

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CONFLICT AMONG THE TEACHERS OF
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE MTHATHA EDUCATION DISTRICT

by

YUSUF LUKMAN

A full dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION (M. Ed)

(In Educational Management)

at

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISOR: Dr B. Z. Gobingca

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr I. Mohammed

MAY 2016

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors contributing to conflict among the teachers of secondary schools of Mthatha Education district. The literature review reflects theories concerning the factors contributing to conflict among teachers, ranging from the leadership styles use in the schools, the causes of poor interpersonal relations among teachers and the causes of teachers' resistance in schools. To attain the aims and objectives of the study the researcher used the case study design as well as the qualitative research method, both in collecting and analysing the data. Ten (10) teachers and five (5) principals from five different secondary schools formed the sample size of the investigation. Convenience sampling method was used to select this sample size. An open-ended interview schedule and tape recording were used for the face-to-face in-depth interviews. Themes drawn from the responses of the participants and discussed included: unhealthy competition, poor communication, poor interpersonal relations, poor leadership styles used in schools, excessive teacher workload and the existence of cliques and informal groups resulted into conflict among the secondary school teachers. Democratic and participatory styles were suggested as the best working styles of leadership used in the secondary schools. The effects of conflict on the culture of teaching and learning were: weak team spirit among teachers, less communication, stressed among the teachers, high absenteeism, less collaboration, less teacher motivation and prolonged decision making processes in the schools. The predominant causes of teacher resistance were also highlighted as: the use of autocratic style by school managers, poor communications, ill and unprofessional treatment of staff by managers, constant curriculum changes and unclear policies in the schools. The recommendations on the factors contributing to conflict among secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District were made.

Declaration

I, YUSUF LUKMAN, Student number 209143436, solemnly declare that this dissertation entitled, factors contributing to conflict among the teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District is my original work. All sources used or quoted in the study have been indicated and acknowledged by way of complete references.

CANDIDATE: YUSUF LUKMAN

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

SUPERVISOR: Dr B. Z. Gobingca

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr I. Mohammed

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Declaration on plagiarism

- (i) I am aware that plagiarism is defined as Walter Sisulu University (WSU) as the inclusion of another's ideas or others' ideas, writings, works, discoveries and inventions from any source in an assignment or research output without the due, correct and appropriate acknowledgement to the author(s) or source(s) in breach of the values, conventions, ethics and norms of the different professional, academic and research disciplines and includes unacknowledged copying from intra- and internet and peers and/ fellow students.
- (ii) I have duly and appropriately acknowledged all references and conformed to avoid plagiarism as defined by WSU.
- (iii) I have made use of the citation and referencing style stipulated by my lecturer/ supervisor.
- (iv) This submitted work is my own.
- (v) I did not and will not allow anyone to copy my work and present it as his/ her own.
- (vi) I am committed to uphold academic and professional integrity in the academic/ research activity.
- (vii) I am aware of the consequences of engaging in plagiarism.

Signature

Date

Acknowledgements

- I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr B.Z Gobingca and my co-supervisor, Dr I. Mohammed for their valuable guidance and support from the beginning to the conclusion of this dissertation. I thank you.
- The Mthatha Education District Office for allowing me to conduct this research project in their schools. I thank you.
- The principals and teachers of the sample schools who made a great contribution in this study. I thank you.
- My parents and brothers for their continuous support. I thank you.
- My Uncle Salihu Lukman for his support towards the completion of this dissertation
- My dear wife, Habiba Yusuf Lukman for your prayers, love, patience and encouragement. I thank you.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to: To my mother Aisha Mohammed Dikko, my father Lukman Musa Lukman, and my Late Granny Goggo Adugwa and Goggo late Goggo Zainab Abu

Acronyms	Meaning
COLTs:	Culture of learning and teaching services
DoE:	Department of Education
HoDs:	Head of departments
HNT:	Human Needs Theory
KPAs:	Key performance areas
KSD:	King Sabata Dalindyebo
MED:	Mthatha Education District
SMTs:	School Management teams
SGBs:	School Governing Bodies

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Declaration.....	ii
Declaration on plagiarism	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedication	v
Acronyms meaning	vi
Chapter 1	1
Introduction, key concepts and context.....	1
1.1 introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study.....	2
1.3 Statement of the problem	6
1.4 Research questions	6
1.5 Aim of the study.....	7
1.6 Objectives of the study	7
1.7 Rationale for the study	8
1.8 Significance of the study.....	8
1.9 Theoretical framework.....	8
1.10.1 Limitations of the study.....	9
1.10.2 Delimitation of the study	9
1.11 Definitions of terms	9
1.11.1 Conflict	9
1.11.2 Secondary school teachers	10
1.11.3 Mthatha educational district	10
1.12 The structure of the study.....	10

1.13 Conclusion	11
Chapter 2	13
Literature review and theory on organisational conflict	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Theoretical framework of organisational conflict.....	13
2.2.1 Theoretical approaches.....	13
2.3 Factors contributing to conflict among teachers of secondary schools.....	15
2.3.1 Unclear roles to the stakeholders in schools	15
2.3.2 Interpersonal relations.....	16
2.3.3 Competition for limited resources	18
2.3.4 Poor communication channels	18
2.4 Influence of leadership style in schools.....	19
2.4.1 Autocratic leadership style and how it contributes to conflict in schools	19
2.4.2 Bureaucratic leadership and how it contributes to conflict	21
2.4.3 Democratic leadership and how it contributes to conflict.....	21
2.5 Teachers' resistance in schools.....	22
2.6 The impact of informal groups on the culture of teaching and learning in schools	25
2.6.1 Advantages of informal groups.....	25
2.6.2 Disadvantages of informal groups.....	26
2.7 Analysis of conflict management and conflict resolution strategies in schools	27
2.8 Conclusion	30
Chapter 3	31
Research methodology	31

3.1 Introduction.....	31
3.2 Research paradigm.....	31
3.3.1 The research design	32
3.3.2 The research methodology.....	33
3.4. Population and sampling.....	35
3.5 Sampling	35
3.4 The research instrument.....	36
3.4.3 Semi-structured interview	37
3.5 Data collection procedure	38
3.6 Ethical considerations	40
3.6.1 Permission to conduct the study	40
3.6.2 Confidentiality and anonymity.....	41
3.6.3 Protection of participants against abuse, discrimination and abuse	41
3.7 Validity and reliability	41
3.7.1 Validity	41
3.7.2 Reliability	42
3.7.3 Credibility	42
3.7.4 Trustworthiness.....	43
3.8 Conclusion.....	43
Chapter 4	45
Data analysis, presentation and discussion of the main findings.....	45
4.1 Introduction.....	45
4.2 Analytical method used.....	45
4.2.1 Data interpretations of the teachers' responses	46

4.2.2 Data interpretations of the principals' responses.....	67
4.2.3 Discussion of research findings.....	81
4.2.3.1 Competition	82
4.2.3.2 Botched communication and interpersonal relations in schools	82
4.2.3.3 Excessive workload on teachers.....	84
4.2.3.4 Existence of cliques and informal groups.....	84
4.2.3.5 Leadership styles adopted by school management teams in schools	85
4.2.3.6 Attitudes of secondary teachers towards the implementation of policies.....	86
4.2.3.7 Conflict management strategies in place	87
4.2.3.8 Resistance of teachers to educational changes	88
4.2.3.9 Limited availability of effective conflict management strategies	89
4.3 Conclusion	90
Chapter 5	91
Summary, conclusion and recommendations	91
5.1 Introduction.....	91
5.2 Summary of the study	91
5.3 conclusion	94
5.4 Recommendations.....	98
5.4.1 Maintain good working relations.....	98
5.4.2 Training of school stakeholders	99
5.4.3 Support from DoE.....	101
5.4.4 Existence and implementation of conflict management strategies.....	102
5.5 Suggestions for further research	102
6. References	103

APPENDIX A: Sample letters to DoE, and the Principals 111

APPENDIX B: Response from the district office 113

APPENDIX B: Response from a principal 115

Chapter 1

Introduction, key concepts and context

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors contributing to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District (MED) and how it could be managed. Conflict among teachers in schools has been going on for many years. Conflict sometimes can be constructive through identification of the cause and its repercussions to lives of people, productivity of human resources in the organisation, and workplaces to mention but few such as in schools, government departments, and municipal offices. Conflict can sometimes be constructive in schools for example, by correcting erroneous decision making made and implementation of policies and activities that are ineffective for quality teaching and learning. This implies that conflict can be constructive by improving practices especially in workplaces.

Conflict is also destructive in workplaces or institutions such as schools, in families, communities and churches by influencing the working, social, psychological and economic environment. Furthermore, it has some negative consequences to time, emotions and health of human resources. From the researcher's point of view, it is clear that conflict among stakeholders such as teachers, school management teams (SMTs), school governing bodies (SGBs), learners, teacher unions, parents and Department of Education (DoE) in schools could negatively affect the schooling system in activities such as implementation of curriculum, teamwork and government policies if it is not managed properly and dealt with immediately and in amicable manner. It is confirmed by Tshepo (2007) that in any working situations such as schools, conflict affects the moral of the teachers, increases absenteeism among teachers and affects the pace at which they work.

This study was driven by the continuous conflict among teachers that was observed by the researcher, which actually affects the culture of teaching and learning in the schools. It is the quest of the researcher to explore the factors contributing to conflict

with the intention to come up with strategies to manage the identified problem as it is inescapable where there are people.

This chapter commences by presenting the background to the study ranging from international to national experiences regarding the identified problem in comparison to South African school context. The statement of the problem is presented to show how the status quo of conflict in schools of the MED. is the main research question and sub-questions are outlined as a way of guiding this study. The aim of the study and objectives of the study were also highlighted. It was found imperative by the researcher to state under rationale sub-heading why it is worthwhile to conduct such a study in the schools of MED. Under the significance sub-heading, the beneficiary of this study are highlighted including the reflection on how would they benefit from this study. The theoretical framework, limitations, delimitations of the study, the structure of the study and conclusion are presented.

1.2 Background to the study

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship. It is common and natural law that two or more people get disagree on issues at times. Learning how to deal with conflict rather than avoiding it is a crucial skill required to be encouraged to people. It should be seriously considered by people that if conflict is mismanaged it could cause great harm to the relationship and culture of organisation. When it is handled in a respectful and positive way, conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between two or more people. A study conducted in New York by Morton (2006) shows that the impact of cliques and informal groups among teachers has a negative impact on the culture of teaching and learning. This means that teachers and learners' performance is influenced by limited peace, collegiality and unity among teachers. Furthermore, it is evident that conflicts can grow into major problems if are not dealt with appropriately.

It is argued by Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012) that also the leadership styles adopted by school management teams (SMTs) such as principals, deputy principal and head of departments have a bearing on conflicts in schools by way of how they manage the school

resources. This claim is documented in a study conducted in Zimbabwe by Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012) which reveals that conflicts exist in most schools between the principal and the teachers over unequal distribution and allocation of resources. Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012)'s findings also show that teachers were dissatisfied with the ways in which problems were resolved by their SMTs. This implies that in some schools teachers are not treated equally by their immediate supervisors.

A study conducted by Peter (2010: 2) into schools within conflict zones in South Africa clearly shows a picture of schools exposed to high levels of conflict and communal violence. This implies that teaching and learning in those schools were affected as a result of conflict among the societies where those schools are located. In addition, rural schools and former homeland school communities were deeply traumatized by forcible relocation (Peter 2010: 2).

Peter (2010: 2) asserts that these communities were thrown together in the midst of confusion and violence, often having been dispossessed of all or most of their resources and wealth. It is known that many if not most schools serving black communities in South Africa were exposed to varying but often high levels of conflict during the 1980s and early 1990s (Peter, 2010). It can be concluded that much of the South African schooling system can be classified as post conflict and that it is therefore undiagnosed within the country. This may explain why in South Africa whatever interventions in improving the quality teaching practices of teachers, effective management of SMTs, academic performance of learners and improving teacher-parent relations are introduced in most of the schools fail to be realised. It is why teachers feel so badly misunderstood and why school communities are so resistant to change. Furthermore, it could be the reason why there is a prevalence of conflict among teachers in the South African schools.

It is generally believed that there is no common definition for the term conflict. In light of this, researchers defer in their effort to depict what conflict looks like. Nitin (2012:1) states that conflict is a process in which an effort is purposefully made by one person or

unit to block another that results in frustrating the attainment of the other's goals or the furthering of his or her interest.

Moreover, Robbins (2010) argues that conflict is a result of poor communication and, a lack of trust between people. Conflict can be eliminated or resolved only at high levels of management. According to this view on conflict, all conflicts should be avoided, thus there is a need to pay attention to the causes of conflict and to correct them in order to improve group and organizational performance. From the researcher's point of view, poor communication and a lack of trust between people influence the enabling environment for teaching and learning. Conflict can be eliminated or resolved only at high levels of management. This seems to suggest that managers should understand the common causes of conflicts to enable them able to prevent it to occur. Therefore, conflicts should be avoided, thus by paying attention to the causes of conflict and to correct them in order to improve group and organizational performance (Robbins: 2005).

To expand on the benefits of constructive conflict, Kinick and Kreitner (2008) insist that constructive conflict supports the goals of the organization and improves its performance.

Conflicts occur in different phases and at various level of any organization, and for every level there are different sources. In this regard, Van Niekerk (1994) concurs with Nitin (2012) by stating that in the life of any school, six types of conflict occur and these are:

- Conflict within individual: This is the type of conflict which occurs when the ethical behaviour or the achievement expected of an individual teacher in the school does not coincide with his or her behaviour or with his abilities or actual achievement.
- Conflict between individuals: This is the type of conflict which occurs through personality difference and often originates as a result of role-related pressure.
- Conflict between the individual and group: This is the type of conflict which originates when the individual does not accept the norms of the group.

- Conflict between different groups within the school: This is the type of conflict which occurs when different interest groups of different departments rely on the same scarce resources.
- Conflict between organisations: This is the type of conflict which occurs when different organisations or schools propagate their own policies or when different organisations want to have a share in the same scarce resources or to serve the same people or clients. (Van Niekerk, 1994:191).

On the other hand, Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012) expanded in their view that the following are sources and causes of conflict in schools, namely:

Intra-role conflict: Intra-role conflict results when various members in a role set simultaneously and legitimately make differing demands on a single role. If the complexity and specialisation is great, the degree of interdependence and need for role conformity will also be great. Intra role conflict at a school can occur when teachers claim that instructional materials are too difficult for a grade level, some teachers claim that they are too easy and so forth. Inter-role conflict is the simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult complaints with the other. This type of conflict typically occurs when one individual holds several different roles that make competing demands (Jeriphanos & Amasa, 2012).

Intradepartmental conflict: This occurs when members of the same formal unit cannot agree on an important issue. For example, when Mathematics teachers cannot agree on whether to introduce computers into the classroom instructional process, the outcome can be considerable turbulence.

Intra-organisational conflict: is often characterized by clashes that transcend hierarchical levels, for instance, teachers complaining to the District Education Officers about unrealistic demands on their time, unfair distribution and unfair deadlines.

Intrapersonal conflict: This is caused by troublemakers. These are disturbed people who have not developed satisfying and healthy patterns with society. At a school the head

can encounter intrapersonal conflict when there is poor time management, underestimation or over estimation of skills and assigned tasks that do not match goals, interest, values or abilities. Additional causes are the inability to say no to requests, a lack of self-confidence and lack of control (Jeriphanos & Amasa, 2012).

It is impracticable to completely avoid the occurrences of conflict in any school setting, however, Morgan (2012) alludes that conflict most often can be resolved through mediation and acknowledgement of cultural differences.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Conflict prevails in schools especially in secondary schools and it has some adverse effects in the culture of learning and teaching. From informal conversation with teachers and from my personal teaching experience, there is an unequal treatment of teachers in the schools and that the rate at which these teachers compete over the scarce resources of the schools is worrying. In most cases secondary schools teachers are unhappy with how they are managed and governed in schools.

Furthermore, there is an inevitable clash between formal authority and power and those informal groups in the schools as a result of difference in beliefs, threat and fear of the unknown. It is in the light of this background that motivated me to conduct this study to find out what factors contribute to the conflict among teachers in schools and how possible could the identified factors be eliminated.

1.4 Research questions

The relevant research questions that direct this study are as follows:

MAIN QUESTION

The main research question is: What are the factors contributing to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District?

SUB-QUESTIONS

1.4.1. How does leadership style of school managers contribute to conflict among teachers in schools?

1.4.2. To what extent does an interpersonal relation contribute to conflict among teachers in schools?

1.4.3. How does resistance among teachers contribute to conflict in school?

1.4.4. What impact do cliques among teachers have in the management of school?

1.4.5 What systems are in place to overcome conflicts that emerge in schools?

1.5 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate what factors contribute to conflict among teachers of secondary school in Mthatha Education District.

1.6 Objectives of the study

This study addresses the following objectives:

1.6.1. To examine how leadership style of school managers contribute to conflict among teachers in schools.

1.6.2. To determine the extent that interpersonal relations contribute to conflict among teachers in schools.

1.6.3. To determine how resistance among teachers contribute to conflict in schools.

1.6.4. To examine the impact cliques among teachers have in the management of school.

1.6.5 To determine what systems are in place to overcome conflict that emerge in schools?

1.7 Rationale for the study

The researcher developed an interest in this study following the phenomenon of conflict among teachers of secondary schools teachers in the MED in the Eastern Cape Province. This study is worth undertaking to come up with tentative strategies to curb the conflict in schools as it is destructive and could negatively impact teaching and learning. This study is worth investigating as conflict among teachers in schools contributes to their absenteeism and affects the pace at which teaching and learning take place. Furthermore, it is hoped that conducting this study could enhance working relations of teachers, principals, learners, parents and communities for quality education.

1.8 Significance of the study

The findings of this study will help to contribute to the existing knowledge of conflict management practices and policies in workplaces or institutions especially among teachers in schools. The researcher envisages that the findings of this study will be disseminated in the form of manuscripts and paper presentation to teachers, the Department of Education and professional bodies as means of alerting them of issues that lead to occurrence of conflict in an organisation especially in schools. In this study, the researcher documents the conflict resolution strategies in the form of recommendations that can be adopted by teachers, communities, SMTs, DoE, teacher unions and professional bodies to curb the phenomenon of conflict in schools. It is hoped that stakeholders such as teachers, school governing bodies (SGBs) and SMTs could acquire conflict resolution skills generated from this study which are required to improve working conditions and culture of learning and teaching services (COLTs).

1.9 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that guided this study is the Human Needs Theory (HNT). According to Williams (1998:3) Human Needs Theory was developed in 1970s and 1980s as a generic or holistic theory of human behavior. From the theoretical perspective, humans have basic needs that have to be met in order to maintain stable societies. Human participants in conflict situations are compulsively struggling in their respective institutional environments at all social levels to satisfy primordial and universal needs.

Moreover, basic needs are said to motivate people when they are unmet. Also, the need to fulfill such needs will become stronger the longer the duration they are denied.

1.10.1 Limitations of the study

Below are some of the limitations encountered in this study:

Lack of availability of time limited the study to be conducted on a larger scale. Financial resources have restrained the researcher to conduct this study to only a few selected secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District.

1.10.2 Delimitation of the study

This is delimited to factors contributing to conflict among the teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District. The study is further delimited to 5 selected secondary schools of MED in the Eastern Cape, one of the Provinces of South Africa. This sample of study included only teachers of secondary schools in the MED.

1.11 Definitions of terms

The following terms are defined in this study:

1.11.1 Conflict

Gohshu (2012) concurs with Van Niekerk (1994) in describing conflict by alluding that conflict occurs when two or more people do not agree on an issue or course of action. Furthermore, Wiki (2013) also concurs with Gohshu (2012) by defining conflict as a state of opposition, disagreement or incompatibility between two or more people or groups of people. It is a state of opposition between persons or ideas or interests. It is a hostile encounter between two or more people. Conflict is usually based upon a difference over goals, objectives, or expectations between individuals or groups.

Howard (2008:1) states that conflict can be defined as an ongoing state of hostility between two or more people or groups. Conflict begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something the first party cares about (Robbins, 1998:434). In this study, conflict will refer to disagreement

amongst stakeholders such as teachers, learners, communities, teacher unions and DoE over implementation of policies formulated in line with South Africa's Constitution that was promulgated in 1996.

1.11.2 Secondary school teachers

The secondary schools in South Africa are described by Engelbrecht (2010: 26) as learning institutions that accommodate learners from grade 8 up to grade 12. In this study, secondary school teachers refer to teachers who teach in schools with grades eight to twelve.

1.11.3 Mthatha Educational District

Mthatha Education District comprises of all schools within Umtata and Mqanduli magisterial districts. These districts fall under the King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) Municipality. After the democratic elections in South Africa, these two magisterial districts merged to form Mthatha Education District. MED is one of the 23 education districts in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

1.12 The structure of the study

This study is divided into five chapters:

Chapter1

The problem and its context

This chapter one focuses on the following: The background to the study, statement of the problem, the research questions, aim of the study, objectives of the research, rationale for the study, significance of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework, delimitations and limitations of the study, and definitions of terms.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

In chapter 2, the pertinent literature review to the area of this research will be presented. The aim of the literature review is to analyse critically the existing knowledge on

factors contributing to conflict among senior secondary schools teachers and how it can be managed. The literature review will also assist to identify the knowledge to which this study could contribute.

Chapter 3

The Research Design and Methodology

The research methodology is presented in chapter 3. The research methodology and will include: the research methodology, the research design, the population and sample, the research instrument, the data collection procedure, ethical aspect, validity and reliability.

Chapter 4

Data presentation and analysis of the findings

The chapter 4 presents the analysis, interpretation and discussions of the findings. The researcher will place the raw data into logical, meaningful categories, examine them in a holistic fashion, and find a way to communicate this interpretation.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented in chapter 5. This chapter also presents the suggestions for further research.

1.13 Conclusion

It is learned by the researcher from the reviewed literature in this chapter that conflict occurs when there is disagreement over certain issues such as in implementation of policies among the stakeholders in organisations for example, in schools. It is reflected by authors acknowledged in this chapter that conflict can be constructive in some instances and could be destructive on the other hand. As the thrust of this study, the re-

searcher prompted by the latter side of the conflict as it was prevailing in schools and its occurrence seemed bearing detrimental effects on the quality of education.

This chapter presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the main research question, sub-questions, aim of the study, objectives of the study, rationale, significance, theoretical framework, limitations, delimitations of the study, the structure of the study and conclusion.

In the next chapter of this study, the literature review is presented.

Chapter 2

Literature review and theory on organisational conflict

2.1 Introduction

This chapter commences by discussing the theoretical framework of organizational conflict to place this study in its context and perspective. The theoretical framework for conflict management is followed by the discussion of leadership styles adopted by principals and how their leadership styles could contribute to conflict in schools. The effects of interpersonal relations among school stakeholders such as teachers, school management teams, parents and learners are discussed. In this chapter, teachers' resistance in schools is discussed to reflect how they influence conflict among stakeholders in schools. The impact of cliques and informal groups of teachers are presented. The last section in this chapter discusses the consequences of conflict to the education stakeholders such as teachers, learners, school management teams, parents, school governing bodies, teachers unions and departmental officials.

2.2 Theoretical framework of organisational conflict

This section in chapter two of this dissertation examines the theory relevant to understanding the conflict management in schools in order to define the scope and variety of conflict in schools of the MED. The discovery of theory relevant to conflict management in schools is important in advancing the strategies to resolve conflict and to facilitate efficient and effective teaching so that learners could benefit quality education. In order to find solutions to the seemingly unreasonable problems in schools, an appropriate theory needs to be fully explored. It is with this background that the researcher reviewed the following theoretical approaches to place the present study to the relevant theoretical framework.

2.2.1 Theoretical approaches

Cunningham (1998) avers that there is mutual opposition among theoretical approaches. In his assertion, he comes up with two contending approaches such as the classical

approach that focuses on the macro level of analysis. This implies that causes of conflict are not limited at school level but it can be applicable at education district, provincial and national level through stakeholders such as Department of Education (DoE), unions and communities. Another theoretical approach by Cunningham (1998) is behaviourist focuses on micro level which includes learners, teachers, school governing bodies (SGBs) and school management teams (SMTs) such principals, deputy principals and head of departments (HoDs) at school level.

In addition to the above stated theoretical approaches by Cunningham (1998) there are other theories such as enemy system theory, human needs theory, and conflict resolution. It is argued by Cunningham (1998) that the social conflict could be regarded as something rational, constructive, and socially functional or something irrational, pathological, and socially dysfunctional. The following section briefly discusses enemy system theory, human needs theory, and conflict resolution to reflect how relevant to the study.

(a) Enemy System Theory

Cunningham (1998) highlights that enemy system theory was developed in the early 1990s to help explain intractable conflict. It is a fusion of developmental psychology and international relations theory. This theory presents some important conceptualisations that help to create explanatory model of conflict. It has not been widely adopted to explain the totality of the conflict. The theory is used as a model to explain the complexities of group behaviour, particularly with regard to incompatible group relationships. The gist of the enemy system theory is the hypothesis that humans have a deep rooted psychological need to establish enemies and allies.

(b) Human Needs Theory

Cunningham (1998) allude that Human Needs Theory (HNT) was developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a generic or holistic theory of human behaviour. It is based on the hypothesis that humans have basic needs that have to be met in order to maintain sta-

ble societies. It is noted from Cunningham (1998)'s theories that human participants in conflict situations are compulsively struggling in their respective institutional environments at all social levels to satisfy primordial and universal needs such as security, identity, recognition, and development. This means that the employees and employers strive to gain the control of their environment in ensuring that their needs are satisfied.

(c) Conflict Resolution Theory

Conflict resolution means terminating conflict by methods that are analytical and that get to the root of the problem (Cunningham, 1998). This is in line with the intent of the researcher who wants to examine what factors are capable of influencing conflict in organisations such as schools.

2.3 Factors contributing to conflict among teachers of secondary schools

2.3.1 Unclear roles to the stakeholders in schools

From the reviewed literature, it is imperative to note that teaching and learning activities are negatively affected when there is no enabling environment as a result of conflict. To affirm to this claim, Janie and Demand (2013) indicate that conflict is inevitable whenever two or more teachers interact at school. It is vital that factors that could contribute to conflict in organization such as schools should be identified to avoid interfering with effective teaching and learning. The following factors are identified and discussed.

It should be learned in organisation especially in schools that unclear roles to the teachers, SGBs and SMTs for example, have bearing on causing conflict among them. In view of this claim, Janie and Demand (2013) assert that when it is unclear who is responsible for what area of a project or task, conflict can occur. Territorial issues arise when decisions are made that appear to cross boundaries of responsibility.

On that note, it is argued by Gohshu (2012) that conflict can be caused by ambiguous job scope and responsibilities such as emanating from workload which is unevenly distributed to the members of the organisation.

It is viewed by Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012) that conflict results from a lack of agreement concerning the direction of evaluating task accomplishment in organisation and is found to be most frequent in an organization such as school where individual teachers may bring with them different time and goal orientations that may create a state of high differentiation. In accordance with Whetten and Cameron (2012) unclear roles bear repercussions in organizational context which include incompatible goals and interdependence where a person has to depend on another one to complete his task. Interdependence is characterized by blame shifting when something goes wrong in completion of task (Whetten & Cameron, 2012).

Other consequences include an underlying tension between managers and subordinates as most people do not like being told what they have to do, when the lines of responsibility in an organization are uncertain then jurisdictional ambiguities appear (Whetten & Cameron, 2012:3). It is revealed by Whetten and Cameron, (2012) that individuals have a tendency to pass unwanted responsibilities to another person when responsibilities are not clearly stated. From Whetten and Cameron (2012)' views it is evident that detailed job descriptions can help employees to eliminate jurisdictional ambiguities in minimising the conflicts in an organisation such as schools. From the above reviewed literature, it is noted by the researcher that unclear roles could contribute to conflict in schools especially where teachers, communities, SGBs and SMTs lack to understand and implement their key performance areas (KPA's). This implies that relations on what one should do are critical in schools.

2.3.2 Interpersonal relations

Interpersonal relations at work serve a vital role in the development and maintenance of trust and positive feelings in any work environment. Although the quality of interpersonal relation alone is not enough to produce staff productivity, it can significantly contribute to it. In light of the above, Chan (2008:9) assert that interpersonal relationship is a strong, or close connection or acquaintance between two or more people that may grasp in duration from brief to enduring. This association may be based on inference, solidarity, or some other type of social loyalty (Chan 2008). Interpersonal rela-

relationship is very significant in workplaces but it is often given inadequate attention. Each individual in a group has a particular and unique personality style that is shaped by the lifetime of their experience. Janie and Demand (2013) opine that lacking in understanding how personal interests and goals fit within the structure of the organization exacerbate the possibilities of conflict in an organisation. When an individual's personal goals are at odds with the goals of the organization, the individual may be tempted to fight for his personal goals, creating a conflict situation that will hamper success of the project (Janie & Demand, 2013:7).

In the light of the above assertion, interpersonal conflict is perceived as the most frequent in schools. It concerns the quality of interactions between two or more teachers. This can be due to severe personality differences between teachers on the basis of their personal traits such as professional competencies at school, behaviour, age, race, teaching experiences and qualifications. Interpersonal conflict can emanate from the personal motives of those involved. Conflict between individuals and groups is perceived as developing when two members in group normally good friends normally find themselves seeking promotion to a single job. Group conflict can occur when an individual teacher resists the influence of a group to conform to certain agreed practices. The lack of acceptance leads to conflict and deviant behaviour (Jeriphanos & Amasa, 2012).

It is reflected by Van Niekerk (1994) that difference in values and opinions of stakeholders influence conflict in schools for example, where a teacher who is a member of a group may receive conflict instruction from his or her team members on one side and from his Head of Department (HoD) on the other. One of the two groups may be disadvantaged by his or her conduct and this can lead to conflict (Van Niekerk, 1994:193). This affirms that the personalities of the people involved in the organizational structure play an important part in conflict resolution.

From the researcher's point of view, poor interpersonal relationship among teachers could negatively affect productivity in any working environment such as schools. In line with this Chan and Avoko (2012) aver that conflicts caused by interpersonal relationship

negatively influence the organizational performance and decision-making. The poor interpersonal relationship leads to low personal satisfaction and increases distress resulting in a negative effect on relationships between members.

2.3.3 Competition for limited resources

It is argued by Gohshu (2012) that conflict can be caused by factors such as by employees competing for limited resources, for example, manpower, time, infrastructure, and money. Ntini (2012) concurs with Janie and Demand (2013) that competition for limited resources, including money, time and materials, causes the teams to undercut each other, leading to conflict which is detrimental to progress of the organization. Friction can exist as there is limited amount of any resources available in the school and these resources are expected to be equally shared among teachers in particular to ensure quality education. On that note that, Van Niekerk (1994) expresses that the interdependence of different departments results to conflict as a result of limited resources. This implies that unhealthy competition is capable of causing conflicts in an organisation especially among employees.

2.3.4 Poor communication channels

Howard (2008:2) argues that the root cause of conflict in most schools is poor communication channels from school managers such as principals, deputy principals and HoDs to their school teachers. Such observation is affirmed by Schelenkrich and Upfold (2009) when they articulate that ineffective communication breeds conflict and effective communication is the foundation to effective conflict resolution skills. It is also confirmed in most recent studies in the field of conflict that the leading cause of conflict among school teachers is poor communication (Hans & Harms, 2010). Also it can be concluded that failing to communicate between staff and the management may cause lead to conflict. The literature reviewed on the role of communication clearly shows that conflict is likely to be influenced by the way the stakeholders in schools interact with one another.

2.4 Influence of leadership style in schools

A leadership style is a leader's style of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Robin 2010:67). In addition, Schultz and Schultz (2010:3) opine that there are many different leadership styles that can be adopted by leaders in the politics, business or organisation such as schools. This implies that leadership style defines or characterizes the managers of institutions such as school principals, deputy principals and head of HoDs who are regarded as accounting officers by the DoE in ensuring that the government policies such as implementation of curriculum is accomplished. Research affirms that the managers have different leadership styles that differentiate one from another and as such their leadership styles influence the working environment. In this study, autocratic, bureaucratic and democratic leadership styles are discussed in relation to their implications to the working environment.

2.4.1 Autocratic leadership style and how it contributes to conflict in schools

From the researcher's point of view, the success of any educational institution depends on the quality of the leadership style used. Van Deventer and Kruger (2010: 142) assert that the leadership style adopted by a school principal can have a positive or negative effect on the smooth running of the school, learner academic performance, teacher motivation and job satisfaction. The autocratic leadership is commonly called coercive leadership or dictatorship (Musaazi, 1985). Mayank (2014:5) argues that autocratic style of leadership, which is sometimes called authoritarian style, is where the leader makes the decisions without the consultation of followers. In school context, it means that the SMTs apply top down approach in dealing with managing school resources for example, teachers and learners. This shows that conflict could arise in a situation where the management deliberately abstains from engaging the staff in crucial issues. Furthermore, it is clear those principals who adopt autocratic leadership style in managing their resources such as teachers do not consider their expertise, integrity teaching experience and professional competence in engaging them in policy formulation and decision-making. Such practices by principals indicate marginalisation of their subordinates which could have some effects on the productivity as teachers.

Autocratic leadership style is described by Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:142) as a leading practice by principals who do not involve other school stakeholders such as teachers, learners, SGBs, parents and communities. It is further highlighted that in a school with autocratic principal there is limited teamwork among school stakeholders, no staff development, instability and unfriendly environment (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2010). Similarly, Mayank (2014) opines that principals who adopt autocratic leadership style limit them from taking the views of school stakeholders towards decision-making. Autocratic leadership style is viewed by Musaazi (1985) as a leadership that is imposed on the organization by leaders and is a poor and dangerous way of leading people (Musaazi, 1985). In this regard, it is affirmed by authors such as Macheal and Germino (2010) that autocratic leadership style employed by principals could damage an organization irreparably as they force their followers to execute strategies and services in a very narrow way based upon a subjective idea of what success looks like.

The above observation is incorporated by Whetten and Cameron (2012) when they contend that very strict managers most often have conflicts with their employees. The findings of a study conducted by Thomas and Thomas (2008) who was testing relationship between conflict style and organisational level show that assertiveness increased with hierarchical level. Based on the above mentioned assertions, it can be concluded that interpersonal conflict among teachers and school management teams vary depending on the individuals' level of authority involved in the conflict. From the researcher's point of view, it appears that when the managers in schools possess the autocratic leadership style, there could be high possibilities of conflicts due to limited ownership of the decision-making.

Musaazi (1985) asserts that an autocratic leader alone determine policy and assigns tasks to teachers without consulting with them. Similarly, Mayank (2014:1) opines that principals who adopt autocratic style limit them from taking their views of school stakeholders towards decision-making. This kind of leadership to the researcher's observation could subject pressure on subordinates to perform. It is evident that the culture of learning and teaching in schools could be affected where teachers have to carry out the

directives of the principals without questions even if there are clear possibilities of failure to attain the organizational goals as per the management's decision-making.

2.4.2 Bureaucratic leadership and how it contributes to conflict

Michael and Germino (2010:1) describe bureaucratic leaders as those people who create and rely on policy to meet organizational goals. According to Smith and Cronje (1995) with a bureaucratic leadership style, teachers are directed by a sense of duty towards the school goals and by set of logical rules and regulations. The bureaucratic schools are characterized by clear division of labour, a formal hierarchy where teachers are subjected to specific rules, policy and procedures (Smith & Cronje, 1995). As it clearly discussed in the preceding paragraphs where the roles of employees are unclear there are possibilities of conflict in the organisation. As with Smith and Cronje (1995)'s views, bureaucratic schools seem to have lesser chances of conflict than in autocratic leadership approach adopted by management as teachers are working guided with logical rules and roles that clearly spelt out to ensure realization of the organizational goals., As Smith and Cronje (1995) put it explicitly that there are set rules that guide the teachers of what is expected of them, from the researcher' s point of view, it is comforting teachers as they know what is expected of them towards the realisation of organisational goals. Bureaucratic leaders are most comfortable relying on a stated policy in order to convince followers to get on board (Michael & Germano, 2010). Bureaucratic leaders are usually strongly committed to procedures and processes even if those policies are destructive and thoughtlessly developed (Michael & Germano, 2010). In the light of such assertion by Michael and Germino (2010) it appears that policies that are not feasible to the implementation by employees could lead to resistance and conflict.

2.4.3 Democratic leadership and how it contributes to conflict

According to Musaazi (1982: 64) democratic leadership style rests on the idea that members of the group or their representatives are involved in the making of policies, decision making and respecting of one's attributes such as expertise. This type of leadership emphasises group and leader participation in formulation of policies that serve as

guidelines for organizational operations. On the basis of what Musaazi (1982) articulates, democratic leadership involves joint decision-making which affords the all members own such policies and encourages them to perform its task as per their planning in order to achieve the set goals. Lee (2008) argues that subordinates' satisfaction increases when superiors use collaborating, compromising, and accommodating conflict management strategies.

It is acknowledged by Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012) that many conflicts find their sources in the head's leadership style as the major source of conflict. However, it can be concluded that leadership styles adopted by managers play a pivotal role in influencing conflict and maintaining conducive work environment for all the school stakeholders to enable them achieve the set goals such as teaching and learning. For absolute and perfect control of conflicts at school level, Brown and Samuel (2012) affirm that successful dealing with conflict requires conflict management approach where a manager recognizes the conflicts in the early stages and carefully assesses the impact on the performance of the organization and actively addresses those impacts through encouragement of functional conflict and management of dysfunctional conflict.

2.5 Teachers' resistance in schools

Van der Westhuizen (2007) notes that, the intensity of teachers' resistance to change usually depends on what is being changed and whether the stability of the school is being threatened. That is why resistance to change is usually a reaction of an individually teacher who wishes to protect himself or herself against the effects or results of change. Generally, resistance to change by an individual implies uncertainty about his or her future role and behaviour in a new situation. Van der Westhuizen (2007: 230) asserts that..."the school principal is primarily responsible for the implementation of change in the school and must therefore be conversant, but also with the manner in which resistance to change must be managed." Another reason why the principal should know how to manage resistance to change in education is that change places enormous pressure on teaching staff. This seems to suggest that when the staff mem-

bers are not prepared for the demands made on them by renewal and change, resistance occurs in the workforce.

From the researcher's point of view, it is imperative to document what contribute to teachers' resistance in schools to enable the involved stakeholders in education to be acquainted and able to prevent such practices. Van Niekerk (1994) and Van der Westhuizen (2007) are in agreement when they suggest that it is imperative to identify forces that influence the resistance to change among the stakeholders in organisation especially in schools. They both outline the following forces namely:

- The loss of personal choice and values
- Possible loss of authority
- Not understanding the reasons for change
- Meaningless change
- Fear of change and failure
- Competition such as clashes due to behavioural styles and frustration as a result of others not meeting one's expectations
- And lack of skills (Van Niekerk, 1994: 185).

From the above list of forces, it is clear that lack of understanding why the change is for, could have some possibilities of creating conflict among teachers, learners, parents, SMTs, SGBs, teacher unions and DoE. In accordance with Mayank (2014), school management that are not negotiating with its teachers in implementing the changes contribute to teachers' resistance. This means that the culture of learning and teaching is affected when teachers are refusing to implement educational changes as they are in state of resistance. It is argued by Bean, Human and Eksteen (2006: 135) that..." since most schools consist of people, changes in school, refer to changes in people, generally people do not like change, and it is human nature to resist change." To successfully im-

plement change, school principals must be aware of why people resist change and what techniques are available to minimize resistance (Bean, *et al.*, 2006).

In addition, Bean, *et al.*, (2006) explain the typical reactions and emotions that teachers go through in the process of adaptation to changes such as when they are overwhelmed by change, they become frozen and unable to reason or plan as well as doubting to cope with the new circumstances. Change trigger rational and irrational emotional behavior because of the uncertainty involved. Furthermore, Bean *et al.*, (2006) illustrate some other reasons that lead to teachers' resistance as follows:

- Denial: The teacher denies the fact that change exist and refuses to acknowledge that something has changed in his or her life
- Self-doubt or depression: The teacher slowly begins to realize doubts that change has occurred and doubts his or her ability to cope with the new circumstances
- Accepting reality: The teachers accept that things have changed and break all links with the past.
- Testing self: The teachers have lot of energy, but there is anger and irritability close to the surface during this period of testing his or her ability to cope with change.
- Seeking and looking for meaning: The teacher thinks about what has happened and tries to make sense of what the change has meant in his or her life.
- Internalising: The teacher makes the newly discovered meaning part of his or her behaviour (Bean, *et al.*, 2006: 135).

From Bean, *et al.*, (2006)'s citation of reasons that could lead to teachers' resistance, it appears that change that is brought with limited negotiation and motivation by DoE and SMTs bears the unbearable pressure to teachers especially when are they expected to execute those changes without proper training on how to adopt those policies. This seems to suggest that teachers with limited skills and knowledge about the implementation of changes are subject to counterattack by their authorities. This is in line with

what Bean, *et al.*, (2006) are advocating for when they encourage that manager should focus efforts to remove barriers to change such as offering training to workers that would capacitate them to be efficient in implementing the organisational goals. Such observation is echoed by Van Westhuizen (2007: 22) when he asserts that it is usually better to decrease the resisting forces because an increase in the driving forces can result in increased resistance.

The next section presents the impact of informal groups on the culture of learning and teaching in schools.

2.6 The impact of informal groups on the culture of teaching and learning in schools

The existence of informal group within organization is inevitable and there are many reasons that lead to its formation. Farveh (2012:2) avers that informal organisation are the interlocking social structure created to answer employees' social and psychological needs. On the psychological point of view, it is clear that people need to feel that they are part of something and are engaged on the inception and implementation stages in attaining the responsive environment. It can be learned that informal groups arises when people of the same views club together in showing who they are and what they are willing to do as opposed the other people in an organisation. It is affirmed by Farveh (2012: 4) that ..." informal group is a source of conflict and depends on both their sizes of organisation and the manner how managers deal with them."

It is envisaged by the researcher to show how the informal group contributes to conflict. Following is a brief discussion of advantages and disadvantages of cliques and informal groups.

2.6.1 Advantages of informal groups

In terms of advantages and the causes of the formation of cliques, Van Niekerk (1994: 195) indicates that informal groups usually develop as a result of individual and group needs. Informal groups facilitate quicker decision making, ease the flow of information, circumventing lines of authority, and could improve the cooperation between depart-

ments (Van Niekerk, 1994:195). The formation of cliques and informal groups in schools is viewed by Farveh (2012:4) as a motivational factor among teachers. Such assertion is incorporated by Whetten and Cameron (2012:6) when they reiterate that...“the existence of cliques promotes teacher motivation in the schools, encourages healthy competitions among teachers, assist in solving each other’s personal problems and stress related issues in the schools.

It can be concluded that the existence of cliques in schools is only beneficial if it operates in a manner that yields positive changes to the schooling system such as improving in teaching practices of teachers, social relations among communities, parents, SGBs, SMTs, DoE, learners and teachers also in academic improvement of learners as well. It is with these reasons that the researcher perceives the cliques vital in the quality of education by engaging members and affording them to compromise for the sake of attaining meaningfully the organisational goals.

2.6.2 Disadvantages of informal groups

Contrary to the above mentioned benefits, cliques and informal groups in schools contribute negatively to the smooth running of schools. Farveh (2012:4) contends that informal group is a source of conflict. Conflict arises when group members become loyal to their own group’s aims and put it ahead of formal organisation’s goals. Moreover, informal groups have a potential to distribute rumours across organisation because they control informal communication nets (Farveh 2012:4).

Whetten and Cameron (2012:8) aver that the source of conflict among employees can be as a result of age differences, cultural background, ethics, and values. For instance, a long-serving employee who feels loyal to the organisation may have conflict with a young new-comer who sees the organization as a stepping stone in his future career. Furthermore, informal groups in schools is viewed by Whetten and Cameron (2012:8) as intensifying envy and jealousy among teachers, and generates ground for unprofessional behaviour from rival groups as a result of lack of unity and co-operations. Joseph (2013:1) highlights that although conflict within an organization can be stressful, it is

necessary for an organisation to encounter conflict for it to become strong and successful.

It is argued by Farveh (2012) that informal groups influences, regulates individuals' behavior and their activities resulting in an undeniable impact on organisation' progress.

2.7 Analysis of conflict management and conflict resolution strategies in schools

According to Joseph (2013) when dealing with organizational conflict, it is best for the organization to be prepared with a conflict resolution plan. This often is put into place during the formation or transformation of the organization. A conflict resolution plan can aid in resolving organizational conflict within a group by merely laying down a set of guidelines and rules for each group member to follow when he or she experiences conflict within the organization. When confronted with organizational conflict, it is important for each party to keep an open mind, maintain a professional tone and to support any arguments with facts. People who maintain a professional attitude and an open mind when confronting an organizational conflict are able to manage that conflict more successfully. In addition, when confronted with an organizational conflict that cannot be solved by following the conflict resolution plan, it is important for those who are involved to report to a group or team member of a higher status with more power to resolve the conflict. Most large and powerful organisations employ human resource representatives specifically for the management of organizational conflict.

Wertheim (2002) aver that key influence in conflict resolution is the mindset of the participants. A win-win mind-set generally leads to the conflict being resolved while a win-lose mind-set generally leads to the conflict escalating.

In broader sense Howard (2008) contends that conflict managed through the implementation of a process called the 5 A's technique of managing conflicts listed below:

Assessment: the assessment phase is the investigative stage when dealing with conflict situations.

Acknowledgement: acknowledging the conflict after conducting a thorough assessment.

Attitude: The attitude must aim at resolving the issue at hand.

Action: during the resolution period of resolving a conflict a fair number of action points will be recorded which must be completed in an acceptable timeframe.

Analysis: once the conflict situation has been resolved, it should be analysed to determine what caused the conflict situation to begin with and what measures can be put in place to stop this type of situation from reoccurring (Howard 2008:6).

The 5 A's technique of managing conflicts presented by Howard (2008) above could be used to overcome conflict among secondary school teachers in the Mthatha Education District. According to Gohshu (2012) conflict management should be distinguished from conflict resolution. The former does not seek to get rid of the problem, but rather to ensure that the problem is managed transparently, adequately, and that the entire team gets to working together again. In short, conflict management aims to enhance learning and helps in the development of high performing and effective teams. Conflict resolution, on the other hand, aims to reduce, remove or end the conflict (Gohshu, 2012).

In encouraging the occurrence of conflict management strategies in organisations, Lee (2008) argues that subordinates' satisfaction increases when superiors use collaborating, compromising, and accommodating conflict management strategies. Furthermore, Gohshu (2012) elaborates that there are three key aspects to conflict management and these:

- Awareness of the self: Awareness of the self is important in conflict management. As a manager, your behaviour in the workplace (as a professional) and toward your team (as a person with integrity) will be a key defining factor with regard to how much individual team members trust and respect you. A manager who has the trust and respect of the team members will find it easier to get vari-

ous members to understand the situation from others' standpoints. They would then be more willing to compromise or adhere to a proposed solution,

- Awareness of team dynamics: Knowing how the team works is the second aspect of conflict management. For example, who in the team requires more hand-holding? When issues arise, are there ample opportunities given to both parties to have their say? Are there cliques within the team that will take sides? What are some of the indicators that trouble may be brewing at work? An awareness of such issues will put the manager in good stead to pre-empt potential problems, and increase the chances of a happier and more productive team. Understanding the stages of group development can be helpful in managing conflict because it contextualises group dynamics within the work context.
- Taking action: When dealing with conflict within the team, it is best to intervene as soon as the team exhibits signs of distress and inability to resolve differences. Thereafter, follow-up action will be required to ensure all members of the team are on the same page and aware of the entire situation. All action taken should also be in line with company policy, and clearly communicated so that the entire process is transparent, and no member feels that he or she is unfairly treated. Remember, conflict management does not seek to get rid of the problem, but rather to ensure that the problem is managed transparently so that the entire team gets back to working together again, and as a result, grow from the episode. Whether the conflict would be constructive hinges critically on the way a manager handles the episode (Gohshu 2012:4).

To minimize the occurrences of conflict at school level, Jeriphanos and Amasa (2012) contended that school management should ensure that workshops on conflict and conflict resolution should be mounted for school stakeholders including heads, teachers and school development committees. In order to formulate an effective solution, it is essential that all factors which give rise to the conflict situation are carefully identified and explored (Jeriphanos and Amasa, 2012:5). In support of the above mentioned view,

Chan (2008) conceded that managers contribute to making the organization more pleasant by creating a positive work environment and may influence subordinates perceptions about their job.

2.8 Conclusion

It is learnt from the reviewed literature that placing the study on the theoretical framework assists the researcher in reviewing the pertinent literature that could put the study into context. It is highlighted in this chapter that conflict is accompanied by feelings of anger, frustration, hurt, anxiety, or fear and as such quality of education is likely to be negatively affected if it the stakeholders lack conflict management skills. In this chapter theoretical framework such as system needs, and human needs are explicitly explained to place the study into school context. It emerged from this chapter that needs of people need to be satisfied to acquire improved working relations. It was crucial to learn that there are factors contributing to conflict among secondary schools teachers and their repercussions to the culture of learning and teaching services. The factors that militate the conflict in secondary schools that are discussed in this chapter include the interpersonal relations among teachers in schools, types of leadership adopted by principals such as autocratic and bureaucratic leadership. In dealing with how the conflict occur, factors contributing to teachers' resistance in schools, the impact of informal groups of teachers on the culture of teaching and learning in schools were discussed.

The research methodology is presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, details of the research methodology have been followed to investigate with the aim to provide information and strategies to manage the identified problem especially in schools. In simple terms methodology can be defined as giving a clear cut idea on what methods or process the researcher is going to carry out in his or her research to achieve research objectives. In order to plan for the whole research process at a right point of time and to advance the research work in the right direction, carefully chosen research methodology is very critical. Research methodology maps out the whole research work and gives credibility to whole effort of the researcher. Moreover, research methodology guides the researcher to involve and to be active in his or her particular field of enquiry. The methodological process explained in this study include: the research paradigm, methodology, design, population, sampling, instrumentation, trustworthiness, reliability and the procedures for data collection and analysis.

3.2 Research paradigm

To situate this study in its proper context, it is important to indicate which paradigm the researcher aligned himself to. A research paradigm is a set of scholars' fundamental assumptions and beliefs about the world (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). Among the number of paradigms a highlighted by McGregor and Murnane (2010), such as Positivist paradigm, Post-positivist, Pragmatism paradigm and interpretivist paradigm, the research used the later interpretivist paradigm. This study situated within the interpretivist paradigm because a qualitative research approach was used in the collection and analysis of the data. This was to find out the reality in terms of the factors that contribute to conflict among teachers of secondary schools is relative and multiple. This was also because each individual participant constructed his/her own reality about the factors that contributed to conflict among the selected secondary school teachers of Mthatha Education District. For that matter, there were multiple interpretations of the reality of factors that contributed to conflict among the selected secondary school teachers from the partici-

pants. This was in keeping with interpretivist view that social construction of reality made up as people interact with one another to share view and understanding overtime about something in specific social settings (Creswell 2011:2). Data gathered was as well within the interpretivist research paradigm which is primarily descriptive. The emphasis is on exploration and insight rather than experiment and the numerical treatment of data (Creswell 2011:2). Finally, this study situated within the interpretivist paradigm because the main goal of the researcher in this study was to define, describe, interpret and understand the behaviours of the participants regarding the factors that contribute to conflict among the teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District.

3.3.1 The research design

In this study the researcher used case study as a design to conduct this research. A qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Pamela & Susan, 2008:2).

According to Judith (2004:12), the case study approach is particularly appropriate for individual researchers as it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in-depth within a limited time scale. The researcher used the case study designed to present and interpret the detailed information about the factors contributing to conflict among secondary schools teachers in the Mthatha Education District. Eunjung, Faye and Sara (2010:12) opine that the case study as an evidence-based approach in knowledge building and testing warrants careful investigation and delineation of its unique characteristics. Case study is characterised by empirical approach as an intensive investigation of a single system or phenomenon that is, embedded in a real-life context, and a close association with theories (Eunjung, Faye & Sara, 2010:12).

In explaining what case study method entails, Robert (2009: 4) avers that it allows investigators to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events such as individual life cycles, small group behavior, organisational and managerial processes.

The case study research design was found to be relevant to investigate the conflict among the teachers of secondary schools of Mthatha Education District. In case study research the data are interpreted as collected. Inferences are made in a detective-like fashion.

Regarding the components of case study, Patricia (2008) postulates that a case study strategy has five components namely:

- The study's questions,
- Its propositions which reflect on a theoretical issue,
- Its unit(s) of analysis (the event, entity, or individuals noted in the research questions),
- The logic linking the data to the propositions, and
- The criteria for interpreting the findings (Patricia, 2008: 4).

Patricia (2008:4) also states that rigorous data collection follows carefully articulated steps, such as the use of multiple sources of evidence, the creation of a case study database, and the maintenance of a chain of evidence. The use of multiple sources of data enables the researcher to cover a broader range of issues, and to develop converging lines of inquiry by the process of triangulation (Patricia, 2008:4). It is viewed by the researcher that the case study research design is appropriate to investigate the identified problem based on its usefulness as a research design.

3.3.2 The research methodology

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was adopted to provide in-depth contextual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue which in this study is the prevalence of conflict in schools. It provides information about the human side of an issue like contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals (Mack, Cynthia, Kathleen, Greg, & Emily, 2011:3). Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socio economic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent (Mack, Cynthia, Kathleen, Greg, & Emily, 2011:3).

As with Karin (2008:10)'s view, qualitative researchers give emphasis to illuminating, understanding, generalizing and meaning making to the findings of their investigation. Qualitative research seeks to capture the richness of people's experience in their own terms. It involves the non-numerical organization of data to discover patterns, theme, and qualities found in field notes. Andy (2006:1) affirms that qualitative research involves the collection and analysis of narrative data, and is interested in the lived experiences of individuals which in this study are teachers of secondary schools in Mthatha Education District. The study was best suited to the qualitative research approach as the qualitative research reports are descriptive, incorporating expressive language and the presence of voices in the text. Again, qualitative research uses the natural setting as the source of data.

Gajendra and Kanka (1990:27) contend that qualitative research approach involves the gathering of evidence that reflects the experiences, feelings or judgments of individuals taking part in the investigation of a research problem or issue whether as subjects or as observers of the scene. There may be some element of quantification in a qualitative research approach, for example, when the researcher is reporting the numbers of individuals with similar judgment or experiencing similar feelings. Qualitative research is often concerned with social processes such as conflict which is the problem studied in this research.

It is suggested by Marie (1997:2) that the qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can also be used to gain new perspectives on things about which much is already known, or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. Thus, qualitative methods are appropriate in situations where one needs to first identify the variables that might later be tested quantitatively, or where the researcher has determined that quantitative measures cannot adequately describe or interpret a situation. Research problems tend to be framed as open-ended questions that support discovery of new information or experiences (Marie, 1997:2).

The above observation is incorporated by White (2005) when he stated that qualitative research methodologies are methodologies dealing with data that are principally verbal. The qualitative research is more concerned with understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the participants. This happens through the researcher's participation in the daily life activities of those involved in the research or through historical empathy with participants in past social events. The nature of reality and human behavior in qualitative research is the one constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation.

3.4. Population and sampling

James and Sally (2010:129) regard population as "a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which researchers intend to generalise the result of the study. This group is also referred to as the target population or universe (James & Sally, 2010:129).

In this study, the populations were teachers and SMTs selected from secondary schools in the MED. The researcher chose to use the secondary school teachers as the problem identified at that level tends to impact negatively on teachers' professional performance, learners' academic achievement and instability to the stakeholders in schools. They were also selected on the basis that they appear to be unhappy with how they are managed and governed in schools. In most secondary schools there are prevalence of conflict involving rivalries, jealousies, personality clashes, role definitions, and struggles for power and favour which partially or completely disrupt the culture of teaching and learning. In some instances, conflict is allegedly reported as leading to murder and resignation of teachers.

3.5 Sampling

Dennis (2007:30) asserts that a sample is part of the population from which it is drawn. Sampling involves getting information from only some members of the population while population sharing similar characteristics in an area. In this study, ten (10) teachers and five (5) principals from five different secondary schools formed the sample size of the

investigation. Convenience sampling method was used to select this sample size. Convenience sampling method refers to situations when population elements are selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available to the researcher and the problem identified impact on them (Maree, 2007). It is usually quick and cheap. It is useful in explanatory research where the researcher is interested in getting inexpensive, quick approximation of the truth (Maree, 2007:177).

In accordance with Allison (2012:122) convenience sampling is the type of sampling when the researcher selects people who are most easily located or who are most available for participation in the research study. The major advantage for convenience sampling is that it assists the researcher to easily locate the sampling objects. The teachers and the principals selected for this study were found to be relevant to provide meaningful data for the study and were accessible to the researcher on the basis of their exposures to conflicts and teaching experiences in secondary schools.

3.4 The research instrument

In this study, the researcher used interview schedule, thus, face-to-face in-depth individual interviews to gather detailed information from the participants regarding the problem under investigation. Their views and opinions were captured down based to the questions posed by the researcher. For the researcher to ensure that what is reflected by the interviewees is not lost, for validity and reliability of the research instrument adopted, a tape recorder was used. Julius and Chris (2000:6) argue that the advantage of audio tape recording is that it allows complete verbatim recording of both the researcher's questions and the informant's responses. In this study, tape-recording was done to ensure that during data analysis stage, the researcher has all the responses from the interviewed participants. Indeed, that helped the researcher during his data analysis as he was able to replay the tape-recorder in accessing the responses of participants. The researcher also learned that capturing verbal expressions by writing is not as accurate as that one obtained when tape-recorder was used. Some participants are fast in expressing themselves than others which makes difficult for the interviewer to capture all what was said with her/his hand writing. Paul, Nick and Carol (2004: 123)

consider that in a personal or face-to-face interview, the researcher can gain a deeper understanding of the validity of the response. In a face-to-face interview better explanations are possible as the participants' body language offer additional clues to the answers. There are three forms of interviews which researchers tend to select one from in order to craft their questions to be posed during interviews. The three forms of interviews are briefly discussed below.

3.4.3 Semi-structured interview

The researcher used semi-structured interview schedule in the data collection. The interview is perceived by Joseph, Mallihai, Zui and Terry (2009:6) as the most common form of data gathering technique in qualitative tradition. Many informative papers have been written on the theory and practice of data gathering through the interview. A contextualising statement serves the purpose of situating the interviewee as the expert in the room. This implies that in this study the sampled teachers and principals have relevant experience and information regarding the identified problem by the researcher. With the interview design, a semi-structured interview was used. It is argued by Marie (1997) that in semi-structured interview there are no predetermined inquiry responses as the interviewer is free to probe and explore within predetermined inquiry areas. Furthermore, to maintain validity of the instrument, an interview schedule guide containing questions was prepared and used to ensure that basically the same questions to each and every participant are asked. This was intended to access more less the same responses to enable the researcher for meaningful data analysis. There were no predetermined inquiry responses in the semi-structured interviews as the interviewer was free to probe and explore within predetermined inquiry areas.

Marie (1997:5) further explains that interview guides ensure good use of limited interview time, they make interviewing multiple subjects more systematic and comprehensive, and they help to keep interactions focused. Interviewing guides can be modified over time to focus attention on areas of particular importance, or to exclude questions the researcher has found to be unproductive for the goals of the research (Marie, 1997).

3.5 Data collection procedure

In this study, the data collection procedure that was used is presented below. The researcher in this study used an audiotape as a data collection tool. The audiotape recorder was switched on immediately the interview began, to capture the direct words of the participants. The advantage of this form of data collection was that the researcher concentrated more on the questioning of the participants than trying to write down what they said. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews which allowed for the generation of first-hand, in-depth, rich, unexpected and relevant information from the interviewees.

Each interview lasted for 30 minutes and these were done after school hours to ensure that classes were not disrupted by this study. English was used as a medium of research during interview session. The researcher went to participants with a tape recorder and a notepad to manually write the responses in case the tape recorder fails. The researcher motivated the interviewees by explaining to them about the research objectives and was ensured that the information gathered would be made valuable to school principals, the Department of Education and teachers in the form of manuscripts. Each interview started with a contextualising statement such as: There is a lot of discussion in education about conflict among teachers in schools. The researcher introduced himself to the participants that he is doing a study to explore factors contributing to conflict among secondary schools teachers in the MED. The researcher negotiated with the participants to tell him about their experiences with regard to the factors contributing to conflict among teachers in their schools.

It is encouraged by Pamela and Susan (2008:10) that in the data collection phase, the quality of the case study can be enhanced by considering the dimensions of sampling, numbers and heterogeneity of samples, sources of evidence, timing of data collection points, and intervention procedures.

Clair, Min and Judith (2006) aver that it is virtually impossible to write down everything that is said in an interview and transcribing is a time consuming business. They further

state that when conducting an interview, the researcher should remember the following five basic principles:

- Providing a quiet and comfortable room for the interview,
- Testing all recording,
- Equipment beforehand and having spare batteries/power leads;
- Explaining what the interview is all about and
- Trying to ensure that the interviewee is relaxed. Knowing what to ask and avoiding bias is also very important (Clair, Min & Judith, 2006: 37).

All of the above-mentioned steps suggested by Clair, *et al.*, (2006) were adhered to by the researcher.

Pamela and Susan (2008:11) suggest that decisions must be made about how many times to collect data. Data may be collected using a one-or two-shot design (post intervention only, or pre intervention and post intervention, respectively) versus continually collecting data over time (after weekly sessions) for an extended period. Yin (1994) expanded that the principles of data collection in a case study include The use of multiple sources of evidence (such as triangulation), creating a case study database (such as case study notes, case study documents and tabular materials) and maintaining a chain of evidence (such as maintaining a link between initial study questions and case study procedure, circumstances of the evidence collected, putting the data collection to practice on the basis of the protocol and actual evidence storage in the database for later checks (Yin 1994).

In this study, for data collection from the sampled teachers and principals, the researcher adopted one-shot design due to limited time and invaluable information accessed from the sample.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethics are generally considered to deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper and improper, good or bad (White, 2005). White (2005) further states that ethics are set of moral principles which are suggested and accepted by the interviewees and interviewers. Ethics offer rules and behavioral expectations about the acceptable conduct that govern the participants and researchers. This means that the ethics involve agreement based on principles to be followed by both parties. To adhere to the ethical measures the following steps were observed by the researcher.

3.6.1 Permission to conduct the study

Permission to conduct the study in sampled secondary schools was sought and obtained from DoE, principals and teachers of the secondary schools (see Appendices A, B and C). As part of exercising the ethical practices, informed consent forms were sought from Walter Sisulu University and were supplied to the participants to fill in (see Appendix D). This was done to access their consent and willingness to participate in the study. Consent thus protects and respects the right of self-determination and places some of the responsibility on the participants should anything go wrong in the research. As part of the right to self-determination, the subjects have the right to refuse to take part, or to withdraw once the research has begun. Mack, *et al.*, (2011:11) concluded by pointing out that individual informed consent may be written or oral:

1. Written consent: This means that a person receives a written form that describes the research and then signs the form to document his or her consent to participate.
2. Oral consent: This means that a person receives all of the information needed for consent either orally or in writing and then orally consents to participate. The participant does not sign a consent form; this is often described as waiving the requirement for documentation of informed consent. Oral consent is generally acceptable for research with minimal risks, or where a loss of confidentiality is the primary risk and a signed consent form would be the only piece of identifying information for study partici-

pants. For the purpose of this study, participants were negotiated and opted for written consent.

3.6.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

Participants were assured that no names of the participants would be reflected in the study instead letters of alphabets that were used to represent the names participants during analysis of data. This implies that the participants were also made to know that pseudonyms would be used. Furthermore, the participants were assured that the data shared by them to the researcher were of the strictest confidentiality and for the purposes of the research only.

3.6.3 Protection of participants against abuse, discrimination and abuse

Participants were also protected from any forms of abuse by ensuring the venue where the interviews were conducted was user-friendly and enabling environment. The participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time without a penalty or victimization. This requires a commitment to ensure the autonomy of the research participant, and to protect people from exploitation of their vulnerability. The researcher ensured that participants' dignity were respected, their autonomy were ensured and were not simply used as a means to achieving the objectives of this study (Mack, *et al.* 2011).

3.7 Validity and reliability

Macmillan and John (2010:10) aver that in a qualitative study the technical features of instruments such as validity and reliability are not used. Nevertheless, the more general ideas of appropriateness of the inferences (validity) and error in collecting information (reliability) are still important.

3.7.1 Validity

To ensure validity and reliability, the researcher followed a proper procedure when collecting the data from the participants. The researcher also considered the issue of bias throughout the data collection stage. Furthermore, to ensure validity and reliability, participants were given sufficient time during the interview process to answer the ques-

tions. Andy (2006) concurs with Louis, Lawrence and Keith (2009) by stating that validity refers to the accuracy and truth of the data and findings that are produced, the extent to which research measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe. Distinctions can be made between internal validity (the extent to which findings represent the phenomenon being investigated) and external validity (the extent to which findings can be generalised to the wider population). The researcher selected external validity as the phenomenon under study is applicable between two or more people.

The researcher also ensured validity through conducting a pilot study to test the research instrument before it was actually adopted to the sampled teachers and principals. This exercise afforded the researcher to administer a tool that was well proved to meaningful and relevant questions with no errors.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability is a measure of consistency over time and over similar samples (Louis, Lawrence & Keith, 2009). A reliable instrument for research yields similar data from similar participants over time. Andy (2006:1) explains that reliability is generally understood to represent the probability that repeating the research procedure under the same conditions would produce similar results. The researcher ensured reliability by choosing an appropriate and common time for interviews to all the interviewed teachers and principals. The reliability of the instrument was strengthened by use of face-to-face semi-structured interviews and tape recordings of the responses of the participants. According to White (2005:193) reliability demonstrates whether the researcher's conclusion is true or correct and does it responds to the actual state in reality.

3.7.3 Credibility

To enhance credibility, the researcher made segments of the raw data available to the colleagues to analyse. Again, to ensure credibility, the researcher provided sufficient information that could be used by the readers to determine whether the findings were applicable to new situations. The researcher in this study ensured credibility through

the use of an inquiry audit. This is a process whereby reviewers were made to examine both the process and the product of the research for consistency. Funda (2008:4) asserts that in qualitative research there are issues of credibility of the research results in a different sense. The main issue of credibility in a qualitative study is the relationship between the data obtained from interviews and the categories for describing the ways in which people experience a certain phenomenon.

3.7.4 Trustworthiness

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher ensured the elimination of bias in the research procedures and the establishment of confidence with regards to the truth of the findings based on the research design. White (2005:203) asserts that trustworthiness of qualitative research can be achieved through:

1. Truth value. This establishes how confident the research is with the truth of the findings based on the research design, informants and context.
2. Applicability. This refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or with other groups; it is the ability to generalize from the findings to a larger population.
3. Consistency of data. This means the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context.
4. Neutrality has to do with the freedom from bias in the research procedures.

To adhere to the above principles, the research informants considered in the research question design and in the context of research problem. The researcher was neutral, honest and consistent during the data collection procedure.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter of the study has presented and discussed the qualitative research as the research methodology used. The chapter has also presented and discussed the case study as the research design used in this study; the population, the sample size and the

rationale for sampling technique used to select the sample were discussed. Face-to-face in-depth interview which was used as the data collection instrument was discussed in this chapter. The chapter also presented and discussed the data collection procedures followed by the researcher when data was to be collected. This chapter also presented the steps followed by the researcher to adhere to ethical considerations. Finally, the chapter also presented efforts made by the researcher to ensure that validity and reliability of research instrument used meet the study in terms of collecting relevant data for credible and meaningful publication of findings.

The data analysis is presented in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 4

Data analysis, presentation and discussion of the main findings

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focuses on research design and methodology adopted including the ethical measures adhered to in this study based on the research questions. The researcher portrayed how the data collection procedures are followed in this chapter. The responses of sampled teachers and principals collected through use of interviews are presented and analysed to provide meaningful findings of this study. The researcher adopted themes to analyse the data that emerged from the participants' responses.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:46) qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories. The inductive process of qualitative research means that the researcher develops theories from the information that has been gathered. With regard to qualitative data analysis, White (2005:22) observes it as a process that involves becoming familiar with the data in-depth to provide detailed descriptions of the situation, participants and activities. It involves categorizing, coding pieces of similar data into themes for interpreting and synthesising the organised data into understanding. The gathering of information involves selecting data, using techniques for data collection and the transcriptions through conversations. In this study, the researcher used interviews to collect the data that were conducted face-to-face with the sampled teachers and principals.

4.2 Analytical method used

The researcher captured the direct words from ten sampled teachers and five principals who were interviewed through the use of tape recording. The researcher then used the manual method to transcribe the interview transcripts generated from these participants. The analytical method used is presented below through four phases:

In the first phase of the data analysis process, the researcher listened to tape recordings and became familiar with the data. In the second phase of the data analysis pro-

cess, the researcher examined the data and provided detailed descriptions of the participants' words and responses. In the third phase of the data analysis process, the researcher categorised and coded the data and then grouped them into themes. In the fourth and the final phase, the researcher interpreted the organized data so as to draw up the conclusion. The analyses of the responses from teachers (see Sub-section 4.2.1) based on the research questions of the study and those of principals (see Sub-section 4.2.2) are presented below. The interpretation of the research findings are discussed in sub-section 4.2.3.

4.2.1 Data interpretations of the teachers' responses

The researcher captured the direct words of the fifteen participants consisted of ten teachers and five principals from different sampled school. The interviewed teachers and principals as participants are assigned with alphabets to ensure anonymity. The questions posed are ranging from question 1 to question 6.

Question 1a: What do you think are the causes of conflict among secondary school teachers?

To respond to the above question, the interviewed teachers highlighted that excessive pressure from the principals demanding teachers to meet deadlines, unhealthy and unmanaged competition among teachers to use the scarce resources of the school, different values and opinions from teachers, hatred, poor communication and teacher workload. It was also mentioned by these participants that competitions for higher positions, lack of resources, lack of proper communication channels, lack of commitment by teachers to teach in class, poor leadership styles and lack of transparency in the school were some of the most common causes of conflict among secondary school teachers. The following examples support these assertions as factors that influence conflict among their secondary school teachers. The eight sampled teachers put it in the following ways:

Participant A: *As you know teachers are human being, so conflict is unavoidable whenever people interact with one another. I believe if there is pressure there is conflict.*

Participants B and C had expressed similar view to what causes the conflict in their school, *also competition among these teachers also causes conflict.*

Participant B: *Poor communication causes conflict, in our school the principal is younger than many of the staff members, instead of him to be humble, he rather communicates arrogantly. As a result, many staff members find it difficult to follow his instructions. These cause hatred and envy between the principal and most of the school staff.*

Participant C: *Poor communication. Workload and failure to meet submission deadline cause conflict in this school.*

Participant D: *Stress and depression from both the teachers and management usually cause conflict in our schools.*

Participant J: *Lack of transparency and accountability from teachers and management causes conflict in this school.*

It is clear from the participants' responses that the most common causes of conflict among secondary school teachers are: Poor communication, workload, unmanaged competition and poor interpersonal relations among staff members. The following excerpts support these mentions:

Participant E: *The most common type of conflict in this school is caused by poor interpersonal relations among staff members at various levels.*

Participant F: *The common types of conflict in this school are: competitions for higher positions, lack of resources and poor relations among us.*

Participant H: *What I can say is that teachers sometimes do not teach as expected and so this causes conflict between us the management.*

Question 1b: How do your school managers' behaviours contribute to conflict among teachers in your schools?

Participants were of the view that the behavior of their school managers contributes towards conflict among teachers in the following ways: favouring of some teachers over others, the use of coercive style of leadership in the school, unmanaged competitions among teachers by the school managers, lack of concerns for teachers stress and personal problems, poor leadership styles and lack of proper implementation of policies in the schools. Responses below support these highlights:

Participant C: *Most of the time our school managers use coercive style of leadership. This is one of the factors that contribute to conflict in the school.*

Participant E: *Although the behavior of our school manager is excellent, but I think certain measures need to be in place, which will help in minimizing stress in the school environment.*

Participant F: *They favour some teachers in this school and that causes conflict.*

Participant G: *As I said to you earlier on it is the issue of bad ways of implementing rules and regulation.*

Participant I: *Their inconsistency ways of implementing policies and dealing with all of us in the schools.*

It emerged from the responses of interviewed teachers that principals' conduct/behaviors such as nepotism/favouritism militate the conflict in their schools which ignite the occurrence of conflict.

Question 1c: How do secondary school teachers' behaviours contribute to conflict among themselves and the management of the schools?

The numerous behaviour of secondary school teachers that contributed to conflict in the school mentioned by participants were: teachers regarding themselves superior over others, jealousy and envy, failure to meet deadlines and thus shifting the pressure on

other teachers, unhealthy competitions among teachers, teachers not communicating properly with other colleagues, lack of co-operations from teachers and teachers negligent of their duties to teach in the schools. The following excerpts support these assertions:

Participant C: *Workload is one of the things that cause conflict in my school. Some teachers fail to submit their work because it is very huge for them to accomplish before the deadline; this work is then shared among other teachers to do thereby causing conflict in my school.*

Participant H: *In this school, there is lack of co-operations and collaborations among us.*

Participant I: *As I said in the beginning difference values among teachers can cause conflict.*

Participant J: *Some teachers neglect their work and at the end it affects all other teachers.*

From the researcher's point of view, it appears that workload is found to be among the measure causes of conflict act by **participants A** and **C**. also difference in values immensely contribute to conflict.

Question 1d: How could the identified factors contributing to conflict in schools be overcome?

Participants claimed the identified factors contributing to conflict among secondary school teachers could be curbed by: teachers understanding each other's values, opinions and tolerate one another, reducing teacher workload in the schools, establishment of policies that prohibits unhealthy competitions and favouritism in the schools, there should be proper accountability and transparency and the leadership styles in all school should be democratic and participatory styles. Examples below support these claims:

Participant A: *We need to understand each other and adopt an element of tolerance. Everybody should be subjected to authority.*

Participant B: *In every work environment, there is authority; we need to be submissive to the authority.*

Participant C: *If the school managers will consider that teachers are human beings they supposed not to be overloaded with responsibilities that they cannot fulfill at the prescribed time.*

Participant D: *To curb the identified factors, the school managers should establish code of conduct which will enable them to manage competition among teachers*

Participant H: *The leadership style use in the school should be democratic and fair to all teachers.*

Question 2a: How would you describe the interpersonal relationships among the staff in this school? Are the relations good or bad and justify why they are so?

These participants stated that at times teachers tried to maintain good interpersonal relations with each other that there is co-operations and understanding among the teachers in the schools. Examples of these claims are:

Participant B: *Teachers in this school always endeavor to maintain good interpersonal relationship.*

Participant C: *Well, in this school, there is cooperation and understanding among teachers in my school.*

Participant D: *I cannot say it is good and I can't say it is bad.*

Participant E: *Staff members in this School are trying their level best to maintain good relationship but sometimes it goes out of hands.*

Participant H: *Sometimes very bad especially when they are stressed.*

Some of these participants rather stated that teachers sometimes tried to maintain good relations with each other but it sometimes turned to be poor, that relations among teachers is very bad since there is favouritism among themselves, there is poor communication and there was no transparency in all activities of the schools. The following excerpts confirm these claims:

Participant F: It is very bad since there is favoritism.

Participant J: *It is bad because there is no transparency among us.*

Participant I: *Not bad at but we need proper communications in this school.*

Participant J: *It is bad because there is no transparency among us.*

It is confirmed by majority of the interviewed teachers that their welfare is interrupted by limited interpersonal relationship among them.

Question 2b: What advantages would schools enjoy when there are positive interpersonal relations among the staff?

Participants highlighted the following as the possible advantages schools will enjoy if there are positive relations among teachers, these were: harmonious school environment, effective teaching and learning, tranquility in the school, supportive and collaborative school environment and teacher high morals. The examples bellow support these highlights:

Participant A: *There will be harmony and there will be peace.*

Participant D: *There will be good and healthy environment where people will respect one another.*

Participant E: *Good interpersonal relationship always contributes to conducive atmosphere where learning and teaching will not be disrupted.*

Participant H: *There will bring about effective collaborations.*

It is evident that cooperation, collaboration and understanding among teachers could help to minimize or eliminate conflict in schools as alluded by participants C and H.

Question 2c: What are the consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

On the other hand, these participants stated that the consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff members on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools are: there was poor teaching and learning culture, infighting and frequent conflict in the school, there was lack of trust, there are poor communication and lack of effective co-operations from the staff members. Examples to support these claims are:

Participant A: *Poor interpersonal relations affect the learners because the little ones always look up to their educators.*

Participant C: *There will be fight among teachers.*

Participant E: *Learning and teaching will be disrupted in any school as result of poor interpersonal relation among staff members.*

Participant H: *There will be lack of trust in this school.*

Question 3a: What is your opinion about the leadership or management style use in your school? Does it contribute to harmonious school environment or conflict among the staff or not?

Participants stated that their opinions about the management style used in their school were: communication breakdown between management and teachers result into conflict, some school managers did not know their responsibilities in the schools and that

some school managers refuse to consult teachers before decisions are taking. The following excerpts support these opinions:

Participant A: *I believe some times, there is communication breakdown from the management which leads to conflict in the school.*

Participant B: *Some people do not know or seemed to forget their responsibility in the school. Managers are expected to know their responsibilities as custodians who are entrusted with huge responsibilities.*

Participant C: *Our school managers seldom take our opinion before taken decision, though in some instances things are completed at the management level without our inputs.*

Again, these participants reiterated that the management styles of their principals were coercive and did not contribute to harmonious school environment, the managers favoured some teachers over others, there was no proper accountability in the schools and procedures or policies were not properly implemented in the schools. Examples of these reiterations were:

Participant D: *The approach in our school is coercive, so it does not contribute to harmonious environment.*

Participant F: *Since there is favouritism, their behaviour contributes to conflict in the schools.*

Participant G: *The only thing I can say is that they failed to implement procedures in this school.*

Participant J: *Lack of transparency and accountability from the principal will mean constant conflict in the school.*

In contrary, some participants believed the leadership and management style of the principals were excellent, democratic and contributed to harmonious school environment. Examples of these beliefs were:

Participant E: *As I have said earlier, the leadership style used in this school is excellent and it is democratic because every staff member idea or opinion is respected.*

Participant I: *There is harmonious environment in this school because of the good behaviour of our managers.*

Some of the interviewed teachers contend that the leadership style adopted by their principal's influence the conflict in schools. They further cited some instances of how leadership style contributes to the conflict. It was only two of the sampled teachers that reflected that they experience enabling leadership styles from their principals.

Question 3b: Are there relationships between poor leadership style and the existence of conflict among staff in your schools? Give instances.

Section of these participants attested to the assumption that there was a strong relation between poor leadership style used in school and the existence of conflict. These participants claimed because most decisions were taken without consulting staff teachers were always eager to rebel in the school, that there was a failure on the part of management to consider teachers' opinions and that caused conflict and that some school principals forced teachers to take up extra work and duties causing serious conflict in the schools. Examples to support these statements were:

Participant B: *Yes; because decisions are mostly taken without consulting staff members in this school.*

Participant D: *There was an incident of a Maths teacher who did not want to work overtime. He was forced to come every day including Saturdays in order to prepare the school matriculants (Grade 12 students).*

Participant C: *Oh yes, failure to consider opinion of staff members, sometimes cause conflict among teachers in my school.*

Participant D: *There was an incident of a Maths teacher who did not want to work overtime. He was forced to come every day including Saturdays in order to prepare the school matriculants (Grade 12 students).*

Furthermore, these participants stated that most principals leadership styles is divide and rule were section of the staff are favoured over others, principals failed to implement and apply policies properly that eventually lead to conflict in the school and that there was poor management of educational resources, poor management of different opinions and values and there was lack of transparency and accountability in the principals' leadership styles. Excerpts to confirm these are:

Participant F: *Yes, because if the principal divides and rule that will cause conflict.*

Participant G: *If you fail to implement policies well that means you have poor style of management and can cause conflict.*

Participant H: *Yes, because school resources have been mismanagement and that causes conflict.*

Participant J: *Lack of transparency and accountability are signs of poor leadership styles and therefore contribute to conflict in this school.*

On the other hand, two participants claimed there were no relations between the leadership and management style used by their managers and conflict because the style of management used in their schools was perfect and that there was democratic style of leadership used by their managers. Examples of these claims are:

Participant A: *Our principal adopts democratic rule and I thing this makes it easy for us to follow as his subjects.*

Participant E: *The leadership style used in this school is not in any way contributing towards conflict among staff members.*

Question 3d: How could the poor leadership style be improved?

The participants to this question suggest that all principals should acquire adequate knowledge of leadership, school managers must undergo trainings which would capacitate and prepare them to lead, teachers' opinions must be considered when a decision was to be taken, and that managers must not force or coerce teachers to do what was voluntary. Excerpts to support these responses are:

Participant B: *School managers must undergo trainings which will capacitate them and prepare them to rule.*

Participant C: *It is very simple. People's opinion should be considered when taking decisions in the school.*

Participant D: *People must not be forced to do what they are not willing to do, especially when it is voluntary.*

Participant E: *To avoid poor leadership style, organisation need to ensure that leaders are well capacitated and trained.*

Again, these participants suggested that principals should be trained on educational policies and how to apply them, proper and effective management styles such as democratic style should be used by all principals, school managers must undergo management of school resources training and workshops, inclusive leadership style must be used by our principals and they must also learn to be accountable as leaders. Excerpts to support these are:

Participant F: *Proper and effective management styles such as democratic style should be used by all principals.*

Participant J: *Inclusive leadership style must be used by our principals and they must also learn to be accountable as leaders.*

Participant G: *Principals must be trained on educational policies and how to apply them.*

Participant H: *For me I think our managers need management of school resources training and workshops.*

It transpired from the sampled teachers that in-service training of principals could improve their leadership style in dealing with conflict management to their schools. To acquire listening, negotiating skills from the in-service training

Question 4a: What are the attitudes of teachers towards the implementations of new policies, curriculum and decisions in the schools?

The general responses from participants to this question were that teachers struggle to implement new policies and procedures in the schools as a result of resistance, that some teachers were arrogant to conform to policies, and that it took a very long time for teachers to be accustomed to and to adopt to new policies in the schools. Examples of such responses are:

Participant A: *responded as follows, "I will like to believe that in our school, we struggle to do everything stipulated by the school or the Department of Education. Resistance emanates as a result of laziness."*

Participant B: *Some people are arrogant to abide by the rules and curriculum.*

Participant C: *In this School teachers find it very difficult to adopt and implement new policies.*

Participant D: *When there is new curriculum from the Department of Education, people have no choice other than to adopt and follow it.*

Furthermore, these participants stated that teachers sometimes resisted new policies, decisions and curriculum in the schools but that depended on what had been suggested to them, that teachers did not like change at all and due to the fact that they were not consulted when the change was to be made and that teachers did co-operate where possible. Excerpts to confirm these responses are:

Participant E: *It takes time for teachers to get used to new policies which is new to them.*

Participant F: *Teachers sometimes resist but that depends on what has been suggested.*

Participant H: *Teachers as you know do not like change.*

Participant J: *I think we are always ready to abreast new decisions, policies or curriculum but the problem is that we are sometimes not been consulted.*

It is evident from the responses advanced by the sampled teachers that, teachers are resistant to the implementation of policies, and rules. It is learned by the researcher that the leadership styles adopted by their school managers affect their morale and willingness to implement the changes brought up by the Department of education.

Question 4b: What are the predominant causes of teacher resistance in schools?

The predominant causes of teacher resistance in the secondary schools mentioned by participants were: the use of autocratic style by school managers, poor communications, ill and unprofessional treatment of staff by managers, constant curriculum changes and unclear policies in the schools. The following excerpts support these statements:

Participant A: *Autocratic rule by school management ignites resistance.*

Participant B: *Usually people become very reluctant to practice whatever is new to them.*

Participant E: *The predominant cause of teacher resistance in school is autocratic system of ruling. When managers are not soft this makes it difficult for their staff to obey in some instances.*

Participant F: *The major causes are curriculum changes.*

Question 4c: What are the negative effects of teacher resistance in your school?

These participants categorically stated that the negative effects of teacher resistance in schools included among other things such as: poor culture of teaching and learning, division and misunderstanding among the school staff, lack of trust and confidence among teachers, failure of new curriculum, less co-operations among teachers and tension in the school which would eventually lead to serious conflict in the school. Examples of such responses are:

Participant B: *Resistance causes division between the school management and staff. And it also cause misunderstanding among the teachers themselves.*

Participant G: *New curriculum will fail because teachers did not welcome it.*

Participant D: *The school managers will not have confidence in their staff and similarly, the staff will not trust their leaders, as the case in our school.*

Participant E: *Work will not get done properly when resistance existed in any organization*

Question 4d: How could teacher resistance be overcome?

The general suggestions presented by these participants in their responses included: acknowledging teachers excellent work done, by conducting awareness training with teachers, by implementing proper consultation programmes before new policies were implemented and school managers must be flexible and collaborative in carrying out their activities. In responding to how teacher resistance could be overcome, participant B articulated that, "I think resistance can be reduced when people are given orientation and practice on new policies.

Participant C: *Consultation between staff members and the management must be encouraged; this will automatically reduce resistance in the school.*

Participant D: *Every organization has its vision mission and goals. There must be clear guidelines on how to effectively achieve them.*

Participant E: *Managers should not be too harsh on their subordinates; this will significantly reduce resistance in any organization.*

It was also suggested by these participants that teachers must be given the chance to state their reasons to resist, in all curriculum related matters teachers must be given the opportunity to contribute their ideas and all school principals must be given change management training to spot resistance before they turn into conflict. Excerpts to confirm these are:

Participant H: *Teachers must be given the opportunity to state why they resist.*

Participant I: *In all curriculum related matters teachers must be made to be part when a decision is to be made.*

Participant F: *All teachers must be trained on the importance of new policies and the effect of resistance in school.*

Participant G: *I think what is best to organize awareness training for all those who will be affected by any change.*

Question 5a: What is the state of cliques, informal groups and camps among the teachers in this school (Are there camps among the teachers in this school and how do they behave?).

Participants mentioned that there were signs of cliques and informal groups in their schools which were mostly formed on the basis of nationality and culture. Teachers like to associate with only certain types of teachers in the staffroom and that one would see these groups when a decision was to be made. Participants also mentioned that certain teachers moved or shared their problems with only particular teachers and that each teacher in the school had a closer friend who he or she moved or related well with. The examples to support these mentions are:

Participant A: *Really cliques do exist in our school. This school is cosmopolitan set up which comprises of people from various nationalities.*

Participant B: *In my school we do have teachers from Zimbabwe, Ghana, Cameron, India as well as South African indigenous who are the majority. What I notice is that people like to associate more to a group which they belong.*

Participant C: *We have no cliques in this school. We are all working together to uplift the image of school.*

Participant D: *Of course we do have cliques, but that did not negatively impact in the running of the school.*

It is observed that in most sampled schools, there are cliques on the basis of nationality, union belongings, socio-economic status such as their wealth, and education level. To add more, it is also acknowledged by the researcher that some sampled teachers expressed that age and religious practices of teachers also lead to cliques in their schools. Regarding to the effects of cliques, fewer sampled teachers who reflected that it promotes stability in their school but the majority of the sampled teachers condemned cliques as one of the factors that derails the operations, academic and professional progress in schools.

Question 5b: What causes cliques or the formation of informal groups in this school?

With regards to this question, participants were of the view that, age variation among teachers, nationality as foreign teachers felt they were secluded and marginalized, injustice and unfair treatment, discrimination, conflict and poor leadership styles were the causes of cliques and informal groups in the schools. Examples of such responses are:

Participant B: *I think foreign teachers feel they are secluded and marginalized. This is one of the reasons why they form their group in the school.*

Participant C: *Injustice and unfair treatment can result into informal groups.*

Participant F: *If particular teachers feel they have been discriminated at that can make them to form a group to resist or fight that.*

Participant G: *Conflict and poor teacher relations are the biggest causes.*

Question 5c: Could you please tell me if there are advantages of having camps of teachers in the secondary schools

Sections of the participants believed there were advantages derived from the formations of cliques and informal groups in school and some of these advantages were: cliques ensures teacher motivation in the schools, it encourages healthy competitions among teachers and that members in a clique assisted in solving each other's personal problems and stress related issues in the school. Excerpts to support these are:

Participant A: *Cliques leads to motivation among teachers.*

Participant B: *Cliques encourage competition.*

Participant E: *Informal groups can make teachers to motivate one another in getting things done properly which is not always the case.*

Participant F: *Teachers personal problems can sometimes be solved by informal members.*

On the other hand, some participants believed cliques and informal groups did not offer schools any advantages and stated the following reason: with cliques there was no proper unity and co-operations in the school, there was segregations, there was conflict between informal groups, teachers rebelled against management and informal groups prolonged the decision making process in the school. Examples of such beliefs are:

Participant H: *It is not good because teachers turn to rebel against management.*

Participant J: *Sometimes it prolongs the decision making process in a bad way and at time in a good way.*

Participant C: *No, there is no any advantage in having cliques and informal groups. People ought to be working together to ensure that the school achieve its goals.*

Question 5d: What are the negative effects of having camps, cliques and informal groups of teachers in the secondary schools?

All participants claimed having camps, cliques and informal groups in schools contributed negatively in the following ways: Vital information was not shared with rival groups in the school, there was constant fight and there was unhealthy competition among teachers. Examples of such responses are:

Participant A: *Some clique members hide useful information from teachers who do not belong to their clique.*

Participant D: *When an individual or a group is segregated. This individual or group would develop dislike and envy against those who segregate them.*

Participant B: *Sometimes cliques make life very difficult to other teachers in the school.*

Participant C: *There will be division.*

These participants also claimed the disadvantages of informal groups in schools were that there was envy and jealousy, it bred ground for unprofessional behaviour from rival groups, it led teachers to rebel against management and there was lack of strong team spirit among the teachers. The following excerpts confirm these claims:

Participant D: *When an individual or a group is segregated. This individual or group would develop dislike and envy against those who segregate them.*

Participant E: *Informal groups sometimes discourage one another especially when it involved in unhealthy competition.*

Participant G: *It breeds ground for unprofessional behaviour like non co-operations and unity.*

Participant H: *As I have said earlier on said it leads teachers to rebel against management.*

Question 6a: What can you say about the implementation and existence of conflict management strategies in your school? Are there strategies in your school to deal with conflict or not?

These participants were of the view that there were strategies implemented in their school to manage and deal with conflict, that the school SMTs and SGBs play very important roles in such. The following responses support the above views:

Participant B: *Oh! Yes, there are strategies in place to deal with conflict. The SMT and SGB play a very significant role in this regard.*

Participant C: *Yes we have strategies in place to deal with conflict. Conflicts among staff of this school are addressed and solved during our weekly meetings.*

Participant F: *Yes we have strategies in place.*

Participant H: *Definitely it is implemented in this school.*

A section of the participants believed there were no such strategies in their schools to manage and deal with conflict issues. These participants said even if those strategies were available in the schools there were not functional. Excerpts to confirm these are:

Participant E: *I am not aware of the strategies in place to deal with conflict in this school.*

Participant I: *I am not sure we have such in this school.*

Only four out of ten sampled teachers who affirmed that there are systems/strategies in place to deal with conflict in their schools. This implies that in majority of sampled schools there are no management strategies to deal with conflict.

Question 6b: If any, how effective are the conflict management strategies implemented in your school?

Large number of these participants highlighted that the strategies put in place in their schools to deal and manage conflict were effective and functional. These participants

said because of the presence of such strategies there was harmony in their schools. To support these read the following responses:

Participant A: *I am still studying the environment, but I can assure you that the system adopted by our management is sufficient enough to curtail any conflict in the school.*

Participant C: *It is very effective because it creates harmony in the school.*

Few of these participants believed that the strategies were not effective at all and that there were not even present in their schools. Examples of such responses are:

Participant A: *I am still studying the environment. But I can assure you that the system adopted by our management is sufficient enough to curtail any conflict in the school.*

Participant C: *It is very effective because it creates harmony in the school.*

Participant D: *I think there are ineffective.*

Participant I: *If we do not have it, it means it is not effective.*

Question 6c: Is there any transparency in applying conflict management strategies when resolving conflict in your school? If Yes, give instances and if No also give instances.

Again, majority of the participants affirmed that there was transparency and openness when applying the strategies in their schools. These participants went ahead to say that both the SMTs and the SGBs worked hand in hand in a transparent, openness and fairness when resolving conflict among teachers that the school management always consulted staff members when taking any measure or decision in the school. The following responses confirm these highlights:

Participant B: *Yes, there is transparency. Both the SMT and the SGB operate with transparency, openness and fairness when resolving conflict in the school.*

Participant C: *Yes there is transparency, and dialogue is very important.*

Participant E: *There is transparency; the school management always consults staff members when taking any measure decision that has got to do with the School affairs.*

Participant F: *Yes there is.*

Again, few of the participants rather thought there was no openness, transparency and fairness when conflict management strategies were been applied in their schools. These participants believed there was always one side way of dealing with conflict in the schools. Only the favoured side wins in conflict situation. The following responses support these:

Participant D: *Like the case of the math teacher, the principle of transparency was totally not applied. The issue was not discussed in public. The principal took decision together with few in individuals who are close to him.*

Participant G: *Not at all because there is always a side that wins because of divides and rule.*

Question 6d: What are the negative effects of conflict on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

It was claimed by these participants that conflict among teachers had serious consequences and negative effects on the culture of teaching and learning in the schools because with conflict there was no team work and there was not effective teaching in class which resulted into poor learner performance in class. The following examples confirm these claims:

Participant A: *If there is conflict it affects not only the management but even the learner's get affect.*

Participant B: *The school will not be productive; the culture of teaching and learning will be disrupted.*

Participant E: *The whole process of learning and teaching will be disrupted.*

Participant G: *The team spirit of the teachers will be weak.*

These participants also highlighted that because of conflict in the schools most teachers were stressed, there was high absenteeism, less collaboration, less teacher motivation and prolonged decision making process in the school. The following excerpts support these highlights:

Participant C: *There will be no progress as per as the whole system is concern. Failure rate among the learners will be very high.*

Participant D: *Many factors can be identified as effects of conflict. These include absenteeism, stress, misconduct and misunderstanding.*

Participant F: *Teachers will not collaborate to teach.*

Participant J: *Teachers will not be motivated to come to school daily.*

4.2.2 Data interpretations of the principals' responses

Below are the analyses of the principals' responses to the questions, the excerpts as well as examples from the responses:

Question 1a: What do you think are the causes of conflict among secondary school teachers in your school?

Participants responded to this question by stating that the causes of conflict among teachers are: the presence of cliques and informal groups in the school, teachers' absenteeism especially when been approached by the management to stop such unprofessional behaviour, lack of commitment from teachers, poor communication, and resistance from teachers to implement new policies or curriculum and tribalism among the teachers. The excerpts below confirm these statements:

Participant A (Principal): *There are various kinds of conflicts in schools and the extent in which they occur varies. In my School the major cause of conflict is cliques. In that, teachers divide themselves in to informal groups.*

Participant E (Principal): *Resistance and failure to implement policies and curriculum prescribed by the department are the major causes of conflict in this school.*

The common types of conflict among secondary school teachers listed down by these participants were: conflict among cliques or informal group members, tribalism, poor communication, lack of discipline among teachers and resistance from teachers in curriculum and policy matters. Examples below support these lists:

Participant A (Principal): *As I have stated earlier, the most common type of conflict in our school occurs as a result of cliques.*

Participant B (Principal): *Tribalism is the main problem in this school.*

In this regard, most of the participants stressed that competition, tribalism and cliques among teachers for higher positions were some of the most common types and causes of conflict among the secondary school teachers.

Question 1b: How do school managers' behaviours contribute to conflict among teachers in schools?

Participants responded to this question by stating that the behaviours of school managers that contributed to conflict in the school are: lack of clear policies for teachers, not treating teachers equal and fair, divide and rule leadership style and not been role models in the schools. Examples to confirm these statements were:

Participant D (Principal): *In as much as the subordinates are mandated by the law to respect their leaders, managers or leaders are also mandated to be role models.*

Participant E (Principal): *A situation where a principal divides and rule can cause conflict in the school.*

It was also revealed that leadership styles used in schools contributed to harmonious school environment all so divide and rule system intensify the likelihood of conflict among teachers to arise as stated by participants D and E.

Question1d: How do your school teachers' behaviours contribute to conflict among themselves in school?

These participants responded to this question by highlighting the following as some of the behaviour of their teachers that contributed to conflict in the schools. These are: poor communication among the teachers, teachers unaware of their responsibilities, teachers' superiority complex and lack of trust among themselves. Excerpts to support these are:

Participant A (Principal): *in some cases teachers are unaware of their responsibilities, this contribute to conflict. Also poor communication contributes to conflict among teachers.*

Participant B (Principal): *Well, some teacher's think they are superior in terms of their qualifications and experience than others.*

Participant D: (Principal): *The behavior of teachers among themselves in this school is always cordial, unlike the relation between the management and the teachers.*

The consequences of poor communication, weak school team and lack of effective co-operations from the staff members negatively affect the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Question 2a: How would you describe the interpersonal relationships among the staff in this school? Are there relations good or bad and how?

Participants claimed the interpersonal relations of teachers in their schools were good but not perfect meaning that there were signs of conflict and poor relations among the

secondary school teachers in the school and that communication among teachers need to be improved. Examples of such claims are:

Participant C (Principal): *Interpersonal relation among teachers in this school is cordial. But good communication among staff needs to be improved.*

Participant E (Principal): *It is not good because they have their own clashes and differences.*

Participant D (Principal): *The interpersonal relationship among the staff is very good.*

Clearly maintaining sound interpersonal relation is significant for conducive environment for learning and teaching to exist.

Question 2b: What advantages would schools enjoy when there are positive interpersonal relations among the staff?

The advantages and benefits schools would enjoy if there were good relations among teachers claimed by the participants were: effective teaching and learning, high productivity, sound and smooth management and governance, harmonious and tranquility school environment and higher team spirit. The following responses support these claims:

Participant A (Principal): *The school will be productive, academic and administrative aspects of the school will be sound.*

Participant B (Principal): *There will be harmony and tranquility in any environment where everyone maintains a good interpersonal relationship.*

Participant E (Principal): *The team spirit will be high in the school.*

Apparently, the participants highlight that interpersonal relation can positively or negatively affect the smooth running of the schools,

Question 2c: What are the consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

On the other hand participants highlighted the following as the possible consequences and disadvantages of poor interpersonal relations among teachers. These were: weak team spirit among teachers, dysfunctional school, disrespect and lack of trust among teachers, conflict and infighting and bad reputation of the school. Excerpts to support these highlights are:

Participant A (Principal): *The consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff on the culture of teaching and learning is that teachers will not work as a team. For example a teacher who supposed to teach trigonometry in his/her class will find it easy to invite another teacher who can teach it better to assist him/her if there is good interpersonal relations among staff. But if there is poor interpersonal relation, a teacher may say, no, I can every do thing, I don't want anyone to interfere with the way I teach.*

Participant B (Principal): *The running of the school will not be smooth.*

Participant D (Principal): *Poor interpersonal relation will cause bad reputation for the School.*

Question 3a: What is your opinion about the leadership or management style you use in your school? Does it contribute to harmonious school environment or does it contribute to conflict among the staff or not?

All the participants were fast to claim that the kind of leadership style they used in leading and managing the schools contributed to harmonious school environment because they deployed democratic and participatory leadership styles in the schools and that they also turned to be soft and not harsh on teachers and learners. Excerpts to support these are:

Participant A (Principal): *It does contribute to harmonious school environment, because we try to be democratic though some time you instruct people to do something and they do the opposite.*

Participant B (Principal): *We try to be democratic and subordinates are always welcome when they want to voice out their opinions.*

Participant E (Principal): *It is more or less participatory to avoid conflict.*

It was revealed that good leadership styles contribute toward eliminating conflict at school environment.

Question 3b: Are there relationships between poor leadership style and the existence of conflict among staff in the secondary schools? Give instances.

Majority of these participants believed there was no relationship between poor leadership style and the existence of conflict among teachers because they maintained a democratic school environment where everyone's opinion was respected and that measures were in place to prevent conflict before their occurrence. The following responses confirm these beliefs:

Participant A (Principal): *In our school we try to maintain a democratic environment where people's opinion is respected. But this does not in any way grant permission to our staff to go against any rule or policy set by the school or by the department of education.*

Participant B (Principal): *The leadership style we are using is not promoting conflict. We are democratic.*

Participant D (Principal): *Measures are always in place to prevent conflicts prior to their occurrences. And in case they occur, appropriate procedures are followed to solve them.*

Only one of the participants thought there was a relationship between poor leadership style and the existence of conflict among teachers in schools and that occurs in situations where school managers are biased to certain group of teachers in the school. The following excerpt supports this claim:

Participant E (Principal): *Sometimes yes, if the principals is biased to some teachers.*

Question 3c: What are the consequences of poor leadership style in the secondary schools?

Participants asserted that the consequences of poor leadership style used in schools were: divisions among the teachers which affected the culture of teaching and learning, non-conformant to policies rules and regulations in the school; wastage of resources, negative school image in the society, ill-discipline as well as lack of respect among teachers. Excerpts to confirm these assertions are:

Participant A (Principal): *There will be division among staff members of the school and negatively affects the culture of teaching and learning.*

Participant B: *When leaders are not showing example themselves, you cannot expect the subordinates to take heed of the set rules and regulation of the school.*

Participant D (Principal): *Indiscipline, and lack respect among staff members will occur.*

Question 3d: what are the possible ways to improve poor leadership style in your schools?

The responses from these participants were that school principals must avoid the use of autocratic and bureaucratic as leadership styles in their schools and school principals must strike for a balance between democratic and bureaucratic styles in the schools. Participants also claimed good communication channels in the schools and proper training of all school principals could contribute to the improvement of poor leadership styles in the schools. Examples to support these responses are:

Participant A (Principal): *School managers supposed to adopt a leadership style which is not too soft and not too harsh (autocratic).*

Participant C (Principal): *Leadership style can be improved through good communication.*

Participant D (Principal): *Principal must be trained to be democrats in their management.*

In situations where school managers were bias and adopt autocratic leadership style to certain group of teachers in the school, conflict will be unavoidable. This is in line with the response of participant A.

Question 4a: What are the attitudes of teachers towards the implementations of new policies, curriculum and decisions in the secondary schools?

Greater number of these participants believed the attitudes of teachers towards the implementations of new policies, curriculum and decisions in the secondary schools were good, positive and encouraging because it was rare to see teachers resisting or going contrary to new policies and because the school management teams led the teachers by examples, made teachers to also implement policies without resistance. To confirm these, read the following responses:

Participant A (Principal): *It is very rare in this school to see teachers going contrary or against policies, decisions and curriculum implementations.*

Participant B: *Because we the school custodians always stick to the rules and regulations set by the department, this makes it very easy for those under us to do the same.*

Participant C (Principal): *Our teachers are not resisting to conflict or any curriculum from the Department of Education.*

Only two of the participants were of the view that the attitudes of teachers towards the implementations of new policies, curriculum and decisions in the secondary schools depended on what had to be implemented and that not all teachers had the same attitudes of implementing new policies and decisions. These two participants claimed few teachers had negative attitudes towards new curriculum and policy implementations. To support these; read the excerpts below:

Participant D (Principal): *It all depends on how they have been approached, mostly they do not have problem sticking to policies.*

Participant E (Principal): *Not all teachers are the same; in this school few have such tendency not to follow new policies.*

Question 4b: What are the predominant causes of teacher resistance in schools?

Participants claimed cliques and informal groups formed by teachers, tribalism, poor communication, workload and frequent curriculum changes in the education system were the predominant causes of resistance in the schools. Examples below support these claims:

Participant A (Principal): *Predominant teacher resistance in my school is caused by their cliques.*

Participant B (Principal): *Tribalism. I foe one is a foreigner by nationality and I happen to be the school principal. I can tell you that some of the staff members of this school undermine me because of my nationality.*

Participant E (Principal): *Resistance is cause by curriculum related problems such as change of subjects.*

The strength of teachers' resistance to change usually depends on what is being change and whether the stability of the school is being affected.

Question 4c: What are the negative effects of teacher resistance in the secondary schools?

Participants categorically stated that the negative effects of teacher resistance in the secondary schools include among other effects such as: non-attainment of educational goals, division among teachers, lack of effective teaching and learning in the schools, less co-operations and failure to implement curriculum successfully. The following examples confirm these statements:

Participant B (Principal): *The culture of effective teaching and learning will be disrupted in a situation where a teacher will resist instructions.*

Participant D (Principal): *The curriculum might not be implemented well.*

Participant E (Principal): *There will be less co-operations in the school.*

Question 4d: How could you overcome teacher resistance?

The general suggestions from participants to overcome the effects of teacher resistance in the schools were: proper communication in the school, instilling discipline among teachers, involving teachers in all decision making processes and avoiding teacher workload in the schools. To confirm these suggestions; read the following responses:

Participant B: (Principal) *Discipline is the major way to overcome teacher resistance.*

Participant C (Principal): *Good communication prevents resistance.*

Participant E (Principal): *I think the best way is to avoid implementing things that will bring more work to teachers.*

It was found that proper communication in the school, instilling discipline among teachers could all contribute to overcoming teachers' resistance in the secondary schools as stated by participants B and C respectively.

Question 5a: What is the state of cliques, informal groups and camps among the teachers in this school (Are there camps among teachers in the secondary schools and how do they behave?)

Participants were quick to assert that there were cliques and informal groups among teachers in their schools which usually emanate as a result of tribalism and which were sometimes difficult to control. Excerpt to support these assertions are:

Participant A (Principal): *Yes off course, there are informal groups in this school. And the challenge we face when addressing this is that some of the members of this cliques*

are parts of formal groups in the school. For example, you have some of the SGB members operate in the cliques this makes it difficult to address problems when they arise.

Participant B (Principal): *Yes we do have cliques. As I have emphasized, the main cause of cliques in this school is tribalism and racism.*

Participant D: *These informal groups exist in this school in different ways.*

Only one respondent asserted that there were neither cliques nor informal groups of teachers in their schools. The following responses support this:

Participant C (Principal): *We don't have cliques in this school.*

Question 5b: Could you please tell me if there are advantages of having camps of teachers in the secondary schools

Some of the participants thought cliques and informal groups of teachers in schools encouraged healthy competitions among teachers and that members in an informal groups shared individual problems and assisted in solving those problems. To support these; read the following responses:

Participant A (Principal): *Existence of cliques enhances competition. One group work very hard to ensure that it is better than its opponent. This can be regarded as advantage to the whole process of teaching and learning.*

Participant E (Principal): *I think these group members share their problems and talks about life in general.*

Other participants viewed the existence of cliques and informal groups of teachers in schools as not contributing to the betterment of the school and that there was no advantage derived from the formation of cliques and informal groups in the schools. That learners did not gain from teachers' cliques it only favoured the teachers. The following examples support these:

Participant B (Principal): *I don't see any advantage in having informal groups in any academic environment.*

Participant D (Principal): *It only favours those groups and not to the learners.*

Question 5c: What are the negative effects of having camps, cliques and informal groups of teachers in the secondary schools?

These participants responded that the negative effects of having camps, cliques and informal groups of teachers in the secondary schools included: divisions and conflict among teachers, it led to stereotype, prejudice and unhealthy competition among teachers in the schools. The following examples support these responses:

Participant B (Principals): *This will lead to unnecessary competition, Stereotypes and prejudice.*

Participant C (Principal): *One of the effects is that it causes disunity among staff.*

Participant D: *These cliques create lot of conflict in the school environment.*

It was revealed that the disfavours of informal groups in schools were that there will be envy and jealousy, it causes unprofessional behaviour from rival groups and there would be lack of strong team spirit among the teachers.

Question 5d: How do you prevent/deal with negative effects of cliques in your school?

The various mechanisms presented by the participants to deal with the negative effects of cliques in the schools included: treating all teachers equally, there should not be bias in the school, policies against hatred, racism must be drawn and made known to all teachers, by monitoring the behaviour and activities of informal groups in the schools and by ensuring that teachers put forth the goals of the school before the goals of their informal groups. The following excerpts support these presentations of mechanisms:

Participant A (Principal): *Some times, unequal treatment of the staff members by the, management can cause Cliques. To address this, the managers are advised to treat*

their staff equally, without biases. This will automatically prevent cliques in any organization.

Participant E (Principal): *By monitoring the activities and behaviour of in formal groups in the school.*

Participant D: *By ensuring that teachers put the goals of the formal group first before anything.*

Question 6a: What can you say about the implementation and existence of conflict management strategies in the secondary schools? Are there strategies to deal with conflict or not?

Participants agreed that there were strategies to deal with the effects of conflict in their schools which includes discussions in meetings, involvement of the unions, the district officials and references to the school disciplinary committee. Two of the five interviewed principals responded as follows:

Participant A: *There are strategies to deal with conflict in these school including discussions in meetings.*

Participant C (Principal): *We do solve conflicts in our weekly meetings. If it fails we refer it to our disciplinary committee.*

Participant D (Principal): *Yes we do have strategies and sometimes we involve the unions and the district officials.*

Availability of conflict resolution plan can assist in resolving organizational conflict within a school by laying down a set of guidelines and rules for each individual to follow when he or she experiences conflict within the organization.

Question 6b: If any, how effective are the conflict management strategies implemented in your school?

Three out of Five of these participants responded that the available strategies to deal with conflict in their schools were effective and functional the only problem was that some members of the cliques belonged to the school management team. Their responses are as follows:

Participant A (Principal): *We have structures like SMT. May be some of the SMT members are parts of the cliques. If you are to arrive at a decision of disciplining someone, you will find out that there is opposition.*

Participant C: *It is very effective*

Participant E (Principal): *As I have said earlier on, these strategies are effective in this school.*

Only one participant expressed that those strategies in placed to deal with conflict issues in the school were not effective at all. Example of the statement is:

Participant B (Principal): *The strategies that are available are not effective in dealing with conflict.*

Question 6c: Is there any transparency in applying conflict management strategies when resolving conflict in your school? If yes, give instances or if no also give instances.

All the participants affirmed by stating that there is transparency in the application of the conflict management strategies in the schools. This was where all affected members or parties were called upon to testify and that union representations were also encouraged to be involved when resolving conflict in the schools. The following excerpts confirm these affirmations:

Participant A (Principal): *There was an instance of some staff members who engaged in serious conflict; the management was very transparent in solving the dispute that witnesses were called to testify before the SMT. this is to ensure that things are not done in secret.*

Participant B: *Absolutely, there is transparency. Things are done in public.*

Participant E (Principal): *All groups or teachers affected are allowed to be represented in a transparent manner.*

Question 6d: What are the negative effects of conflict towards the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

Participants categorically stated that the following are the effects of conflict towards the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools. These were: weak team between teachers, poor culture of teaching and learning and that there was less communication between teachers in the schools. Examples below confirm these statements:

Participant C (Principal): *The entire culture of learning and teaching will be disrupted if there is no good management of conflict.*

Participant E (Principal): *The negative effects of conflict in this school is that there is less communication between teachers and that results into teachers unaware of new policies or circulars.*

From the responses of the interviewed teachers and principals, the researcher developed themes based on the research questions and objectives that guided the study. The main themes that were developed included: Competition, botched communication and interpersonal relations in schools, excessive workload on teachers, existence of cliques and informal groups, attitudes of secondary teachers towards the implementation of policies, conflict management strategies in place, limited availability of effective conflict management strategies, resistance of teachers to educational changes. These aforementioned themes were used in the discussion section.

4.2.3 Discussion of research findings

From the responses of the interviewed teachers and principals, the researcher developed themes to reflect how they have responded to the research questions that were guiding this study. The main research question sought to investigate factors that con-

tribute to the conflict among the secondary teachers with intention to come up with tentative strategies to manage the identified problem. In analysing the responses to the research questions, thematic approach was adopted by the researcher to reflect and discuss the identified findings. Following is a brief discussion of main findings identified by the researcher based on the research questions that were set to guide this study in relation to how they could influence the conflict in schools. In addition to the discussion of the main findings the researcher also considers the pertinent literature review and primary sources (direct responses of the participants in this study) which justify the implications of the identified findings.

4.2.3.1 Competition

The fair and friendly competition is likely to bring the best in people by leading to new scientific innovations or outstanding efforts in solving community problems. When it is unfriendly, it can bring out worst in people. The study revealed that according to the teachers interviewed, competition is as a result of limited resources in the schools and slim opportunities for promotions. One of the participants posited as follows: **Participant G:** *There is competition for higher positions, lack of resources and poor relations among us.*

Competition can yield positive results in situations where it is used as motivational tool. In this regard, Paul (2012) elaborates that Cooperative competition occurs when a team works together to attain a goal for the goodness of the organization.

4.2.3.2 Botched communication and interpersonal relations in schools

The reviewed literature demonstrates that communication plays the central role in personal relationships (Drussell, 2012: 3). Furthermore, it is noted from Drussell (2012: 2) by the researcher that..."the lack of skills to effectively communicate and resolve conflict in person may negatively affect the behaviour of people by crippling their ability to develop and maintain relationships." This means that failure to communicate effectively could lead to conflict which can harm an organisation such as school. It was affirmed by

the teachers and one principal that poor communication results in conflict. They further showed the consequences of poor communication as follows:

- *Less communication between teachers and managers results into teachers becoming unaware of new policies or circulars.*

A lack of communication can lead to misunderstanding where an employee could believe that his/her approach of carrying the organisational task is correct whereas it is incorrect. As an example, it was acknowledged by one of the teachers who took part in the study that poor communication has some repercussions in schools. **Participant G** puts it in this way...."*new curriculum will fail because teachers did not welcome it.*" This response seems to suggest that failure to communicate policies by the authorities affects the working relations among the teachers and principals.

The responses of the interviewed teachers and principals showed their dissatisfaction regarding to the interpersonal relations in their schools. They expressed that..." *The most common type of conflict in this school is caused by poor interpersonal relations among staff members at various levels. Interpersonal relation among teachers in this school is cordial. But good communication among staff needs to be improved. It is not good because they have their own clashes and differences.*" It can be concluded that when employees work with different sets of information and have conflicting personalities and work approaches, it can create tension and lead to anger. It surfaced from the responses provided by the sample that there could be possible advantages in schools to enjoy if there are positive relations among teachers. Following is the list of the anticipated benefits namely:

- harmonious school environment,
- effective teaching and learning,
- supportive and collaborative school environment and realisations of teacher high morals,
- high productivity, sound management and governance and
- higher team spirit.

The above expectations are explicitly expressed by two of the interviewed principals in the following way. Principal A asserts that...*"The school will be productive, academic and administrative aspects of the school will be sound."* Another principal reported that...*"there will be harmony and tranquility in any environment where everyone maintains a good interpersonal relationship."* It can be concluded that good communication and interpersonal relations are critical in schools.

4.2.3.3 Excessive workload on teachers

This study found that the main factors related to perceived excessive workload were too much of paperwork and high learner enrolment in their classroom which impact on their instructional practices, administrative duties and time during marking sessions. **Participant C** strongly agreed that *"workload is one of the things that cause conflict in my school. Some teachers fail to submit their work because it is very huge for them to accomplish before the deadline."* It was reported by one of principals that took part in the study that the workload should be considered in distributing the work to teachers. **Principal E** puts it in this way... *"I think the best way is to avoid implementing things that will bring more work to teachers."* Such assertion was also supported by one of teachers (**Participant C**) by saying... *"if the school managers will consider that teachers are human beings they are supposed not to be overloaded with responsibilities that they cannot fulfil at the prescribed time."*

On that note, Msila (2012: 30) asserts that...*"principals and teachers may experience conflict due to overload of tasks."* It appears that workload to teachers and principals has some impact on their professional duties and could result in emotional stress if is not fairly considered and managed.

4.2.3.4 Existence of cliques and informal groups

There was general agreement from the teachers and principals who participated in this study that there are cliques in their schools and consequently those cliques impact on the culture of learning and teaching services. They replied as follows...*"yes, we do have cliques. As I have emphasized, the main cause of cliques in this school is tribalism and*

racism.” It is noticed that the participants associated the existence of cliques among other things with racism that is prevalent in their schools.

In their comments they were aware that cliques impact on the social life negatively. In support of their claim they put it in this way,

- **Principal A:** *Some clique members hide useful information from teachers who do not belong to their clique.*
- **Principal C:** *No, there is no any advantage in having cliques and informal groups. People ought to be working together to ensure that the school achieves its goals. One of the effects is that it causes disunity among staff.*
- **Principal D:** *These cliques create lot of conflict in the school environment.*

From the above responses, it can be concluded that the social exclusion could negatively impact on the operations of the schools and personal interactions if is not properly managed by stakeholders in schools.

On the hand, some of the participants were of the view that existence of cliques play a vital role in social interaction by promoting the competence in completion the tasks and working excellent in outweighing the other group in the schools which in turn results in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. To support their argument, they put it in this way, for example Participants E & F stated that...*“cliques lead to motivation among teachers, to motivate one another in getting things done which is not always the case, and teachers’ personal problems can be solved by informal groups.”*

4.2.3.5 Leadership styles adopted by school management teams in schools

In an attempt to investigate the influence of leadership style on interpersonal conflict management among teaching and non-teaching staff in one of secondary schools in Osun State of Nigeria, Oladitan, Ajibua, Fashogbon, and Ajayi (2014) found that...

“There is a general agreement that leadership involves the process by which people are influenced to have their efforts directed towards the achievement of some specific goal or goals.”

In their study, it was further noted that there is a significant relationship between leadership styles and conflict management in secondary schools in Isokan Local Government Area of Osun State (Oladitan, *et al.*, 2014). In view of Oladitan, *et al.*, (2014), it becomes clear that the leadership styles used by principals have an impact on the culture of learning and teaching services. The confirmatory finding in this study is demonstrated by two of the interviewed teachers respectively (participant D) who responded as...*"like the case of the Mathematics teacher, the principle of transparency was totally not applied. The issue was not discussed in public. The principal took decision together with few individuals who are close to him."* While participant G expressed her concern as follows: *"Not at all because there is always a side that wins because of divide and rule."*

It was cited by one of the principals interviewed that poor leadership style results in limited teamwork and chaotic environment in schools. The principal A puts in this way...*" There will be division among staff members of the school and negatively affects the culture of teaching and learning."* The highlighted responses seem to suggest that leadership styles employed by principals play a critical role in making environment conducive or chaotic in schools. From the study it is learned that managers who possess strong democratic leadership approach with limited autocratic approach lead to the improved working conditions in an organisation such as schools. The teachers who were interviewed expressed that...*"proper and effective management styles such as democratic style should be used by all principals. Inclusive leadership style must be used by our principals and they must also learn to be accountable as leaders (see participants F & J)."*

4.2.3.6 Attitudes of secondary teachers towards the implementation of policies

Research conducted in Northern Ireland by Lambe and Bones (2007) shows that the attitude of teachers plays a pivotal role in influencing the implementation of educational policies. They posit that when teachers have positive attitudes they are willing to implement policies than when they have negative attitudes. In support of such assertion,

the sampled teachers reflected that *"It is very rare in this school to see teachers going contrary or against policies, decisions and curriculum implementations."*

While on the other hand, it was divulged by other teachers who took part in the study by stating that, *"teachers as you know do not like change."* In view of these teachers, when teachers have negative attitudes, they tend not to comply with the implementation of policies. It is clear that such practice could cause tension among the stakeholders such as teachers, learners, SMTs, parents and DoE. It can be learned that a paradigm shift by definition involves a change in attitude which is why it is relevant to consider the attitudes of teachers (Abd-Al Magid, 2006: 2). This seems to suggest that tempering with teachers' attitudes to become negative could result in conflict as there is no consensus about the change. Such observation is affirmed by the finding of Abd Al-Magid (2006:1) when it states that...*"the effective implementation of communicative approach was critically dependent on teachers' positive attitudes towards this approach."* It is clear that the more the teachers possess positive attitudes towards educational change and policies, the more they will implement those policies. On that note, it is illustrated by Lassig (2009) that...*"knowledge of attitudes is important for a successful program."* This means that attitudes of teachers play a pivotal role in their academic performance and willingness to implement the policies.

4.2.3.7 Conflict management strategies in place

From a study conducted by Wagude (2015), it is confirmed that conflict management skills are a fundamental and critical aspect of leadership effectiveness. The response advanced by one of sampled principal was of the view that the entire culture of learning and teaching will be disrupted if there is no good management of conflict. This implies that on the basis that conflict is unavoidable where there are two or more people with different views in achieving the goals, especially in schools, the sampled principals are aware that the conflict management skills are required from them to ensure that teaching and learning service is not affected. It is also noted from the sampled teachers in this study that schools experiencing and implementing the conflict management strategies enjoy harmony. They put it in this way... *"it is very effective because it creates*

harmony in the school." On that note, Wagude (2015) argues that limited conflict management skills on the employees impact their productivity.

It was also found that there were strategies to deal with the effects of conflict in the secondary schools which included discussions in meetings, involvement of the unions, the district officials and references to the school disciplinary committee. The following came from two principals:

We do solve conflicts in our weekly meetings. If it fails we refer it to our disciplinary committee.

Yes we do have strategies and sometimes we involve the unions and the district officials.

In addition to conflict management strategies Joseph (2013:1) postulates that when dealing with organizational conflict, it is best for the organization to be prepared with a conflict resolution plan.

To be able to manage conflict the leader should analyse the situation considering the type of the conflict, its sources and the intensity. Once these factors have been analysed an applicable strategy can be determined.

4.2.3.8 Resistance of teachers to educational changes

It was found that teachers sometimes resisted new policies, decisions and curriculum in the schools but that depended on what had been suggested to them and teachers did not like change at all due to the fact that they were not been consulted when the change was to be introduced. Two teachers and a principal had these to say:

Teachers as you know do not like change.

I think we are always ready to abreast new decisions, policies or curriculum but the problem is that we are sometimes not been consulted.

Resistance and failure to implement policies and curriculum prescribed by the department are the major causes of conflict in this school.

A study conducted by Westhuizen (2008:221) highlighted that, the intensity of teachers' resistance to change usually depends on what is being change and whether the stability of the school is being threatened. That is why resistance to change is usually a reaction of an individual teacher who wishes to protect him or her against the effects or results of change. Resistance to change usually develops when renewal is implemented and an individual teacher is compelled to change his or her existing behaviour, actions and habits.

Every organization has its vision mission and goals. Therefore, there must be clear road map on how to effectively achieve them. For this to materialized, a proper teacher resistance management has to be in place. In this respect, Participants E, F and H had these to say respectively:

Managers should not be too harsh on their subordinates; this will significantly reduce resistance in any organization.

All teachers must be trained on the importance of new policies and the effect of resistance in school.

I think what is best to organize awareness training for all those who will be affected by any change.

Also one of the best methods of controlling resistance in schools is that teachers must be given the opportunity to state why they resist.

4.2.3.9 Limited availability of effective conflict management strategies

Conflicts that are not managed among secondary school teachers in most cases results into inefficiency, teacher heavy workload, teachers failing to meet deadlines, social exclusion, and poor interpersonal relations among staff members as well as resistance among teachers. It was also found that there were strategies to deal with the effects of

conflict in the secondary schools which included discussions in meetings, involvement of the unions, the district officials and references to the school disciplinary committee. The following came from two principals:

We do solve conflicts in our weekly meetings. If it fails we refer it to our disciplinary committee.

Yes, we do have strategies and sometimes we involve the unions and the district officials.

For effective conflict management strategy, Joseph (2013:1) stressed that when dealing with organizational conflict, it is best for the organization to have conflict resolution plan in order to manage it. Once these factors have been analysed, an applicable strategy can be determined which will tremendously contribute in solving both existing and potential conflicts.

4.3 Conclusion

From this chapter, it was found that there factors that contribute to the conflict in schools. It was also learned that at times the conflict is influential in improving the culture of learning and teaching services (COLTs) if it is well managed by school stakeholders. The study showed that there are instances where conflict impacts negatively the school environment. Amongst the negative effects of conflict are social exclusion, competition of teachers and limited collegial relationship. Themes were drawn from the similar responses of the interviewed teachers and principals to questions that were asked during interviews sessions. The main findings were critically discussed to facilitate meaningful recommendations that are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The summary of this study is presented in this chapter. It is followed by a brief discussion of conclusion. The recommendations suggested by the researcher conclude the study.

5.2 Summary of the study

This research study was set out to investigate the factors contributing to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District. From secondary and primary sources, it is evident that there are factors contributing to conflict in secondary schools among the teachers. Literature reviewed in this study confirmed that the conflict is inescapable in organisations and management of it is highly recommended. It further reports that conflict has advantages and disadvantages to the organisations. It was in the light of this background that motivated the researcher to conduct this study to explore what factors contribute to conflict among teachers in the secondary schools and how can it be managed.

Therefore, the aim of the study was to investigate what factors contribute to conflict among teachers of secondary school. The objectives of the study were to:

- To determine the extent to which the interpersonal relations contribute to conflict among teachers in schools.
- To examine how does leadership style of principals contribute to conflict among teachers in schools.
- To determine how resistance of teachers contributes to conflict in schools.
- To examine the impact cliques among teachers have in the management of school.

- To determine what conflict management strategies are in place to deal with conflict that emerged in schools.

The secondary sources were reviewed to get more of what on what other researchers say about the factors contributing to conflict in organisations such as school. The study also identified literature on the following: the kind of leadership styles use in schools, the causes of poor interpersonal relations among teachers in schools, causes of teachers' resistance in schools, the impact of cliques and informal groups of teachers on the culture of teaching and learning in schools and the causes of conflict between school management and governance.

To attain the aim and research objectives of the study, the researcher used the case study design as well as the qualitative research method both in collecting and analysing the data. The case study design was suitable for this study as it facilitated the exploration of the phenomenon within the context using a variety of data sources. This ensured that the issue was not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allowed for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. The case study design also presented the researcher an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some in-depth within a limited time scale.

The qualitative research method was suitable for this investigation to acquire in-depth understanding of the factors that contribute to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in the Mthatha Education District. This qualitative research therefore, was used to assist the researcher in accessing and providing complex textual descriptions of how the participants experienced the factors that contribute to conflict among secondary schools teachers in the Mthatha Education District. It assisted to provide information about the human side of the issue that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of participants.

In this study ten (10) teachers and five (5) principals from five different secondary schools formed the sample size of the investigation. Convenience sampling method was used to select this sample size. Convenience sampling method refers to situations when

population elements are selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available to the researcher and the sample is viewed having capacity to provide the relevant information regarding the identified problem under investigation.

The researcher analysed the data by capturing the patterns and direct words of the participants that were interviewed using tape recording. The researcher then used the manual method to transcribe the interview transcripts generated from these interviews. The data was categorised and coded and then grouped the similar responses into themes. Finally, the data was interpreted into conclusion. The findings revealed that the five principals and the ten teachers used in the study had a sound understanding and have experiences of factors that contribute to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in the MED. The participants were confident in their responses. This enables the researcher to identify the following main findings which relatively answer the research questions:

- The study revealed that there is competition among the teachers over limited resources, unfairly promotion practices and jealousy over some teachers' competencies. The competition was identified as a cause for conflict in schools where teachers and principals participated in this study.
- Poor communication was cited by the participants as one of the contributing factors that cause conflict among the secondary school teachers.
- The study showed that there is prevalence of poor interpersonal relations among the secondary school teachers. And the poor interpersonal relation was advanced by the participants as a factor that impacts the COLTs in schools.
- The study indicated that teachers experienced astronomical workload in their schools results in conflict. It was divulged by the participants that unequal distribution of workload is exacerbated by favouritism done by SMTs to teachers.

- It was highlighted by the participants that there are cliques and informal groups which result in conflict among secondary school teachers. The study revealed that the discrimination on the basis of colour, race and jealousy lead to cliques. It was learned that existence of cliques helps to improve the quality and efficiency of employees as they work to outweigh the other group. On the other hand, it is noted that the existence of cliques hinders the working relations of the employees and that could affect the productivity and progress in the organisation.
- The study showed that there are teacher resistance to change which cause conflict and hamper the school environment.
- It was cited by participants that leadership styles adopted by SMTs influence the conflict to schools when there are unclear roles to perform by teachers, unequal treatment of teachers in implementing the policies and not involving teachers in decision making. This implies that there is strong relationship between poor leadership style used in secondary schools and the existence of conflict in secondary schools.
- The revealed that there are limited effective conflict management strategies in the secondary schools to manage the conflict.

5.3 conclusion

The researcher is of the opinion that this research study has identified a number of factors that could contribute to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in the MED. In Chapter 1, a brief discussion of the background of the study and its context was presented. The statement of the research problem, research questions, and research objectives, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations are highlighted.

A literature review related to the problem under investigation was discussed in chapter 2. The secondary sources clearly showed that conflict is inevitable in organisations such

as schools. From the literature reviewed, it was learned that there are several factors that contribute to conflict in schools. The literature reviewed reports that strategies to manage conflict are critical.

The research design and methodology adopted in this study as well as ethical considerations followed were discussed in chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents the analysis and interpretation of data. Based on the objectives and the research questions the following conclusions are drawn.

It can be concluded that competition for higher positions such as head of department (HoD), deputy principals and principals, limited resources and jealousy results in conflict among teachers of secondary schools. It was highlighted by the participants that poor communication as a result of improper communication channels between managers and teachers, unanimous decision making coupled with top down approach, limited transparency and favouritism lead to conflict among teachers of secondary schools. Poor interpersonal relations among staff members are the most common types and causes of conflict among secondary school teachers. The study revealed that teacher workload influences conflict in schools by failing to meet deadlines and thus shifting the pressure and burden on to other teachers.

The study reveals that there are possible advantages schools would enjoy if there are positive relations among teachers, namely:

- harmonious school environment that enables effective teaching and learning,
- teamwork,
- sound management, leadership and governance practices,
- tranquillity in the school, supportive and collaborative school environment and

On the other hand, the study shows the consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff members on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools are:

- poor teaching and learning culture,

- infighting and frequent conflict in the school,
- lack of trust,
- poor communication,
- weak school team and lack of effective co-operations from the staff members,
- Dysfunctional school, disrespect and lack of trust among teachers and bad reputation of the school.

In addition, there were communication breakdown between management and teachers which resulted into conflict, some school managers did not know their responsibilities in the schools and that some school managers refused to consult with teachers before decisions were taking causing conflict in the schools.

Workload and frequent curriculum changes in the education system were also some of the predominant causes of resistance in the schools.

The negative effects of teacher resistance in secondary schools included the following: poor culture of teaching and learning, division and misunderstanding among the school staff, lack of trust and confidence among teachers, failure of new curriculum, less co-operations among teachers and tension in the school which would eventually lead to serious conflict in the school. It also the following: non-attainment of educational goals, division among teachers, lack of effective teaching and learning in the schools, less co-operations and failure to implement curriculum successfully.

It can be concluded that there are signs of cliques and informal groups of teachers in schools which are mostly formed on the basis of tribalism, nationality and culture. Teachers like to associate with only certain types of teachers in the staffroom. The causes of the formations of cliques and informal groups among teachers of secondary schools include the following:

- age variation among teachers,
- nationality as foreign teachers feel that they are secluded and marginalized,
- injustice and unfair treatment, discrimination, conflict and

- Poor leadership styles.

It was found that there are advantages and benefits derived from the formations of cliques and informal groups in schools and some of these advantages and benefits are:

- cliques ensured teacher motivation in the schools,
- It encourages healthy competitions among teachers and members in a clique assists in solving each other's' personal and stress related issues in the schools.

On the other hand, cliques and informal groups in schools have some negative effects in the following ways:

- vital information is not shared with rival groups in the school,
- prolong the decision making processes in the school,
- lack of collegiality,
- lead teachers to rebel against management,
- there is constant fight, jealousy,
- affect the culture of teaching and learning,
- non conformant to policies rules and regulations in the school; wastage of resources,
- negative school image in the society,
- ill-discipline as well as lack of respect among teachers and
- There is unhealthy competition among teachers.

The several mechanisms to deal with the negative effects of cliques in the schools included: treating all teachers equally, no bias in the school, policies against hatred and racism must be drawn and made known to all teachers, by monitoring the behaviour and activities of informal groups in the schools and by ensuring that teachers put forth the goals of the school before the goals of their informal groups.

The study documents that democratic and participatory leadership styles could be used in schools to curb with the effect of conflict among teachers. Democratic and participatory leadership styles are found to be contributing to harmonious school environment.

This means that there is a strong relationship between the leadership style used by principals and their management practices in the schools. This is clearly shown by their behavior such as favouritism, not involving staff in decision making, unclear about government and school policies, divide and rule approach to teachers. Such management and leadership practices lead to discomfort to some teachers.

Also it is evident in this study that some teachers struggled to implement new policies and procedures in the schools as a result of resistance and negative attitudes towards change which is not properly communicated and were not involved at earlier stage.

There were strategies implemented in the schools to manage and deal with conflict such as the important roles played by the school SMTs and SGBs. Also, the strategies put in place in the secondary schools to deal and manage conflict were effective and functional. These strategies also included discussions in meetings, involvement of the unions, the district officials and references to the school disciplinary committee. Because of the presence of such strategies there was harmony in the schools.

The study showed that there are limited conflict management strategies and in those schools that have it appears that there is no openness, transparency and fairness when it is applied in resolving the conflicts.

5.4 Recommendations

This study has highlighted the number of factors that contributed to conflict among senior teachers of secondary schools in the MED. On the basis of the identified findings the following recommendations are proposed.

5.4.1 Maintain good working relations

The study recommends that promotions of teachers should be based on the professional competencies, teaching experiences, professional qualifications and community engagements and not on their race, gender and social association. SGBs and panelists involved in promotions should be transparent from advertising of the posts, short-listing

of applicants for posts up until recommendations so that everyone becomes aware of all the processes from the start.

The strategies to deal with poor leadership style used in the secondary schools were: all principals to acquire adequate knowledge of leadership, school managers to undergo trainings which would capacitate and prepare them to lead, teachers' opinions to be considered when a decision was to be taken, and managers not to force or coerce teachers to do what was voluntary. Again, principals to be trained on educational policies and how to apply them, proper and effective management styles such as democratic style to be used by all principals, school managers to undergo management of school resources training and workshops and inclusive leadership style to be used by school principals.

Furthermore, and on the strategies to deal with poor leadership style used in the secondary schools; it was suggested for schools principals to avoid the use of autocratic and bureaucratic as leadership styles in their schools, school principals to strike for a balance between democratic and bureaucratic styles in the schools, good communication channels in the schools to be established and proper training of all school principals to be done.

5.4.2 Training of school stakeholders

The SMTs, SGBs and teachers need to be trained in managing conflict in their schools on regular bases to capacitate everyone in the school on how to work collaboratively, efficiently and effectively. Mentoring programmes involving conflict management skills should be an on-going process for SMTs, SGBs and teachers.

The SMTs should be trained by the DoE on how to manage unhealthy competition teachers of secondary schools The SMTs, SGBs and teachers need to be trained in managing conflict in their schools on regular bases to capacitate everyone in the school on how to work efficiently and effectively. Learn that competition for promotion and limited resources should not happen. Training of teachers to face the competition should be an on-going process to inculcate positive attitudes and values on how to live

in a harmonious working environment. The study recommends that promotions of teachers should be based on the professional competencies, teaching experiences, professional qualifications and community engagements and not on their race, gender and social association. SGBs and panelists involved in promotions should be transparent from advertising of the posts, short-listing of applicants for posts up until recommendations so that everyone becomes aware of all the processes from the start. The DoE should partner with other sister departments to access on-going psychological services for learners, teachers and principals. These could also be achieved by employing psychologist to provide psychological services at cluster level. The schools must also develop proper communication channels where all barriers of communications which contributed to conflict among the teachers are prevented or eliminated. It is also recommended that the school management teams should re-look into how the teaching tasks are allocated to teachers in order to ensure that less work is allocated to teachers within a given period of time to enable them complete their task and to meet deadlines.

It is recommended that in order to achieve maximum benefits from the formation of cliques and informal groups in the secondary schools; principals should continuously monitor the behaviour and activities of those groups on site to ensure they do not derail the smooth running of the school. It is also recommended that all teachers in the school no matter which clique or group they belong to should be treated equally by the principals. Policies against hatred and racism must be drawn and made known to teachers and any teacher who goes against it must be disciplined. Policies should involve all the stakeholders at all levels.

The study recommends that the identified factors contributing to conflict in school in particular could be managed by: teachers understanding each other's' values, opinions and tolerate one another, reducing teacher workload in the schools, establishment of policies that prohibits unhealthy competitions and favouritism in the schools, there should be proper accountability and transparency.

To ensure proper leadership and management in schools, it is recommended that the DoE should organise management and leadership workshops for all principals where they are trained, developed and capacitated on programmes such as

- the appropriate leadership styles to be used in schools such as democratic and participatory leadership styles,
- On how to involve teachers and other stakeholders in decision making and implementing educational policies.

Such practices should be conducted on rotational bases to enable the teachers to be aware on how to conform to the leadership practices of their principals. Each and every circuit manager should conduct a survey with teachers of his circuit on leadership style adopted by principals to their schools on yearly basis with the aim of improving their leadership and management practices. Where teachers are promoted to principalship, the DoE should expose them to training that will capacitate with strategies to manage school effectively.

5.4.3 Support from DoE

The study also recommends that there should be seminars or conferences for teachers, SMTs, SGBs, DoE and any interested parties on conflict management and should be in districts year plans where the results are published in newsletters to reach all school. It is further recommended that staff establishment should be correctly considered to ensure that all schools are provided with sufficient educational resources such as teachers, furniture, classrooms and learning and teaching materials to avoid competition over inadequate resources, and work overload.

To ensure good interpersonal relations among the secondary school teachers; the study recommends that proper team building campaign should be organised by all the secondary schools where all teachers are made to attend. In this venue teachers must be made to go through team building activities that will increase their desires and interests to treat each teacher as an important team member within the school. Teachers should

also be made to do away with favouritism and to work collaboratively within the schools and to trust and respect each other teacher's opinions and views.

Also to promote productivity among teachers and eliminate unnecessary competition over promotions, the DoE should adopt a system that would ensure regular promotions among teachers by way of grading them based on their teaching experience and professional competence.

This study recommends that the DoE should coordinate change management and awareness training for all principals. In this training, principal should be capacitated on how to implement change in their schools in a way that will prevent resistance from teachers. At the same venue, principals must be educated on the dangers of teacher resistance in schools and the strategies to be used to welcome teachers' views and contributions when a change is to be implemented in the schools. It is also recommended that SMTs should also conduct proper consultation and awareness training with their teachers when new policies or decisions are to be implemented.

5.4.4 Existence and implementation of conflict management strategies

The study recommends that from district to school levels there should be clear, constructive and jointly framed conflict management policy by DoE, SMTs, SGBs and teacher unions which is made available to all schools to implement it in a transparent manner without favours. In any conflict situation in the schools, it is recommended that SMTs and SGBs should be informed about its existence and the steps should be taken promptly to resolve the conflict. Involvement of relevant parties per case is suggested and transparent processes such as hearing of parties concerned should be done. Record and minutes keeping should be done. There should also be proper time allocated to resolve conflicts in the school meetings and if possible there should be the involvement of the unions, family member and the district officials to ensure transparency and fairness.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

It is evident in this research study that there is a need for further research regarding the factors that contribute to conflict among teachers of primary schools in the MED. It

is such a vital issue that if we do not give the necessary attention to the identified factors, the smooth running of the secondary schools, the harmonious school environment and the culture of teaching and learning could be affected. This is therefore a challenge to other researchers to do some further research as the researcher only focused on five secondary schools of the MED and ignored the primary school teachers to involve in this study. Therefore, other researchers could go beyond this district as these challenges highlighted by in this study might not be the only ones that affect teachers in their schools.

It is therefore suggested that researchers could look at issues like the role of the Department of Education in curbing conflict among secondary school teachers, or the educational implications of favouritism among teachers of secondary schools, or the rationale for the use of bureaucratic leadership styles by the principals of secondary schools.

6. References

Allison, J. T. 2012. *Clinical Research for the Doctor of Nursing Practice*. United Kingdom: Kevin Sullivan.

Anderson, G. 1990. *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. 1st edition. London: Falmer Press.

Andy, H. 2006. *Critical Thinking and reflection in research*. [Online] Available at <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk> [Accessed 24-10-2013].

Bean, P. Eksteen, F. and R. L. N. Human, 2006. *Business Studies for Grade 11*. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Nasou- via Afrika.

Brown S, Samuel T. 2012. *Conflict Management in Projects*. United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.

Chan, K. 2008. *Managers' conflict management styles*. 3rd edition. United State of America: Thomas Wadsworth Publications.

Clair, M. and Judith. P. 2006. *Conflict resolution theory and practice*. 2nd edition. New York: Jossey-Bassia.

Creswell, J.A 2011. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Approachs*. California: Sage Publications.

Cunningham, W. G. 1998. *Conflict Theory and the Conflict in Northern Ireland*. The University of Auckland. Northern Ireland: University of Auckland.

Danica, G. H and Anneliese, A. S, 2012. *Qualitative Inquiry in Clinical and Educational Settings*. United States of America: Library of Congress Cataloging Publication.

Dennis, L. A. 2007. *A Practical Guide to Media Research*. Australia.

Drussell, J. 2012 *Social Networking and Interpersonal Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills among College Freshmen*. Jennifer Whetstone, LICSW.

Engelbrecht, K. 2010. *Challenges of Inclusive Education in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Eunjung, L. Faya, M. and Sara, B. 2010. *How to Evaluate Case Studies in Social Work*. [Online] available at <http://www.sagepublications.com>. [Accessed 10-07-2014].

Farveh, F. 2012. *The Effects of Informal Groups on Organizational Performance: A case Study of Iran*. [Online]. Available at <http://journal-archieives17.webs.com/>. [Accessed 1-11-2013].

Funda, O. 2008. *An overview of a Theoretical Framework of a Phenomenography in Qualitative education research: An example from Physics Education Research*. [Online] available at <http://www.ied.edu.hk> [Accessed 10-07-2014].

Ganjendra, K. V. and Kanka, M. 1990. *Researching Education: Perspectives and Techniques*. 1st edition. Philadelphia Publication/.

Gohshu, S. 2012. *Conflict Management- A Guide for New Managers*. [Online].

Available at <http://www.cscollege.gov.sg/>. [Accessed 31-10-2013].

Han, G. H., and Harms, P. D. 2010. *Team identification, trust and conflict: A mediation model*. *International Journal of Conflict Management*. [Accessed on 06-04-2015]

Howard, B. 2008. *Conflict Management in the Workplace*. [Online].

Available at <http://www.bizcommunity.com/>. [Accessed 27-10-2013].

James, K. and Sally, P. 2010. *Organizational Behavior*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Janie, S. and Demand, M. 2013. *Four Types of Conflict in Organisation*. [Online].

Available at <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/>. [Accessed 25-10-2013].

Jeriphanos, M. and Amasa, P. N. 2012. *Conflict Resolution between Heads and Teachers: The Case of 4 Schools in Masvingo Zimbabwe*. [Online] Available at

<http://www.gjournals.org/>. [Accessed 26-11-2012].

Joseph, A. 2013. *What is Organisational Conflict?* [Online] Available at

<http://www.wisegeek.com/>. [Accessed 26-10-2013].

Judith, B. 2004. *Doing your Research Project. A guide for first time researchers in education and social sciences*. 3rd edition. United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Julius, S. & Chris, W. 2000. *Research in Health Care: Concepts, Designs and methods*.

United Kingdom. Published by Stanly Thornes publishing Ltd.

Karin, K. 2008. *Qualitative Research in the Study of Leadership*. United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Lambe, J. and Bones, R. 2007. The effect of school based practice on student teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Education for Teaching, Vol 33, No 1, pp. 99-113.*

Lassig, C.J. 2009. Teachers' attitudes towards the gifted: the importance of professional development and school culture. *Australian Journal of Gifted Education, 18(2).pp. 32-42.*

Laura, A. P. 2006. *An Education Research Primer: How to Understand, Evaluate, and Use It*. Published by Jossy-Bass United State of America.

Lecompte, M. D. and Schensul, J. J 1999. *Designing and Conducting Ethnography Research* . United Kingdom: Alta Mira Press.

Mallihai, Z. and Tarry S. 2009. *Methods in behavioral research* 10th edition. Boston: McGraw Hill.

maabdal-magid M, V. 2012. Conflict Management and School Leadership. *Journal Communication, 3(1): 25-34.*

Lee, K. L. 2008. An examination between the relationships of conflict management styles and employees' satisfaction. *International Journal of Business and Management, 3(9), 11-25.* Available at <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijbm> [accessed on 05-04-2015].

Louis, C. Lawrence, M. and Keith, M. 2002. *Research Methodology in Education*. 6th edition. New York. Published by MPG Books Ltd.

Mack. N. Cynthia, W. Kathleen, M. M. Greg, G. and Emily, N. 2011. *Qualitative Research Methods: A data collector's field guide*. [Online] Available at: http://www.fhi.org/en/rh/pubs/booksreports/qrm_datacoll.htm. [Accessed 14 -10- 2013].

Kinic, Y. and Kreitner, N. 2010. The influence of organizational culture and conflict on market orientation. *The Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, available at <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-4/baxter.pdf>. [Accessed 15-02-2015].

McGregor, S.L.T., and Murnane, J. A. (2010). Paradigm, methodology and method: *Intellectual integrity in consumer scholarship*. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 34(4), 419-427. Wiley Blackwell.

McMillan, J. H. and Schumacher, S. 2010. *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry*. 7th edition. United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.

Micheal, F and Germino, T 2010. *Organisational Conflict*. New York: Jossey-Bassia.

Marie C. H., 1997. *Choosing Qualitative Research: A primer for technology Education Researchers*. [Online] Available at: <http://scholars.lib.vt.edu/journals>. [4-7- 2014]

Mayank, J. 2014. *Leadership Styles in Secondary Schools*. [Online] Available at <http://www.ehow.com/info> [Accessed 29-10-2014].

Abd Al-Magid, Abd, M.L. 2006. *The effect of teachers' attitudes on the effective implementation of the communicative approach in ESL classrooms*. Unpublished Dissertation. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Morgan, R. 2012. *What is Interorganisational Culture*. Human Resources.

[Online] Available at www.ehow.com/facts_6038557_interorganizational- [Accessed 26-03-2015].

Morton, D. 2006. *The Hand Book conflict resolution theory and practice*. 2nd edition. New York: Jossey-Bassia.

Msila, V. 2012. Conflict Management and School Leadership. *Journal Communication*, 3(1): 25-34.

Musaazi, J. C. S. 1985. *The Theory and Practice of Educational Administration*. London. Published by Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

- Nitin, A. 2012. *Organizational behavior and Ethos*. [Online] Available at <http://www.slideshare.net/>. [Accessed 29-10-2013].
- Oladitan, O. I., Ajibua, M. A., Fashogbon, B. A. Ajayi, M. O. 2014. Influence of Leadership Style on Interpersonal Conflict Management Among Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff in Secondary Schools in Osun State of Nigeria. *Higher Education of Social Science Vol. 6, No. 1, 2014*, pp. 39-44.
- Pamela, B. and Susan, J. 2008. *Qualitative Research Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers*. The Qualitative Report Volume 13 Number 4 December 2008 544-559 [online] available at <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-4/baxter.pdf>. [Accessed 15-10-2013].
- Paul, H. Nick, H. & Carol, A. M., 2004. *Marketing Research in Practice: A guide to the basics*. United Kingdom: British Library Cataloguing in Publication
- Patricia, A. B. 2008. A review of Literature on Case Study Research. *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education/Volume 1*. [Online] available at <http://www.cjnsercjc.ca>. [Accessed 27-06-2014].
- Peter, J. 2010. Mistaken Identity, A Case of South African Schools. Article Published in Mail and Guardian: [Online] Available at <http://www.cepd.org.za/>. [Accessed 15-10-2013].
- Robert, K. V. 2009. *Case Study Research: Design and Methodology*. 4th edition. United Kingdom: SAGE Publications. Inc.
- Robins, S. 1998. *Organizational Behavior*. USA, Prentice Hall Inc.
- Robin, K. 2010. *Workplace Dispute*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Schlenkrich, L., and Upfold, C. 2009. A guideline for virtual team managers: The

effective social interaction and communication. *The Electronic Journal Information Systems Evaluation* Retrieved from www.ejise.com. Available at <http://www.gova.edu/jjj/malter.pdf>. [Accessed on 15-10-2014].

Schults, R. and Shultz. G. M. 2010. *Organizational Behavior*. 11th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Smith, P. J. and Cronje, D. J. 1995. *Management Principles: A contemporary South African Edition*: City Juta & Co, Ltd.

Thomas, K., and Thomas, G. 2008. Conflict styles of men and women at six organization levels. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, available at <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals>. [Accessed on 08-03- 2015].

Tshepo W. F. 2007. *Conflict among Educators at Primary Schools in Khutsong Township*. [Online] Available at www.libserv5.tut.ac.za. [Accessed 16-01-2014]

Van Deventer, I. and Kruger, A. G., 2010. *An Educator's Guide to School Management Skills*. South Africa. Van Schaik Publishers.

Van Niekerk, W. P. 1994. *Contemporary Management*. South Africa: Butterworth Publishers (Pty) Ltd.

Van Der Westhuizen, P. C., 2007. *Schools As Organisations*. 3rd edition, Pretoria. Published by: Van Schaik publishers.

Whetten, A. and Cameron, S. 2012. *Managing Power and Conflict in the Workplace. Introduction to International Organizational Behavior*. [Online] Available at www.introtoob.com/textbook/introtoob/chapter7/ [Accessed 01-04-2015].

White, C. J. 2005. *Research: A practical guide*. 1st edition. Pretoria: Ithuthuko Investment.

Wiki. answers. 2013. Define Conflict and various types of conflict in organization?

[Online] Available at <http://wiki.answers.com/Q/>. [Accessed 12-02-2014].

Williams, G. C. 1998. *Theoretical Framework for Conflict Resolution*. [Online]. [Accessed 26-11-2013]. Available at <http://www.cain.uist.ac.uk>. [Accessed 25-11-2013].

Wagude, J. 2015. Influence of principals' age on conflict management styles in secondary schools in Kenya. *International journal of scientific and technology research vol 4, issue 05*.

Yin, R.K. 1994. *Case study Research: Design and Methods*. [Online] available at <http://www.soberit.hut.fi>. [Accessed on 09-07-2014].

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LETTERS TO DoE AND THE PRINCIPALS

Galaxy Internet café
No. 51 Victoria street
Mthatha
5099
17-01-2014

TO:
The District Director of Education
Mthatha District

Dear Sir/ Madam

INFORMED CONSENT

I am currently busy with research on the topic "Factors contributing to conflict among senior secondary schools teachers in Mthatha Education District" in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (M. ED) in Educational Management at the Faculty of Education in Walter Sisulu University. I therefore hereby request your consent in undertaking this research.

The following sample size has been identified for this study: The sample will comprise of fifteen (10) teachers, five Head of Departments (5), and five principals (5) from five different senior secondary schools of the district. The researcher is assuring you the strictest confidentiality and anonymity. No school or individual shall be identified in this study and at the same time school programmes shall not be disrupted by this study. The researcher will strive to be honest, objective and empathetic. The Department of Education will be informed about the outcome of this study.

Thank you, in advance for your time and co-operation.

Yours faithfully


Researcher: YUSUF LUKMAN (Cell: 072 3063 414)

Student Number: 209143436

Galaxy Internet Cafe

No.51 Victoria Street

Mthatha

5099

5-April-2014

To:

The Principal of Cooperative Combined College

Mthatha

INFORMED CONSENT

I am currently busy with research on the topic "Factors contributing to conflict among teachers of secondary schools in Mthatha Education District" in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (M.Ed) In Educational Management at the Faculty of Education in Walter Sisulu University. I therefore hereby request your consenting undertaking this research.

The following sample size has been identified for this study: the sample will comprise of eight (10) Teachers and five (5) principals from different Schools. No School or individual shall be identified in this study and at the same time school programmes shall not be disrupted by this study.

Thank you, in advance for your time and co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Researcher: Yusuf Lukman

Cell: 073 314 0790 Student Number 209143436

APPENDIX B: RESPONSE FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE



STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES
Steve Mokhe Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape
Private Bag X0032 • Bisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 (0)43 702 7428 • Fax: +27 (0)43 702 742708 • Website: www.eced.gov.za

29 October 2014

Enquiries: Dr Heckrodt

Email: enquiries@ecefca.com

Mr Y Lukman
Suit 51 Victoria Street
Mthatha
5099

Dear Mrs Rozani

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A MASTER'S THESIS: FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CONFLICTS AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS TEACHERS IN MTHATHA EDUCATIONAL DISTRICT

- 1 Thank you for your application to conduct research.
- 2 Your application to conduct the above mentioned research in three (3) Primary and one Secondary School under the jurisdiction of Mthatha District in the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education (ECDBE) is hereby approved on condition that:
 - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education (ECDBE) to the District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
 - d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research.



Isimiso eNgqambeni

- e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, as educators' programmes should not be interrupted.
 - f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to the Director, Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services.
 - g. the research may not be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where a special well motivated request is received.
 - h. your research will be limited to those schools or institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Director – Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services.
 - i. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis. This must also be in an electronic format.
 - j. you are requested to provide the above to the Director, The Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services upon completion of your research.
 - k. you comply to all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDBE document duly completed by you.
 - l. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).
 - m. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Director, Strategic Planning Policy Research and Secretariat Services.
3. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDBE.
 4. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
 5. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Dr Annetia Heckroodt on 043 702 7428 or mobile number 083 271 0715 and email: annetia.heckroodt@edu.ecprov.gov.za should you need any assistance.

DR AS HECKROODT

DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES



APPENDIX B: RESPONSE FROM PRINCIPAL

Co-tive Combined Community College

Mthoperaatha

District

04-06-2014

Galaxy Internet Café
No. 51 Victoria Street
Mthatha
5099

Dear Yusuf Lukman

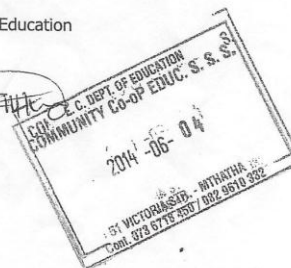
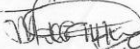
RE-INFORMED CONSENT

This serves to confirm that permission has been granted to YUSUF LUKMAN to conduct research in the above mentioned School provided that learning and teaching will not be disrupted.

Good luck

Yours in Education

Principal



APPENDIX C : INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Title of the project: Factors Contributing to Conflict among Senior Secondary School Teachers in Mthatha Education District
 Name of Researcher: Thabisa Lukman
 Researcher's Institution: Walter Sisulu University
 Name of the Main Supervisor (in case of students): Dr. B. G. Gubunga
 Purpose of the study/research: (if research is for a qualification, which one?) M.Ed

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMED CONSENT

The purpose of the study and the extent to which I will be involved was explained to me by the researcher or another person authorized by the researcher in a language which I understood. I have understood the purpose of the study and the extent to which I will be involved in the study. I unreservedly agree to take part in it voluntarily. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time at any stage at my own will. I am aware that I am not directly benefitting from this study. I am made aware that my responses will be treated anonymously and that I may be audio- or video-taped for the purpose of this research.

For participants who are under 18 years (minors): I have explained to my parent/guardian that I am willing to be part of this study and they too have agreed to it.

Signed at (place) Mthatha on (date) 2014-05-02 by
 (full name) _____ of (address) _____
 Witness: Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

In case where minors are participants, the parent/guardian, also needs to sign below (in such cases, a letter of introduction in a language which the parent/guardian understands will accompany this form)

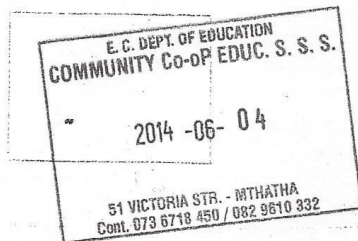
PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S INFORMED COMMENT

I _____ am the father/mother/guardian of the minor. The purpose of the study/project and the extent to which the minor under my care will be involved was explained by the researcher or another person authorized by the researcher to me in a language which I understood. I have understood the purpose of the study and the extent to which the minor will be involved in the study. I unreservedly agree for him/her/them to take part in it if he/she/they have no personal objection. I understand that I and/or the minor are free to withdraw our consent at any time at any stage at our own will. I have explained to the minor under my care that I have no objection in him/her in taking part in this study and he/she too have agreed to it.

Signed at (place) _____ on (date) _____ by (full name) _____
 or (address): _____
 Witness: Name: _____ Signature: _____
 Date: _____

ENDORSEMENT BY THE HEAD OF THE PARTICIPANT'S INSTITUTION

Name: _____ Signature: _____
 Office Stamp: _____



APPENDIX D: Interview schedule guide

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (TEACHERS)

(TITLE)

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CONFLICT AMONG TEACHERS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MTHATHA EDUCATION DISTRICT

The researcher shall conduct an individual in-depth interview on the participants by using the following schedule:

Purpose:

The researcher shall explain to the interviewees in each of the interview sessions that the purpose of the interview is to find out the factors contributing to conflict among senior secondary schools teachers in Mthatha Education District.

Motivation: The researcher shall motivate the interviewees by explaining to them that the information gathered from them shall be useful to teachers, principals, learners and the Department of Education in understanding the factors contributing to conflict among secondary schools teachers in Mthatha Education District and how best these factors can be mitigated.

INTERVIEW TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

A. (TOPIC) FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CONFLICT AMONG TEACHERS SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS:

Question 1a: What do you think are the causes of conflict among secondary school teachers in your school?

.....

....

Question 1b: Which are the common types of conflict among teachers of secondary school?

.....

....

Question 1c: How do your school managers' behaviours contribute to conflict among teachers in schools?

.....

....

Question 1d: How do your school teachers' behaviours contribute to conflict among themselves in school?

.....

....

Question 1e: How to curb with the identified factors contributing to conflict in schools?

.....
....

**B. (TOPIC) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AMONG
TEACHERS OF SECONDAR SCHOOLS**

Question 2a: How would you describe the interpersonal relationships among the staff in your school? Are the relations good or bad and how?

.....
...

Question 2b: What advantages would schools enjoy when there are positive interpersonal relations among the staff?

.....
....

Question 2c: What are the consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

.....
....

C. (TOPIC) LEADERSHIP STYLES AND HOW THEY CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICT

IN SCHOOLS:

Question 3a: What is your opinion about the leadership or management style use in your school? Does it contribute to harmonious school environment or conflict among the staff or not?

.....
..

Question 3b: Are there relationships between poor leadership style and the existence of conflict among staff in your schools? Give instances.

.....
...

Question 3c: What are the consequences of poor leadership style in the secondary schools?

.....
...

Question 3d: How could the poor leadership style be improved?

.....
....

**D. (TOPIC) FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHERS' RESISTANCE IN
SCHOOLS:**

Question 4a: What are the attitudes of teachers towards the implementations of new policies, curriculum and decisions in your schools?

.....
..

Question 4b: What are the predominant causes of teacher resistance in schools?

.....
...

Question 4c: What are the negative effects of teacher resistance in the secondary schools?

.....
...

Question 4d: How could teacher resistance be overcome?

**E. (TOPIC) THE IMPACT OF CLIQUES AND INFORMAL GROUPS AMONG
TEACHERS ON THE CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN
SCHOOLS:**

Question 5a: What is the state of cliques, informal groups and camps among the teachers in this school (Are there camps among teachers your school and how do they behave)?

.....

.

Question 5b: What causes cliques? And can they be addressed?/ How do you curb them

.....

..

Question 5c: Could you please tell me if there are advantages of having camps of teachers in the secondary schools.

.....

.

Question 5d: What are the negative effects of having camps, cliques and informal groups of teachers in the secondary schools?

.....

..

**F. (TOPIC) AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONFLICT
MANAGEMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES IN SCHOOLS:**

Question 6a: What can you say about the implementation and existence of conflict management strategies in your school? Are there strategies in your school to deal with conflict or not?

.....
..

Question 6b: If any, how effective are the conflict management strategies implemented in your school?

.....
...

Question 6c: Is there any transparency in applying conflict management strategies when resolving conflict in your school? If Yes, give instances and if No also give instances.

.....
...

Question 6d: What are the negative effects of conflict on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

.....
...

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (PRINCIPALS)

(TITLE)

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CONFLICT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS TEACHERS IN MTHATHA EDUCATION DISTRICT

The researcher shall conduct an individual in-depth interview on the participants by using the following interview schedule:

Purpose:

The researcher shall explain to the interviewees in each of the interview sessions that the purpose of the interview is to investigate the factors contributing to conflict among senior secondary schools teachers in Mthatha Education District.

Motivation: The researcher shall motivate the interviewees by explaining to them that the information gathered from them shall be useful to teachers, principals, learners and the Department of Education in understanding the factors contributing to conflict among senior secondary schools teachers in Mthatha Education District and how best these factors can be mitigated.

INTERVIEW TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

A. (TOPIC) FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CONFLICT AMONG TEACHERS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Question 1a: what factors contribute to conflict do you think among secondary school teachers in schools?

.....

....

Question 1b: Which are the common types of conflict among secondary school teachers in your schools?

.....

....

Question 1c: How do school managers' behaviours contribute to conflict among teachers in schools?

.....

....

Question 1d: How do your school teachers' behaviours contribute to conflict among themselves in school?

.....

....

**B. (TOPIC) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS**

Question 2a: How would you describe the interpersonal relationships among the staff in this school? Are there relations good or bad and how?

Question 2b: What advantages would schools enjoy when there are positive interpersonal relations among the staff?

.....
....

Question 2c: What are the consequences of poor interpersonal relations among staff on the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?

.....
....

C. (TOPIC) LEADERSHIP STYLES AND HOW THEY CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICT

IN SCHOOLS:

Question 3a: What is your opinion about the leadership or management style you use in your school? Does it contribute to harmonious school environment or conflict among the staff or not?

.....
..

Question 3b: Are there relationships between poor leadership style and the existence of conflict among staff in the secondary schools? Give instances.

.....
...

Question 3c: What are the consequences of poor leadership style in the secondary schools?

.....
...

Question 3d: what are the possible ways to improve poor leadership style in your schools?

.....

D. (TOPIC) FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHERS' RESISTANCE IN

SCHOOLS:

Question 4a: What are the attitudes of teachers towards the implementations of new policies, curriculum and decisions in the secondary schools?

.....

..

Question 4b: What are the predominant causes of teacher resistance in schools?

.....

...

Question 4c: What are the negative effects of teacher resistance in the secondary schools?

.....

...

Question 4d: How could you overcome teacher resistance?

**E. (TOPIC) THE IMPACT OF CLIQUES AND INFORMAL GROUPS AMONG
TEACHERS ON THE CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN
SCHOOLS:**

Question 5a: What is the state of cliques, informal groups and camps among the teachers in this school (Are there camps among teachers in the secondary schools and how do they behave)?

.....

.

Question 5b: How do you prevent/deal with cliques in your school?

.....
.

Question 5c: Could you please tell me if there are advantages of having camps of teachers in the secondary schools.

.....
.

Question 5d: What are the negative effects of having camps, cliques and informal groups of teachers in the secondary schools?

.....
..

F. (TOPIC) AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONFLICT

MANAGEMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES IN SCHOOLS:

Question 6a: What can you say about the implementation and existence of conflict management strategies in the secondary schools? Are there strategies to deal with conflict or not?

.....
..

Question 6b: If any, how effective are the conflict management strategies implemented in your school?

.....

...

Question 6c: Is there any transparency in applying conflict management strategies when resolving conflict in your school? If yes, give instances or if no also give instances.

.....

...

Question 6d: What are the negative effects of conflict towards the culture of teaching and learning in the secondary schools?