on academic performance can be mitigated or even reversed if the appropriate conflict management strategies are in place and effectively utilized.



Finally, the framework addresses the *Effectiveness of Conflict Management*, which is the ultimate outcome variable that evaluates how well these mechanisms work in resolving conflicts and improving the academic environment. The effectiveness of conflict management is assessed by measuring reductions in conflict incidents, improvements in teacher collaboration, and enhancements in academic performance. This part of the framework highlights the importance of continuously assessing and refining conflict management mechanisms to ensure they are achieving their intended outcomes. Effective conflict management not only helps in reducing the immediate negative impacts of conflict on academic performance but also contributes to a more harmonious and productive educational environment where teachers can work collaboratively and students can thrive academically. This conceptual framework thus provides a robust tool for understanding the dynamics of conflict in educational settings and offers a structured approach to addressing and managing these conflicts to foster better educational outcomes.

#### **2.4 Theoretical Review**

The theoretical framework plays a crucial role in guiding research by providing a structured lens through which the study is conducted and interpreted. According to Creswell (2014), theories serve as a blueprint for research, offering a systematic approach to understanding the relationships between variables and guiding the formulation of research questions and hypotheses. In this study, the theoretical framework underpins the exploration of conflict management among teachers in basic schools, shaping the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. By grounding the research in established theories, the study gains depth and rigor, enabling a comprehensive examination of the causes, impacts, and management mechanisms of conflicts within the educational context.

The importance of a theoretical framework also lies in its ability to link the study's findings to broader concepts and existing literature. Miles and Huberman (1994) emphasized that theory not only helps to contextualize the research but also aids in drawing meaningful conclusions that contribute to the field of study. In this context, the selected theories will provide insights into the dynamics of conflict in schools and the effectiveness of various management strategies. This approach ensures that the study is not just descriptive but also analytical, allowing for a deeper understanding of conflict management in educational settings and offering practical implications for school administrators and policymakers. To this end, this study adopts two key theories: Social Conflict Theory and Structural-Functional Theory.

The Social Conflict Theory, as discussed by Coser (1956), provides insights into the underlying power dynamics and resource-related conflicts that arise among teachers. It helps to explain the causes and consequences of these conflicts within the school setting. Structural-Functional Theory, articulated by Parsons (1951), offers a complementary perspective by emphasizing the role of conflict in maintaining or disrupting the functional equilibrium of the school system. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of conflict management in schools, guiding the research process and contributing to a deeper understanding of how conflicts can be managed to enhance the educational environment.

#### **2.4.1 Social conflict theory**

Social Conflict Theory emerged as a significant perspective in sociological thought during the mid-19th century. Karl Marx, one of its key proponents, laid the groundwork for this theory through his critique of capitalism and class struggles

(Marx & Engels, 1848). Marx's analysis of society focused on the inherent conflicts between different social classes, particularly between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This perspective was further developed by scholars like Friedrich Engels and later by sociologists such as Max Weber, who expanded the theory to include status and power conflicts (Weber, 1978). The historical context of industrialization and the rise of capitalist economies played a crucial role in shaping the development of Social Conflict Theory, as it provided a lens to examine the inequalities and power dynamics within society.

The major contributions of Social Conflict Theory lie in its emphasis on the role of power, inequality, and social conflict in shaping societal structures. Marx's work highlighted the economic disparities and the exploitation inherent in capitalist systems. He argued that the economic base of society, or the mode of production, influenced all other aspects of social life, including politics, culture, and ideology (Marx, 1867). Later, theorists such as Weber and C. Wright Mills contributed by exploring the multifaceted nature of conflict, not only in economic terms but also in relation to status, authority, and bureaucracy (Mills, 1956). These contributions have provided valuable insights into the complex dynamics of social inequality and the processes of social change.

At the core of Social Conflict Theory are several key concepts, including class struggle, power, and inequality. Marx's notion of the dialectical relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed underscores the perpetual state of conflict within society. Power is viewed as a central element, with dominant groups using their influence to maintain control over resources and institutions. Social Conflict Theory also emphasizes the idea that social change is often the result of tensions and conflicts

arising from these inequalities (Dahrendorf, 1959). The purpose and scope of this theory extend to analyzing the roots of social injustice and advocating for societal transformation through the redistribution of power and resources.

Social Conflict Theory offers valuable insights into the dynamics of power and inequality, highlighting the importance of understanding social conflict as a driver of social change. One of its strengths is its focus on the systemic nature of inequality and its critique of capitalist structures. This perspective has been instrumental in challenging the status quo and advocating for social justice. However, the theory has been critiqued for its deterministic view of social relations, often portraying individuals as passive agents shaped by external forces (Collins, 1975). Additionally, its emphasis on conflict may overlook the potential for cooperation and consensus in society. Despite these limitations, Social Conflict Theory remains a powerful tool for analyzing the roots of social inequality.

#### **2.4.1.1 Application to educational settings**

Social Conflict Theory provides a robust framework for understanding the dynamics of conflict among teachers in educational settings. According to Coser (1956), conflict arises from the competition for scarce resources, power struggles, and differing interests within a social group. In schools, these conflicts manifest through disputes over resource allocation, such as access to teaching materials, classroom space, and other essential resources. Teachers may also experience conflicts due to differing expectations and perceptions of their roles, leading to tensions within the educational environment. These conflicts are not isolated incidents but rather reflect broader societal tensions and inequalities that are replicated within the school setting.

In the context of school management, Social Conflict Theory suggests that conflicts among teachers are inevitable due to the hierarchical structure of educational institutions. Marx (1848) emphasized that social structures inherently produce conflicts due to unequal power distributions. In schools, administrators hold authority over teachers, which can lead to power imbalances and, consequently, conflicts. For instance, decisions made by school leadership regarding policy implementation, workload distribution, and evaluation criteria can create friction among staff members. Teachers who perceive these decisions as unfair or biased may resist or challenge the authority, resulting in conflicts that disrupt the educational process. These conflicts, while potentially disruptive, also provide opportunities for change and improvement within the institution.

The broader implications for school management are significant. By applying Social Conflict Theory, school leaders can better understand the root causes of conflicts and address them proactively. Rather than viewing conflicts as solely negative, this perspective encourages school administrators to recognize them as indicators of underlying issues that require attention. Ritzer (2011) argued that conflict can lead to positive change when managed effectively. In the school context, conflicts among teachers can drive improvements in policies, resource distribution, and communication strategies. By addressing the root causes of conflict, school management can create a more equitable and collaborative environment, ultimately enhancing the overall educational experience for both teachers and students.

Moreover, the application of Social Conflict Theory underscores the importance of participatory management in educational settings. Teachers should be actively involved in decision-making processes to minimize conflicts and promote a sense of

ownership and collaboration. According to Dahrendorf (1959), conflict resolution is more likely to succeed when all parties have a voice in the process. In schools, this can be achieved through regular consultations, open communication channels, and inclusive decision-making practices. By empowering teachers to contribute to decisions that affect their work, school management can reduce the likelihood of conflicts and foster a more harmonious working environment. This approach not only addresses the immediate causes of conflict but also contributes to the long-term stability and success of the educational institution.

#### **2.4.2 Structural-functional theory**

Structural-Functional Theory, in contrast, originated from the work of early sociologists such as Émile Durkheim and later Talcott Parsons. Durkheim's studies on social cohesion and the functions of social institutions laid the foundation for this theoretical perspective (Durkheim, 1893). The theory gained prominence in the mid-20th century with Parsons' development of a comprehensive framework that explained how societal structures contribute to stability and order (Parsons, 1951). Structural-Functional Theory arose in a context where the focus was on understanding how societies maintain equilibrium and manage change, particularly in response to the rapid social transformations occurring in the post-industrial world.

This theory's major contributions revolve around its ability to explain how social institutions and structures function to maintain social order. Durkheim introduced the concept of the collective conscience, which refers to the shared beliefs and values that bind society together. Parsons expanded on this by developing the idea of social systems, which he argued consist of interconnected parts that work together to fulfill the needs of society (Parsons, 1951). These contributions have been instrumental in

understanding the roles that institutions like family, education, and religion play in maintaining societal stability. The focus on equilibrium and the mechanisms of social integration remains a central aspect of Structural-Functional Theory.

Key concepts within Structural-Functional Theory include social functions, equilibrium, and the interdependence of social institutions. The theory posits that each part of society has a function that contributes to the overall stability and continuity of the social system. Social institutions are seen as interrelated, with changes in one part of the system affecting the others (Merton, 1957). The concept of equilibrium suggests that societies tend to move toward stability, adjusting to changes to maintain balance. The purpose and scope of Structural-Functional Theory lie in explaining how societies achieve order and stability through the functioning of their various institutions and structures.

Structural-Functional Theory, with its focus on stability and order, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how societies function. Its strength lies in its ability to explain the roles of social institutions in maintaining social cohesion and equilibrium. This theory has been influential in shaping the study of sociology and has provided a basis for understanding how societies manage change and maintain order. However, critics argue that Structural-Functional Theory tends to overlook the role of power and conflict in shaping social structures. It has also been criticized for its conservative bias, often justifying the status quo and neglecting the potential for social change (Mills, 1959). Despite these critiques, the theory remains a foundational perspective in sociology, offering valuable insights into the functioning of social systems.



#### **2.4.2.1 Relevance to conflict management in schools**

Structural-Functional Theory offers a valuable lens through which the role of conflict in schools can be understood, particularly in maintaining or disrupting functional equilibrium. According to Parsons (1951), social systems, such as schools, are composed of various interdependent parts, each contributing to the overall stability and functioning of the institution. Conflict, within this framework, is viewed as both a normal and necessary aspect of social life that can signal dysfunction within the system. When conflicts arise among teachers, they can disrupt the equilibrium, but they also serve as catalysts for identifying and addressing underlying issues that may otherwise go unnoticed.

In the school setting, conflicts may emerge from role expectations, resource distribution, or policy implementation. Merton (1968) argued that dysfunctions within a system can reveal areas where adjustments are needed to restore balance. For instance, conflicts among teachers regarding workload or decision-making authority can highlight imbalances in the distribution of responsibilities or power. These conflicts, though disruptive, can prompt school administrators to re-evaluate and modify existing policies or practices, thereby restoring functional equilibrium. In this way, conflict acts as a mechanism for self-regulation within the school system, ensuring that it remains responsive to the needs of its members.

The theory also posits that not all conflicts lead to negative outcomes. Durkheim (1893) emphasized that conflict could play a constructive role by fostering adaptability and innovation within social systems. In schools, conflicts that are effectively managed can lead to improved communication, stronger teamwork, and more equitable resource distribution. These positive outcomes contribute to the



overall stability and effectiveness of the institution. Structural-Functional Theory thus helps school leaders recognize that conflicts should not be merely suppressed but rather managed in ways that strengthen the school's ability to function smoothly and achieve its educational goals.

Furthermore, the Structural-Functional Theory emphasizes the significance of preserving social order while accommodating essential change. Collins (1975) noted that a balance between stability and change is crucial for the health of any social system. In the context of schools, this means that while conflicts may disrupt the existing order, they also present opportunities for growth and development. By understanding the role of conflict within the broader system, school management can take proactive steps to address issues before they escalate, thereby preserving the institution's overall functional equilibrium. This perspective encourages a more balanced approach to conflict management, where the focus is on harnessing the potential benefits of conflict while minimizing its disruptive effects.

#### **2.4.3 Application of theories to the study**

Integrating Social Conflict Theory and Structural-Functional Theory with the study objectives offers a strong foundation for analyzing conflict management among teachers. These theories provide distinct yet complementary perspectives, allowing a deeper exploration of conflict origins, impacts, and resolution strategies. The study's alignment with these theoretical frameworks enhances its capacity to address the complexities inherent in conflict management within the educational setting. The Social Conflict Theory is particularly useful in examining the root causes of conflicts among teachers. This theory suggests that conflicts arise from competition over limited resources, power imbalances, and differing interests within a social group. In

basic schools, these conflicts can appear as disputes over classroom resources, access to teaching materials, or unequal distribution of workloads. Additionally, power dynamics between teachers and administrators may lead to conflicts, particularly when there is a perceived imbalance. Social Conflict Theory underscores that these conflicts are not random but are driven by underlying social and economic structures that perpetuate inequality. By applying this theory, the study can identify specific factors contributing to conflicts among teachers, offering a clearer understanding of the systemic issues at play.

On the other hand, Structural-Functional Theory views conflict as a natural and inevitable part of any social system, including schools. Parsons (1951) posits that social structures consist of interdependent parts working together to maintain stability and order. When conflicts arise, they may signal dysfunctions or imbalances within the system. In schools, these dysfunctions could stem from unclear role expectations, poor communication, or misalignment between teachers' goals and institutional policies. While conflicts can disrupt the system, Structural-Functional Theory suggests they also present opportunities for necessary changes. Applying this theory to the study allows for an exploration of how conflicts among teachers may expose underlying issues, providing opportunities for improvement.

Further, the effect of conflict on academic performance is another critical area of investigation, with both Social Conflict Theory and Structural-Functional Theory offering valuable insights. Social Conflict Theory suggests that conflicts, especially those rooted in power struggles and resource competition, can significantly disrupt the educational environment. Teachers embroiled in conflicts may experience reduced job satisfaction, lower morale, and increased stress, all of which can negatively affect

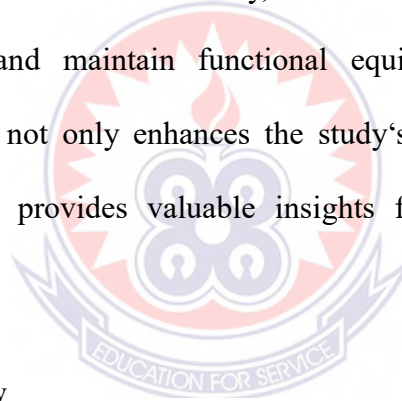
their teaching effectiveness. These conflicts can also lead to absenteeism, turnover, and a lack of collaboration among staff, further compounding the negative effects on student performance. By employing Social Conflict Theory, the study can analyze how teacher conflicts translate into broader disruptions that ultimately affect academic outcomes.

Conversely, the Structural-Functional Theory again provides a more holistic view of the effect of conflict on academic performance. Merton (1968) argued that while conflicts can destabilize social systems, they also offer opportunities for adaptation and growth. In schools, effectively managed conflicts can lead to positive changes, such as improved communication, better resource allocation, and stronger teamwork among teachers. These improvements can enhance the overall functioning of the school, thereby improving academic performance. By integrating Structural-Functional Theory with the study, the research can explore how constructive conflict management leads to beneficial changes in the educational environment, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

Additionally, understanding the conflict management mechanisms employed in schools is essential for addressing the challenges identified. Social Conflict Theory emphasizes the role of power dynamics in shaping conflict management strategies. Ritzer (2011) notes that those in power often dictate the terms of conflict resolution, which can either perpetuate or alleviate underlying issues. In schools, this might manifest as top-down approaches to conflict management, where administrators impose solutions without fully considering the perspectives of teachers. While these strategies may resolve conflicts in the short term, they may fail to address root causes, leading to recurring issues. By applying Social Conflict Theory, the study can

critically assess the effectiveness of current conflict management mechanisms, identifying where power imbalances may hinder effective resolution.

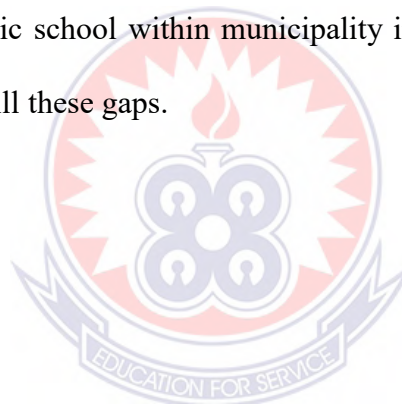
Finally, evaluating the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms requires a comprehensive approach. Social Conflict Theory provides a critical framework for assessing how well these mechanisms address the power dynamics and resource disparities that drive conflict. Effective conflict resolution must address the root causes of conflict rather than merely suppressing symptoms. Structural-Functional Theory offers a complementary perspective by evaluating how conflict management mechanisms contribute to the overall stability and effectiveness of the school system. By integrating both theories with the study, the research can assess how well current mechanisms restore and maintain functional equilibrium within schools. This theoretical framework not only enhances the study's ability to understand conflict management but also provides valuable insights for improving the educational environment.



## **2.5 Chapter Summary**

The literature revealed some measures, strategies, and mechanisms that have been used by some educational institutions in resolving and managing protracted conflicts in public Basic schools in Ghana and Sub-Saharan Africa. Also, the literature reviewed provided evidence that conflict is inevitable in human endeavour. The literature further revealed that some of the conflict resolution mechanisms have not been able to entirely resolve conflicts in public SHSs because certain pre-conditions did not warrant the use of a particular mechanism or mechanisms employed in the conflict.

More so, it is evident that despite significant interventions made by major stakeholders in education in Ghana to resolve conflicts in public Basic school in Ghana. There is still spate of students' violence or conflicts in public Basic school in Ghana. It appears those interventions have not been successful in managing and resolving conflicts in public Basic school in the Ghana. It is also evident from the literature reviewed that, previous studies focused on the internal actors, causes and approaches to handling or resolving teacher Student's conflict in interschools sports competition in public Basic school in the study area. However, those studies neglected other relevant sources and causes of conflicts and the mechanisms used by teacher unions, counsellors and other and school administrators in managing and resolving conflicts in public Basic school within municipality in the central Region of Ghana. This study, therefore, fill these gaps.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### 3.0 Introduction

The research strategies and procedures that directed the gathering and analysis of the data are described in this chapter. In addition to outlining specific research methodology, the chapter provides justification for the methods' suitability and relevance to the subject. The research design is described at the beginning of the chapter, followed by profiles of the study areas, data sources, target population, sampling technique, data collection methods, data collection instruments, data processing, and data analysis. The chapter concludes with ethical considerations for the research project.

#### 3.1 Research Philosophy

There is a direct relationship between our ontological and epistemological presumptions about reality and the methodological approach we choose when conducting research. According to Bryman (2001), positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism are the three main philosophies in social science research.

These paradigms serve as drivers of the entire research process. Positivism philosophy is based upon highly structured methodology to enable generalisation and quantifiable observations and evaluate the results with the help of statistical methods. Interpretivists, on the other hand, believe that reality is multiple and relative (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Leitch et al., 2010). The knowledge acquired in this discipline is socially constructed rather than objectively determined (Carson et al., 2001). The last is pragmatism. No ideology or reality-based framework can confine pragmatic thinking. According to Creswell (2003), pragmatists believe that what is true now is

what is true. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), pragmatists hold that there is an outside reality that exists independently of the mind in addition to an internal one.

The assumptions of interpretivism appear to be more in line with the study than they are with the main thrust of it. There are two factors that went into selecting the qualitative approaches. First and foremost, the goal of the study was to gain a better understanding and appreciation of conflict and conflict management techniques to create theories for the long-term management of disputes. The objective of the study was to provide a comprehensive account and explanation of conflict resolution techniques to enhance their comprehension.

Second, because this study focuses on behavioural traits and permits the use of techniques like participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon I was studying as well as exposure to its intricate structure thanks to the qualitative method. This made a proper description possible. Accordingly, the study accepted the interpretivism paradigm as the foundation for its philosophy.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The phenomenon case study design was chosen for this study. A phenomenon case study is an empirical investigation that explores a current issue within its real-life context (Yin, 2003). The goal of this kind of investigation is to develop a comprehensive, primarily narrative account that will help others comprehend a phenomenon.

A case study approach allows the employment of a variety of evidence through interviews, artefacts, direct observations, discussions and documents. When research is on contemporary issues, when behavioural events within the research questions are explanatory, and when a researcher has little control over events, the case study approach is the best strategy (Yin, 2003).

### **3.3 Research Approach**

The ontological split between positivism and interpretivism has given rise to epistemological divisions between research visions that are quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research in social science is usually predicated on positivist assumptions, while qualitative research is predicated on interpretivist assumptions (Bryman, 2014). Quantitative social research begins with the numerical measurement of social phenomena, as its name suggests (Saunders., Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

This study adopted the qualitative approach in gathering of data. Qualitative research is the process of natural inquisitiveness which wants to find an in-depth understanding of specific social phenomena within a regular setting. It seeks to extrapolate significance from these data to comprehend social existence. Rather than concentrating only on the "what" or "how many" that quantitative approaches usually aim to answer, it focuses on understanding the "why" and "how" of human behaviour, experiences, and interactions.

One of the least expensive ways to collect data from study participants is through qualitative research. Interviews and focus groups are typically the main technique used in this procedure to gather information. While some research investigations necessitate a prolonged period of observation to yield useful findings, conducting group interviews can yield valuable information in less than 60 minutes. In



comparison to other research approaches, this implies that you can go on with your ideas more quickly.

### **3.4 Study Area**

The Effutu Municipality is one of the 20 administrative districts in the Central region of Ghana. It is situated between latitudes 5°16' and 20.18" N and longitudes 0°32' and 48.32" W of the eastern part of Central region. The Municipality lies between the Gomoa East District to western, northern and eastern flanks. On the southern flank is the Gulf of Guinea. The administrative capital is Winneba, a town renowned for its specialised major institutions of higher learning. It covers a total land area of 95 square kilometres.

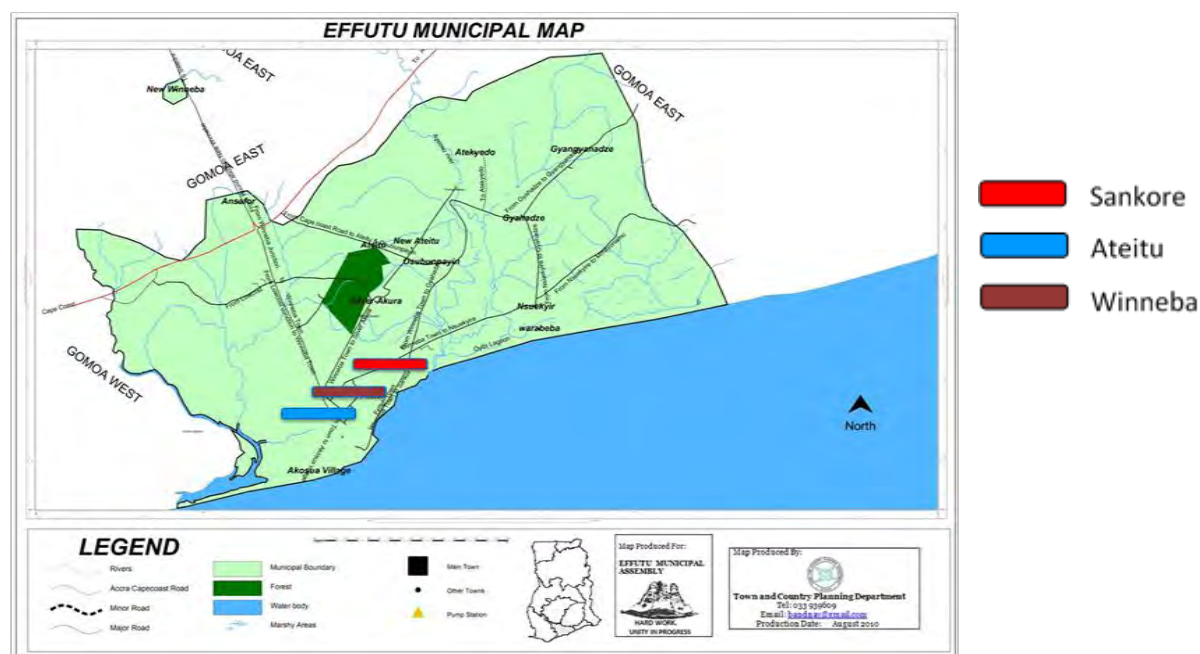
#### **3.4.1 Education in Effutu Municipality**

The Municipality is made up of three circuits for the purposes of education management. There is a total of 247 educational institutions in the Municipality; of which 74 (30%) are public institutions and 173 (70%) are private institutions. The Municipality has 78 pre-schools (24 public and 54 private), 77 Primary Schools (26 Public and 51 Private) and 47 Junior High Schools (22 Public and 25 Private). The Winneba Senior High School is the only public second cycle institution. There are three (3) private Senior High Schools and two (2) Technical and Vocational Institutions in the Municipality (Effutu Municipal Assembly, 2022).

There is one major tertiary institution; the University of Education, Winneba which has its main campus in Winneba with Campus at Ajumako. There is also the National Sports College of Winneba where sports personnel (Football, Sportsmen and Women) receive advanced training in their specialized fields and disciplines. In addition, there is the Police Staff and Command College. Other Specialized Institutions include the

hearing-Impaired School – University Practice (UNIPRA) South School and Fr. John Mentally Derailed School under the Don Bosco Girls Primary School (Effutu Municipal Assembly, 2022).

The basic schools in the Municipality, like several others in the Central Region, face problems of inadequate facilities such as furniture, electricity and toilet facilities. There are also inadequate supply of textbooks and other teaching aids. Most of the schools are without libraries and ICT facilities (Effutu Municipal Assembly, 2022).



**Figure 3.1: Map of Effutu Municipality**

**Source:** Ghana Statistical Service, GIS

### 3.4.2 Population of the Study

Population in research may be considered as the total set from which the individual or units of study are chosen. It is the totality of persons, events or organization units with which the real research problem is concerned (Seidu, 2007).

The individual or units possess specific characteristics. In addition, Seidu (2007) maintains that population is the entire group of people, object, animals, institutions, establishments which the researcher intends to study.

The population for this study comprised all headteachers, assistant headteachers, guidance and counselling coordinators and teacher in Basic Schools within Effutu municipality in 2023-2024 academic year.

### **3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedure**

A sample is the specific group that a researcher will collect data from (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). According to Nesbary (2007) a sample is a subset of a population that has been selected and contains the characteristics of a population. The size of the sample is always less than the total size of the population. Kumekpor (2002) explains sampling as the procedure in the selection of a part for the express purpose of obtaining from its description or estimates certain properties and characteristics of the whole. The actual sample used in the study was drawn from the accessible population.

Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 100 participants for the study. Purposive sampling was used to select the Headteachers, assistant heads, Guidance and counselling coordinators while snowballing was used in selecting a teacher who was recently involved in conflict within the 2024\2025 academic year. This sampling technique was used since the researcher wanted to select the sample to reflect the purpose of the study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Here the researcher was interested in only the participants who would be able to give relevant information so that the phenomenon under study could be well understood. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who have experienced or observed the experience of conflict among their colleagues' teachers

within Effutu municipality. Where they are more than the number needed, simple random sampling techniques was used to select the right number.

**Table 3.1: Tabular Presentation of Population Sample**

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>SAMPLE</b>
HEAD TEACHERS	4
TEACHER UNION (GNAT, NAGRT& CCT)	3
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING COORDINATORS	4
TEACHERS	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

Choosing appropriate instruments for data collection is one of the most important decisions in research. The instrument employed for gathering data for this research work was a structured and semi-structured interview guide.

An interview guide is a written instrument that contains a series of questions or statements called items that attempt to collect information on a particular topic (Seidu, 2007). The researcher used interviews because of the advantages they possess.

Firstly, an interview enables the researcher to establish rapport with participants to explain the purpose of the study and the meaning of terms that are not clear to them. Secondly, interviews were used to enable the researcher to save time and energy, and they were also used to collect data from many people (participants) at a reasonable time limit without any problem.

Thirdly, interviews have advantages over other instruments in that it is possible for many participants to be assembled at a place. This provides a high rate of retrieval of interviews and eliminates financial constraints. Finally, interviews have been proven to be effective in terms of their validity and reliability (Seidu 2007). Despite the above advantages, interviews had their own weaknesses, such as a lack of probing for details and a low response rate.

The interview guide was designed by the researcher. The interview guide for this study was divided into two parts. The first part dealt with the biodata of the participants, whereas the second part considered the causes of conflict among teachers and conflict resolution strategies to resolve those conflicts. The questions were closed-ended, with multiple-choice items and forced-choice rating scales adopted. The participants were asked to provide answers that were applicable to them according to the interview guide. Comments and contributions from participants were recorded and, in some cases, documented for decoding to reflect the most applicable situation on the cause of conflict prevention and resolution strategies or mechanisms.

### **3.7 Data Sources**

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Primary data were gathered from the Headteachers, assistant heads, Guidance and counselling coordinators and a teacher from the selected schools. Secondary information was obtained from both published and unpublished materials and activity reports from the schools.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

An introduction letter was obtained from Centre for Education Policy Studies, University of Education, Winneba and given to the Headmaster or Head teachers at the selected schools. The objectives of the study were explained to the headmaster and

teachers at the selected schools before the interview were administered, the instrument was self-administered to the target participants. It was believed that the administration of the instrument by the researcher in person would result in more co-operation than if others were asked to collect the data.

The interview was personally delivered to the participants, and they were asked to give response to questions in the interview guide within two hours. The interview was conducted on one -on -one basis. They were then carefully briefed about the purpose of the exercise and they were asked to carefully read and consider the options before filling out the responses. In addition, the researcher carefully and clearly read out one after the other, every item on the instrument and gave explanations, where necessary before the teachers responded to them. On the average, it took two hours for the teachers to respond to questions in the interview guide. The responses were documented and recorded with the consent of the participant on the spot. As a result, there was a hundred percent (100%) return rate.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The analysis of the qualitative data obtained from fieldwork was done to uncover and understand the issue being investigated. The interviews were recorded by the researcher. Responses from the interview tapes were played several times until the full transcription of each participant was obtained.

The results were entered into a computer for them to be coded, counted, and analyzed. For purposes of classification, summarization, and tabulation, content analysis was carried out on verbal or behavioural data. The qualitative data was analysed using the interpretative method based on the themes that emerged during the data collection.

The themes were related to the research questions and interpreted considering the number of issues raised by participants.

### **3.10 Credibility**

There exist distinct philosophical and methodological positions concerning the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. Hammersley (1992) describes three positions, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Qualitative studies should be judged using the same criteria and terminology as quantitative studies.
2. It is impossible, in a meaningful way, for any criteria to be used to judge qualitative studies.
3. Qualitative studies should be judged using criteria that are developed for and within the qualitative paradigm.

A fourth position suggests that the credibility of qualitative research findings could be established by testing out the emerging theory by means of conducting a deductive quantitative study (Moody 1990; Cutcliffe 1995; McKenna 1997). Each of these positions warrants examination in more detail.

Cavanagh (1997) suggests that qualitative researchers should strive to achieve reliable and valid results. Furthermore, he goes on to argue that qualitative researchers should consider three different types of validity: content, hypothesis, and predictive. Cavanagh (1997) also attempts to develop arguments for using measures of stability to determine the credibility of qualitative research findings. Here, Cavanagh (1997) is recommending the rigour of qualitative research.

Findings can be judged using criteria and terminology that have been constructed in order to test the validity of results obtained from quantitative studies. Jasper (1994)



and Appleton (1995) construct similar arguments and submit that since qualitative research methods are often criticised for failing to address issues of reliability and validity clearly, researchers cannot ignore these parameters. They 'import' these quantitative terms and then 'translate' them into terms more often associated with qualitative studies, such as 'truth value'.

Therefore, by considering and addressing the 'truth value' of endings, researchers are addressing the inherent validity of their findings. Brink (1991) adopts a similar view when she argues that issues of validity are just as pertinent to qualitative research studies as they are to quantitative studies. In considering these arguments, there is a need to examine the philosophical underpinnings of quantitative research approaches. A researcher who adopts a quantitative approach to the collection of data is viewing the world through a particular type of lens.

The view suggests that the world can be explained and understood in terms of universal laws and objective truths (McKenna, 1997). Its positivist and empiricist underpinnings suggest that there is only one reality, and consequently, a measure of the accuracy of this reality is its validity. However, the qualitative researcher views the world through a very different lens. Key authorities on qualitative research point out that it is inappropriate to attempt to apply positivistic and empiricist views of the world to qualitative research (Benner & Wrubel 1989; Morse 1991; Denzin & Lincoln 1994). Qualitative research is based upon the belief that there is no one singular universal truth; the social world is multi-faceted; it is an outcome of the interaction of human agents in a world that has no unequivocal reality (Ashworth 1997b). It is concerned with describing, interpreting, and understanding the meanings that people attribute to their existence and to their world.



Additionally, few would dispute that theory does not develop from empiricism alone (McKenna 1997). Carper (1978) described different ways of knowing: empirics, aesthetics, ethics, and personal knowing. It is argued that these and the philosophical underpinnings of the research methods should influence the way the resulting theories and conclusions are tested for accuracy.

Chinn and Kramer (1995) assert that because there are different ways of knowing, the resultant theories should not be tested using only those methods advocated by empiricists. In other words, a qualitative study is likely to lack credibility if it is critiqued using positivistic criteria. It matters little if this is carried out overtly or in a more covert form by importing and subsequently translating quantitative terms.

We would argue that qualitative research findings should be tested for credibility or accuracy using terms and criteria that have been developed exclusively for this approach. Leinenger (1994, p. 97) makes this point most clearly when she states:

We must develop and use criteria based on the qualitative paradigm rather than using quantitative criteria for qualitative studies. It is awkward and inappropriate to re-language quantitative terms.

Accepting this, it is unfortunate that the research literature still proliferates, with authors attempting to establish the credibility of qualitative studies using synonyms for quantitative approaches (Appleton 1995). There are also several authors who criticise the credibility of qualitative studies using criteria meant for quantitative studies (Cavanagh, 1997). Such practices are likely to confuse and confound readers and undermine the very purposes and essence of qualitative research.

### 3.11 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, as Sandelowski (1993) mentioned, becomes a matter of persuasion whereby the scientist is viewed as having made those practices visible and therefore auditable. She also argued that validity in qualitative studies should be linked not to the truth or value as they are for positivists.

A study is trustworthy if and only if the reader of the research report judges it to be so. Trustworthiness has been further divided into credibility, which corresponds roughly with the positivist concept of internal validity; dependability, which relates more to reliability; transferability, which is a form of external validity; and confirmability, which is largely an issue of presentation.

However, Sandelowski (1993) regarded reliability and dependability as threats to validity or credibility and questioned many of the usual qualitative reliability tests, such as member checking (returning to the participants following data analysis) or peer checking (using a panel of experts or an experienced colleague to reanalyze some of the data), as ways of ensuring that the researcher has analysed the data correctly. But Guba and Lincoln (1989) regarded member checks as the single most critical technique for establishing credibility'.

Put simply, any attempt to increase reliability involves a forced or artificial consensus and conformity in the analysis of the data, which is usually at the expense of the validity or meaningfulness of the findings. Sandelowski (1993), therefore, rejected reliability as a useful measure of quality in qualitative research in favour of validity or trustworthiness.

In concluding, to ensure trustworthiness, the researchers considered member checking, triangulation, detailed transcription, a systematic plan, and coding in this study.

### **3.12 Ethical Considerations**

This study ensured that privacy of participants was not jeopardized. As a matter of fact, this study upheld the assurances given the participants that all information provided would be treated with the strictest level of confidentiality, due to this reason participants were not asked to provide their names on the questionnaires.

Other ethical matters that guided this includes the fact that only relevant research methodologies including techniques a required by the research objectives and not for any other reason was chosen and allied, also that the research questions were formulated to avoid sensitive questions and finally that there no fabrications of data to substitute and draw conclusions.

Much attention was given to ethical issues when collecting the data from the field. Notable ones include informed consent, confidentiality etc. With regards to informed consent the researcher identified himself to the participants in order to avoid any false impression that may have been created in the minds of the participants. In addition, the purpose of the study was explained for participants to have a better understanding of the study.

Finally, the nature of the questionnaire was made known to them so as to have a clear picture and idea on how to answer the questions and fully participate in the study. With issues of confidentiality, participants were informed and assured that the information given by them will purely be used for the purpose for which the study is

conducted. Also, they will be informed that the information given will be available for other people for any reason.

### **3.13 Positionality**

Scharp and Thomas (2019) deduce that scholars who engage in critical social science research should access how their positionality and experience might contribute to their interpretations of people's lived experiences. They assert that in all research, it is incumbent on the researcher to understand the positionality and perspective underlying the data collection processes or modes. Having this as the guiding rule for embarking on the research, one can disclose his or her position and the dynamics that underpin the phenomenon under study.

Although the researcher is a teacher within the Efutu Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana, the school he teaches was not part of the selected schools for the study. Schools and participants selected for the research were not in any ancillary relationship with the researcher. Participants were also made aware that the research was conducted for academic purposes with no a hidden agenda or motive.

In view of this, the researcher prevented all attempts to shape the study's conclusions to suit or appease the interests of groups or outside parties. However, the information gathered and obtained was born out of the experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives of the participants or participants.

### **3.14 Chapter Summary**

This chapter vividly espouse how the researcher embark on the research by describing how he used the research tool (interview) that guided and lead him to arrive at his findings. Again, the researcher has made known his philosophical underpinnings,

where he juxtaposed the relationship between ontology and epistemology as propounded by Bryman (2001).

The study area which is Effutu Municipality was explicitly talked about supported with topographical map prepared by Ghana Statistical Service survey for the Municipality in the year 2022. Sampled size of fifteen (15) was collected from the population of 549 through purposive and snowball techniques for the research.

The researcher occupation as a teacher did not influence the research, because he conducted the research as a student and not a teacher hence without bias. Ethically, the researcher fulfilled and respected all ethical considerations guiding qualitative research which is the design adopted for this research.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter examined the analysis and discussion of data collected from the field. The chapter provides a detailed exploration of the causes, impacts, and management of conflicts among teachers in basic schools within the Effutu Municipality. The analysis is structured to align with the study's objectives and research questions, offering a systematic interpretation of the data. The findings are contextualized within relevant literature and theoretical frameworks to provide depth and understanding, ensuring that the discussion addressed the key areas of inquiry comprehensively.

To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms are assigned to all participants (fourteen): CCT, GCC1, GCC2, GCC3, GCC4, PH, DBH, EH, AVH, PT, DBT, ET, AVT, and NG. This approach ensured that participants' identities were protected while allowing their unique voices and perspectives to remain distinct in the discussion. The use of pseudonyms also facilitated a transparent yet ethical presentation of the data, ensuring trustworthiness and credibility.

##### 4.1.1 Themes Generated

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which identified recurring patterns and key themes in the participants' responses. The thematic approach was guided by the research questions, ensuring that the analysis remained focused on the study's objectives. The findings were further contextualized with references to existing literature and theoretical frameworks, offering both empirical and academic insights into the dynamics of teacher conflicts. This method ensured a balanced exploration of participant perspectives alongside scholarly interpretations.

The analysis of the data collected from participants revealed several interconnected themes that reflect the complex dynamics of conflict among teachers in basic schools within the Effutu Municipality. These themes provide insights into the causes, impacts, and mechanisms of conflict, offering a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by educators and the broader implications for school environments. Each theme explores a distinct aspect of the phenomenon, encompassing issues such as workload distribution, leadership practices, interpersonal relationships, communication barriers, and the effects of conflicts on academic performance and teacher morale.

The themes also highlight the strategies employed to manage these conflicts, both formally and informally, while addressing systemic barriers and stakeholder concerns that hinder resolution efforts. The findings are rooted in the lived experiences of participants, represented through their distinct voices, and contextualized within relevant theoretical frameworks and literature. This thematic exploration serves as the foundation for a comprehensive discussion of the dynamics shaping teacher conflicts and their resolution.

**Table 4.1: Themes Generated**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Code</b>	
Sources of Conflict	Allocation and Workload	Unequal distribution of tasks	
	Issues	Subject allocation discrepancies	
		Leadership Practices	Lack of transparency Perceived favouritism
	Interpersonal Issues	Personality clashes Gossip	
	Communication Problems	Miscommunication	
Impacts of Conflict	Academic Performance	Disruption to learning processes Decreased teacher collaboration	
	Teacher Morale and Motivation	Reduced job satisfaction Absenteeism	
	Emotional and Psychological Well-being of Students	Students emulating negative behaviours	
	Conflict Management	Formal Mechanisms	Transfers Mediation by committees
		Informal Mechanisms	Use of local community leaders Avoidance
Challenges in Conflict Management	Systemic Barriers	Inefficiency and delays in formal processes Breach of confidentiality	
	Stakeholder Dissatisfaction	Perceived bias Lack of inclusivity in decision-making	

Source: Field Data (2024)

## 4.2 Sources of Conflict

### 4.2.1 Allocation and Workload Issues

The findings revealed that unequal distribution of tasks and responsibilities was a recurrent source of discord among teachers. Participants emphasized that workloads were not equitably distributed, creating perceptions of unfairness that often escalated



into workplace conflicts. This phenomenon aligns closely with the principles of Social Conflict Theory, which underpins the study by exploring how power imbalances and disparities in resource allocation generate tension and conflict within organizations. Moreover, the Social Conflict Theory emphasizes that inequities in power and resources, such as the uneven allocation of tasks and teaching responsibilities highlighted in the findings, are primary sources of workplace disputes. For instance, Participant CCT observed that,

*When superiors identify someone as hardworking, they often assign most tasks to that individual. This can lead to a lack of participation from others, which may be misinterpreted as the hardworking individual being overly ambitious or more passionate than their colleagues. Such perceptions disrupt the collegial atmosphere, fostering resentment and misunderstandings among peers.*

Such dynamics resonate with Jehn's (1995) assertion that perceived inequities in workload distribution often lead to intragroup conflicts, particularly in collaborative environments. Additionally, the findings reflect the influence of decision-making processes on workplace harmony. Participant GCC4's account of dissatisfaction arising from the uneven allocation of teaching periods and roles underscores the importance of equitable workload distribution in maintaining staff morale. According to Participant GCC4, "When one teacher has fewer classes than others, it can cause complaints. Combined with expectations for punctuality or participation in other school activities, these differences create unnecessary friction among staff members." This observation aligns with Shanka and Thuo's (2017) findings that rigid institutional policies and unequal task allocation exacerbate workplace tensions by failing to account for individual capacities and workloads.

Another critical perspective came from Participant PH, who emphasized the importance of transparency in decision-making regarding task allocation. Participant

PH noted, “For instance, if decisions are made without consulting the team or without clear criteria, teachers begin to speculate about favouritism or incompetence. These speculations undermine trust and cooperation within the school.” This assertion aligns with the findings of Akparep et al. (2019), who identified unclear communication and role ambiguity as significant contributors to workplace disputes. Transparency in task distribution not only mitigates perceptions of bias but also fosters a sense of shared responsibility and inclusivity among staff members.

The systemic nature of these conflicts was particularly noteworthy. Participants pointed to a lack of structured policies for equitable workload distribution as a major contributing factor. According to Participant GCC4, institutional policies that do not adapt to the dynamic needs of schools often exacerbate tensions. This aligns with the argument of Ntho-Ntho and Nieuwenhuis (2016), who posited that flexible and participatory policies are crucial in minimizing workload-related disputes. Moreover, Shanka and Thuo (2017) suggested that proactive measures, such as involving teachers in decision-making processes and periodically reviewing workload allocations, are essential for reducing conflict and fostering a harmonious work environment.

Interestingly, some participants presented a different perspective, suggesting that perceptions of inequity might sometimes be unfounded. Participant AVH remarked, “It is not always that workload differences reflect unfair practices. Some teachers are unwilling to take on additional tasks, and their reluctance often falls on others who are more committed.” This aligns with the argument by Annan (2017) that individual attitudes towards work ethic also contribute to conflicts, compounding systemic challenges.

Participant CCT remarked:

*When the superiors identify someone as hardworking, they often assign the most of tasks to that individual. This can lead to a lack of participation from others, which may be misinterpreted as the hardworking individual being overly ambitious or more passionate than their colleagues. Such perceptions can create tension and challenges among staff members and their peers.*

This observation aligns with Jehn's (1995) argument that perceived inequities in workload distribution often lead to intragroup conflicts, particularly in settings where collaboration and mutual respect are vital for organizational success.

Subject allocation and the number of teaching periods were also noted as significant sources of tension. Participant GCC4 highlighted:

*Subject allocation or the number of periods a teacher handles can lead to misunderstandings. For example, when one teacher has fewer classes than others, it can cause complaints. Combined with expectations for punctuality or participation in other school activities, these differences create unnecessary friction among staff members.*

This insight mirrors the findings of Shanka and Thuo (2017), who identified that institutional policies lacking flexibility often intensify workplace tensions. Policies that fail to adapt to dynamic school environments and do not account for individual workloads exacerbate feelings of inequity, further straining interpersonal relationships.

Interestingly, some participants suggested that perceptions of inequity might sometimes be unfounded. Participant AVH remarked:

*It is not always that workload differences reflect unfair practices. Some teachers are unwilling to take on additional tasks, and their reluctance often falls on others who are more committed. This unwillingness is a significant source of frustration for those who work diligently.*

This perspective is consistent with Annan's (2017) argument that individual attitudes toward work ethic also contribute to workplace conflicts. Such attitudes, when compounded by systemic challenges, create a more complex web of relational dynamics that must be navigated by school leaders. Transparency in decision-making emerged as a recurring theme among participants. Participant PH noted:

*Workload imbalances frequently stem from a lack of openness in how responsibilities are assigned. For instance, if decisions are made without consulting the team or without clear criteria, teachers begin to speculate about favouritism or incompetence. These speculations undermine trust and cooperation within the school.*

This observation reflects Akparep et al.'s (2019) findings, which identified unclear communication and role ambiguity as frequent triggers of workplace disputes. Transparent decision-making processes were deemed critical for alleviating perceptions of bias and fostering trust among staff members. This corresponds with Social Conflict Theory, which emphasizes that power imbalances and structural inequities often serve as catalysts for disputes (Rahim, 2002). The opaque nature of task allocation processes not only reflects systemic inequalities but also reinforces feelings of discontent and mistrust among teachers, exacerbating tensions. The theory provides a lens to understand how structural barriers and lack of equity in resource distribution can foster dissatisfaction and erode workplace relationships. By addressing these systemic inequities, schools can mitigate conflicts rooted in perceptions of unfairness and power disparity.

Conversely, participants proposed mechanisms to restore workplace harmony, such as periodic reviews of workload allocation and greater involvement of teachers in decision-making. These strategies highlight the importance of reducing the structural triggers of conflict and ensuring inclusive practices that align with principles of

fairness and mutual respect. Such measures directly address the systemic challenges identified by Social Conflict Theory, offering pathways to reduce the escalation of disputes and foster a more equitable and cohesive work environment.

The findings collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of workload-related conflicts. While structural inequalities in task allocation are central to these tensions, individual attitudes and the absence of transparent policies further compound the issue. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that combines equitable workload distribution, participatory decision-making, and a commitment to fostering a culture of collaboration. By doing so, school leaders can minimize conflict and promote a harmonious and productive educational environment.

#### **4.2.2 Leadership Practices**

Leadership emerged as a central theme in the findings, with participants identifying the actions and attitudes of school leaders as key drivers of conflict. A significant concern was favouritism, as highlighted by Participant GCC1:

*Favouritism on the part of the head teacher is a major issue. Some teachers enjoy benefits others do not, whether it is in resource allocation or professional recognition. This unequal treatment creates divisions among staff and makes collaboration challenging.*

This perspective mirrors Annan's (2017) assertion that biased administrative practices foster resentment among staff, which undermines teamwork and reduces overall productivity. When certain individuals are perceived to receive preferential treatment, it creates a sense of exclusion among others, often escalating into open disputes that disrupt the work environment. This aligns with Social Conflict Theory, which emphasizes how perceived inequities in power and resources generate tension and conflict within organizational settings. The findings underscore the necessity of

addressing these biases to foster inclusivity and harmony within educational institutions.

Moreover, the need for transparency in leadership was another critical issue raised in the data. Participant PH explained, “Conflict among teachers often arises from a lack of transparency by the head teacher. If decisions are made behind closed doors and teachers do not understand the rationale, it breeds mistrust.” This sentiment aligns with the findings of Akparep et al. (2019), who emphasized that transparent leadership significantly reduces tensions in educational institutions. Transparency in leadership also reflects Structural-Functional Theory’s focus on maintaining stability and harmony by addressing dysfunctions, such as lack of clarity in decision-making. When leaders provide clarity regarding their decisions and involve staff in the decision-making process, it fosters trust and a sense of shared purpose. Conversely, opaque leadership practices often lead to speculation and mistrust, further aggravating tensions among staff.

Additionally, another recurring concern in the findings was the communication style of school leaders. Participant DBT observed, “Conflicts arise when head teachers adopt an authoritarian attitude. Leaders who fail to engage their staff or solicit input are more likely to encounter resistance and conflict.” This critique reflects Rahim’s (2023) argument that participatory leadership approaches are more effective in reducing workplace tensions. Participatory leadership aligns with Structural-Functional Theory by promoting dialogue and inclusivity to restore balance and cooperation within the school environment. Authoritarian leadership styles, characterized by rigid top-down communication and limited engagement with subordinates, often alienate staff members and stifle collaboration. On the other hand,

participatory leadership encourages dialogue and inclusivity, which can mitigate potential conflicts and improve staff morale.

Interestingly, not all participants viewed leadership issues in the same light. Participant GCC3 suggested that while leadership styles can contribute to conflicts, some disputes arise from misunderstandings or exaggerated perceptions. Participant GCC3 remarked that –sometimes, what teachers perceive as favouritism or authoritarianism is simply the head teacher enforcing rules or making tough decisions. In such cases, the leader’s intent might not be biased, but the lack of communication creates room for misinterpretation.” This perspective is consistent with Annan’s (2017) observation that conflicts can sometimes be rooted in misperceptions rather than deliberate misconduct. Such instances highlight the critical role of effective communication in preventing unnecessary tensions. When leaders fail to articulate their intentions clearly, it creates an environment where assumptions and misinterpretations can flourish.

The findings also reflected elements of Social Conflict Theory, which emphasizes the role of power dynamics and structural inequalities in generating disputes. Leadership practices that reinforce power imbalances, such as favouritism or authoritarian decision-making, reflect broader systemic inequities that exacerbate conflicts. Conversely, Structural-Functional Theory was evident in the participants’ recommendations for transparent and participatory leadership, which aim to restore equilibrium and foster a collaborative work environment.

However, some participants attributed leadership-related conflicts to broader systemic and cultural factors, suggesting that challenges often transcended individual shortcomings and reflected institutional inefficiencies.



Participant DBH observed:

*Leadership challenges often stem from systemic pressures. Heads of schools are caught between administrative demands and the expectations of staff. While some conflicts are due to poor leadership practices, others result from the inherent tension in balancing these competing priorities.*

This observation aligns with Kesse's (2019) argument that conflicts in educational settings are often indicative of systemic inefficiencies rather than merely the inadequacies of individual leaders. Structural constraints, such as rigid administrative frameworks and limited autonomy for school heads, can create environments where even well-intentioned leaders struggle to meet the diverse needs of their stakeholders. These systemic challenges exacerbate workplace tensions, particularly when leaders are perceived as prioritizing administrative demands over the well-being of their staff.

Favouritism was another prominent concern highlighted in the data, as participant GCC1 noted:

*Favouritism on the part of the head teacher is a major issue. Some teachers enjoy benefits others do not, whether it is in resource allocation or professional recognition. This unequal treatment creates divisions among staff and makes collaboration challenging.*

This sentiment mirrors Annan's (2017) findings, which identified biased administrative practices as a significant source of workplace resentment. Such practices not only undermine trust but also hinder collaboration, as teachers feel demotivated when their contributions are not equitably recognized. Social Conflict Theory's emphasis on power imbalances is particularly relevant here, as favouritism reinforces perceptions of inequality and deepens divisions within the teaching staff.



The lack of transparency in decision-making processes further emerged as a critical issue. Participant PH highlighted:

*Conflict among teachers often arises from a lack of transparency by the head teacher. If decisions are made behind closed doors and teachers do not understand the rationale, it breeds mistrust. Transparency is critical to fostering trust and cooperation in any school.*

This aligns with Akparep et al. (2019), who emphasized that transparent leadership significantly mitigates tensions in educational environments. When decision-making processes are opaque, they fuel suspicions of bias and incompetence, eroding the foundations of trust and cooperation among staff. Conversely, transparent practices that involve teachers in decisions enhance accountability and foster a sense of shared purpose, reflecting the principles of Structural-Functional Theory, which advocates for collaborative mechanisms to restore equilibrium within organizations (Merton, 1957).

Communication styles also featured prominently in the discussion of leadership-related conflicts. Participant DBT remarked:

*Conflicts arise when head teachers adopt an authoritarian attitude. When teachers are excluded from decision-making, they feel undervalued, and this creates animosity. Leaders who fail to engage their staff or solicit input are more likely to encounter resistance and conflict.*

This critique reflects Rahim's (2023) findings, which argue that participatory leadership approaches are more effective in reducing workplace tensions. Authoritarian leadership styles, characterized by top-down decision-making and limited consultation, often alienate staff and amplify resistance. In contrast, participatory leadership fosters dialogue, inclusivity, and mutual respect, creating an environment where potential conflicts can be preemptively addressed.

Interestingly, while many participants criticized specific leadership practices, others highlighted the inherent tension faced by school leaders in navigating competing priorities. Participant DBH noted that systemic pressures often constrained leaders' ability to address staff concerns effectively. This duality echoes Annan's (2017) assertion that leadership challenges often arise from the interplay of individual practices and systemic inefficiencies, underscoring the complexity of leadership dynamics in educational settings.

The data strongly reflects the dual theoretical perspectives guiding this study. Social Conflict Theory's focus on power imbalances and structural inequalities is evident in participants' concerns about favouritism and exclusion. These issues underscore how systemic inefficiencies can exacerbate workplace conflicts. Simultaneously, the relevance of Structural-Functional Theory is evident in participants' recommendations for fostering transparency, collaboration, and inclusive decision-making. These mechanisms not only address immediate conflicts but also contribute to restoring balance and fostering a more harmonious school environment.

In synthesizing these perspectives, it becomes evident that leadership-related conflicts in educational settings are multifaceted, shaped by both systemic constraints and individual practices. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that combines systemic reforms, such as granting school heads greater autonomy, with targeted interventions to promote transparent and participatory leadership practices. By balancing these elements, schools can create an environment that minimizes conflicts and enhances collaboration, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes.

### 4.2.3 Interpersonal Issues

The findings underscored the prevalence of interpersonal tensions among teachers, often rooted in personality clashes, perceptions of superiority, and underlying social dynamics. These relational challenges were repeatedly identified as significant contributors to workplace discord. Participant PT highlighted the hierarchical structure within the GES, noting –conflict among teachers often stems from superiority and inferiority complexes. For instance, long-serving teachers may feel overshadowed by newer colleagues with higher ranks or recent promotions.” This observation mirrors findings by Kesse (2019), which emphasized that professional hierarchies frequently trigger interpersonal tensions, particularly in environments where promotions disrupt established social dynamics. Similarly, Jehn (1995) noted that status differentials within professional groups often lead to competition and resentment, which undermine workplace harmony. These dynamics are consistent with Social Conflict Theory, which identifies hierarchical power imbalances as a breeding ground for relational conflicts.

Participant DBH elaborated on how materialism and external comparisons fueled interpersonal disputes, stating:

*Some of the causes of conflict among basic teachers include lack of trust. Gossip is another cause of conflict among teachers. Teachers are also judged based on their possessions, such as the type of car they own or the quality of their clothing, fostering unhealthy comparisons and divisions.*

This perspective aligns with Rahim’s (2023) argument that social comparisons within professional communities often challenge individual self-esteem, resulting in relational tensions. As noted by Festinger (1954) in his Social Comparison Theory, individuals tend to evaluate their self-worth relative to others, particularly in competitive settings, which can exacerbate feelings of inadequacy or resentment. This

finding also reflects the conclusions of Travers (2017), who identified gossip and material comparisons as key sources of interpersonal conflict in educational institutions.

Gendered power dynamics were another critical factor highlighted in the data. Participant EH described situations where gender roles and assumptions exacerbated tensions, stating:

*Interpersonal issues such as communication breakdowns, personality clashes, or power struggles can definitely cause conflict. For instance, I have experienced situations where gender played a role, with male teachers saying, 'I am a man, so a woman cannot talk to me anyhow.' Such attitudes, coupled with low self-esteem or feelings of inferiority, can escalate conflicts.*

This reflects the findings of Shanka and Thuo (2017), who argued that gendered power dynamics often intensify relational tensions in organizational settings. Gender-based biases, particularly in male-dominated environments, contribute to communication barriers and feelings of marginalization, further aggravating workplace conflicts. This dynamic is consistent with Annan's (2017) findings, which emphasized the intersectionality of gender and power as a significant factor in workplace disputes.

The findings revealed that interpersonal issues frequently intensified when personal and professional boundaries were blurred. Fisher et al. (1981) contended that unresolved relational tensions within professional groups often spill over into personal interactions, thereby complicating conflict resolution processes. This dynamic becomes particularly pronounced in environments characterized by close-knit professional relationships intertwined with competitive pressures, as emphasized by Mayer (2000). Such scenarios resonate with Social Conflict Theory, which

underscores the effect of relational power dynamics and competition on escalating tensions within organizations.

Furthermore, the findings underscored the role of low self-esteem in fueling interpersonal conflicts. Teachers with diminished confidence were more likely to perceive comments or actions from colleagues as personal affronts, thereby exacerbating relational strain. Camacho et al. (2021) similarly highlighted that feelings of inadequacy or inferiority among teachers increased their sensitivity to perceived slights, making them more vulnerable to conflict. This observation aligns with Structural-Functional Theory, which suggests that individual psychological factors, such as self-esteem, can disrupt organizational harmony and impede the restoration of stability if left unaddressed. Ghaffar (2009), further noted that these dynamics are magnified in the absence of robust conflict resolution mechanisms, reinforcing the necessity of proactive and comprehensive interventions to mitigate such issues.

Despite the challenges posed by interpersonal tensions, the findings revealed a shared acknowledgment among participants of the potential for conflict resolution through improved understanding and collaboration. Participant GCC4 remarked:

*Since we are all not the same, it has to do with temperament. We are all from different backgrounds, and the way we react to issues differs. If we do not understand each other, misunderstandings can escalate into more significant issues.*

This perspective resonates with Brackett et al. (2011), who argued that fostering emotional intelligence among colleagues is critical to improving relational dynamics and reducing the prevalence of workplace disputes. By understanding the temperaments and perspectives of others, teachers can navigate differences more

constructively, transforming potential conflicts into opportunities for growth and collaboration.

The hierarchical nature of the GES system remained a recurring theme in the findings, particularly regarding its influence on interpersonal dynamics. Participant PT noted:

*Conflict among teachers often stems from superiority and inferiority complexes. For instance, long-serving teachers may feel overshadowed by newer colleagues with higher ranks or recent promotions. This hierarchy in the GES system can lead to conflicts of ideas and perceptions of authority.*

This observation aligns with the findings of Kesse (2019), who emphasized that professional hierarchies often disrupt established social dynamics, fostering resentment and competition. As Jehn (1995) highlighted, status-based conflicts arise when organizational structures unintentionally privilege certain groups over others, creating an imbalance of power that perpetuates interpersonal tensions. This dynamic is consistent with Social Conflict Theory, which underscores the role of perceived inequalities in generating disputes.

Issues of trust and social comparisons also featured prominently in the findings.

Participant DBH highlighted:

*Some of the causes of conflict among basic teachers include lack of trust. Gossip is another cause of conflict among teachers. Teachers are also judged based on their possessions, such as the type of car they own or the quality of their clothing, fostering unhealthy comparisons and divisions.*

This sentiment mirrors Rahim's (2023) argument that workplace conflicts often arise from breaches of trust and social comparisons that undermine individual self-esteem. Festinger's (1954) Social Comparison Theory further explains that individuals are prone to evaluating themselves against others in their social group, leading to feelings of inadequacy or superiority that exacerbate relational tensions. Travers (2017)

similarly noted that gossip and material comparisons are common sources of interpersonal discord in professional settings, as they erode trust and breed divisions among colleagues.

The role of gender dynamics in exacerbating interpersonal issues was also a significant finding. Participant EH shared:

*Interpersonal issues such as communication breakdowns, personality clashes, or power struggles can definitely cause conflict. For instance, I have experienced situations where gender played a role, with male teachers saying, 'I am a man, so a woman cannot talk to me anyhow.' Such attitudes, coupled with low self-esteem or feelings of inferiority, can escalate conflicts.*

This observation is consistent with Shanka and Thuo's (2017) findings, which identified gendered power dynamics as a key factor in relational tensions within organizational settings. Gender biases, particularly in traditionally male-dominated environments, contribute to communication breakdowns and feelings of marginalization among women, further compounding interpersonal conflicts. Annan (2017) also emphasized the intersectionality of gender and power as a critical element in understanding workplace disputes.

The findings highlighted that interpersonal issues were not limited to personality differences but were often exacerbated by structural and systemic factors. For example, low levels of emotional intelligence among staff and rigid institutional policies that failed to address relational tensions contributed to the escalation of conflicts. Camacho et al. (2021) argued that promoting emotional intelligence and fostering a culture of trust are essential strategies for mitigating these challenges.

Participants' suggestions for improving interpersonal dynamics reflect the principles of Structural-Functional Theory, which emphasizes the importance of fostering



cooperation and understanding to restore balance and harmony within organizations. Participant DBH's emphasis on addressing trust deficits and Participant GCC4's call for recognizing temperament differences both align with the theory's focus on creating structures that promote collaboration and reduce conflict (Merton, 1957). Similarly, Deutsch (1973) highlighted that constructive conflict management strategies, such as open communication and empathy, are essential for maintaining healthy workplace relationships.

Interpersonal tensions among teachers, often stemming from personality clashes, hierarchical structures, and social comparisons, reflect the intricate dynamics within educational settings. However, the findings reveal that such challenges can be addressed through strategies that foster emotional intelligence, mutual understanding, and inclusive practices. By focusing on individual-level interventions, such as emotional intelligence training, alongside systemic measures to promote trust, equity, and inclusivity, educational leaders can cultivate a more harmonious and collaborative environment. This holistic approach not only alleviates workplace conflicts but also strengthens the overall effectiveness of teaching teams.

#### **4.2.4 Communication Problems**

Communication challenges emerged as another critical factor contributing to conflicts among teachers. Participants frequently cited issues such as miscommunication, tone mismanagement, and the lack of direct dialogue as catalysts for workplace disputes.

Participant EH remarked:

*Conflict among teachers often arises from lack of communication. For example, the way we talk to each other, whether face-to-face or on the phone, can cause issues. When you are talking to someone in person, you may manage your tone better, even if annoyed. However, over the phone,*



*the other person cannot see your demeanor, which can escalate misunderstandings.*

This aligns with Travers' (2017) findings, which highlighted that tone and medium of communication are pivotal in either resolving or aggravating workplace conflicts. Similarly, Mayer (2000) emphasized that non-verbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions, often mitigate misunderstandings in face-to-face interactions, a factor absent in indirect forms of communication.

Participant DBT expanded on this, pointing to personality traits as compounding factors in communication breakdowns:

*Conflict among teachers often stems from miscommunication and misunderstandings. For instance, when a head teacher has an authoritative attitude, it may clash with the personal interests of teachers, creating tensions. Personality traits, such as being too harsh or inflexible, also contribute to conflicts.*

This reflects the work of Johnson and Johnson (1996), who argued that effective communication involves not only clarity but also adaptability to individual temperaments and emotional states. Similarly, Ghaffar (2009), noted that rigid leadership styles often exacerbate communication gaps, particularly when leaders fail to account for the emotional and personal contexts of their staff.

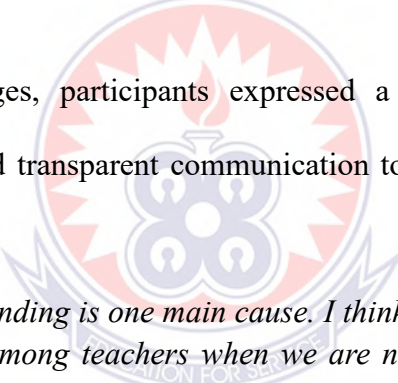
The data also revealed how indirect communication, such as gossip, undermined professional relationships. Participant DBH stated:

*Gossip is another cause of conflict among teachers. When someone shares personal information or a message with a colleague and it is later heard outside, it can lead to conflict. Gossip not only damages trust but also hinders teamwork.*

This echoed Annan's (2017) findings, which argued that informal communication, when misused, can exacerbate workplace tensions and erode professional trust. Camacho et al. (2021) similarly observed that gossip fosters a culture of distrust and division, undermining collaboration and the cohesion necessary for effective teamwork.

The detrimental effects of gossip are further explained by Festinger's (1954) Social Comparison Theory, which posits that individuals often evaluate themselves relative to their peers. Gossip amplifies these comparisons, fueling resentment and competition. Travers (2017) additionally highlighted how gossip disrupts workplace harmony, particularly when it is used as a tool for undermining colleagues.

Despite these challenges, participants expressed a shared understanding of the importance of open and transparent communication to mitigate conflicts. Participant GCC2 remarked:



*Misunderstanding is one main cause. I think misunderstanding contributes to conflict among teachers when we are not open enough to each other. Approaching each other in a positive manner can resolve many of these conflicts before they escalate.*

This perspective resonates with Deutsch's (1973) recommendation to foster a culture of dialogue and mutual respect to address communication challenges. Similarly, Rahim (2002) emphasized that open communication channels reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, creating a foundation for effective conflict resolution. Akparep et al. (2019) further argued that structured communication frameworks, such as regular staff meetings, promote transparency and trust among team members.

Structural-Functional Theory offers valuable insights into the role of communication as a central mechanism for maintaining harmony within educational systems. By

fostering open communication, schools can function as cohesive units, where misunderstandings are promptly addressed, and collaboration is prioritized. As noted by Merton (1957), effective communication serves as a stabilizing force that mitigates disruptions within organizations.

Conversely, Social Conflict Theory provides an explanatory lens for understanding how communication breakdowns exacerbate perceived inequalities and intensify conflicts. Rahim (2023) argued that unresolved communication gaps often reflect deeper systemic inequities, reinforcing power imbalances and fostering mistrust. For instance, when leaders fail to communicate their intentions clearly, it creates opportunities for speculation and misinterpretation, which deepen existing tensions.

Practical solutions to address these challenges include fostering emotional intelligence, as suggested by Brackett et al. (2011), and integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) into professional development programs (Durlak et al., 2011). These approaches equip teachers with the tools to manage their emotions and navigate interpersonal dynamics more effectively. Additionally, Mayer (2000) emphasized the importance of mediation training for school leaders to bridge communication gaps and resolve conflicts constructively.

The findings emphasise the pivotal role of communication in influencing workplace dynamics among teachers. Sources of conflict, such as miscommunication, inappropriate tone, and gossip, were identified as significant barriers to harmony. Participants pointed to the importance of open dialogue and mutual understanding as effective means of conflict resolution. A comprehensive approach is essential, combining systemic reforms that promote transparency and trust with individual-level strategies to develop emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. By addressing

these aspects collectively, educational leaders can foster more cohesive and collaborative school environments.

### 4.3 Effects of Conflict

#### 4.3.1 Academic Performance

The data consistently illustrated that conflicts among teachers had significant repercussions on students' academic performance. Participants frequently emphasized that workplace tensions disrupted the cohesion necessary for effective teaching, ultimately compromising the quality of education delivered to students. Participant DBH observed:

*Conflict among teachers can negatively affect academic performance. For instance, during PLC sessions where teachers are meant to share ideas and help one another, if two teachers are not on good terms, they may withhold assistance. This lack of teamwork means that students ultimately suffer, as they do not get the best from their teachers.*

This observation mirrors the findings of Akparep et al. (2019), who underscored the detrimental effect of discord among educators on students' ability to achieve learning objectives. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) highlighted the essential role of collaboration in enhancing student outcomes, arguing that schools function optimally only when educators work together to address challenges.

A lack of unity among teachers often results in missed opportunities for knowledge sharing and joint problem-solving. For instance, during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, which are intended to foster collaborative teaching strategies, unresolved conflicts can hinder collective action. Participant PT elucidated that "during PLC meetings, if teachers are not on good terms, they fail to collaborate effectively on strategies to address students' weaknesses. This lack of unity diminishes the quality of interventions and learning outcomes." This aligns with

Annan's (2017) findings, which emphasized that teacher cohesion is a critical component of fostering an environment conducive to academic success. Similarly, Ghaffar (2009) noted that collaboration among teachers is instrumental in implementing effective teaching methodologies, and any disruption to this unity invariably affects students' performance.

The emotional toll of teacher conflicts also emerged as a recurring theme in the data.

Participant GCC4 highlighted:

*If there is conflict and I am not in a good mood, I cannot put up my best, and this will affect the learners. A dispirited teacher is worse than inadequate furniture in the classroom, as their mood dictates their teaching effort.*

This perspective reflects the findings of Opoku-Asare et al. (2015), who argued that unresolved workplace tensions diminish educators' ability to perform effectively, resulting in suboptimal outcomes for students. Camacho et al. (2021) similarly observed that emotional well-being is a determinant of teaching quality, with low morale among teachers translating to reduced classroom engagement.

The disruptive effects of conflict extend beyond individual teachers, influencing broader classroom dynamics and learning outcomes. Participant CCT pointed out that "if a subject is taken from one teacher and given to another, and the latter performs better, students might discuss this, leading to jealousy and mistrust among teachers. Such animosities inevitably affect teaching quality and academic outcomes." This observation aligns with Travers' (2017) argument that changes in teacher assignments, particularly when prompted by conflicts, can create instability that confuses students and undermines their learning experience. Similarly, Rahim (2002) emphasized that

workplace conflicts often generate negative spillover effects, affecting not only those directly involved but also the broader institutional environment.

The findings also highlighted the detrimental effects of competition and disagreements over teaching methods. Divergent perspectives on pedagogy, compounded by interpersonal conflicts, often hinder the implementation of cohesive instructional strategies. Johnson and Johnson (1996) argued that teacher collaboration is essential for developing innovative approaches to address students' academic challenges, and any disruption to this collaboration negatively impacts learning outcomes.

Gossip and indirect communication further exacerbated these challenges, undermining the trust required for effective teamwork. As Participant DBH noted:

*Gossip is another cause of conflict among teachers. When someone shares personal information or a message with a colleague and it is later heard outside, it can lead to conflict. Gossip not only damages trust but also hinders teamwork.*

This perspective echoes Annan's (2017) findings, which identified gossip as a significant source of workplace tension, eroding trust and professional relationships. Festinger's (1954) Social Comparison Theory provides a theoretical lens for understanding how informal communication, when misused, can amplify social comparisons and foster resentment, ultimately disrupting the collaborative culture needed for academic success.

The broader implications of teacher conflicts for student outcomes were emphasized by Deutsch (1973), who argued that unresolved conflicts within organizational systems often hinder their effective functioning. In the context of schools, conflicts among teachers disrupt the harmony required to implement joint strategies for

addressing students' academic weaknesses. This finding is consistent with Merton's (1957) Structural-Functional Theory, which highlights the importance of maintaining balance within systems to ensure optimal performance.

The emotional and cognitive stress associated with teacher conflicts also has long-term implications for students. As noted by Brackett et al. (2011), students are highly perceptive of their teachers' emotional states, and conflicts among educators can create an environment of instability that affects students' ability to focus and engage. Durlak et al. (2011) similarly emphasized the importance of fostering emotionally supportive environments in schools, arguing that unresolved tensions among teachers undermine the psychological safety necessary for effective learning.

Practical solutions for mitigating these challenges include the implementation of conflict resolution mechanisms that prioritize transparency and teamwork. Akparep et al. (2019) highlighted the effectiveness of professional development programs aimed at enhancing collaboration and communication among teachers. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) argued for the establishment of structured platforms for dialogue, such as regular staff meetings, to address conflicts before they escalate.

Structural challenges, such as uneven workload distribution, also need to be addressed to minimize the triggers for conflict. Shanka and Thuo (2017) emphasized that equitable task allocation is critical for fostering a sense of fairness and reducing interpersonal tensions among teachers. This perspective is supported by Rahim (2023), who argued that addressing systemic inequities within organizations is essential for promoting harmony and collaboration.



The data revealed a direct link between teacher conflicts and reduced academic performance, highlighting the multifaceted effect of such tensions. Disruptions to collaborative efforts, the emotional strain on educators, and instability in classroom dynamics emerged as key factors undermining learning outcomes. To address these issues effectively, a combined strategy is necessary—one that includes systemic measures to strengthen transparency and teamwork, alongside targeted efforts to improve emotional well-being and interpersonal skills among teachers. Re-establishing harmony and fostering cooperation within teaching staff can significantly enhance both teacher performance and student achievement.

#### **4.3.2 Teacher Morale and Motivation**

Teacher morale and motivation were identified as significantly impacted by workplace conflicts. The data revealed that unresolved disputes created an environment of dissatisfaction, reducing teachers' engagement and enthusiasm for their roles. Participant GCC2 shared:

*Imagine I am having a conflict with a colleague teacher in the school. Each day in the morning before setting out to come to school, I would just be thinking about the conflict before I even get to the school—how I would deal with the person if the person tried to cross me throughout the day. So with this, it either stresses my mind, taking my attention away from whatever I am coming to do in the school to help the learners, or I would not even come to school at all to avoid the teacher.*

This statement underscores how conflicts not only disrupt teachers' mental well-being but also interfere with their ability to focus on professional responsibilities. These findings align with Ferrare and Phillippo's (2023) research, which highlighted the emotional toll of workplace disputes, often manifesting as reduced productivity in educational settings. Similarly, Travers (2017) noted that unresolved tensions create a



hostile work environment, leading to stress, absenteeism, and diminished teacher engagement.

Participant DBH elaborated on how conflicts could lead to absenteeism, stating:

*When there is conflict, teachers may not feel happy coming to school. Isolation from colleagues can lead to absenteeism, which affects the teacher's performance and the academic performance of the pupils. The lack of motivation and job satisfaction caused by unresolved conflicts reduces the teacher's effectiveness.*

This observation mirrors Opoku-Asare et al.'s (2015) findings, which emphasized that a lack of motivation and job satisfaction among teachers undermines their effectiveness and, by extension, student outcomes. The link between workplace conflicts and absenteeism is further supported by Rahim (2002), who argued that interpersonal tensions often lead to withdrawal behaviors as individuals attempt to avoid stress-inducing situations.

The systemic factors contributing to low morale were also highlighted in the data. Participant PT noted “low morale and motivation among teachers are common in conflict situations. Teachers may feel undervalued or unsupported, especially when resources are scarce. Combined with insufficient salaries and a lack of stakeholder engagement, this reduces job satisfaction.” This view resonates with Akparep et al. (2019), who identified resource limitations and administrative inefficiencies as common stressors in Ghanaian schools. Similarly, Ghaffar (2009) observed that inadequate support structures, coupled with unresolved conflicts, diminish teachers' sense of professional fulfillment, leading to disengagement and reduced performance.

Relational tensions among colleagues further exacerbate these issues, as noted by Participant GCC4:

*As teachers, we are all to carry out our duties effectively and efficiently. If a teacher is not doing the right thing, others may feel like they are doing everything alone. This can make others feel demotivated, thinking, 'We are all being paid the same, so why should I be doing all the work alone?' This can make others relax and not give their best.*

This observation reflects Johnson and Johnson's (1996) findings, which argued that perceptions of inequity in workload distribution contribute significantly to demotivation among staff. The lack of a collective sense of responsibility undermines collaboration and reduces the overall effectiveness of teaching teams. Mayer (2000) further emphasized that unresolved interpersonal disputes can erode trust and cooperation, both essential for maintaining high morale in educational institutions.

The emotional and psychological toll of conflicts also emerged as a recurring theme. Camacho et al. (2021) highlighted how unresolved tensions create chronic stress, reducing teachers' ability to engage with their roles effectively. Brackett et al. (2011) similarly emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence in mitigating the effects of workplace disputes, arguing that teachers who manage their emotions well are better equipped to maintain motivation and productivity.

The findings demonstrated that morale was often undermined by a combination of relational tensions, isolation, and systemic inefficiencies. These observations align with Leithwood et al.'s (2020) assertion that staff morale is essential for maintaining a productive and collaborative educational environment. When teachers feel unsupported or undervalued, their ability to perform at their best is compromised, which ultimately affects student outcomes.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Conflict Theory offers insights into how systemic inequalities and interpersonal disputes fuel dissatisfaction and reduce motivation. For example, power imbalances within schools, such as perceived favoritism or inequitable resource distribution, exacerbate tensions and diminish teachers' sense of fairness. Travers (2017) observed that addressing these structural inequalities is critical for fostering a more harmonious and productive work environment.

Conversely, Structural-Functional Theory emphasizes the importance of restoring equilibrium within the school system to ensure optimal performance. By addressing conflicts proactively and fostering collaboration among staff, schools can create an environment that supports both teacher morale and student success. Merton (1957) argued that functional organizations rely on cooperation and cohesion, and any disruption to these elements hinders overall effectiveness.

Practical solutions to address these challenges include implementing proactive conflict resolution strategies and fostering an inclusive work culture. Akparep et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of professional development programs aimed at enhancing collaboration and communication among teachers. These programs can equip educators with the skills to navigate interpersonal disputes constructively, reducing their effect on morale and motivation.

Similarly, Rahim (2002) recommended establishing structured platforms for dialogue, such as regular staff meetings or peer mediation programs, to address conflicts before they escalate. These initiatives not only resolve immediate tensions but also foster a culture of transparency and trust, which is essential for maintaining high morale.

Emotional support systems, such as professional counseling services, can also play a crucial role in addressing the psychological toll of conflicts. Brackett et al. (2011) emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence training in helping teachers manage stress and maintain motivation. Durlak et al. (2011) further recommended integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) programs into school systems to support both teachers and students in developing resilience and effective communication skills.

Addressing systemic inefficiencies is equally important for improving teacher morale. Shanka and Thuo (2017) argued that equitable resource distribution and workload management are critical for fostering a sense of fairness and reducing interpersonal tensions. Similarly, Ferrare and Phillippo (2023) emphasized that addressing resource constraints and administrative inefficiencies is essential for creating a supportive work environment.

The data highlighted the profound effect of workplace conflicts on teacher morale and motivation, with relational tensions, systemic barriers, and emotional stress standing out as key contributors to dissatisfaction and disengagement. Effectively addressing these challenges calls for a comprehensive approach that integrates conflict resolution techniques, robust emotional support mechanisms, and structural reforms. Cultivating a culture of collaboration, transparency, and fairness can empower educators, bolster morale, and positively influence both their performance and student achievement.

#### **4.3.3 Emotional and Psychological Well-being of Students**

The findings highlighted significant concerns regarding how teacher conflicts impacted the emotional and psychological well-being of students. Participants consistently emphasized the role of teacher behavior and interpersonal disputes in

shaping students' emotional health, with observations reflecting a shared understanding of the detrimental effects of such tensions. Participant PH highlighted that –when teachers quarrel or behave negatively in front of students, it impacts the students' mindset. The students may lose respect for their teachers and feel caught in the middle of these disagreements.” This observation mirrors findings by Opoku-Asare et al. (2015), who argued that students often internalize the stress of witnessing teacher conflicts, leading to emotional distress and disengagement from academic activities. Similarly, Travers (2017) emphasized that unresolved teacher disputes disrupt the stability and sense of safety students expect within their learning environment, creating a ripple effect that hinders their emotional well-being.

Participant PT highlighted the behavioral implications of teacher conflicts, stating:

*As teachers, we are role models for learners, so there should not be any situation where learners observe that relationships among teachers are not the best. Learners expect unity and good morals from us. If they see that teachers are not in good faith, it affects their moral development. They may also imitate the behavior, arguing or creating misunderstandings among themselves.*

This aligns with Leithwood et al. (2020), who argued that teachers' interactions significantly influence students' values and social behaviors. When students observe teachers engaging in disputes, it not only undermines their moral development but also fosters an environment where negative behaviors, such as conflict and division, are normalized. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory provides further insight into this dynamic, suggesting that children model behaviors they observe, particularly from authority figures like teachers.

Participant GCC2 provided a broader perspective on the long-term effects of such disputes, explaining:

*Most of the kids we have in our classrooms are already facing parental issues and money issues, so sometimes the school becomes their home. When they get to the classroom and see teachers fighting each other, it affects them. For example, a teacher might fight with a colleague teacher in front of the kids. The kids try to relate whatever is happening in the school to their experiences at home. At the end of the day, the child might decide to stay at home, thinking, 'Even if I go to school, I will not get the peace of mind I used to have in the classroom and the school.'*

This observation underscores how teacher conflicts exacerbate existing challenges in students' lives. As noted by Durlak et al. (2011), schools often serve as sanctuaries for students experiencing difficulties at home, and disruptions within the school environment can compound their emotional struggles. Rahim (2002) similarly highlighted the importance of maintaining positive teacher interactions to foster a safe and supportive atmosphere conducive to student well-being.

The findings also revealed that teacher disputes erode trust, which is critical to students' emotional security. Participant CCT noted:

*Students model their behavior on their teachers, so when teachers engage in disputes, students may feel they have no one to turn to for guidance. This lack of trust can create emotional distress for students, impairing their focus and academic progress.*

This sentiment aligns with Akparep et al. (2019), who emphasized the role of teacher-student relationships in supporting academic and emotional development. When students perceive their teachers as divided or hostile, it diminishes their sense of trust and connection, impairing their ability to seek guidance or support. Mayer (2000) further argued that trust is a cornerstone of effective educational environments, and its absence disrupts both emotional and academic growth.

Teacher disputes also contribute to increased anxiety and disengagement among students. Camacho et al. (2021) observed that exposure to negative interactions

among authority figures heightens students' stress levels, leading to symptoms of anxiety and withdrawal. This aligns with Brackett et al. (2011), who emphasized the critical role of emotional intelligence in mitigating the effect of conflicts on student well-being. Teachers who manage their emotions effectively can prevent disputes from escalating in front of students, thereby preserving the classroom's supportive atmosphere.

Moreover, the effect of teacher conflicts on students extends beyond the immediate classroom environment. Annan (2017) noted that students often carry the emotional burden of witnessing disputes into other areas of their lives, affecting their interactions with peers and family members. This spillover effect highlights the importance of addressing teacher conflicts not only for the benefit of the educators involved but also to protect the broader well-being of students.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Conflict Theory provides insights into how teacher disputes perpetuate systemic inequalities that undermine students' psychological well-being. For instance, power imbalances and favoritism among teachers create an environment of division, which students internalize as a reflection of broader societal dynamics (Rahim, 2023). Structural-Functional Theory complements this perspective by emphasizing the need for harmony and cooperation within schools to maintain their role as supportive systems (Merton, 1957).

Practical strategies for mitigating the effect of teacher conflicts on students include implementing proactive conflict resolution mechanisms. Akparep et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of structured mediation programs that address disputes before they escalate, ensuring that conflicts do not disrupt the school environment. Additionally, Durlak et al. (2011) recommended integrating social and emotional



learning (SEL) programs into school curricula to equip both teachers and students with the skills to navigate interpersonal challenges constructively.

Counseling services can also play a critical role in supporting students exposed to teacher conflicts. Travers (2017) emphasized the importance of providing students with safe spaces to process their emotions and develop resilience in the face of challenges. Brackett et al. (2011) similarly advocated for professional development programs focused on emotional intelligence, enabling teachers to model positive behaviors and maintain supportive relationships with their students.

Addressing systemic factors contributing to teacher disputes is equally important. Shanka and Thuo (2017) argued that fostering equitable policies and transparent communication among staff can reduce the prevalence of visible conflicts, thereby protecting students from their adverse effects. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) emphasized the role of inclusive leadership in promoting harmony and cohesion within schools, ensuring that the learning environment remains supportive for all stakeholders.

The findings underscored the significant effect of teacher interactions on student well-being, highlighting how disputes among educators can disrupt the emotional stability and psychological security that students rely upon in their school environment. This disruption often leads to diminished academic engagement and hinders personal development. Effectively addressing these challenges necessitates a comprehensive strategy that incorporates conflict resolution programs, emotional intelligence training, and systemic reforms aimed at promoting harmony among staff. By prioritising these measures, educational leaders can uphold schools as safe and



supportive spaces, safeguarding the emotional and psychological health of their students.

#### **4.4 Conflict Management**

##### **4.4.1 Formal Mechanisms**

Formal mechanisms for conflict resolution emerged as a prominent theme in the data, with participants detailing the strategies employed to manage disputes among teachers. These mechanisms often involved administrative interventions, including teacher transfers, mediation committees, and referrals to higher authorities. Participant CCT explained:

*Teacher transfers are often initiated by school heads to address conflicts. When two teachers cannot work together, the head teacher may request a transfer for one of them to another school. While this resolves the immediate issue, it does not address the root causes of the conflict.*

This observation aligns with the findings of Akparep et al. (2019), who argued that administrative actions like transfers often function as reactive measures, addressing symptoms rather than the underlying causes of workplace disputes. Similarly, Travers (2017) noted that while transfers may provide immediate relief, they fail to tackle relational tensions or systemic issues, potentially allowing conflicts to resurface in new contexts.

The use of mediation committees was another common strategy identified in the data.

Participant GCC4 described the mediation process:

*The issue is taken to the directorate, where there is either a guidance and counseling unit or a committee that addresses the matter. The committee includes representatives from the school and the district education office, ensuring that all parties are heard.*

This perspective reflects recommendations by Opoku-Asare et al. (2015), who emphasized the importance of structured mediation processes in fostering equitable resolutions. Mediation committees, when effectively constituted, ensure that conflicts are addressed through a participatory approach, promoting fairness and accountability. Rahim (2002) also highlighted that mediation fosters a collaborative environment, encouraging open dialogue among conflicting parties.

Participant DBH highlighted confidentiality as a critical challenge in implementing formal mechanisms:

*Confidentiality is a major challenge in implementing conflict resolution mechanisms. When sensitive issues are not handled discreetly, it undermines the process and discourages teachers from coming forward. This creates an environment where conflicts fester rather than being addressed.*

This observation echoes Rahim's (2023) findings, which identified trust and confidentiality as critical components of effective conflict management. A lack of discretion in handling sensitive matters often exacerbates tensions, creating a culture of fear and mistrust. Camacho et al. (2021) similarly argued that breaches of confidentiality erode the legitimacy of formal mechanisms, deterring individuals from engaging in resolution processes.

In cases where conflicts escalated beyond the capacity of school-level interventions, participants described the involvement of higher authorities. Participant EH noted:

*Sometimes, conflicts escalate to the point where higher authorities must intervene. In such cases, the district directorate assigns mediators who evaluate the situation and recommend a course of action. These interventions help maintain order but are resource-intensive and time-consuming.*

This aligns with the work of Leithwood et al. (2020), who observed that external interventions often serve as last resorts in managing workplace disputes. While these measures can provide impartial evaluations and enforce resolutions, they are not sustainable in addressing frequent conflicts. Akparep et al. (2019) argued that reliance on higher authorities highlights systemic gaps in conflict resolution frameworks at the school level.

The findings also underscored the limitations of formal mechanisms in addressing deeper relational and systemic issues. For example, transfers and administrative directives often bypass the interpersonal dimensions of conflicts, leaving unresolved tensions among affected parties. As noted by Shanka and Thuo (2017), structural interventions alone cannot foster the trust and understanding needed for long-term conflict resolution. Structural-Functional Theory emphasizes that institutions must balance procedural efficiency with relational harmony to ensure stability and cohesion (Merton, 1957).

Moreover, the data revealed the resource-intensive nature of formal mechanisms. Administrative efforts to mediate conflicts or transfer teachers require time, personnel, and financial resources, often straining the capacity of educational institutions. Travers (2017) argued that resource constraints frequently limit the effectiveness of formal conflict resolution mechanisms, particularly in underfunded school systems.

To enhance the effectiveness of formal mechanisms, the findings suggest several practical recommendations. First, regular training for administrators and mediators is essential to equip them with the skills to address conflicts constructively. Rahim

(2023) emphasized that well-trained mediators can navigate complex disputes more effectively, fostering equitable outcomes and reducing recurrence.

Second, incorporating restorative practices, such as dialogue-based resolution approaches, can address the relational dimensions of conflicts. Deutsch (1973) highlighted the importance of fostering mutual understanding and empathy in resolving disputes, arguing that collaborative approaches often yield more sustainable solutions. Restorative practices encourage conflicting parties to articulate their perspectives, identify shared goals, and rebuild trust.

Third, ensuring confidentiality in conflict resolution processes is crucial to encourage participation and build trust. Brackett et al. (2011) advocated for transparent but discreet handling of sensitive issues, emphasizing that confidentiality is a cornerstone of effective conflict management. By safeguarding sensitive information, schools can create an environment where individuals feel secure in seeking resolutions.

Additionally, fostering an inclusive and transparent work culture can preemptively address the root causes of conflicts. Akparep et al. (2019) argued that inclusive policies and equitable resource distribution reduce perceptions of favoritism and inequity, minimizing the triggers for disputes. Camacho et al. (2021) similarly noted that transparent communication fosters a sense of fairness and accountability, enhancing staff cohesion.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Conflict Theory provides valuable insights into the power dynamics and structural inequalities underlying teacher disputes. For instance, perceived favoritism or inequitable treatment often reflects broader systemic inequities that perpetuate tensions (Rahim, 2023). Structural-Functional Theory

complements this perspective by emphasizing the need for institutional interventions to restore stability and harmony within educational systems (Merton, 1957).

The findings illuminated both the effectiveness and shortcomings of formal mechanisms for conflict resolution in educational settings. While approaches such as administrative interventions, mediation committees, and external referrals can address immediate disputes, they often fall short in resolving deeper relational and systemic challenges. Strengthening these mechanisms demands a multifaceted strategy, incorporating targeted training, restorative practices, and a steadfast commitment to confidentiality and inclusivity. By embedding these enhancements, educational leaders can foster a more cohesive and supportive work environment, promoting positive outcomes for both teachers and students.

#### **4.4.2 Informal Mechanisms**

The data revealed that informal conflict resolution mechanisms played a crucial role in addressing disputes among teachers, often functioning as complementary strategies to formal approaches. These mechanisms were particularly valued for their flexibility, cultural relevance, and capacity to foster trust among disputing parties. Participants frequently highlighted the effectiveness of leveraging community leaders and social networks to mediate conflicts. Participant PT shared:

*When conflicts arise, we sometimes involve community opinion leaders, such as assembly members or respected parents, to help resolve the issues. This is particularly effective because these individuals understand the dynamics of the school and the community.*

This observation aligns with the findings of Opoku-Asare et al. (2015), who emphasized the importance of culturally grounded informal mechanisms in managing disputes within Ghanaian schools. Community leaders often serve as trusted

mediators, leveraging their deep understanding of local relationships and norms to facilitate equitable resolutions. Similarly, Travers (2017) noted that community-driven approaches enhance trust and accountability, particularly in environments where formal mechanisms may lack cultural resonance.

Avoidance was another common informal strategy identified in the data. Participant EH remarked, “many teachers prefer to avoid confrontation altogether, hoping the issue will resolve itself. While this can prevent immediate escalation, it often leaves the underlying problems unaddressed.” This perspective corresponds with the findings of Annan (2017), who argued that avoidance, while useful in de-escalating tensions temporarily, often risks perpetuating unresolved issues. Rahim (2002) similarly noted that avoidance strategies can lead to suppressed emotions and latent conflicts, which may resurface with greater intensity in the future. From the perspective of Structural-Functional Theory, avoidance strategies may hinder the restoration of organizational equilibrium, as unresolved issues disrupt long-term harmony and stability.

Participants also emphasized the role of personal mediation by school leaders. Participant AVH described their approach, “sometimes, the head teacher might invite both parties into their office for an informal discussion. By sitting down and listening to both sides, I have been able to resolve disputes without involving higher authorities.” This approach reflects Rahim’s (2023) emphasis on dialogue and mutual understanding as effective tools for de-escalating workplace conflicts. Informal discussions facilitated by school leaders often allow for a more personalized and empathetic resolution process, fostering trust and cooperation among staff. Johnson and Johnson (1996) similarly highlighted the importance of direct communication in resolving interpersonal disputes, noting that such methods often lead to more

sustainable outcomes. This aligns with Social Conflict Theory, which underscores the importance of dialogue in addressing power imbalances and fostering mutual understanding to reduce workplace tensions.

The ineffectiveness of interventions was a further source of frustration among stakeholders. Participant PT remarked, “Even when conflicts are resolved, the solutions are often temporary. For example, transferring one teacher to another school does not solve the underlying problem. This creates frustration among teachers who see no real change.” This reflects Opoku-Asare et al.’s (2015) findings, which noted that administrative measures like transfers often serve as short-term fixes rather than addressing the root causes of conflicts. Rahim (2023) similarly argued that conflict resolution mechanisms must prioritize sustainable solutions to prevent the recurrence of disputes. From the perspective of Structural-Functional Theory, temporary fixes fail to address underlying dysfunctions, preventing the restoration of equilibrium and stability within the institution. Without addressing underlying issues, interventions risk becoming repetitive and ineffective, further diminishing stakeholder confidence.

The reliance on informal mechanisms was frequently tied to the personalities involved. As Participant GCC2 observed “the use of informal approaches often depends on the personalities involved. If one party is unwilling to compromise or engage, these methods can fail. Formal mechanisms then become necessary to ensure accountability and resolution.” This statement underscores the limitations of informal strategies, particularly when one or both parties are unwilling to engage in dialogue. Travers (2017) noted that informal approaches are highly context-dependent, with their success contingent on the willingness of individuals to participate in good faith. Akparep et al. (2019) also highlighted the risk of bias in informal processes, as



outcomes may be influenced by personal relationships or power dynamics rather than objective considerations.

Despite these limitations, the data underscored the significant role informal mechanisms play in fostering conflict resolution, particularly in culturally sensitive environments. Community-driven approaches and personal mediation often build trust and encourage dialogue, reflecting the principles of Social Conflict Theory, which emphasizes the importance of addressing relational inequalities and power imbalances. For example, Rahim (2002) argued that informal mechanisms often focus on rebuilding relationships and fostering mutual understanding, addressing the root causes of disputes rather than just their symptoms.

One notable advantage of informal mechanisms is their ability to prevent disputes from escalating into more formalized processes, which can be time-consuming and resource-intensive. Durlak et al. (2011) highlighted that early intervention through informal discussions often resolves conflicts before they disrupt the broader organizational environment. Similarly, Deutsch (1973) emphasized the value of informal communication channels in maintaining organizational harmony, noting that these channels foster open dialogue and mutual respect.

However, the data also revealed significant challenges associated with informal mechanisms. A reliance on avoidance, for instance, often left the underlying causes of conflicts unaddressed. As noted by Brackett et al. (2011), avoidance strategies can lead to unresolved tensions that manifest as chronic stress or disengagement among staff. Mayer (2000) similarly argued that unresolved conflicts diminish trust and cohesion, ultimately undermining organizational effectiveness.



The reliance on personality-driven outcomes was another limitation identified in the data. When the success of informal mechanisms hinges on individual willingness to engage, the resolution process becomes inconsistent and potentially inequitable. Shanka and Thuo (2017) emphasized the need for structured frameworks to guide informal mechanisms, ensuring that they are applied consistently and fairly across different contexts.

To enhance the effectiveness of informal mechanisms, the findings suggest several practical recommendations. First, integrating training programs for teachers and administrators can help build the skills necessary for constructive dialogue and mediation. Akparep et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of equipping school leaders with conflict resolution skills, enabling them to navigate interpersonal disputes more effectively. Such training can also help mitigate the risk of bias, ensuring that informal mechanisms are applied equitably.

Second, fostering a culture of openness and transparency within schools can strengthen the effect of informal mechanisms. Camacho et al. (2021) argued that trust is a critical component of successful conflict resolution, and schools that prioritize open communication are better positioned to address disputes informally. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) noted that fostering inclusive environments encourages individuals to engage in dialogue, reducing the likelihood of unresolved tensions.

Finally, integrating informal mechanisms into broader conflict management frameworks can enhance their effectiveness. Rahim (2023) recommended combining informal approaches with formal strategies, ensuring that disputes are addressed holistically. For instance, schools could establish hybrid models where informal

discussions serve as a first step, with the option to escalate unresolved conflicts to formal mediation processes.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Conflict Theory provides a strong explanatory basis for understanding the role of informal mechanisms. These strategies often seek to address power dynamics and relational inequalities at their core, fostering a sense of justice and equity among disputing parties (Rahim, 2023). Structural-Functional Theory complements this view by emphasizing the need for cohesion and harmony within organizations. Informal mechanisms contribute to this balance by addressing conflicts in ways that align with cultural norms and organizational values (Merton, 1957).

The findings emphasised the vital role of informal mechanisms in managing teacher disputes, especially within culturally sensitive environments. Community-driven approaches, personal mediation, and avoidance strategies emerged as prevalent methods, offering both benefits and challenges. While these mechanisms promote trust and open dialogue, their dependence on personality-driven dynamics and avoidance highlights the necessity of embedding them within structured conflict management frameworks. By integrating informal methods with formal strategies, educational leaders can establish a holistic approach to conflict resolution, effectively addressing both relational and systemic concerns.

## **4.5 Challenges in Conflict Management**

### **4.5.1 Systemic barriers**

The findings revealed several systemic barriers that impeded the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms within schools. These barriers included bureaucratic inefficiencies, breaches of confidentiality, and resource limitations, all of which

compounded existing tensions among teachers and undermined trust in formal processes. Participants emphasized that addressing these systemic challenges is critical to fostering a cohesive and harmonious work environment.

One significant barrier identified in the data was inefficiency within formal conflict resolution processes. Participant PH explained:

*One of the main challenges is inefficiency within formal processes. When a conflict is reported to the district office, it can take weeks or months for a resolution. This delay often worsens the conflict, as teachers feel unsupported.*

This observation aligns with the findings of Akparep et al. (2019), who noted that bureaucratic delays in conflict management systems often exacerbate workplace tensions. Travers (2017) similarly argued that prolonged resolution timelines diminish trust in formal mechanisms, creating frustration and disengagement among staff. Leithwood et al. (2020) further highlighted that inefficiencies in administrative processes often lead to feelings of neglect and isolation among teachers, which can escalate conflicts rather than resolving them.

Another critical barrier was the lack of confidentiality in handling disputes. Participant DBH shared –confidentiality is rarely upheld during conflict resolution. For example, when teachers report sensitive issues, these details sometimes leak to other staff members. This undermines trust and discourages others from using formal channels.” This perspective mirrors Rahim’s (2023) findings, which emphasized that breaches of confidentiality erode the credibility of conflict resolution mechanisms. When sensitive information is mishandled, it not only discourages individuals from reporting issues but also creates an environment of mistrust. Mayer (2000) similarly noted that confidentiality is a cornerstone of effective conflict management, as it

ensures that individuals feel secure in seeking resolutions without fear of reprisal or public exposure.

Resource limitations were also highlighted as a significant systemic barrier. Participant GCC3 remarked –many schools do not have the resources to effectively manage conflicts. For instance, we lack trained mediators or even spaces where teachers can meet to discuss their issues.” This observation reflects the challenges identified by Opoku-Asare et al. (2015), who argued that inadequate resources hinder the implementation of conflict management strategies in Ghanaian schools. Similarly, Akparep et al. (2019) noted that resource constraints often force schools to rely on ad hoc and informal mechanisms, which may lack the structure and impartiality needed for effective resolutions. Camacho et al. (2021) further emphasized that insufficient investment in conflict resolution infrastructure, such as training programs and dedicated mediation spaces, undermines the capacity of schools to address disputes comprehensively.

The findings also highlighted the role of unclear policies and guidelines as systemic barriers. Participant DBT noted –in many cases, there are no clear steps to follow when a conflict arises. Teachers are left to navigate these issues on their own, which often leads to inconsistent and unsatisfactory outcomes.” This aligns with the work of Shanka and Thuo (2017), who observed that the absence of clear policies creates ambiguity in conflict resolution processes, increasing the likelihood of unresolved disputes. Rahim (2002) similarly argued that well-defined protocols are essential for ensuring fairness and consistency in managing workplace conflicts.

The cultural dynamics within schools further complicated conflict resolution efforts. Participant EH explained –in some cases, cultural expectations and hierarchies

prevent teachers from speaking openly about their grievances. For example, younger teachers may feel uncomfortable challenging their seniors, even when they are in the right.” This perspective resonates with the findings of Annan (2017), who noted that hierarchical structures in Ghanaian schools often inhibit open dialogue, perpetuating unresolved tensions. Bandura’s (1977) Social Learning Theory provides additional insight, suggesting that cultural norms and power dynamics shape individuals’ behavior, often discouraging assertiveness in conflict situations.

From a theoretical perspective, Structural-Functional Theory offers valuable insights into these findings. The systemic barriers identified in the data disrupted the stability and cohesion of the school environment, creating imbalances that hindered its effective functioning (Merton, 1957). By failing to address these barriers, schools risk perpetuating a cycle of unresolved conflicts, which undermines both teacher morale and student outcomes.

Practical solutions for addressing these systemic barriers include enhancing transparency and efficiency within formal mechanisms. Akparep et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of streamlining administrative processes to reduce delays and ensure timely resolutions. Implementing digital platforms for conflict reporting and tracking could also improve efficiency, as suggested by Travers (2017). Such systems provide real-time updates and ensure accountability, fostering trust in formal mechanisms.

Ensuring confidentiality is another critical step. Rahim (2023) recommended establishing clear protocols for handling sensitive information, including training administrators and mediators on the importance of discretion. Mayer (2000) further

advocated for the use of anonymized reporting systems, which allow individuals to raise concerns without fear of exposure.

Addressing resource limitations requires increased investment in conflict resolution infrastructure. Opoku-Asare et al. (2015) highlighted the need for dedicated mediation spaces and trained personnel to manage disputes effectively. Camacho et al. (2021) similarly emphasized the importance of professional development programs for teachers and administrators, equipping them with the skills to navigate conflicts constructively.

Establishing clear policies and guidelines is also essential for overcoming systemic barriers. Rahim (2002) recommended developing standardized conflict resolution protocols that outline the steps to be followed in addressing disputes. These policies should be communicated to all staff to ensure consistency and transparency. Leithwood et al. (2020) further emphasized the importance of aligning these protocols with the cultural and organizational context of schools, ensuring that they are both practical and effective.

Promoting a culture of open dialogue can help address cultural barriers to conflict resolution. Annan (2017) suggested that schools establish regular forums for staff to discuss grievances and share feedback in a safe and supportive environment. Such initiatives encourage teachers to voice their concerns openly, reducing the likelihood of unresolved tensions. Brackett et al. (2011) also highlighted the importance of fostering emotional intelligence among staff, enabling them to manage interpersonal dynamics more effectively.

The data highlighted the significant Effect of systemic barriers on the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms in schools. Challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, breaches of confidentiality, resource limitations, and cultural influences were identified as key factors contributing to the persistence of unresolved disputes. Overcoming these obstacles necessitates a comprehensive strategy that integrates policy reforms, targeted infrastructure investments, and capacity-building efforts. By adopting these measures, educational leaders can develop more equitable and efficient frameworks for conflict resolution, promoting harmony and productivity within the school environment.

#### **4.5.2 Stakeholder Dissatisfaction**

The data revealed significant dissatisfaction among stakeholders regarding how conflicts were managed within schools. Perceptions of bias, a lack of inclusivity, and the ineffectiveness of interventions were highlighted as key sources of discontent. These findings underscored the critical need for reforms to foster trust and collaboration in conflict resolution mechanisms.

One recurring theme was the perception of bias in conflict resolution processes. Participant AVH observed that “teachers and stakeholders often feel dissatisfied with conflict management processes because they perceive bias. For instance, if a teacher feels that the head teacher favors one party over the other, they lose trust in the process.” This perspective corresponds to the findings of Kesse (2019), who emphasized that perceived inequities in conflict resolution undermine stakeholder confidence and disengage teachers from the process. Rahim (2002) similarly argued that fairness and impartiality are essential for building trust in conflict management systems. This analysis aligns with Social Conflict Theory, which highlights how



perceived inequalities and favoritism can generate exclusion, mistrust, and tension within organizational systems. When stakeholders perceive bias, it creates a sense of exclusion and mistrust, further exacerbating workplace tensions.

The exclusion of teachers from decision-making processes was another critical source of dissatisfaction. Participant GCC4 stated, “There is often no open forum for teachers to voice their concerns. Decisions are made by the head teacher or district officials without consulting those involved in the conflict. This lack of inclusivity worsens the situation.” This observation resonates with Annan’s (2017) findings, which highlighted the importance of participatory approaches in fostering trust and accountability in conflict resolution. Akparep et al. (2019) also noted that the exclusion of stakeholders from decision-making processes perpetuates a culture of top-down management, which undermines the effectiveness of resolutions. This connects with Structural-Functional Theory, which emphasizes the need for inclusive frameworks to maintain harmony and cooperation within an organization. Travers (2017) argued that inclusive frameworks are essential for ensuring that all parties feel heard and valued, which ultimately contributes to more sustainable outcomes.

The ineffectiveness of interventions was a further source of frustration among stakeholders. PT1 remarked, “Even when conflicts are resolved, the solutions are often temporary. For example, transferring one teacher to another school does not solve the underlying problem. This creates frustration among teachers who see no real change.” This reflects Opoku-Asare et al.’s (2015) findings, which noted that administrative measures like transfers often serve as short-term fixes rather than addressing the root causes of conflicts. Rahim (2023) similarly argued that conflict resolution mechanisms must prioritize sustainable solutions to prevent the recurrence



of disputes. From the perspective of Structural-Functional Theory, temporary fixes fail to address underlying dysfunctions, preventing the restoration of equilibrium and stability within the institution. Without addressing underlying issues, interventions risk becoming repetitive and ineffective, further diminishing stakeholder confidence.

The lack of acknowledgment of teachers' concerns also emerged as a critical barrier to satisfaction. Participant CCT explained –many teachers do not feel heard or valued in the conflict resolution process. This lack of acknowledgment makes them disengaged from the school environment, which affects their motivation and performance.” This perspective mirrors the findings of Johnson and Johnson (1996), who emphasized that recognizing and addressing stakeholder concerns is essential for fostering engagement and trust in conflict resolution processes. Mayer (2000) similarly noted that when individuals feel ignored or undervalued, it not only undermines their commitment to the organization but also perpetuates a cycle of disengagement and dissatisfaction.

The findings also revealed systemic challenges that contributed to stakeholder dissatisfaction. Bureaucratic inefficiencies, such as delays in addressing disputes, often compounded frustrations. Participant EH noted –when conflicts are reported to higher authorities, it can take weeks or months for a resolution. This delay makes stakeholders feel unsupported and ignored, which worsens the conflict.” This observation aligns with the work of Leithwood et al. (2020), who highlighted that inefficiencies in administrative processes erode stakeholder confidence and exacerbate workplace tensions. Travers (2017) argued that timely and efficient responses are critical for maintaining trust in conflict management systems, particularly in environments where delays can escalate tensions.

Confidentiality breaches were another systemic issue that fueled dissatisfaction. As noted by Rahim (2023), the mishandling of sensitive information during conflict resolution processes creates mistrust and discourages stakeholders from engaging with formal mechanisms. Akparep et al. (2019) similarly emphasized that confidentiality is a cornerstone of effective conflict management, and its absence undermines the legitimacy of resolutions.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Conflict Theory provides valuable insights into stakeholder dissatisfaction by highlighting the role of perceived inequities in fueling tensions. When stakeholders feel excluded or perceive bias in conflict resolution processes, it reflects broader systemic inequalities that undermine trust and collaboration. Structural-Functional Theory complements this view by emphasizing the need for systemic harmony and the restoration of balance within organizational frameworks. Merton (1957) argued that organizations must address structural inefficiencies and relational tensions to maintain stability and cohesion.

The findings suggest several practical implications for addressing stakeholder dissatisfaction. First, fostering transparency and inclusivity in decision-making processes is essential. Akparep et al. (2019) recommended establishing platforms for open dialogue, such as regular staff meetings or conflict resolution forums, to ensure that all voices are heard. Deutsch (1973) similarly emphasized that participatory approaches build trust and accountability, creating a sense of ownership among stakeholders.

Second, implementing training programs for administrators and mediators can help enhance the fairness and effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms. Rahim (2023) highlighted the importance of equipping school leaders with the skills to

navigate disputes impartially and constructively. Brackett et al. (2011) also advocated for the integration of emotional intelligence training, enabling leaders to manage interpersonal dynamics more effectively and foster trust among stakeholders. This corresponds to Structural-Functional Theory, which underscores the importance of equipping organizational leaders with the tools to address dysfunctions and promote stability.

Third, addressing systemic inefficiencies, such as delays and confidentiality breaches, is critical for restoring stakeholder confidence. Travers (2017) recommended streamlining administrative processes through the use of digital platforms for conflict reporting and tracking, ensuring timely responses and greater transparency. Mayer (2000) further suggested the adoption of anonymized reporting systems to protect confidentiality and encourage engagement. These recommendations resonate with Social Conflict Theory, which highlights the role of systemic barriers and inequities in perpetuating organizational tensions, and the necessity of addressing these to reduce conflict.

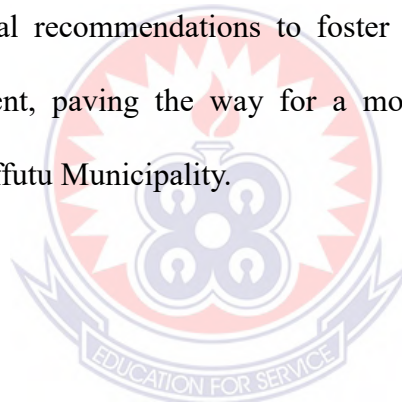
Finally, conflict resolution mechanisms must prioritize sustainable solutions that address the root causes of disputes. Opoku-Asare et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of moving beyond reactive measures, such as transfers, to implement proactive strategies that foster long-term harmony. Shanka and Thuo (2017) similarly argued for the integration of restorative practices, such as mediation and dialogue-based approaches, to rebuild relationships and prevent the recurrence of conflicts. This aligns with Structural-Functional Theory, which advocates for strategies that restore equilibrium and long-term stability within institutions by addressing underlying issues.

The findings revealed considerable dissatisfaction among stakeholders with existing conflict resolution processes in schools. Key challenges included perceptions of bias, a lack of inclusivity, and ineffective interventions, all of which eroded trust and limited engagement. Tackling these issues necessitates a holistic approach focused on fostering transparency, ensuring inclusivity, and promoting sustainable practices. By prioritising these elements, educational leaders can develop conflict resolution frameworks that address stakeholder concerns effectively, contributing to a more harmonious and productive school environment.

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter explored the dynamics of teacher conflicts in basic schools within the Effutu Municipality, focusing on their causes, impacts, and management mechanisms. Systemic issues such as unequal workload distribution, favoritism, and authoritarian leadership practices emerged as key triggers, compounded by interpersonal challenges like personality clashes, miscommunication, and gossip. These conflicts often disrupted workplace harmony, undermining teacher collaboration and trust. Drawing on Social Conflict Theory, the findings highlighted how power imbalances and structural inequities fuel disputes, while Structural-Functional Theory emphasized the destabilizing effects of these tensions on the school environment. Furthermore, the study revealed how unresolved conflicts diminished teacher morale and reduced job satisfaction, negatively affecting classroom effectiveness and contributing to a hostile work environment. The ripple effects extended to students, whose academic performance and emotional well-being were adversely impacted by the strained dynamics among their educators.

Transitioning to conflict resolution mechanisms, the chapter examined both formal and informal approaches, each with distinct strengths and limitations. Formal strategies, such as mediation and transfers, offered structured solutions but often failed to address the underlying relational issues. Informal approaches, including peer mediation and the involvement of community leaders, proved culturally relevant but lacked consistency and systemic support. Systemic barriers such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, breaches of confidentiality, and stakeholder dissatisfaction further complicated conflict resolution efforts. The findings underscored the need for inclusive, transparent frameworks that integrate structural and relational strategies to mitigate these challenges. By synthesizing these insights, the chapter provided a foundation for practical recommendations to foster collaboration and improve the educational environment, paving the way for a more harmonious and productive school culture in the Effutu Municipality.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter consolidates the findings of the study, providing a synthesis of the major insights drawn from the analysis. It outlines the conclusions reached based on the objectives of the research and offers practical recommendations for addressing teacher conflicts in basic schools within the Effutu Municipality. The chapter also identifies areas for further research, highlighting gaps that remain unaddressed and offering pathways for future inquiry. These contributions aim to support policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in fostering more harmonious and productive educational environments.

#### 5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study aimed to examine the causes, impacts, and resolution mechanisms of conflicts among teachers in basic schools within the Effutu Municipality of Ghana. It sought to explore how these conflicts affected teacher performance and student outcomes while assessing the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms in place. The objectives included identifying the sources of teacher conflicts, evaluating their effect on academic performance, describing the mechanisms employed to manage such disputes, and assessing the efficacy of these mechanisms in fostering harmonious school environments.

The findings revealed that conflicts among teachers arose from a variety of sources, including workload imbalances, leadership practices, interpersonal tensions, and communication breakdowns. Unequal task allocation and subject distribution were identified as significant triggers, with teachers perceiving favoritism and unfairness as

aggravating factors. Leadership practices, particularly a lack of transparency and instances of favoritism, were consistently associated with dissatisfaction and mistrust among staff. Interpersonal issues, such as personality clashes and social comparisons, further compounded the challenges, often escalating into visible disputes that affected collaboration and morale.

The study highlighted that teacher conflicts had a profound effect on academic performance. Disruptions in teacher cooperation negatively influenced classroom preparation and student engagement, with learners often bearing the brunt of unresolved disputes. Additionally, conflicts undermined teacher morale and motivation, leading to absenteeism, reduced productivity, and diminished job satisfaction. Teachers expressed that these tensions created a hostile work environment, detracting from their ability to deliver quality instruction.

Conflict management mechanisms were categorized into formal and informal approaches. Formal mechanisms, such as transfers and mediation by administrative bodies, were noted for addressing disputes but often fell short of resolving underlying relational issues. Informal mechanisms, including the use of community leaders and avoidance strategies, played a complementary role but were limited by their reliance on individual personalities and circumstances. Systemic barriers, such as delays, confidentiality breaches, and resource constraints, hindered the efficiency of conflict resolution processes. Furthermore, stakeholder dissatisfaction with perceived bias and exclusion from decision-making processes was a recurring theme.

The findings underscored the significant influence of unresolved teacher conflicts on students' emotional and psychological well-being. Students exposed to teacher disputes were reported to experience emotional distress, diminished trust in their

educators, and a negative perception of school as a supportive environment. Teachers also noted that students often mirrored negative behaviors observed among their mentors, further affecting classroom dynamics and peer relationships.

The study concluded that while conflict management mechanisms were in place, their effectiveness varied significantly depending on their implementation and contextual factors. The findings aligned with both Social Conflict Theory and Structural-Functional Theory, highlighting the interplay of systemic inequalities and the need to restore balance within the educational environment. By addressing these challenges through proactive and inclusive conflict resolution strategies, schools could foster better teacher collaboration, improve student outcomes, and create a more conducive atmosphere for learning.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Conflict management among teachers in educational institutions is undeniably crucial for fostering a productive and harmonious environment that benefits all stakeholders. Indeed, unresolved conflicts significantly affect teacher morale, job satisfaction, and institutional productivity, leading to a ripple effect on overall educational outcomes. This assertion aligns with studies such as Opoku-Asare et al. (2015) and Atteh et al. (2020), which emphasize the adverse consequences of poorly managed conflicts in Ghanaian schools. In the specific context of the Effutu Municipality, these issues are further exacerbated by resource limitations, role ambiguity, and ineffective communication channels, which create an environment prone to frequent and unresolved disputes.

Furthermore, the study highlights the indispensable role of effective conflict management mechanisms, such as transformative leadership and structured resolution



frameworks, in addressing these challenges. Specifically, McCaffery (2018) and Robinson et al. (2008) confirm that transformational leadership styles enhance teacher collaboration and reduce interpersonal tensions, fostering a cohesive and supportive work environment. Similarly, Kesse (2019) and Abdul et al. (2023) emphasize the critical need for capacity building and professional development in conflict resolution, particularly for school leaders who are often at the forefront of managing disputes. By equipping leaders with the necessary skills, schools can significantly improve their ability to address conflicts constructively.

Consequently, the study has demonstrated that teacher conflicts not only disrupt the educational environment but also adversely affect student performance. This finding is corroborated by Bonsu et al. (2023), who report that unresolved conflicts, often leading to teacher absenteeism and turnover, negatively affect student outcomes. Teacher absenteeism disrupts the continuity of instruction, while turnover destabilizes school environments, hindering students' academic progress. Therefore, implementing robust conflict management strategies is imperative for maintaining quality education and ensuring consistent teacher engagement, both of which are essential for fostering positive student outcomes.

Additionally, cultural and socio-economic factors significantly influence conflict dynamics in the Effutu Municipality, as evidenced by studies such as Akparep et al. (2019) and Annan (2017). Local socio-economic challenges, including resource scarcity and cultural expectations, often shape the nature and resolution of conflicts in Ghanaian schools. Addressing these contextual factors through tailored conflict management approaches is, therefore, vital for fostering a supportive and productive educational environment. Such strategies must consider the unique needs of the

community while promoting equity and inclusivity, ensuring that all stakeholders feel valued and respected.

Ultimately, this study underscores the need for targeted interventions to address the root causes of conflicts and implement effective resolution mechanisms. By integrating conflict resolution training into professional development programs and adopting collaborative leadership approaches, schools can mitigate the negative effects of conflicts on educational outcomes. Consequently, these strategies align with the recommendations of Foghang & Titanji (2022) and Petkou et al. (2024), who advocate for systemic changes to enhance conflict management capacities within educational institutions. By fostering improved teacher collaboration, higher job satisfaction, and better academic outcomes for students, these interventions will contribute to the overall success and sustainability of educational institutions in the Effutu Municipality and beyond.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The findings of this study have highlighted critical areas requiring attention to address conflicts among teachers and enhance the overall educational environment in Ghanaian basic schools. The recommendations provided here are closely aligned with the research questions. Key stakeholders, including school administrators, policymakers, and teacher unions, must collaboratively implement these strategies to foster harmonious relationships and improve performance outcomes.

- **What are the causes of conflict experienced among teachers at Basic Schools in the Effutu Municipality:** To address the causes of conflicts among teachers, the Ghana Education Service (GES) should establish clear and enforceable guidelines for workload distribution and subject allocation.

Transparent and equitable processes for assigning responsibilities will help reduce perceptions of favoritism and unfairness. School administrators must conduct regular open discussions with teaching staff to explain the criteria for decision-making, fostering a sense of inclusion and respect. Leadership training programs should also be instituted to enhance the capacity of head teachers in communication, transparency, and proactive conflict prevention.

- **How does conflict among teachers affect academic performance in Basic Schools within the Effutu Municipality:** In mitigating the effect of conflicts on academic performance, schools should adopt collaborative frameworks that include team-building activities and regular professional learning communities to strengthen collegial relationships. Teacher unions should advocate for emotional intelligence training as a component of professional development programs, enabling educators to effectively manage interpersonal issues. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education should prioritize the provision of resources and support structures to reduce stressors that contribute to workplace conflicts, thereby creating a more conducive academic environment.
- **What conflict management mechanisms are used to resolve conflict among Basic School teachers in the Effutu Municipality:** To improve conflict management mechanisms, the GES should establish conflict resolution units at district levels, staffed with trained mediators to address disputes promptly and confidentially. Schools should adopt restorative practices such as peer mediation and dialogue sessions to address relational conflicts and foster reconciliation. Stakeholder consultations should be

integrated into the design and review of conflict management policies, ensuring inclusivity and building trust in the process.

- **How effective are the conflict management mechanisms used to resolve conflict among Basic School teachers in the Effutu Municipality:** Enhancing the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms requires collaborative monitoring by teacher unions and educational authorities to evaluate the implementation of strategies and provide feedback for improvement. Formal and informal conflict resolution approaches should undergo regular evaluation to refine their impact, with a focus on continuous training and capacity building for mediators and school leaders.

These recommendations comprehensively address the causes, impacts, and management of conflicts among teachers in basic schools within Effutu Municipality. Their implementation will foster a harmonious educational environment, improve teacher collaboration, and enhance student outcomes.

### **5.5 Areas for Future Research**

Future research should delve into the effect of socio-cultural dynamics on conflict resolution within Ghanaian schools. Specifically, exploring how cultural norms, values, and traditions influence teachers' perceptions of fairness, equity, and authority can provide deeper insights into the relational dimensions of conflicts. Understanding the role of respect for hierarchy, collective decision-making, and the influence of community expectations may reveal unique conflict patterns and resolution strategies that are culturally sensitive and effective.

Investigating the differences between urban and rural schools offers another important avenue for study. Comparative analyses can illuminate how disparities in resources,

infrastructure, and administrative support contribute to variations in the frequency, nature, and resolution of conflicts among teachers. For instance, urban schools may face conflicts rooted in bureaucratic complexities or larger teacher populations, while rural schools might experience issues tied to limited resources and close-knit community dynamics. Examining these differences can help tailor conflict management strategies to the specific needs of diverse school settings.

Another promising area of research is the inclusion of students' and parents' perspectives in understanding conflicts among teachers. As key stakeholders in the educational ecosystem, their experiences and observations can provide a more comprehensive view of how conflicts affect the broader school environment. For example, conflicts among teachers might affect students' learning experiences, perceptions of school authority, or overall academic outcomes. Parents' views on teacher interactions and conflict resolution practices could also offer valuable insights into how external expectations influence internal school dynamics.

Furthermore, longitudinal studies tracking the long-term effects of unresolved conflicts on teacher retention, morale, and school performance would enhance understanding of the systemic implications. Exploring how emerging trends, such as technological integration and changing teacher demographics, influence conflict dynamics could also contribute to more forward-thinking solutions.

By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to the development of robust, context-specific strategies for managing teacher conflicts, fostering healthier school environments, and ultimately enhancing educational outcomes in Ghanaian schools and beyond.

## REFERENCES

- Aggrawal, S., & Magana, A. J. (2024). Teamwork Conflict Management Training and Conflict Resolution Practice via Large Language Models. *Future Internet*, 16(5), 177.
- Ajmal, M., Basit, I., & Sadaf, S. (2024). Evaluating the Role of Students' Feedback in Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(2), 1492-1499.
- Ali, M. R., Ashraf, B. N., & Shuai, C. (2019). Teachers' conflict-inducing attitudes and their repercussions on students' psychological health and learning outcomes. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 16(14), 2534.
- Aliyyah, R. R., Widyasari, W., Rasmitadila, R., Ulfah, S. W., Humaira, M. A., & Mulyadi, D. (2020, February). Outstanding Teachers' Competition: Between Strategies and Challenges. In 3rd *International Conference on Research of Educational Administration and Management (ICREAM 2019)* (pp. 153-157). Atlantis Press.
- Amsler, L. B., Martinez, J., & Smith, S. E. (2020). *Dispute system design: Preventing, managing, and resolving conflict*. Stanford University Press.
- Appiah-Kubi, J., & Amoako, E. (2020). Parental participation in children's education: Experiences of parents and teachers in Ghana. *Journal of Theoretical Educational Science*, 13(3), 456-473.
- Balay, R. (2006). Conflict management strategies of administrators and teachers. *Asian Journal of Management Cases*, 3(1), 5-24.
- Bazemore, D. (2020). *Teacher perceptions on teacher conflict and its Effecton student achievement and school culture* (Doctoral dissertation, Capella University).
- Blazar, D., & Kraft, M. A. (2017). Teacher and teaching effects on students' attitudes and behaviors. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 39(1), 146-170.
- Bloxham, S. (2008). Assessment in teacher education: stakeholder conflict and its resolution. *Practitioner Research in Higher Education*, 2(1), 13-21.
- Bonsu, P., Adom, D., Adu-Agyem, J., & Adu-Mensah, J. (2023). The Effects of Teacher Absenteeism on the Academic Performance of Students in Selected Junior High Schools in the Ejisu Municipality, Ghana. *ASEAN Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 14(1), 1-11.
- Bostic, B., Schock, N., Jeon, L., & Buettner, C. K. (2023). Early childhood teachers' sense of community and work engagement: Associations with children's social, emotional, and behavioral functioning. *Journal of School Psychology*, 98, 133-147.

- Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., & Salovey, P. (2011). Emotional intelligence: Implications for personal, social, academic, and workplace success. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(1), 88-103.
- Buenaño, J. J., Jiménez-Sánchez, Á., Poaquiza, P. P., Castro, S. V., & Paredes, M. L. (2022). Implementation of school mediation programs as a tool for conflict resolution in Ecuadorian adolescents. In *EDULEARN22 Proceedings* (pp. 1356-1364). IATED.
- Bush, R. A. B., & Folger, J. P. (1994). *The Promise of Mediation: Responding to Conflict Through Empowerment and Recognition*. Jossey-Bass.
- Cai, Y., Wang, L., Bi, Y., & Tang, R. (2022). How can the professional community influence teachers' work engagement? The mediating role of teacher self-efficacy. *Sustainability*, 14(16), 10029.
- Camacho, D. A., Hoover, S. A., & Rosete, H. S. (2021). Burnout in urban teachers: The predictive role of supports and situational responses. *Psychology in the Schools*, 58(9), 1816-1831.
- Ciuladiene, G., & Kairiene, B. (2017). The resolution of conflict between teacher and student: Students' narratives. *Journal of teacher education for sustainability*, 19(2), 107-120.
- Collins, R. (1975). *Conflict sociology: Toward an explanatory science*. Academic Press.
- Cook, J. B. (2018). The effect of charter competition on unionized district revenues and resource allocation. *Journal of Public Economics*, 158, 48-62.
- Cowen, J. M., & Strunk, K. O. (2015). The Effect of teachers' unions on educational outcomes: What we know and what we need to learn. *Economics of Education Review*, 48, 208-223.
- Dahrendorf, R. (1959). *Class and class conflict in industrial society*. Stanford University Press.
- Deutsch, M. (1973). *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes*. Yale University Press.
- Dignath, D., Kiesel, A., & Eder, A. B. (2015). Flexible conflict management: conflict avoidance and conflict adjustment in reactive cognitive control. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 41(4), 975.
- Dolev, N., & Leshem, S. (2017). Developing emotional intelligence competence among teachers. *Teacher Development*, 21(1), 21-39.
- Durkheim, É. (1893). *The division of labor in society*. Free Press.



- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Effect of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405-432.
- Fatima, T., Bilal, A. R., & Imran, M. K. (2019). Workplace ostracism and employee reactions among university teachers in Pakistan. *The Qualitative Report, 24*(11), 2759-2777.
- Ferguson, K., Mang, C., & Frost, L. (2017). Teacher stress and social support usage: The Effect on resource competition. *Brock Education: A Journal of Educational Research and Practice, 26*(2). <https://doi.org/10.26522/brocked.v26i2.604>
- Fetzer, M. (2014). *A critical case study of peer mediation at an alternative high school* (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Education, Culture and Society, University of Utah).
- Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (1981). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. Penguin Books.
- Foghang, V. M., & Titanji, P. F. (2022). Interpersonal Conflicts between Teachers: Causes and Effects in Teacher Training Colleges, North West Region, Cameroon. *Journal of Education and Teaching Methods, 1*(2), 18-31.
- Foy, T., Dwyer, R. J., Nafarrete, R., Hammoud, M. S. S., & Rockett, P. (2019). Managing job performance, social support and work-life conflict to reduce workplace stress. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management, 68*(6), 1018-1041.
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(2), 106-116.
- Ghaffar, A. (2009). Conflict in Schools: Its Causes & Management Strategies. *Journal of Managerial Sciences, 3*(2), 212-227.
- Göksoy, S., & Argon, T. (2016). Conflicts at Schools and Their Effect on Teachers. *Journal of Education and Training studies, 4*(4), 197-205.
- Gul, R., Tahir, I. U., & Batool, T. (2021). Effect of teachers workload on their time management skills at university level. *Indian Journal of Economics and Business, 20*(3), 819-829.
- Han, E. (2023). The gendered effects of teachers' unions on teacher attrition: Evidence from district-teacher matched data in the US. *Feminist Economics, 29*(1), 141-173.
- Han, E. S. (2019). The Effect of teachers unions on teachers' well-being under various legal institutions: Evidence from district-teacher matched data. *AERA Open, 5*(3), 2332858419867291.



- Han, E. S. (2020). The myth of unions' overprotection of bad teachers: Evidence from the district-teacher matched data on teacher turnover. *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, 59(2), 316-352.
- Han, E. S., & García, E. (2023). The effect of teachers' Unions on teacher Stress: Evidence from district-teacher matched data. *Labor Studies Journal*, 48(1), 35-69.
- Han, E. S., & Keefe, J. (2023). What Teachers' Unions Do for Teachers When Collective Bargaining is Prohibited. *Labor Studies Journal*, 48(2), 183-212.
- Hanna, F., Oostdam, R., Severiens, S. E., & Zijlstra, B. J. (2019). Domains of teacher identity: A review of quantitative measurement instruments. *Educational Research Review*, 27, 15-27.
- Harter, D. K. (2021). *Student Engagement and Equitable Student Learning Outcomes*. (Doctoral Dissertation, National-Louis University).
- Hietanen-Kunwald, P., & Haapio, H. (2021). Effective dispute prevention and resolution through proactive contract design. *Journal of Strategic Contracting and Negotiation*, 5(1-2), 3-23.
- Huang, Y., Nalipay, M. J. N., & Wang, H. (2024). Profiles of occupational well-being among Chinese teachers: Associations with basic psychological needs satisfaction and teaching quality. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 139, 104461.
- Ibarrola-García, S. (2023). Peer relationships: school mediation benefits for sustainable peace. *Pastoral Care in Education*, 1-28.
- Jehn, K. A. (1995). A Multimethod Examination of the Benefits and Detriments of Intragroup Conflict. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40(2), 256-282.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1996). Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Programs in Elementary and Secondary Schools: A Review of the Research. *Review of Educational Research*, 66(4), 459-506.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1996). Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs in elementary and secondary schools: A review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 66(4), 459-506.
- Kraft, M. A., Marinell, W. H., & Shen-Wei Yee, D. (2016). School organizational contexts, teacher turnover, and student achievement: Evidence from panel data. *American Educational Research Journal*, 53(5), 1411-1449.
- Kutasi, R. (2023). Feedback: Unveiling Its Effect and Enhancing Its Effectiveness In Education. *Journal of Pedagogy*, 2, 7-32.

- Larasati, R., & Raharja, S. (2020). Conflict management in improving schools effectiveness. In *3rd International Conference on Learning Innovation and Quality Education (ICLIQE 2019)* (pp. 191-197). Atlantis Press.
- Lewicki, R. J., Barry, B., & Saunders, D. M. (2010). *Negotiation: Readings, Exercises, and Cases*. McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Lundström, U., & Holm, A. S. (2011). Market competition in upper secondary education: Perceived effects on teachers' work. *Policy Futures in Education*, 9(2), 193-205.
- Mafa, O., & Makuba, E. (2013). The involvement of parents in the education of their children in Zimbabwe's rural primary schools: The case of Matabeleland north province. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 1(4), 37-43.
- Maharaj, S., & Bascia, N. (2021). Teachers' organizations and educational reform: Resistance and beyond. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, (196), 34-48.
- Mallik, B. (2023). Teacher-Student Relationship and Its Influence on College Student Engagement and Academic Achievement. *Anatolian Journal of Education*, 8(1), 93-112.
- Marx, K. (1867). *Capital: Critique of political economy* (Vol. 1). Progress Publishers.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848). *The Communist Manifesto*. Penguin Books.
- Mayer, B. (2000). *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide*. Jossey-Bass.
- Merton, R. K. (1957). *Social theory and social structure*. Free Press.
- Mills, C. W. (1956). *The power elite*. Oxford University Press.
- Mills, C. W. (1959). *The sociological imagination*. Oxford University Press.
- Moore, A. (2019). *The Effect of Teacher Working Conditions and Beginning Teacher Support on the Retention of Beginning Teachers in High-Poverty School Districts*. Gardner-Webb University.
- Msila, V. (2022). Teacher unions, schools and success: Opportunities and contradictions. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 21(3), 263-280.
- Murphy, P. A. (2020). *The relationship between sense of community and job satisfaction among urban middle school teachers*. (Doctoral Dissertation, Liberty University)

- Nese, R. N., Meng, P., Breiner, S., Chaparro, E., & Algozzine, R. (2020). Using stakeholder feedback to improve online professional development opportunities. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 52(2), 148-162.
- Ntho-Ntho, M. A., & Nieuwenhuis, F. J. (2016). Mediation as a Leadership Strategy to Deal with Conflict in Schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 5(2), 13-24.
- Obizue, M. N., Chukwudebelu, C., & Onuoha, E. O. (2020). Conflict management strategies for improving secondary school administration in Imo State. *Journal Of The Nigerian Academy Of Education*, 14(2), 61-69.
- Odoziobodo, S. I. (2015). Integrity and conflict resolution in Nigeria: An analysis of trade disputes between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the academic staff union of universities, ASUU. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(22).
- Oduro, F., Parker, D., & Mensah, E. T. (2024). The Role of Teacher Autonomy, School Climate, and “Perceptions of Value & Policy Influence” in Predicting Lower Secondary School Teachers’ Job Satisfaction in South Africa. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 1-20.
- Ogbeide, F., & Enabunene, I. O., (2023). An Assessment of Stress Management Skills and Teachers’ Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance*, 3(2), 37-48.
- Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students’ need for belonging in the school community. *Review of Educational Research*, 70(3), 323-367.
- Paddy, S., & Jarbandhan, D. B. (2014). Perceptions of the role of teacher unions in education in two secondary schools in Soweto. *Administratio Publica*, 22(3), 148-166.
- Pan, H.-L. W., Chung, C.-H., & Lin, Y.-C. (2023). Exploring the predictors of teacher well-being: An analysis of teacher training preparedness, autonomy, and workload. *Sustainability*, 15(7), 5804. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15075804>
- Parsons, T. (1951). *The social system*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Payne, H. (2022). Teaching staff and student perceptions of staff support for student mental health: a university case study. *Education Sciences*, 12(4), 237-254.
- Pearson, L. C., & Moomaw, W. (2005). The relationship between teacher autonomy and stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism. *Educational research quarterly*, 29(1), 38-54.
- Peng, Y., Wu, H., & Guo, C. (2022). The relationship between teacher autonomy and mental health in primary and secondary school teachers: the chain-mediating role of teaching efficacy and job satisfaction. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(22), 15021.

- Proksch, S. (2016). *Conflict management*. Springer.
- Rabiner, D. L., Carrig, M. M., & Dodge, K. A. (2016). Attention problems and academic achievement: Do persistent and earlier-emerging problems have more adverse long-term effects?. *Journal of attention disorders*, 20(11), 946-957.
- Rahim, M. A. (2002). Toward a Theory of Managing Organizational Conflict. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 13(3), 206-235.
- Sana, F., & Aslam, N. (2018). Effect of Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict in Predicting Work-Family Conflict Among Teachers. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 33, 349-365.
- Sanjaya, D. B., Suartama, I. K., & Suastika, I. N. (2022). The Effect of the Conflict Resolution Learning Model and Portfolio Assessment on the Students' Learning Outcomes of Civic Education. *International journal of instruction*, 15(1), 473-488.
- Schultz, F., Utz, S., & Göritz, A. (2018). Is the medium the message? Perceptions of and reactions to crisis communication via Twitter, blogs, and traditional media. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 20-27.
- Shanka, E. B., & Thuo, M. (2017). Conflict Management and Resolution Strategies between Teachers and School Leaders in Primary Schools of Wolaita Zone, Ethiopia. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(4), 63-74.
- Smith, P. E. (2024). *Effect of Social Emotional Learning on Conflict Resolution Skills* (Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University).
- Smith, P. K., & Sandhu, D. (2004). Violence in schools: Risk, consequences, and prevention. *Psychology in the Schools*, 41(7), 635-650.
- Te Braak, P., Van Droogenbroeck, F., Minnen, J., van Tienoven, T. P., & Glorieux, I. (2022). Teachers' working time from time-use data: Consequences of the invalidity of survey questions for teachers, researchers, and policy. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 109, 103536.
- Thapa, A., & Cohen, J. (2023). School climate improvement: A data-driven strategy that supports individual and organizational health. In *Handbook of Resilience in Children* (pp. 539-548). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Thomas, K. W., & Kilmann, R. H. (1974). *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument*. Xicom.
- Thompson, G., Creagh, S., Stacey, M., Hogan, A., & Mockler, N. (2023). Researching teachers' time use: complexity, challenges and a possible way forward. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 1-24.

- Travers, C. (2017). Current knowledge on the nature, prevalence, sources and potential Effect of teacher stress. *Educator Stress: An Occupational Health Perspective*, 23-54.
- Ullah, R. (2022). The buffering role of emotional intelligence in conflict transformation. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 33(2), 223-244.
- Utami, P. P., & Harini, H. (2019). The effect of job satisfaction and absenteeism on teacher work productivity. *Multicultural Education*, 5(1), 99-108.
- Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology*. University of California Press.
- Weldon, P. (2018). Early career teacher attrition in Australia: Evidence, definition, classification and measurement. *Australian Journal of Education*, 62(1), 61-78.
- White, A. J., Wertheim, E. H., Freeman, E., & Trinder, M. (2013). Evaluation of a core team centred professional development programme for building a whole-school cooperative problem solving approach to conflict. *Educational psychology*, 33(2), 192-214.
- Widlund, A., Tuominen, H., & Korhonen, J. (2024). Motivational profiles in mathematics—stability and links with educational and emotional outcomes. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 76, 102256.
- Xu, X., Shi, Z., Bos, N. A., & Wu, H. (2023). Student engagement and learning outcomes: an empirical study applying a four-dimensional framework. *Medical education online*, 28(1), 2268347.
- Yao, M., Kadetz, P. I., Sidibe, A. M., Wu, Y., Li, J., Lyu, J., ... & Hesketh, T. (2021). Teachers' perceptions of student mental health in eastern china: a qualitative study. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(14), 7271.
- Yusuf, L. A., & Ibrahim, Y. (2019). Conflict management strategies and administrative effectiveness among tertiary institutions in Sokoto metropolis. *Makerere Journal of Higher Education*, 10(2), 83-91.
- Zehr, H. (2002). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*. Good Books.
- Zhu, S. (2019). The Effect of Teachers' Unions on educational outcomes. *Educational Journal*. May, 10.
- Zuure, D. N. (2014). Peer mediation as a mechanism for resolution of inter-personal conflicts among students. *People*, 5(39).

## APPENDIX A

### UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE

##### Introduction

Dear participants,

This is an academic exercise, which seeks to **Assess Conflict Management Mechanisms Among Teachers in Selected Basic Schools in Effutu Municipality**. I would, therefore, be very appreciative if you would give me some time to conduct a face-to-face interview which involves a few questions on the topic. The confidentiality of every participant is assured.

##### A. BIO DATA

1. **Name (Optional)** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Age:** 21- 30 [  ] 31- 40 [  ] 41-50 [  ] 51-60 [  ]

3. **Religion:** Christian [  ] Islam [  ] Traditional [  ] Others [  ]

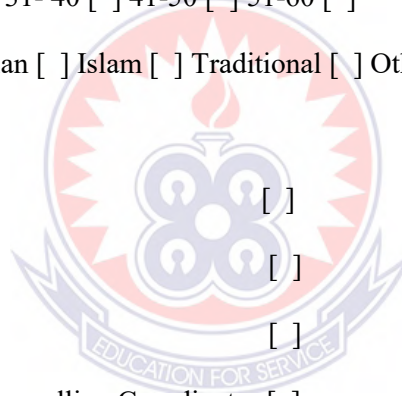
4. **Status:**

Headteacher [  ]

Teacher [  ]

Teacher Union [  ]

Guidance and Counselling Coordinator [  ]



##### B. RESEARCH QUESTION 1

###### *Question 1: Open-ended exploratory question*

Can you share your experiences or observations regarding conflicts among teachers at Basic Schools in Effutu Municipality? What do you think are some of the underlying causes of these conflicts?

###### *Question 2: Specific issue-focused question*

How do you think differences in teaching styles, methodologies, or educational philosophies contribute to conflicts among teachers in Basic Schools within the Effutu Municipality?



***Question 3: Relational dynamics question***

To what extent do you believe conflicts among teachers in Basic Schools are driven by interpersonal issues, such as communication breakdowns, personality clashes, or power struggles?

***Question 4: Environmental and systemic factors question***

Do you think factors such as workload, resource constraints, school administration policies, or community expectations contribute to conflicts among teachers in Basic Schools within the Effutu Municipality? Can you provide specific examples?

**C. RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

***Question 1: Exploring the direct impact***

How do conflicts among teachers affect the academic performance of students in your school, and what specific examples can you share to illustrate this impact?

***Question 2: Investigating teacher morale and motivation***

To what extent do conflicts among teachers influence teacher morale, motivation, and job satisfaction, and how do these factors subsequently affect academic performance in Basic Schools within the Effutu Municipality?

***Question 3: Examining student emotional and psychological well-being***

How do conflicts among teachers affect the emotional and psychological well-being of students, and what consequences does this have on their academic performance and overall educational experience in Basic Schools?

***Question 4: Assessing instructional quality and collaboration***

In what ways do conflicts among teachers hinder or facilitate instructional collaboration, lesson planning, and resource sharing, ultimately affecting the quality of teaching and learning in Basic Schools within the Effutu Municipality?

**D. RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

***Question 1: Exploring formal mechanisms***

What formal conflict management mechanisms are in place within the Effutu Municipal Education Directorate or Basic Schools to resolve conflicts among teachers, and how effective do you think these mechanisms are?



***Question 2: Investigating informal strategies***

Can you share any informal conflict management strategies or approaches used by teachers, school administrators, or local communities to resolve conflicts among Basic School teachers in Effutu Municipality?

**E. RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

***Question 1: Evaluating outcomes***

To what extent do the conflict management mechanisms used in Basic Schools within Effutu Municipality lead to sustainable resolutions, improved teacher relationships, and reduced conflict recurrence?

***Question 2: Assessing process effectiveness***

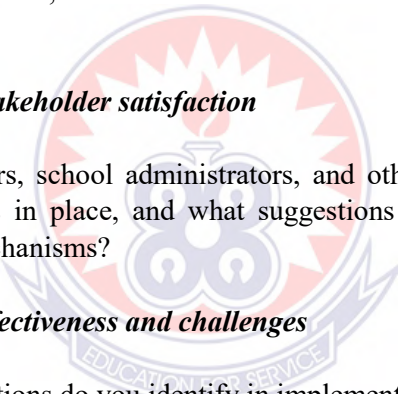
How efficient and timely are the conflict management mechanisms in resolving conflicts among Basic School teachers, and what factors contribute to delays or inefficiencies in the process?

***Question 3: Exploring stakeholder satisfaction***

How satisfied are teachers, school administrators, and other stakeholders with the conflict management mechanisms in place, and what suggestions do they have for improving the effectiveness of these mechanisms?

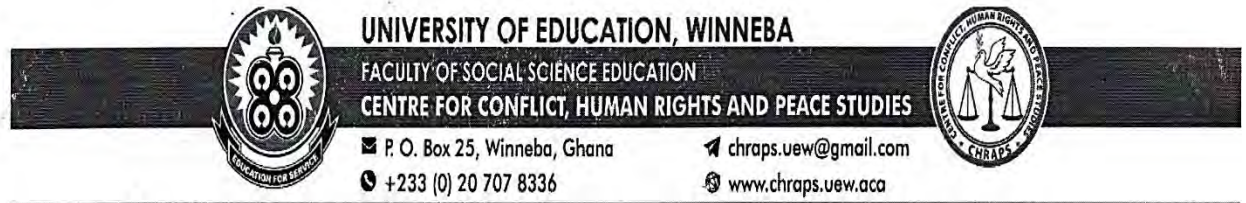
***Question 4: Assessing effectiveness and challenges***

What challenges or limitations do you identify in implementing these mechanisms?



## APPENDIX B

### INTRODUCTORY LETTER



*Our Ref:* CHRAPS. 44/VOL.2/65

31st October, 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION STEPHEN AMEGADZI (8240230008)**

I write as the Director for the Centre for Conflict, Human Rights and Peace Studies of the University of Education, Winneba, to introduce to you Stephen Amegadzi with index number 8240230008 as our student. Stephen Amegadzi is pursuing Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) in Human Rights, Conflict and Peace Studies at the Centre.

He wishes to collect data for his thesis on the topic “**An Assessment of Conflict Management Mechanism among Teachers in Selected Basic Schools in Effutu Municipality**”.

The Centre would be grateful if he is given the needed assistance, please.

Thank You.

Yours faithfully,

*For: David Zuure*

**Prof. David Zuure**  
**Director**