

**Effect of Conflict Management in Performance of Public Secondary  
Schools in Machakos County,  
Kenya**

**Mike Amuhaya Iravo**

**A thesis Submitted in Fulfillment for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Human Resource  
Management in the Jomo Kenyatta  
University of Agriculture and Technology**

**2011**

## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signature..... Date.....

**Mike Amuhaya Iravo**

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors.

1. Signature..... Date.....

**Prof. Gregory Simiyu Namusonge**

**JKUAT, Kenya**

2. Signature..... Date.....

**Dr. Joseph Kabare Karanja**

**JKUAT, Kenya**

## **DEDICATION**

Fondly, in memory of my late baba, Tito Iravo Lihanda, in reverent recompense.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I salute my University Supervisors, Prof. Gregory S. Namusonge, and Dr. Kabare Karanja, for their effective guidance, studious readership and perpetual availability for consultation. I am equally indebted to all members of the Board of External/Internal Examiners who during the defense for this thesis were very instrumental in contributing positively in adding value to the final product. I am also indebted to the University Training Committee who funded me to carry out field work successfully. A bouquet goes to the quartet of Dan Mogaka, Steven Mutuku, Ruth Mwendu and John Kyalo for diligence in research assistance. Additional thanks to all that whose insights further refined this study.

To very special people, my mama, Esther Malimo Iravo, whose undying love, prayers and encouragement enabled me to attain education. My dear wife Joyce Amuhaya, children: Brenkah, Mercy, Tony, Terrick and my grant son Kevin for undying patience and instrumental in the accomplishment of this feat. My sisters: Jane and Rose whose generosity and joy is my pride. Thanks for being there for me, and for giving me hope!

Above all, to the Almighty God, be all the glory, forever!

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**DECLARATION ..... i**

**DEDICATION ..... ii**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... iv**

**LIST OF FIGURES ..... x**

**LIST OF APPENDICES..... xii**

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS..... xiii**

**ABSTRACT ..... xiv**

**CHAPTER ONE ..... 1**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION..... 1**

1.1 Background..... 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem ..... 7

1.3. Research Objectives ..... 9

    1.3.1 General Objective of the Study .....9

    1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study .....9

1.4 Research Hypotheses ..... 9

1.5 Importance and Justification of the Study..... 10

1.6 Scope of the Study ..... 12

1.7 Assumptions of the Study..... 13

1.8 Limitations of the Study ..... 13

1.9 Delimitations of the Study..... 14

1.10 Definitions of Terms ..... 15

**CHAPTER TWO ..... 19**

<b>2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	19
2.2 Theoretical Review .....	19
2.3 Models .....	22
2.3.1 Models in Conflict Management .....	22
2.3.2 Theoretical Models Adopted .....	26
2.4 Conceptual Framework .....	28
2.5 Effects of Conflicts in Organizations .....	29
2.6 Empirical Studies .....	32
2.7 Awareness of Conflicts in Organizations .....	34
2.7.1 Causes of Conflicts in Organizations .....	34
2.7.2 Human Resource Challenges Facing Conflict Management in Organizations .....	37
2.7.3 Attitudes of Management in Solving Conflicts in Organizations .....	41
2.8 Approaches used by Management in Conflict Management and Resolution.....	46
2.8.1 Conflict Resolution and Management .....	46
2.8.2 Conflict Negotiation and Management .....	48
2.8.3 Conflict Stimulation and Management .....	49
2.9 Role of Environment in Resolving Conflicts in Organizations .....	50
2.10 Organizational Performance .....	52
2.11 Summary.....	56
2.12 Research Gaps.....	59
 <b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	 <b>67</b>
<b>3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>67</b>

3.1 Introduction .....	67
3.2 Research Design.....	67
3.3 Target Population.....	68
3.4 Sampling Frame.....	68
3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques .....	69
3.6 Data Collection Methods.....	70
3.7 Data Collections Procedure .....	72
3.8 Pilot Test.....	72
3.9 Data Processing and Analysis.....	74
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>79</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	79
4.2 The Response Rate.....	80
4.3 Understanding of Groups in Organizations .....	81
4.4 Variable One: Effect of Conflict in School Organizations.....	83
4.5 Variable Two: Awareness of Conflicts in Organizations.....	89
4.6 Variable Three: Approaches used by Managers in Public Secondary schools in Conflict Resolution and Management .....	97
4.9 Recommendations for Improving Conflict Resolution and Management .....	116
4.9 Test of Null Hypotheses .....	118
4.9 Proposed Researcher’s Conflict Management Model in School Performance....	124
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>126</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	126

5.2 Summary of Research Findings .....	126
5.2.1 Demographic Information of the Respondents.....	126
5.2.2 Effects of Conflicts in School Organizations .....	127
5.2.3 Awareness of Conflicts in Organization .....	128
5.2.4 Approaches used in Conflict Resolution and Management .....	131
5.3. Conclusions .....	134
5.4 Recommendations .....	135
5.5 Areas for further Research.....	139
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>155</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 3.1:</b>	Target Population of Schools.....	68
<b>Table 3.2:</b>	Sampling Matrix for Schools.....	69
<b>Table 3.3:</b>	Measurement of approaches .....	77
<b>Table 4.1:</b>	Effect of Personnel in Conflict Management and School Performance. ....	85
<b>Table 4.1:</b>	Effect of Personnel on Conflict Management.....	78
<b>Table 4.11:</b>	Negotiation Conflict Handling Technique.....	102
<b>Table 4.12:</b>	One Sample Statistics for Negotiation Conflict Handling Technique .....	105
<b>Table 4.13:</b>	Stimulating Conflict Handling Technique.....	107
<b>Table 4.14:</b>	One Sample Statistics for Stimulating Conflict Handling Technique .....	109
<b>Table 4.15:</b>	Widely used Technique in Conflict Management.....	109
<b>Table 4.16:</b>	Recommendations to Resolve School Organization Conflict.....	117
<b>Table 4.17:</b>	Contingency of Conflict Resolution and Performance in Schools .	118
<b>Table 4.18:</b>	Chi-square.....	119
<b>Table 4.19:</b>	Results for Regression Analysis of Conflict Resolution against Performance Index .....	119
<b>Table 4.2:</b>	Personnel that require a lot of Attention in School Management ...	113
<b>Table 4.20:</b>	Results for ANOVA Analysis of Conflict Resolution against Performance Index .....	120
<b>Table 4.21:</b>	Coefficients .....	120
<b>Table 4.22:</b>	Independent Samples T-test for Level of Awareness and Conflict Resolution .....	122
<b>Table 4.23:</b>	Results for the ANOVA analysis .....	123

<b>Table 4.3:</b>	Effect of Conflicts in School Organizations Performance .....	86
<b>Table 4.4:</b>	Effect of conflict management in School Organizations Performance .....	115
<b>Table 4.5:</b>	Causes of Inter-group Conflict.....	90
<b>Table 4.7:</b>	How do Schools Deal with Indiscipline of Personnel.....	91
<b>Table 4.8:</b>	Capacity to Deal with Problems Related to Conflict Resolution.....	92
<b>Table 4.9:</b>	Resolution conflict handling technique .....	98

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b>	The Conceptual Framework .....	29
<b>Figure 2:</b>	Relationships between Conflict Intensity and Outcomes.....	42
<b>Figure 3:</b>	Classification/types of groups found in a school.....	82
<b>Figure 4:</b>	Reasons for Joining Groups.....	82
<b>Figure 5:</b>	Effect of dysfunctional conflict on personnel (changes between groups)).....	88
<b>Figure 6:</b>	Does your school experience conflicts.....	93
<b>Figure 7:</b>	Type of conflict the school experiences .....	94
<b>Figure 8:</b>	Principals should strive to eliminate conflict .....	96
<b>Figure 9:</b>	Proposed Conflict Management Model in Schools .....	124

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

<b>Appendix I:</b>	Questionnaire Cover Letter.....	<b>155</b>
<b>Appendix II:</b>	Questionnaire for principals.....	<b>156</b>
<b>Appendix III:</b>	Names of zones and districts in Machakos County .....	<b>169</b>
<b>Appendix IV:</b>	Location of Machakos in Kenya .....	<b>170</b>

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AIDS/HIV</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome / Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>ANOVA</b>	Analysis of Variance
<b>BATNA</b>	Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement
<b>BoG</b>	Board of Governance
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CCROSS</b>	Centre for Conflict Resolution of Secondary Schools
<b>DMSP</b>	Dispute Management in the Schools Project
<b>HE</b>	His Excellence
<b>HON</b>	Honorable
<b>HR</b>	Human Resource
<b>HRM</b>	Human Resource Management
<b>IDC</b>	International Development Cooperation
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MLATNA</b>	Most Likely Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>PM</b>	Personnel Management
<b>SMART</b>	School Mediators Alternative Resolution Team
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
<b>WATNA</b>	Worst Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of conflict management in performance of organizations with a view to solving the current phenomenon of conflicts being experienced in public secondary school organizations and make them more effective, efficient and conducive for the development of human resources. The specific objectives of the study were to: assess the effect of conflict in performance of public secondary schools, determine whether management being aware of conflict in the school organization help towards conflict resolution and management, establish management approaches used by the educational institutions managers in Kenya in conflict management and resolution, evaluate the role of environment in conflict resolutions and suggest recommendations for solving conflict in public secondary school organizations.

Both qualitative and quantitative research was used. The research design used in this study was descriptive survey. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. The target population was 140 secondary school principals. Using stratified probability sampling based on different categories of schools and non-probability sampling, an optimum proportion of 30% was drawn from each category of the target population of schools to satisfy these requirements of optimality and representativeness. From each of the selected school, the principal that is the CEO was selected. Therefore, 43 principals were selected as the chief executive officers in-charge of management of the school organizations.

Since the study was concerned with the relationships between identified dependent, intervening and independent variables, structural equation modeling and other multivariate statistical tools were used to analyze the data. The regression and

ANOVA analysis were used to analyze the relationship between conflict management and performance in educational institutions. The correlation coefficients indicated a fairly positive strong relationship,  $r = 0.69$ . This indicates that the relationship is not weak and can be used to explain and predict the rate of performance. On the ANOVA, the beta coefficient of the resulting regression model  $t=2.822$  indicates that the beta coefficient is significantly greater than 0,  $P=0.07$  which is less than  $P=0.05$  the test statistic. This further confirms that essentially there is a strong relationship between conflict resolution and performance in an educational institution. All the four null hypotheses of the study, which were analyzed using Chi and T-test, were rejected. Stepwise regression analysis showed zero significance between the role of environment in conflict management and performance of school organizations. These results were consistent with earlier empirical research on conflict management and organizational performance in organizations.

In conclusion therefore, relationship between conflict management and the performance of school organizations seems to be clear. When the management is knowledgeable in conflict management and at the same time putting this knowledge into practice, the schools will experience less conflict and do well in all activities and areas.

The researcher recommends that conflict management systems should be integrated within the system of the organization and the integration should be at a higher level of the organization hierarchy rather than mere interconnection; conflict management is a human sub-system which is achieved through typical development process.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background**

An organization consists of several people. The attitudes, feelings, needs and perceptions differ from person to person. Individual differences may cause misunderstanding and conflicts between individuals and groups. Interpersonal and intergroup conflicts therefore, affect the organization either negatively or positively. Thus, conflict management is required to resolve conflicts and maintain order, otherwise employee morale and organizational performance may suffer (Dessler, 2008). Conflict based on scarcity of power, resources or social position and differing value systems occurs when individuals or groups feel that other individuals or groups have frustrated their plans, goals, beliefs, or activities (Dana, 2001). Organization conflicts occur as a result of the struggle between incompatible or opposing needs, wishes, ideas, interest or people (Okumbe, 2001). Conflict in organizations occurs at the following four levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, inter-group and inter-organizational (Robbins and Coulter, 2004).

Conflict may have either a positive or a negative effect on organizational performance, depending on the nature of the conflict and how it is managed (Armstrong, 2009). For every organization, an optimal level of conflict exists which is considered highly functional as it helps to generate good performance. When the conflict level is too high that is dysfunctional, performance suffers. Consequently, innovation and change are difficult, and the organization may have difficulty in adopting to change in its environment. Second, the organization's very performance



is also threatened if the conflict is too low. On the other hand, if the conflict levels become too high and too low, the result is chaotic in an organization and also threaten its survival (Beardwell and Claydon, 2007).

Organizations in their own right have chief executive officers who are charged with the responsibility of maintaining their stability in order to achieve organizational performance (Okumbe, 2001). In performing both managerial and operational functions, managers encounter more subtle and non-violent types of opposition such as arguments, criticisms and disagreements. Unresolved conflicts lead to high absenteeism, high labour turnover, prolonged disruption of activities and a marked lack of support by stakeholders (Nzuve, 2007).

Organizational performance depends on individuals/group performance (Alan, 2007). There is no one measure or criteria, adequately reflects performance at any level of the organization (Patrick, 2008). Organizational performance must be considered in multiple measures with a time frame. Ineffective performance at any level of the organization is a signal to management to take corrective action. All of management's corrective actions focus on elements of organizational behavior, structure, or process.

To improve organizational performance managers should be able to use objectives that are tangible, measurable and verifiable (Cole, 2008). Individual objectives are derived or cascaded from organizational goals. The CEOs agree their own specific objectives compatible with organization's goals but restricted to their

own areas of responsibility. Subordinates do the same each lower level, forming and interlocked and coherent hierarchy of performance targets.

For a group to be effective, individual members need to be able to work in a conflict-positive environment. If conflict is well-managed, it adds to innovation and productivity (Murthy, 2006). Briscoe and Schuler (2004) offered procedures for turning dysfunctional conflict into functional conflict, stating that too many organizations tend to take a win-lose, competitive approach to conflict or-at-worst-avoid conflict altogether. Such a negative view of conflict ensures that a group is ineffective and the activity within it becomes destructive. However, a positive view of conflict leads to a win-win solution. Within a group, the member can take any one of the three views of conflict: dysfunctional conflict, conflict avoidance and functional conflict.

Some practicing managers view group conflict negatively and thus seek to resolve or eliminate all types of disputes (Dowling *et. Al* 2008). These managers contend that conflicts disrupt the organization and prevent optimal performance. As such, conflicts are a clear indication that something is wrong with the organization and that sound principles are not being applied in managing the activities of the organization. Browarys and Price (2008) based their approaches on the principles of authority and unity of command to eliminate conflict. They believed that conflicts could be eliminated or avoided by recruiting the right people, carefully specifying job descriptions, structuring the organization in such a way as to establish a clear chain of command, and establishing clear rules and procedures to meet various contingencies. Managers viewed all conflicts as disruptive and their task was to

eliminate them (Griffin, 2006). The main fear was that intense dispute eventually emerges from unchecked minimal conflict. Instead of permitting such heated conflict to develop, proactive managers needed to root out the problems that cause conflicts within groups and between groups (Thomas and Christopher, 2001).

Environment is vital in addressing both individual and group conflict in an organization (Gupta, 2008). It provides a wide variety of employment relationship in the organization. To effectively solve conflict, an organization's environment should address among others: organizational policy and structure, human resource strategy and legal framework. The environment should provide checks and balances in daily running of an organization at all levels, to promote a spirit of team work and loyalty. For the line and top management, both internal and external environments should address the process of decision-making there by providing standards or yardsticks for control. With respect to an organization's goals and objectives, apart from being clearly written, environment should be enabling, flexible and long-lasting.

The Kenya Government has formulated various Acts (such as Labour Act, Employment Act, Educational Act, University Acts, Code of Regulation for Teachers, Heads Manual, Accounting Instructions for Secondary Schools and Prevailing Education Policies generated from various Commissions and Task Committees and others) as sources for guidelines to guide respective various educational institutions chief executive officers in managing and administering. This seems not to be the case. Most of the educational institutions CEOs have failed to manage conflicts in their various educational institutions (MoE, 2002). The report further reveals that in spite of the policies that the government has put in place with

regard to management of education, our educational institutions have been faced with increased cases of all nature of conflicts since the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the first case was reported in Maseno in 1908.

Lately, the concern has been the changing nature, characteristics and increase of the number of educational institutions experiencing organizational conflicts. The increase in the number of educational institutions experiencing some form of personnel conflict alarmingly increased in the seventies. It is worth noting that these conflicts were confined to secondary schools, middle-level colleges and tertiary institutions (MoE, 2002). The conflicts were characterized by violence and wanton destruction of institutional property. Between 1980 and 2008, the number of conflicts in schools alone increased from 22 (0.9%) to 300 (7.5%). These figures comprised the known and the recorded cases and perhaps the number of schools alone that had experienced organizational conflict could have been higher with destruction of school property and even losses of lives being the most serious crimes (The Standard, August 23 2008).

Tragically, the nature of student personnel conflict took a new dimension as happened at St. Kizito Mixed Secondary School on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1991 when male students invaded the girls' dormitory and violently raped a number of them. In the melee that followed 19 girls lost their lives (The East African Standard, July 15 1991). To address this national tragedy, the then President of the Republic of Kenya H.E Hon. Daniel Arap Moi appointed the Presidential Committee on conflict in Kenyan Secondary Schools. The committee made a number of recommendations

some of which have been implemented but none-the-less, the phenomenon still persists.

In spite of government's efforts to stem out the culture of conflicts in schools, the very nature of the conflicts took a dramatic turn for the worse. Not only were they violent and destructive but they were also premeditated and planned to cause maximum harm to human life. The first such case was recorded in Nyeri County where a few students at Nyeri High School locked school prefects in their cubicles while they were asleep, poured petrol and set them on fire killing four of them (Daily Nation, August 28 1998).

Correspondingly, conflict also increased tremendously at tertiary institutions which prompted again the then president, to give a directive in December, 1999 to vice chancellors of public universities to constitute a committee to look into causes of conflicts in public universities. Another disturbing feature in the year 2000 was that primary schools joined the fray of educational institutions conflicts.

Cases of conflict intensified with more educational institutions being burnt down, property destroyed and with more innocent lives being lost as happened in the arson attack in Kyanguli Secondary School, where 68 children were burnt to death and scores injured (MoE, 2002). The situation grew worse even in the subsequent years. During 2008 alone, the period under which this study was undertaken, several cases of educational institutions conflict were reported throughout the country. Over 300 out of 4000 secondary schools alone, that is 7.5% in Kenya had conflicts (MoE, 2008). During the year 2009, Kenyatta University as a result of an educational

institutional conflict closed for one full academic year and witnessed the worst of institutional property destruction. This and many others not reported were as a result of unresolved conflicts which mostly led to prolonged disruption across public educational institutions in Kenya. This persistent conflict in educational institutions affects the development of human resources in Kenya which this study sought to solve by examine in a survey of educational institutions in Machakos County, Kenya.

Conflicts in which educational institution personnel are involved in are largely cognitive and contributing to organizational performance by questioning the status quo. DipPaola and Hoy (2001) found that militant personnel were not only conflict-oriented but also catalysts for change. Kenyan educational institutions, cultural differences, geographical and organizational diversities may influence the result in the current study. Conflicts have made management of educational institutions to be on the spotlight throughout Kenya (MoE, 2002). Educational institutions conflict in Kenya is a phenomenon of greatest concern. Incidence and severity of institutional conflict has and continues to destroy the basic environmental conditions required to provide good environment for developing human resource for Kenya. The chaotic situation has undermined many programmes aimed at enhancing the imparting of knowledge and skills in the future human resources for this country and beyond.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

From the above foregoing, there are indications that educational institutions conflict in Kenya is still on the rise which poses a major challenge to education and development of human resources. Educational institutions CEOs in Machakos,

Kenya have failed to manage conflicts in their respective institutions (MoE, 2002). From (MoE, 2008) 1980 to 2008, the number of conflict, in public secondary schools increased from 22 (0.9%) to 300 (7.5%). In 1999 various public universities were involved in educational institutional conflicts (Daily Nation, November 1999). Year 2000 saw primary schools join the fray of institutional conflicts (Standard, July 2000). In the year 2009 Kenyatta University as a result of an educational institution conflict closed for a full academic year (Daily Nation, December 2009). Despite this challenge, there is little information currently available on the effect of conflict in organizational performance of educational institutions in Kenya. The researcher used public secondary schools in Machakos County to explore this knowledge gap by investigating the persistent organizational conflict being experienced in public educational institutions as a result of ineffective organizational management which inhibits increased ability to capture customer value, improved measures of organizational knowledge which impact on organizational reputation or survival.

More educational organizational conflicts are reported, witnessed and experienced in Kenya today. This phenomenon in educational institutions was reduced to the following general question: How do educational institutions chief executives officers understand and resolve or manage efficiently the expected conflicts in their respective institutions? To effectively investigate this general question, the study was guided by the following four specific questions: i) What is the effect of conflict in the performance of secondary schools? ii) Are school chief executive officers aware of conflicts in their respective institutions? iii) How do school chief executives officers handle conflicts in their schools? iv) Does the environment affect management of conflict in school organizations?

### **1.3. Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study was to examine the effect of conflict management in organizational performance of public secondary schools in Kenya.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study**

Specific objectives of this study were to:

- 1) Establish the effect of conflict management in the performance of secondary school organizations in Kenya.
- 2) Determine whether the CEOs in public secondary schools being aware of conflicts help towards conflict management and resolution.
- 3) Examine conflict resolution and management approaches used by public secondary schools managers in Kenya.
- 4) Evaluate the role of environment in conflict management and the performance of school organizations.
- 5) Suggest recommendations for solving conflicts in educational institutions in Kenya.

### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated from the above objectives:

- 1) There is no significant difference between effect of conflict management and the performance of public secondary schools.
- 2) There is no significant difference between the CEOs who are aware of conflicts in their respective school organizations and conflict management.



- 3) There is no significant difference in management of conflict, between managers who practice conflict approaches and those who do not.
- 4) There is no significant difference between the role of environment in conflict management and the performance of school organizations.

### **1.5 Importance and Justification of the Study**

This study comes at a time when the government is seeking ways of enhancing the efficiency of management of public educational institutions in order to reduce/eliminate the organizational conflict. Strides to finding pathways for effective conflict resolution to benefit the educational institutions and Kenya in providing an appropriate environment for the development of human resources was the single issue occupying the minds of policy-makers. The study therefore, seeks to benefit the following stakeholders:

#### **a) Educational Institutions**

The study is significant because it identified causes of conflicts in public educational institutions and addressed the possible effects of conflict on the performance of school organizations. Not only did it propose ways of managing conflicts to improve stability in both public and private educational institutions but also in other public organizations/sectors in Kenya prone to all sorts of conflicts. The study also sought to help the chief executive officers of educational institutions identify suitable approaches and attitudes in dealing with conflicts in their various institutions.

#### **b) Academic Research Institutions**

The study sought to provide academic research institutions with knowledge to determine causes and effects of conflict in educational institutions. It proposed appropriate policies in managing conflicts in organizations.

#### **c) Policy-Makers**

The study hoped to justify the need for those responsible for appointing the chief executive officers of educational institutions to prepare them in management of conflict resolution before appointing them to the respective positions in order to reduce institutional conflicts.

#### **d) Development Partners**

Our development partners have their best interests at heart and play a very crucial role in the development of a country's human resource. Lacking an adequate capacity in terms of funds and other requisite resources for delivery of adequate and quality education, developing countries like Kenya turn to the development partners for support in this noble undertaking. Our development partners have supplemented the deficit of funds by making huge contributions. The products of our education system are in turn expected to make contribution in the country's social, economic, political as well as other spheres of development. Development partners therefore, pay a keen interest on the country's school systems and this study highlights some important perspectives for their analysis of the overall school management in Kenya.

#### **e) Civil society**

Through activism and lobbying, the civil society agencies proclaim civility in our society. The young people of our country are one of the largest groups of people that a country makes an enormous investment on. They are custodians of prime values, dreams and aspiration of a nation. Acts of mismanagement and incivility in schools

are, therefore, an issue of profound concern to all stakeholders. The civil society thus has been in the frontline in voicing all forms of shortcomings in schools. It has also played a critical role in the search for solutions to problems affecting schools including providing inputs on mechanisms for conflict management. A deeper insight on conflict management for effective performance in schools is an area of utmost significance to the civil society in its clamor for smooth running of educational institutions in their duty to produce a responsible citizen.

#### **f) Parents**

Kenya's prosperity and development of human resources hinge on how well the CEOs of educational institutions manage the conflicts in their institutions. Kenyan parents see schooling devoid of conflicts as a vehicle of social change and development.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on all the 140 public secondary schools in Machakos County (Appendix III) from which the sample was drawn. The Chief Executive Officers were the main respondents. Since 1997 to 2008, Machakos County experienced highest forms of conflicts nationally especially in public secondary schools covering all the 12 districts (Ndithini, Masinga, Matungulu, Kangundo, Yatta, Kathiani, Mwala, Katangi, Athi-River, Central, Kalama and Yathui).

Machakos County was chosen because of the following reasons: i) during the period 2001-2008, 67 out of 140 (47.9%) public secondary schools in the county were involved in organizational conflicts (MoE, 2008); ii) the county is vast, peri-urban and has many categories of educational institutions, for example, it has 1256

early childhood development centers, 834 primary schools, 187 (both private and public) secondary schools and 115 tertiary institutions (Statistics from Education Office Machakos County, 2004); iii) the boarding and day primary schools, which feed the secondary schools in the county are populated with children from virtually all parts of the country; iv) the competitive provincial/regional secondary schools in the county also admit students nationally and are run by CEOs who come from various backgrounds in Kenya. The county therefore, is a fair representation of the rest of the country.

### **1.7 Assumptions of the Study**

The basic assumptions of this study were:

- (i) Public secondary schools management in Kenya acknowledges the effect of conflict management in the performance of their respective organizations.
- (ii) The CEOs of public secondary schools in Kenya are aware of all conflicts in their respective institutions and that they have the capacity of resolving them.
- (iii) Principals or chief executive officers of educational institutions are well-prepared to handle conflict resolutions in their respective organizations.
- (iv) Based on assumption (i), (ii) and (iii) above, organizational performance of educational institutions depends on the effect of conflict management.

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

The following were among the major limitations of this study:

### **a) Conflict Resolutions**

Though there is good attempt of literature on conflict resolutions especially in Africa in general and Kenya in particular, the review of literature on this subject attempted a global perspective as much as possible.

### **b) Stakeholders**

In as much as MoE officials, BoG, parents, teachers and students are major stakeholders in educational institutions management, it was not possible to cover their views, mainly because they are not directly involved in the managerial and operational functions of school organizations.

## **1.9 Delimitations of the Study**

This study confined itself to public secondary school institutions as the organizations prone to conflicts in Kenya between 1997 and 2008. In this period, Kenya experienced several educational institutions conflicts. Being an issue of great concern and scrutiny, public secondary schools conflicts attracted much attention from the public. Consequently, varied reasons and explanations were advanced from a variety of authorities beginning with education experts. These diverse inputs were carried in the print and electronic media as well as discussed at various stakeholder forums. Second, the study focused on the effect of conflict management in the performance of public secondary schools in Machakos County because it had the highest cases of organizational conflicts during the period this study was undertaken. And the question most parents including all the stakeholders in education and employers asked was that “Do the management of public secondary school organizations in Machakos County know the effect of conflict in their school organization”?

## **1.10 Definitions of Terms**

### **ANOVA**

Is a parametric bivariate statistical test which uses a single-factor fixed model to compare the effects of one factor on a continuous dependent variable (Mbwesa, 2006).

### **A theory**

The view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon (Simons, 2007).

### **Conflict**

All kinds of opposition or antagonistic interaction (Armstrong, 2009).

### **Dysfunctional Conflict**

Confrontation or interaction between a group that harms or hinders the achievement of organizational performance (Nzuve, 2007).

### **Efficiency**

The ability of an organization to achieve internally and externally set goals within the available means and with a minimum of waste, expense and effort (Griffin, 2006).

### **Effective**

The ability of making decision or having the desired effect or producing the intended result in an organization (Griffin, 2006).

### **Educational Institution**

The process of teaching at an important organization (Okumbe, 2001).

### **Functional conflict**

Confrontation between individuals or groups of personnel with an aim of enhancing organizational performance (Rahim, 2005).

### **Group**

Two or more individuals/people who interact with each other in such a manner that the behavior and/or performance of a member is influenced by the behavior and/or performance of other members/ students and staff personnel (Browaeys Price, 2008).

### **Industry**

A school or institution that is, responsible with the production of human resources (Okumbe, 2001).

### **Intergroup Conflict**

When dysfunctional conflict occurs between different groups and teams and has predictable effects within each group in an organization (Rao, 2007).

### **Interpersonal conflict**

Dispute that occurs between two or more individuals in an organization (Maund, 1999).

### **Inter-organizational conflict**

It is a dispute which occurs between two organizations, companies or societies (Okumbe, 2001).

### **Intervening variable**

A variable that facilitates a better understanding of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables when the variables appear to not have a definite connection (Sekaran, 2009).

### **Intrapersonal conflict**

Dispute that occurs within individuals, which is related to social roles in organization (Maund, 1999).

### **Legal Provisions**

These are laws, policies and procedures that give guidelines on the promotion, development and management of organization in a number of areas (Robbins & Coulter, 2004).

### **Level of Conflict**

This refers to the number of individuals involved in the conflict (Okumbe, 2001)

### **Management**

The process of coordinating work activities so that they are completed efficiently and effectively with and through other people (Brewster *et. Al* 2007).

### **Moderating variable**

The moderating variable is one that has a strong contingent effect on the independent variable and dependent variable relationship. That is the presence of a third variable modifies the original relationship between the independent and the dependent variables (Kombo and Tromp, 2006).

### **Organization**

A deliberate arrangement of people to accomplish some specific purpose (Robbins &Coulter, 2004).

### **Organizational Performance**

To the accumulated end results of all the organization's work process and activities (Adler, 2008).

### **Policy**

Is a predetermined course of action established to guide the performance of work towards accepted objectives (Gupta, 2008).



### **Process**

Is a series of things that are done by a manager in order to achieve a particular result (Belcourt and McBey, 2009).

### **Procedure**

Is a well thought out course of action or guideline prescribing specific manner in which a piece of work is to be done (Rao, 2007).

### **Role**

Is the function or position that a manager has or is expected to be involved in influencing employees/personnels in an organization (Patrick, 2008).

### **System**

A group of people or departments working together as a whole in an organization (Luis *et. Al* 2004).

### **Strategy**

Is the formulation of organizational missions, goals, and objectives as well as action plans for achievement that explicitly recognize the competition and impact of outside environmental forces (Cole, 2006).

### **“Win/Win”, Solutions**

Resolving conflicts between personnel in the organization in order to satisfy all involved (Adler, 2008).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with theoretical and empirical analytical literature on organizational conflict. The chapter is divided into three parts. Part one identifies and explains the theoretical framework, models and conceptual orientation on which the study was hinged. The second part is dedicated to related literature on conflicts management and resolutions which reviews the empirical, awareness, approaches, environment and summary. The third part discusses research gaps on conflict management in educational institutions.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

Adler (2008) suggests that inter-group conflict can be caused by conflicting goals, task dependency, dissimilar work orientations, competition for limited resources, and competitive reward systems. Once conflict has surfaced, it goes through certain stages, covering a wide range of behaviours such as accommodating and avoiding it. This brings about change which can occur within and between groups. Some changes have positive effects and others have negative effects.

Interpersonal conflicts resulting from personality variables such as dislikes, distrust, or prejudice usually hinder group performance (Nzuve, (2007). When interpersonal conflict occurs, people are more concerned with gaining advantage over others than with task performance. Since the value of conflict can be determined

by how it is managed, managers should know its sources and consequences so that they can find ways of managing it. Brown (2002) posits that the role of conflict management in organizational performance depends on a circumstance that is a contingency. Contingency theory recognizes the influence of given solution on organizational behaviour patterns.

Rahim (2005) the confrontation method of problem solving sought to reduce tensions through face-to-face meetings of the conflicting groups. The purpose of the meetings is to identify conflicts and resolve them. The conflicting groups openly debate various issues and bring together all relevant information until a decision is reached. For conflicts resulting from misunderstandings or language barriers, the confrontation method has proved effective. However, solving more complex problems, for example, conflicts where groups have different value systems, the method has been less successful.

Dana (2001) suggest that in the resolution of conflicts between groups, the super ordinate goals technique involves developing a common set of goals and objectives that cannot be attained without the cooperation of the groups involved. In fact, they are unattainable by one group singly and supersede all other goals of any of the individual groups involved in the conflict. Many organizations among them educational institutions unions have agreed to forgo pay increases and in some cases accepted pay reductions, because the survival of their firm or industry was threatened. This has not finally solved the conflict because when the crises are over, demands for higher wages are again made. Safe Horizon Mediation Program (2009) expanding resources are potentially a successful technique for solving conflicts in

many cases, since this technique may enable almost everyone to be satisfied. But in reality, resources usually are not expanded hence hardly solves conflicts in organizations.

Stephen and Julia (1995) frequently, managers can find some way to avoid conflict. While avoidance may not bring any long-term benefit, it can certainly work as a short-run solution. However, avoiding a conflict could be misinterpreted as agreement with group actions or lack of fortitude on the manager's part. Avoiding a conflict neither effectively resolves it nor eliminate it. Eventually, the conflict has to be faced. But in some circumstances, avoidance may be the best temporary alternative.

Medina *et. al* (2005) the basic believe behind smoothing is that stressing shared viewpoints on certain issues facilitates movement toward a common goal. The manager must explain to the conflicting groups that the organization's work will be jeopardized if the groups will not cooperate with each other. As long as both groups see that the managers are not taking sides, they may rise to the occasion and agree, at least, to a limited truce. But if differences between groups are serious, smoothing-like avoidance-is at best a short-run solution.

Harrison (1998) with compromise, there is no distinct winner or loser, and the decision reached is probably not ideal for either group. Compromise can be used effectively when the goal sought can be equitably shared. If this is not possible, one group must give up something of value as a concession.

De Dreu and Weingart (2003) observe that authoritative command is the most frequently used method for resolving intergroup conflict where management simply resolves the conflict as it sees fit and communicates its desires to the groups involved. It works in the short run and focuses on the cause of the conflict but rather on its results. If the causes remain, conflict will probably recur.

De Dreu and Van De Vliet (1997) argue that altering the human variable focuses on the cause or causes of the conflict and on the attitudes of the people involved. This method has proved to be slower and often costly.

Daves and Holland (1989) altering the structural variables involves changing the formal structure of the organization. The method may fuel more conflicts because it involves transferring, exchanging, or transferring staff.

## **2.3 Models**

### **2.3.1 Models in Conflict Management**

The concept of conflict has been treated as a general social phenomenon, with implications for the understanding of conflict within and between organizations. It has also assumed various roles of some importance in attempts at general theories of management and organizational behaviour. Slowly crystallizing out of this, are a few among many existing conceptual models designed to deal with the major classes of conflict phenomena in organizations:

#### **a) Bargaining Model**

It is a model designed to deal with conflict among interest groups in competition for scarce resources Dana, (2001). This model is particularly appropriate for the analysis

of labour-management relations, budgeting processes, and staff-line conflicts. Each conflict relationship is made up of a sequence of inter-locking conflict episode exhibits a sequence or pattern of development and the conflict relationship can be characterized by stable patterns that appear across the sequence of episodes. This orientation forms the basis for a working definition of conflict.

#### **b) Bureaucratic Model**

This model is primarily concerned with the problems caused by institutional attempts to control behaviour and the organization's reaction to such control (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003). It is applicable in the analysis of superior-subordinates conflicts or, in general, conflicts along the vertical dimension of a hierarchy. Conflict may be functional as well as dysfunctional for the individual and the organization; it may have its roots either within the individual or in the organizational context; therefore, the desirability of conflict resolution needs to be approached with caution.

#### **c) Systems Model**

In this model conflict is intimately tied up with the stability of the organization, not merely in the usual sense that conflict is a threat to stability, but in a much more complex fashion; that is, conflict is a key variable in the feedback loops that characterize organizational behaviour. The model is directed at lateral conflict, or conflict among the parties to a functional relationship. Analysis of the problems of coordination is the special province of this model (DiPaola and Hoy, 2001).

#### **d) The Role Conflict Model**

This model treats the organization as a collection of role sets, each composed of the focal person and his role senders Fried *et. al* (1998). Conflict is said to occur when the focal person receives incompatible role demands or expectations from the persons in his role set. This model has the drawback that it treats the focal person as

merely a passive receiver rather than as an active particular in the relationship. It is argued here, that the role conflict model does not postulate a distinct type of latent conflict. Instead, it defines a conceptual relationship, the role set, which may be useful for the analysis of all three forms of latent conflict described.

#### **d) Semantic Model**

This conflict may sometimes be perceived when no conditions of latent conflict exist, and latent conflict conditions may be present in a relationship without any of the participants perceiving the conflict (General and Kelly, 1997). Conflict is said to result from the parties' misunderstanding of each others' true position. It is argued that such conflict can be resolved by improving communications between the parties. This model has been the basis of a wide variety of management techniques aimed at improving interpersonal relations.

#### **e) Tension model**

In this model, one explanation is that the inconsistent demands of efficient organization and individual growth create anxieties within the individual. Anxieties may also result from identity crises or from extra-organizational pressures Medina *et. al* (2005). Individuals need to vent these anxieties in order to maintain internal equilibrium. Organizational conflicts of the three latent types described earlier provide defensible excuses for displacing these anxieties against suitable targets. Also, a second explanation is that conflict becomes personalized when the whole personality of the individual is involved in the relationship.

Hostile feelings are most common in the intimate relations that characterize total institutions, such as monasteries, residential colleges, and families. To dissipate accumulated hostilities, total institutions required certain safety-valve institutions

such as athletic activities or norms that legitimize solitude and withdrawal, such as the communication norms prevalent in religious orders. Thus, felt conflict may arise from sources independent of the three types of latent conflict, but latent conflicts may provide appropriate targets (perhaps symbolic ones) for undirected tensions.

#### **f) Conflict Process Model**

The conflict process can be thought of as comprising four stages, (Dana, 2001) namely: (i) Frustration caused by a wide range of factors such as disagreement over performance goals, denial of promotion, and competition over scarce resources. (ii) Conceptualization where parties to the conflict attempt to understand the nature of the problem and the process of conflict resolution. (iii) Behaviour where parties involved attempt to implement their resolution mode by competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating with the hope of resolving the problem. It is the stage for determining how to proceed strategically. (iv) Outcome which comes as a result of efforts to resolve a conflict, both sides determine the extent to which a satisfactory resolution or outcome has been achieved.

#### **g) Behaviour Handling Model**

Simons and Peterson (2000) describes behaviour as the actual behaviour. The parties involved attempt to implement their resolution mode by competing with the hope of resolving the problem. Each party decides the extent to which it is interested in satisfying its own concerns called assertiveness and the extent to which it is interested in helping satisfy the opponents' concerns called cooperativeness. It is the stage for determining how to proceed strategically. In this model, five modes of conflict resolution have been formulated as follows: i) Competing, this is when both parties compete with each other. ii) Collaborating, where two sets of concerns are too important to be compromised. iii) Compromising, this is where the goals are



important but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes. iv) Avoiding, when the issue is trivial, or when there are more important issues. v) Accommodating, when one finds that one is wrong and thus allows a better position to be heard.

#### **h) Relationship Model**

Muhammad *et. al* (2009) on the relationship between conflict and organizational effectiveness came out with 5-stage model of conflict as follows: Stage 1: Latent conflict. Here, no outright conflict exists, but there is a potential for conflict in competition for scarce resources, drive for autonomy, divergence of subunit goals, incompatible performance criteria, interdependence, low formalization, differences in reward systems, power incongruence, communication problems, participative decision making and role conflict. Stage 2: Perceived conflict, that is, subunits become aware of conflict and begin to analyze it, and some conflicts are suppressive while other conflicts escalate as groups' battle over the cause of conflict. Stage 3: Perceived conflict where emotions are encountered (anger, frustrations and others) and "us versus them" attitudes can surface. Stage 4: Manifest conflict is adversarial behaviour which exhibits violence, threats, abuse, apathy and rigid adherence to rules. Stage 5: Conflict aftermath is resolved on the basis of future conflict.

#### **2.3.2 Theoretical Models Adopted**

The study used a modified version of the Idler theory of the inter-group conflict model. Inter-group conflict can be caused by conflicting goals, task dependency, dissimilar work orientations, competition for limited resources, and competitive reward systems. Once conflict has surfaced it goes through certain stages, covering a wide range of behaviors such as accommodating and avoiding it. This brings about

change which can occur within and between groups. Some changes have positive effects and others have negative effects. Additional factors were added to capture the effect of other techniques in solving conflict as well as the contribution of the role of management toward positive movement in organizational performance, goals and survival. To determine organizational performance deficiencies, the researcher used the model by Brewster *et. al* (2007) an expectancy model of motivation which state 'behaviour = f(Motivation x Ability). Whether behaviour is desirable or undesirable for the organization, individuals behave as a function of (f), or because of their levels of motivation and ability to do so. Assuming ability does not pose a problem; desired behaviours can be encouraged by influencing personnel motivation through appropriate use of conflict management and resolution. Internal labour markets for employee promotions and the provision of employment security are also forms of work structures that positively affect organizational performance (Jehn *et. al* 2003). Passos and Caetano (2005) model, the number of occupational hierarchies captures the extent to which organizations are able to provide promotion opportunities should organization-specific skills that transfer between positions they should be positively related to performance measures.

The study also used multiple regression models to determine the interdependence between conflict management and performance of an organization. The model was chosen as it attempts to determine whether a group of variables together predict a given dependent variable. The model was used to determine whether the independent variables: Awareness and approaches, together predict the performance of educational institutions (dependent variable) as per below equation. In order to achieve the desired secondary school organizational performance

environment acted as an intervening variable in this study. The following regression model is then developed.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{Simons (2007)}$$

Where:

Y- is the dependent variable- organizational performance

X<sub>1</sub>- is independent variable awareness

X<sub>2</sub>- is independent variable handling strategies

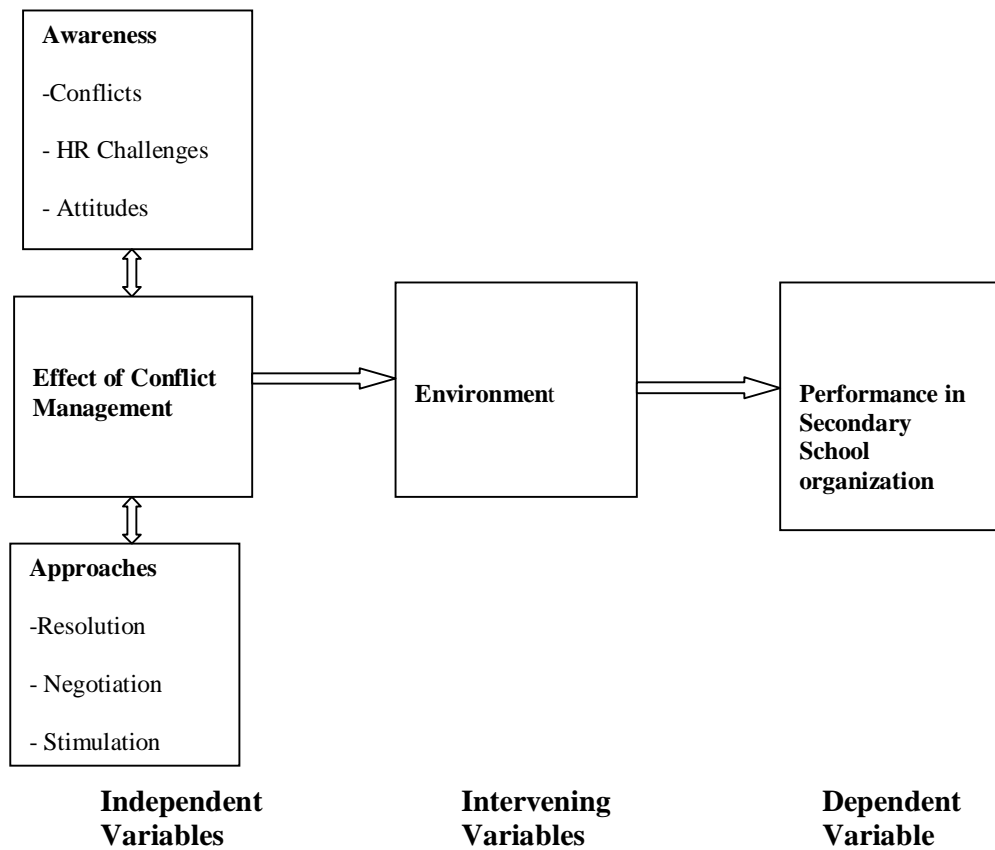
B<sub>0</sub>- is the constant of intercept

β<sub>1</sub>, & β<sub>2</sub>-are regression coefficients

ε - is the error

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is shown in figure 1



***Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework***

**Fig 1: Shows the effect of conflict management in the performance of public secondary schools organizations.**

This study proposes the effect of conflict management in the interaction between conflict awareness and conflict approaches in the performance of public secondary school organizations in Kenya. However the role of environment in this conceptual framework is to provide enabling, flexible and long lasting processes of decision-making in the organization.

The above framework is based on the concept that any change in the independent variables results in the change of dependent variables (Kothari, 2009). The independent variables in the framework of figure 1 are awareness (of conflict, human resource challenges and attitudes in organization) and approaches (that is resolution, negotiation and stimulation). The intervening variable is environment (policies and structures, human resource strategy and legal framework of the organization). The dependent variable from the conceptual framework is performance in secondary school organization. The effectiveness of conflict management and the performance of school organizations depend on the interaction between the variables indicated in the conceptual framework. Each of these variables, are explained, in the context of this study.

**2.5 Effects of Conflicts in Organizations**

Some types of conflict support or destroy the goals and performance of the organization. Functional constructive forms of conflicts benefit or support the main

purpose of the organization. Functional conflict in management circles is constructive confrontation. Chief Executive Officers of an organization must rely on functional conflict to keep themselves open to new ideas and to keep the operation headed in a productive direction. Second, dysfunctional destructive forms of conflicts hinder organizational performance. They are undesirable. Managers should seek their eradication.

Allen and Ann (1999) behavioral scientists have spent more than four decades researching and analyzing how dysfunctional inter-group conflict affects those who experience it. They found that groups placed in a conflict situation tend to react in fairly predictable ways, in changes that occur within groups and between groups as a result of dysfunctional inter-group conflict. Changes within groups generally result in either continuance or escalation of the conflict: i) Increased group cohesiveness provide competition, conflict, or external threat which results in group members putting aside individual differences and closing ranks. Members become more loyal to the group, and group membership becomes more attractive. ii) Autocratic leadership rise in extreme conflict situations, when threats are perceived, democratic methods of leadership are likely to become less popular, members want strong leadership hence autocratic. iii) Focus on activity improves when a group is in conflict; its members usually emphasize doing what the group does and doing it very well. The group becomes more tasks-oriented. Tolerance for members who “goof off” is low, and there’s less concern for individual member satisfaction. Emphasis is on accomplishing the group’s task and defeating the “enemy” that is the other group in conflict. iv) Emphasis on loyalty enables conformity to group norms which tends to become more important in conflict situations. Group goals take precedence over

individual satisfaction, as members are expected to demonstrate their loyalty. In major conflict situations, interaction with members of “the other group” may be outlawed.

Luis (2006) during conflicts, certain changes occur between the groups involved which include: i) Perceptions of each group’s members become distorted. Group members develop stronger opinions of the importance of the units. Each group sees itself as superior in performance to the other and as more important to the survival of the organization than other groups. ii) Negative stereotyping, when it is a factor in a conflict, members of each group sees fewer differences within their unit than actually exist and greater differences between the groups than actually exist. iii) Communication between groups in conflict usually breaks down. This can be extremely dysfunctional, especially where sequential interdependence or reciprocal interdependence relationships exist. The decision-making process can be disrupted, and customers or others whom the organization serves can be affected.

Brown (2002) posits that conflicts have indirect influence on performance through its relationship with commitment. Conflicts are negatively associated with commitment when controlling for the other antecedents, including expectancy, self-efficacy, and need for achievement. Conflict is inevitable in organizations. However, because it can be both a positive and a negative force, management should not strive to eliminate all conflicts, only that which has disruptive effects on the organization’s efforts to achieve goals. Some type or degree of conflict may prove beneficial if it is used as an instrument for change or innovation. Individuals have differing abilities to

withstand stress. Thus, the critical issue appears to be not conflict itself but rather how it is managed.

Members of a group need to understand that not all conflicts are bad, conflict, which lead to group failure, are dysfunctional and should be discouraged. However, some conflict situations can be turned into positive conflict and can thus help to achieve the aims of the group (Murthy, 2006). When dysfunctional conflict occurs between different groups and teams, it is called “inter-group conflict” and has predictable effects within each group, such as increase: group cohesiveness; concentration of task and group loyalty. Where there is dysfunctional inter-group conflict, there tends to be a prevailing attitude of “them and us” where each perceives the other as an enemy and thus each tends to treat the other group as an enemy; become more hostile and decrease inter-group communication (Nzuve, 2007).

## **2.6 Empirical Studies**

Conflict management is a focus of numerous empirical studies of organization. Some of the empirical studies carried out reveal that conflict solving in an organization has not been addressed adequately the gap this study intent to fill:

i) Conflict, the degree to which individuals feel that their multiple goals are incompatible (Deeks and Rasmussen, 2002). As such, it constitutes an important facet of the more general role conflict construct, which has played a prominent role in organizational behaviour studies Newstrom and Davis (1993). Several types of goal conflict have been identified. One type occurs when an externally imposed goal conflicts with one's personal goal. Stephen and Julia (1995) found that when subjects were assigned a goal that is significantly higher than their previously chosen personal

goal level, the commitment to the assigned goal and performance were lower than when personal goals were set after the goal was assigned. DiPaola and Hoy (2001) replicated this finding. Jehn *et. al* (2003) observed a similar decrease in commitment to an assigned goal as the level of the assigned goal was steadily increased over time, which made it more and more discrepant from one's personal goal. Unfortunately, none of these studies actually measured goal conflict.

ii) Conflict occurs when people are asked to achieve multiple outcomes (for example, meeting a quantity quota versus not making any mistakes) when performing a single task. In this case, the conflict is over which of the multiple performance dimensions an individual should focus on or emphasize. Jehn and Mannix (2001) found a significant negative correlation between performance quantity and quality on a computerized task involving arithmetic problems. Once again, experienced goal conflict was not explicitly manipulated or measured, but was recognized as a cause of the goal performance results.

iii) Conflict involves trade-offs between several types of tasks or outcomes when multiple goals or tasks exist (for example, devoting time to selling product A and product B, given limited available time). In a laboratory setting Jehn and Mannix (2001) found that when subjects were instructed to improve their performance on one of two assigned tasks, their performance suffered on the other task. Subjects handled the conflict by prioritizing one goal at the expense of the other. In another laboratory experiment Ayoko and Hartel (2006) found that when subjects were required to set goals for two different tasks, they often gave one task priority by setting higher goals



for it. As was the case with the other studies described, experienced conflict was not actually measured in either of these studies, but inferred.

iv) In a critical advancement of goal conflict research Passos and Caetano (2005) explicitly measured conflict both in a laboratory study and a follow-up field study. The laboratory study focused on conflict that arose when quality and quantity objectives were assigned for a single task. The results indicate that conflict was related to goal commitment. High experienced conflict was related to moderate levels of goal commitment and was negatively related to quantity, but not quality of performance. This study also differed from previous conflict studies in that groups of subjects worked together to perform the assigned task. All measures and analyses were performed at the group level which did not address the role of conflict management in the performance of organizations.

## **2.7 Awareness of Conflicts in Organizations**

### **2.7.1 Causes of Conflicts in Organizations**

There are basic reasons for conflicts (Patrick, 2008). Every group comes into at least partial conflict with every other group with which it interacts as follows:

#### **a) Work Interdependence**

Work interdependence occurs when two or more organizational groups depend on one another to complete their tasks. Conflict potential in such situations is high. Three distinct types of interdependence among groups have been experienced through: pooled interdependence which requires no interaction among groups except through total organization; sequential interdependence requires one group to

complete its task before another can complete its task, thereby increasing likelihood of conflict; and reciprocal interdependence requires each group's output to serve as other groups' input, thereby providing basis for great potential conflict. The more complex the organization, the greater is the potential for conflict and the more difficult is the task facing management.

#### **b) Differences in Goals**

Here conflict occurs in techniques, as a result of subunit of organization becoming specialized, they often develop dissimilar goals. These different goals can lead to different expectations among the members of each unit such as some units may require close supervision while others may require a great deal of participation in decision-making. Goals, conditions (such as resource availability and reward structures) may also foster organizational conflict.

#### **c) Differences in Attitudes**

Conflicts occur as a result of bargaining or different goals accompanied by differing attitudes of reality; disagreements over what constitute reality, may lead to conflicts. Major factors include different goals, different time horizons, inaccurate attitudes and status incongruency.

#### **d) Increased Demand for Specialists**

Conflict between staff specialists and line generalists are probably the most common conflicts. Line and staff persons simply view one another and their roles in the organization from different perspectives. The growing necessity for technical expertise in all areas of organizations, staff roles can be expected to expand, and line and staff conflicts can be expected to increase. The increased sophistication, specialization, and complexity in many organizations mostly influence line-staff conflicts. This is a major concern in managing of organizational behaviour.

Medina *et. al* (2005) summarized causes of conflict between staff specialist and generalists as follows:

**a) Perceived diminution of line authority**

Line managers fear that specialists will encroach on their jobs and thereby diminish their authority and power. As a result, specialists often complain that line executives do not make proper use of staff specialists and do not give staff members sufficient authority.

**b) Social and physical differences**

Often, major differences exist between line managers and staff specialists with respect to age, education, dress, and attitudes. In many cases, specialists are younger than line managers and have higher educational levels of training in a specialized field.

**c) Line dependence on staff knowledge**

Since line generalists often do not have the technical knowledge necessary to manage their departments, they are dependent on the specialist. The resulting gap between knowledge and authority may be even greater when the staff specialist is lower in organizational hierarchy than the manager, which is often the case. As a result, staff members often complain that line managers resist new ideas.

**d) Different loyalties**

Divided loyalties frequently exist between line managers and staff specialists. The staff specialist may be loyal to a discipline, while the line manager may be loyal to the organization. When loyalties to a particular function or discipline are greater than loyalties to the overall organization, conflict is likely.

## **2.7.2 Human Resource Challenges Facing Conflict Management in Organizations**

Berry (1997) one of the big trends in the consulting industry was that consulting firms use change management consultants to implement their recommendations. In the past, consulting firms just made recommendations and left the implementation to the company or to untrained amateurs. Human resources also incorporated more organizational performance interventions. Personnel Journal (1998) predicted that HR departments will focus their time on: creating collaborative cultures in the workplace, enhancing lifelong learning, evaluating employees by their competencies, and focusing on organizational performance.

Drucker *et. al* (1997) surveyed 1,700 HR professionals on Human Resource Trends. The data revealed work in organizational change and involvements with senior management in business strategy development are greater contributors to an organization than traditional HR administrative or employee relations activities. When asked to name the one skill that has increased most in its importance in the HR profession, 26% of the HR professionals surveyed cited change management skills. Combining traditional “hard” business competencies and organizational performance is another emerging trend exhibited by this study. Business managers need to manage and lead their units on a day-to-day basis using organizational development skills such as implementing an active mission, vision and value system, managing change, and providing an atmosphere for continuous learning and employee empowerment. Organizational performance is also influencing the traditional management consulting process. This has created a great opportunity for organizational development practitioners to transfer their competencies through

coaching and training, in addition to the existing collaborative consulting approach. Simultaneously, organizational development practitioners are beginning to use hard business skills in their work. Organizational development practitioners of the future are going to need to measure their interventions in bottom line metrics and all organizational performance interventions will need to be aligned with business goals and strategies.

The successful companies of tomorrow could be driven by their aspired vision, mission, and values. It is up to company leaders to develop these guiding forces and for the managers to implement them. A useful vision, mission, and value system is visible and put into action on a day-to-day basis. These guiding forces provide stability in a constantly changing environment and allow people to link their personal purpose to corporate purpose. Managers of tomorrow need to implement these guiding forces by creating the appropriate culture. This is accomplished by modeling and creating policies that are in alignment with the forces. Managers also need to hire people who fit into the company's culture by using behavioral related competencies to help decide who in to hire (Guest, 2000). Since change happens so quickly, managers often do not have the time to bring in specialists to help with the adaptation process. Thus, managers will have to manage change themselves. Drucker (1998) believes that not only do managers need to be able to manage changes, but they also need to view these changes as opportunities for improvement.

One of the biggest factors and most difficult challenges in making positive change is convincing employees to abandon their old habits. Under performers are those people who keep alive yesterday (Belcourt and McBey, 2009). Managers of

the future have to juggle various types of change simultaneously. They must learn to adapt quickly in order to fend off competition, as product life-cycles are much shorter. They have to motivate their employees to think outside of their usual mental model because now companies are competing in new industries. Managers need to adjust to having direct access to the customer and the supplier via e-commerce. They need to help their employees learn to manage outsourcing relationships. All of these changes make it necessary for managers to learn and think strategically. Managers need to listen to their employees and customers in order to make accurate changes. They also need to understand how they are contributing to a situation and change appropriately by reflecting and obtaining feedback from the personnel.

Managers need to support an environment of continuous change by matching it with a culture of continuous learning. The manager needs to make sure he models desired behaviours as well as invests in knowledge infrastructures and learning laboratories. (Drucker *et. al* 1997) one type of knowledge infrastructure on promoting knowledge networking consists of actively managing and capturing knowledge through company research and development, operations, logistics, marketing, customer service, and other day-to-day activities. This knowledge is transferable and becomes a foundation for growth hence it is a strategic asset to the company. The steps involved in the knowledge life-cycle are modeled after the discipline of library science: acquisition, classification, valuation, storage, access, use, improvement, and retirement. This constant search for knowledge must not be limited to internal activities. It is critical for today's managers to search the globe for ideas. Drucker (1998) feels that the number one skill that the managers of tomorrow need is continuous learning. He suggests managers can accomplish this in part by

job swapping. When an employee is out for a vacation, it should be the manager who fills in. Then the manager can learn the competencies associated with that position.

Part of being a continuous and extensive learner means, a manager must use system thinking (Slack and Parent, 2005). Companies of tomorrow need leaders at all levels not just at the top. It is the manager's role to build the self-esteem of his/her employees and empower them to be leaders through support and encouragement rather than controls and punishment. Today's employee needs to be a strong person who cannot only survive, but also thrive in an environment of constant change by being a continuous independent learner. This means there is a greater need for self-management and the capacity to exercise initiative. For this to occur, employees must have high self-esteem.

Management related courses programmes teach many traditional organizational performance competencies in order to prepare their students to cope with the challenges of the real world. For example, management's core classes emphasize teamwork, reflection as a tool for constant learning, and empowering employees. In addition, they offer electives in change management, facilitation, leadership, and process consultation. In today's global management organizational performance treats the customer as an integral part of the process; quality is checked continuously; change is a necessary aspect of a successful project; problems are viewed using a systemic approach; reflection is utilized to enhance learning; knowledge is captured for further use; and appropriate closure is reached with all stakeholders. Management consultants are collaborating with their clients in

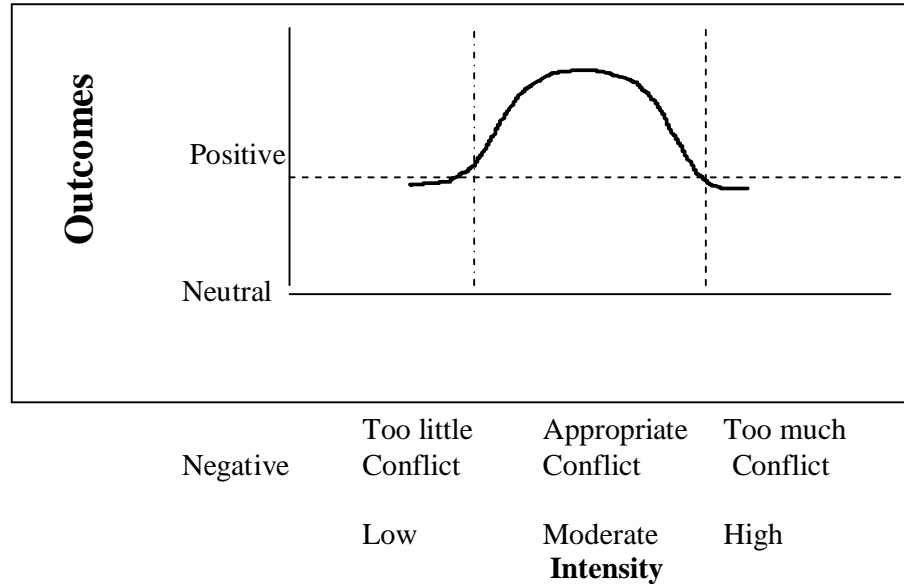
tackling problems rather than using an expert approach. They are trying to transfer the knowledge over to the client to avoid dependencies. This requires the management consultant to act as more of a coach and a facilitator than an expert and a presenter. Management consultants are also taking a systemic approach to their consulting rather than just dealing with symptoms.

### **2.7.3 Attitudes of Management in Solving Conflicts in Organizations**

There are various attitudes towards conflict management in organizations. Some practicing managers view group conflict negatively and thus seek to resolve or eliminate all types of disputes (Gibson *et. al* 1994). These managers contend that conflicts disrupt the organization and prevent optimal performance. As such, conflicts are a clear indication that something is wrong with the organization and that sound principles are not being applied in managing the activities of the organization. To eliminate conflict, early organizational writers based their approaches on the principles of authority and unity of command (Simons and Peterson, 2000). They believed that conflicts could be eliminated or avoided by recruiting the right people, carefully specifying job descriptions, structuring the organization in such a way as to establish a clear chain of command, and establishing clear rules and procedures to meet various contingencies. These managers viewed all conflicts as disruptive and their task was to eliminate them (Lira *et. al* 2006). The main fear is that intense dispute eventually emerges from unchecked minimal conflict. Instead of permitting such heated conflict to develop, proactive managers must root out the problems that cause conflicts within groups and between groups. Brown (2002) there is no one best way to do things. Difficult in determining all relevant contingency factors and



showing the relationship can be very complex. The contingency theory shown in figure 2 was derived from the relationship between conflict intensity and outcomes.



Source: Brown (2002)

*Figure 2: Relationships between Conflict Intensity and Outcomes*

Further, the contingency theory emphasized that, organizations could suffer from too little and too high conflicts. All conflicts ultimately threaten management authority and have to be quickly resolved. Conflicts are unavoidable; managers are advised to learn to live with them. Emphasis remains on resolving conflict whenever possible. This theory therefore formed a very important base for the study. In the theory, certain situations produce more conflict than others. By knowing the antecedents of conflicts, chief executives are better and able to anticipate conflicts and take steps to resolve them if they become dysfunctional). Based on the contingency theory mentioned, work groups, departments or organizations that experience too little conflict tend to be plagued by apathy, lack of creativity, indecision and missed deadlines. Excessive conflict, on the other hand, could erode organizational performance because of political infighting,

dissatisfaction, lack of teamwork and turnover. Appropriate types and levels of conflict energize people in constructive directions. The distinction between functional conflict and dysfunctional conflict pivots on whether the organization's interests are served or not (Brown, 2002).

Maund (1999) whilst competition between groups could well be functional, it does need to be carefully managed so that it does not escalate into dysfunctional conflict. If several groups are attempting to achieve the same goal, they tend to exhibit certain common forms of behaviour; setting territorial boundaries; aggressiveness and prejudice against members of the other groups. Traditionally De Dreu and Weingart (2003) conflicts have been considered destructive and should be avoided at all costs. Conflict can be considered undesirable only when: it produces stress and anxiety for those experiencing it, it causes discontent and frustration; it threatens harmony and unity within social groups such as the family, church, club, school or political party. Managers are evaluated and rewarded on the basis of how well they have maintained peace and harmony in their work group (Medina et. al. 2005). While conflict can be painful and could produce undesirable consequences, its absence can be dysfunctional to an organization's effectiveness. Since conflict can be valuable in strengthening organizational change, conflict and discontent helps stimulate the need for change. Without change, an organization would stagnate. Conflict can generate employee's dissatisfaction and poor job performance if it becomes excessive and unmanageable. Unresolved conflicts can also lead to high absenteeism and labour turnover, prolonged disruption of activities, and lack of concerted effort by organization members and also organizational conflict (Passos and Caetano, 2005).

In regard to conflict resolution, there exists strong contention that most successful organizations have good conflict management systems. Getting most productivity from diversity of ideas and cultures keeps organizations top of the line in employee satisfaction. The conflict is no longer viewed as a problem in many organizations. Some managers feel that the problem is poor conflict management. This results in serious organizational issues like increased conflict, poor productivity and very low level of employee satisfaction. The general performance of educational institutions can be viewed in this context of conflict resolution.

Iravo (2002) the position of the chief executive officer in the educational institution gives him authority to issue instructions and demand compliance from teachers, non-teaching and students personnel. The CEO's office is the best and most defended space in an educational institution. Access to the office is difficult and if the institution is authoritarian, its employees are fully aware of the unpleasant consequences of disobeying the CEO. Moreover, in a typical school, the CEO is more powerful than any single stakeholder, even more powerful than the whole board. In Uganda, non-compliance with the CEO of educational institution directives has many negative effects on teachers, non-teaching and students (Ssekamwa, 2001).

Conflict management strategy is an operational plan to achieve a conflict goal. Belcourt and McBey (2009) identifies three primary strategies that leaders use to manage conflict, namely; openness (or collaboration), distribution (or non-confrontation), and control. Costantino and Sickles (1996) proposes five interpersonal conflict-handling behaviours: withdrawal or retreating from a conflict situation, smoothing or emphasizing areas of agreement and de-emphasizing areas of

difference, compromising or searching for solutions that bring some degree of satisfaction to the conflicting parties, forcing or exerting one's viewpoint at the potential expense of another and confrontation or addressing a disagreement in a problem-solving mode. Manager's choice of a conflict management strategy hinges on whether he or she wishes to engage in assertive or co-operative behaviour. The controlling or forcing strategy which is highly assertive and uncooperative is a win-lose strategy. Win/lose strategies are outcome-directed strategies where influence and power are the major resources of conflict management. Controlling uses power to dominate and ensure that one party wins at the expense of the other. The manager who uses this style pays maximum attention to his own interests, while paying no attention to the concerns of others. Inability to use other means of conflict management by the party who has position power, often results in authoritative decision-making, dominating arguments, and forcing compliance. Corwin (2001) criticised controlling and suggested that management power is most effective when it is less obvious as its open use creates retaliatory negative reaction. Besides, controlling is inappropriate in modern organisational settings because it does not resolve the conflict. However, controlling may be appropriate when quick decisions are needed, or in situations where unpopular decisions need implementation, and on company issues when the manager is sure that he or she is right.

Collaboration is viewed as one of the most effective methods of resolving organizational conflict. Nzuve (2007) contends that collaboration aims to resolve the conflict by means that are analytical and that get to the root of the problem. Managerial behaviours associated with collaboration include sharing information, investigating the underlying problems, searching for situations where all can win and

seeing problems and conflicts as challenges. Jones (2000) relationship between conflict management strategies, subordinate performance and collaborating is associated with high performance while controlling is associated with low performance.

## **2.8 Approaches used by Management in Conflict Management and Resolution**

The potential for conflict is almost limitless, and it is impossible to prepare a recipe for resolution that fits every occasion (Allen and Ann, 1999). Conflict may be on any scale from individual/group to entire organization; and no one can be an expert on all forms of conflict resolution. An organization without conflicts is an organization without growth. An organization's growth depends on how each conflict is seen and how it is managed (Ford, 2007). In the management of conflicts, the approaches of the persons involved in a conflict (either as individuals or as groups, especially group leaders) play a critical role. Some approaches may promote a search for solutions whereas others may lead to deadlock.

### **2.8.1 Conflict Resolution and Management**

Muhammad *et. al* (2009) came out with the following important stages in the approaches to conflicts resolution/management:

i) Self-awareness and care are essential to an effective approach to conflict management. The more one is aware of his/her own biases and "hot buttons," the more likely one is prepared mentally, emotionally and physically to respond in a preferred way. In addition, if you take good care of yourself by exercising, eating properly and getting adequate sleep, that can help one listen well and clearly express needs in attempting to work out a solution to the conflict. We all have different ways

of responding to conflicts, and those responses lead to understandable consequences.

These responses include our behaviours, feelings, thoughts, and physical reactions.

ii) Clarify personal needs threatened by the dispute in terms of: substantive, procedural, and psychological needs; looking at BATNA, WATNA, and MLATNA; identifying "desired outcomes" from a negotiated process. We cannot negotiate solutions to all of our problems in one session, or even in one series of meetings. Therefore, we need to clarify our desired outcomes from this process, and focus our energies on two or three priority issues among the dozens that we feel are important. By doing so, we are more likely to negotiate agreements that are meaningful to us, and less likely to get sidetracked with tangential or petty issues.

iii) If possible, identify a private, neutral room in which to hold your conversation, preferably a space that is not "owned" by one person or the other. If the conversation starts in a more public place (for example, if confronted by a customer), suggest that it might be helpful if the two of you could, at least, move to a more private area within the room. Be sure that the time is also acceptable and appropriate. Consider the use of third parties as appropriate to the needs of the situation: Facilitators and mediators can impartially focus on the process, so people involved in a dispute can fully participate in a dialogue. Advocates can be especially helpful when there are significant power differences, or when one party or another might require additional support and assistance in order to effectively participate. The Employee Assistance Office, or the Office of Quality Improvement, or the new Ombuds Programme for Faculty and Staff, or the Union Leaders and Stewards are excellent resources for assistance. Finally, keep in mind the importance of ground rules in order to improve the likelihood of a civil, constructive dialogue.

- iv) By taking a listening stance into the interaction, set the scene for opportunity to share and the concerns about the conflict. Again, we recognize that this can be very challenging. But, if one perseveres, the effort is often worth it.
- v) Assert needs clearly and specifically. Use "I-messages" as tools for clarification. Build from what has been heard-continue to listen well.
- vi) Approach problem-solving with flexibility, which is: identify issues clearly and concisely; generate options (brainstorm), while deferring judgment; be open to "tangents" and other problem definitions; clarify criteria for decision-making.
- vii) Manage impasse with calm, patience, and respect by: clarifying feelings; focusing on underlying needs, interests, and concerns; taking a structured break, as needed.
- viii) Build an agreement that works by reviewing "hallmarks" of a good agreement and implementing and evaluating-live and learn.

### **2.8.2 Conflict Negotiation and Management**

Knippen and Green (1999) managing conflict is as extensive and varied as conflict itself. Conflicts can be managed and potentially resolved on a continuum ranging from simple negotiation between two people to international arbitration tribunals involving nations to the traditional adjudicative of each country's legal system. Social conflicts such as ethnic, community and special interest group conflict can be managed through the conflict continuum or using third party facilitators to assist the parties in transforming the conflict through problem-solving, dialogue and peace-building. Third parties to the conflict can involve groups and individuals as diverse as industry consultants, educators, Quakers, labour mediators, diplomats, judges, and your next door neighbour. As the conflict field matures and continue to

gain interest, managing and resolving conflict continues to evolve and multiply perhaps, overwhelming potential participants. For this reason, parties to a conflict will have to decide what negotiation makes the most sense to them, is acceptable to both parties, and supports positive change.

Dealing with conflict is very much linked to the context of the conflict-a family, neighbourhood, an organization or a country. How individuals negotiate in conflict management is related to their personalities as much as their circumstances. Thomas (2004) identified five ways that North Americans use towards conflict negotiation: accommodation, collaboration, avoidance, competition, and compromise. These negotiations are used singly or in combination depending on such things as a person's personality, philosophy, skill, and knowledge. Groups and organizations may choose to take different negotiation to conflict depending on their culture, history, power, and resources. Some of these negotiations include: mediation, arbitration, management systems, facilitated problem-solving, the judiciary, consensus-building, sustained dialogue, war, protests, and strikes (University of South Africa, 2007).

### **2.8.3 Conflict Stimulation and Management**

Simons and Peterson (2000) avoiding means ignoring the conflict and letting fate take its course. It is based on the belief that conflict is unnecessary, inappropriate, dysfunctional and costly. A manager who uses the avoiding style is both unassertive and uncooperative. The managerial behaviours associated with the avoiding style are ignoring conflict in the hope that it will disappear, putting problems on hold, invoking slow procedures, use of secrecy and appealing to



bureaucratic rule (Van *et. al* 1992). In certain circumstances, the manager may be wise to avoid conflict. Classical management theories believed in the use of clear lines authority, division of work, and strict rules as effective means of preventing conflict in organisation (Drucker, 1998). DuBrin (1992) avoidance may be ideal when the issue is trivial or when there are no perceived chances of satisfying your concerns, or further still, when others can resolve the conflict more effectively.

Adler and Borys (1996) identified two types of formalisation namely: (i) enabling formalisation in which deviations from the norm are risky, but simultaneously embraced as learning opportunities, and (ii) coercive formalisation, which is designed to force unquestioning compliance. Whereas coercive formalisation stifles creativity, creates dissatisfaction and erodes employee motivation, enabling formalisation is a catalyst for change (Di Paola and Hoy, 2001). However, Di Paola and Hoy further argue that formal procedures need not be coercive and controlling but enabling. Successful conflict strategy should include agreeing on the basics, searching for common interests, and doubting one's own infallibility.

## **2.9 Role of Environment in Resolving Conflicts in Organizations**

Apart from the awareness and approaches influencing conflict resolution, the environment is an important intervening factor in resolving conflict. Among others it is defined by organizational policy and structure, human resource strategy and legal framework. A policy provide a set of proposals and actions that act as reference points for the CEOs in their dealings with personnel while a structure spell out clearly the hierarchy, responsibilities and relationships between the personnel in the

organization. If the environment is effectively practiced and strategically applied dysfunctional conflict in educational institutions could be completely reduced.

Organization policies and structures are necessary in conflict resolution in educational institutions. A deliberate arrangement of people to accomplish some specific purpose depends on: a distinct purpose which is typically expressed in terms of a goal or a set of goals that the organization hopes to accomplish; the people to perform the work that's necessary for the organization to achieve its goals and a deliberate structure so that members can do their work. However, where the structure may be open and flexible, with no clear and precise delineations of job duties or strict adherence to any explicit job/duty arrangements may create a simple network of loose relationships making it difficult to solve conflicts whether aware and made appropriate approach/s towards solving them.

Human resource strategy constitutes guides to decision-making. They furnish the general standards or bases on which decisions are reached. Their genesis lies in an educational institution's vision, mission, values, philosophy, concept and principles. Personnel strategies guide the course of action intended to accomplish personnel objectives. Lack of strategic management in an educational institution means, the institution has established no continuing position hence drawbacks in conflict resolution whether the CEO is aware of and indeed uses the approaches in solving the conflict.

Legal framework governing educational institutions in Kenya form yet another important part in enhancing conflict management in educational institutions.

They contain the laws which give guidelines on promotion, development and management of education in a number of areas. The knowledge and understanding of the legal context and applications are central in solving conflict in educational institution. They enhance the ability of the CEO to work within the framework. This should effectively help the CEO to develop team confidence and trust within the institutional environment which is an important ingredient in solving conflicts in educational institutions.

### **2.10 Organizational Performance**

There are many emerging trends in organizational performance. However, this study discussed only a few of them which included: expanding the use of organizational performance, combining traditional “hard” business competencies and organization performance, creating whole system change- organizational design and culture change, using organizational performance to facilitate partnerships and alliances, enhancing constant learning.

Organizational performance is rapidly becoming more accepted as necessary to enhance the productivity and profitability of organizations and is consequently expanding. In order to deal with many of the challenges created by the macro forces more organizational development is necessary (Drucker, 1998). Constant change is forcing companies to become more competent at change management. This constant change is also burning employees out, which is forcing companies to focus on the quality of work life in order to retain their best employees. The level of competition is at an all time high due to changes in technology and globalization. Since companies can quickly access the same information through technology and

benchmarking, often the competitive advantage rests in the ability of an organization's employees to analyze, utilize, and capitalize on information. Maximizing employee performance is accomplished by a number of organizational development interventions including but not limited to the following three interventions: aligning the organizational dynamics (vision, organizational design, culture, compensation, and strategy), providing the tools and climate that induce constant learning, helping employees obtain strong interpersonal skills so that they can work on teams, network, and manage conflict with all portions of the value chain.

Porter (1998) tomorrow's business environment, competitive advantage lies increasingly in knowledge, relationships, and motivation that distant rivals cannot replicate. Drucker *et. al* (1998) future corporations need to focus on making the lives of their employees better, having the willingness to change, developing self-confidence in people, maximize employee performance by developing the knowledge worker, mastering the human asset, which includes the ability for employees to work in teams. Teamwork is important on an international scale. For example, in Japan, teamwork is described as "human ware" and in France; it is referred to as "Toyotism."

Organizational performance is also successfully spreading into other types of organizations. The educational system is a prime example. Ozigi (1977) believes that adults have trouble with conflict, leadership, teamwork and change because they were not given opportunities to become proficient in these skills as children. This situations in schools calls for use of visioning, participative design with all

stakeholders, partnerships, core competency identification and value-based feedback which in turn teaches the students directly skills in facilitation, leadership, team-building, consensus-based problem solving, vision development, and effective feedback/conflict resolution skills (McClelland and Sandra, 1998).

Organizational development which is also called organizational effectiveness focuses on the business. Too many organizational development people are doing work without making links to business (Gibson et. al. 1994). Apparently, there is some negative stigma attached to the term organization performance. Some people tended to associate organizational development people as soft types who care to help people, but add little value to an organization because they know little about how to make business run better. Even some people who are considered organizational development practitioners put down the field claiming that they were different. Instead, they choose different titles for their work such as business psychology, organizational effectiveness, organizational transformation, and change enablement. Organizational development is dying because there is a transformational shift/need to combine the hard and soft side of business. Organizational development is dead fundamentally. It needs to help companies deal with strategic issues. It needs to deal with the bottom line, and needs to measure interventions and show how we save organizations from conflicts. Practitioners need to articulate results by measuring organizational performance. In organizational development people tend to look at things in isolation. Many do not have the necessary business experience, but it is shifting.

It is obvious that people in the business community feel that successful organizational development practitioners need to have a firm understanding of the goals, strategies, metrics, and language associated with business. Ultimately, the goals of any organizational development practitioner should be to enhance a company by saving money, making it more efficient and increasing revenues. They must choose metrics that are meaningful to the client to prove this success. Competencies are needed so that they can understand the client system that they work with, sell their services, and manage their own practice. Along with understanding these competencies, it is vital for organizational development practitioners to understand the appropriate conflict resolution. Management of conflict allows the organizational development practitioner to relate to the decision-makers and hence attract and retain customers. Several literatures on organizational conflict management observe that traditional view of conflict is the belief that all conflict is harmful and must be avoided. However, positivistic scholars believe that all conflict that is bad certainly offers a simple approach to looking at the behavior of people who create conflict (Bean, 1994). Human relations view of conflict is the belief that conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group (Brown, 2002). Conflict existence cannot be eliminated, and there are an even time when conflict may benefit not only a group's performance but that it is also an absolute necessity for a group to perform effectively.

Modern schools of management view conflict as an inevitable aspect of organisational life, which can be used to foster healthy organisational development (DiPaola and Hoy, 2001). The pluralist view of conflict criticises the classical tendency to over-emphasise the negative aspects of conflict because it distracts

attention from conflicts' potential benefits (Duffy and Olezak, 1991). Most functional outcomes of conflict emanate from cognitive conflict, which occurs as team members examine and reconcile differences. Cognitive conflict results in high quality solutions and team effectiveness. By facilitating open communication about alternatives, cognitive conflict encourages innovative thinking and creative solutions to problems. In cognitive conflict situations, decisions become better than the opinion of the leader or the most vocal, most powerful team member (DuBrin, 1992). Once conflicting parties have reached consensus, team members support the decisions and team decisions are easier to implement. Knippen and Green (1999) found that cognitive conflict develops solidarity among team members and heightens motivation. DiPaola and Hoy (2001) impact of conflict on the school and on the behaviour of teachers and students will depend on the kind of conflict, the school structure, and the way conflict is handled. They advise school administrators to (i) build enabling structures that facilitate innovation, (ii) acquire skills that will enable them to establish effective working relationships with members of the school community, (iii) avoiding reliance on authority to control teachers, and (iv) nurture teacher's professional autonomy and innovation to avoid rigidity and stagnation in schools.

## **2.11 Summary**

In view of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks discussed, it was clear that management of conflict has a bearing on the performance of an organization. Conflicts in organizations are inevitable because they are triggered by a wide variety of antecedents (DiPaola and Hoy, 2001). Among the situations that tended to produce either functional or dysfunctional conflicts in organizational include:

incompatible personalities or value systems, overlapping or unclear job boundaries, competition for limited resources, inadequate communication, interdependent tasks, institutional complexity, unreasonable or unclear policies/standards/rules, unreasonable deadlines or extreme time pressure, collective decision-making, decision-making by consensus, unmet expectation, unresolved or suppressed conflict and others. There is no single best way of resolving conflicts in an organization. Brown (2002) conflict specialists recommend a contingency approach to managing conflict organizations.

Antecedents or certain prevailing/looming conflict and actual conflict need to be monitored. If signs of too little conflict such as apathy or lack of creativity appear in any organization, then functional conflict needs to be stimulated. This could be done by nurturing appropriate antecedents of conflict and/or programming conflict with techniques such as devil's advocacy and the dialectic method. On the other hand, when conflict becomes dysfunctional, the appropriate conflict handling styles need to be enacted such as avoidance, direct command resolution, third party intervention, compromise/negotiation and synergistic. Realistic training involving role-playing can prepare institutional chief executive officer to try also some effective strategies for preventing conflicts by: emphasizing organizational-wide goals and effectiveness; provide stable, well-structured tasks; facilitate inter-group communication; and avoid win-lose situations. Managers can keep from getting too deeply embroiled in conflict by: applying challenging and clear goals; disagreeing in a constructive and reasonable manner; and refusing to get caught in the aggression-breeds-aggression spiral, (Koontz, 2007).



Thomas (2003) whatever the techniques utilized to deal with intergroup conflict, managers must learn how to recognize the existence and causes of intergroup conflict. They must also develop skills to effectively deal with it. Important attributes of an effective conflict resolution process by which managers can gauge their efforts success include:

- i) Clarification of interests through exploration of common and non-conflicting interest of the two groups. Communicate each group's interests to the other without unduly exposing either group to extortion on the basis of such interests.
- ii) Builds a good working relationship by enabling the groups to deal effectively with their difference/s in the current dispute. Fostering the type of relationship the groups would have wanted to have but for the present dispute and by making it easier for the groups to deal with each other when the next conflict arises.
- iii) Generates good options by spurring the groups to brainstorm many options before evaluating them and choosing among them. Encourage the groups to devise ways to create value for mutual gain.
- iv) Being impartial with the legitimate power and instilling in the groups a sense that the solutions it produces will be fair and equitable.
- v) Cognizant of the parties' procedural alternatives that is allowing both sides to develop realistic assessments of their own and the other side's substantive alternatives.
- vi) Improve communication by encouraging the questioning and testing of underlying assumptions. Facilitating the understanding and discussion of partisan perceptions and establishing effective two-way communication between groups.
- vii) Leads to wise commitments by enabling the groups to devise commitments that are realistic, operational, and compliance-prone. And by positioning the parties with

effective recourse to litigation in the event they fail to reach final agreement or in the event of non-compliance.

## **2.12 Research Gaps**

Conflicts in organizations may be as a result of task interdependences, status inconsistencies, jurisdictional ambiguities, communication problems, dependence on common resource pool, lack of common performance standards and individual differences (Muhammad *et. al* 2009):

- i) The greater the extent of task interdependence among individuals or groups, the greater is the likelihood of conflict. This is because the intensity of relationship is heightened so that a small disagreement is quickly blown out of proportion.
- ii) When the top management is given an inequitably higher privilege than the non-managerial staff, there is bound to be conflict.
- iii) For instance, when it is unclear where responsibility for something exactly lies, then two or more employees will experience conflict.
- iv) Communication problems such as ambiguities, poor channels or withholding information lead to frustration, anger and hence conflict.
- v) When several departments or employees compete for scarce resources, conflict is inevitable because two or more departments or persons may require the resource at the same time.
- vi) Differences in performance criteria and reward systems provide more potential for organizational conflict.
- vii) Individual differences such as abilities, traits, skills, negatively impact on the nature of interpersonal relations.

Conflict classification can be complex and diverse. Robert *et. al* (2009) organizational conflict is a state of discord caused by the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests between people working together. Conflict

takes many forms in organizations. For instance in a school environment, an inevitable clash between formal authority and power and those individuals and a group affected is a common phenomenon. According to this school of thought, there are disputes over how revenues should be divided, how the work should be done and how long and hard people should work. There are jurisdictional disagreements among individuals, departments, and between unions and management. Organizational conflict can also manifest itself negatively in form of rivalries, jealousies, personality clashes, role definitions, and struggles for power and favor.

Ssekamwa (2001) in his assessment of school effectiveness established that school management depends on collaboration and teamwork among teachers, students, administrators, and parents. Failure in the mode of collaboration according to the two researchers leads to conflict. At managerial level, decision-making in educational systems is frequently characterized by conflict and disagreement. This is largely due to inherent differences in interests and opinions among educational stakeholders. Ssekamwa further suggest that head teachers who are the chief executives in schools need to manage conflicts using strategies that yield functional synergies and create a constructive school culture that results in teachers and students' satisfaction with the school climate. Amason (1996) conflict is categorised into cognitive conflict, which enhances performance, and affective conflict, which reduces performance and satisfaction. It is desirable that conflict remains constructive, but in practice, cognitive debates often become affective (Di Paola and Hoy, 2001). Nonetheless, conflict within certain limits is desirable and the potential for conflict permeates all human relations. Emergence of conflict can be a necessary evil in unveiling the underlying issues in an organization.

Traditional management theories emphasised organisational goals, managerial control and rationality (Lira *et. al* 2006). Conflict was seen as a problem attributable to some regrettable cause, troublemakers interfering with organisational goals (Jones *et. al.* 2000). The initial studies of conflict, therefore, stemmed from the belief that it was dysfunctional to organisational harmony and performance. The elimination of conflict seemed to be the primary goal of any manager confronted with a conflict situation (Dipaola and Hoy, 2001). Further Lira *et. al* notes that at the back of a traditional manager's mind, there is always a warning tone that once conflict is allowed to exist, it will get out of control and manifest as destructive. However, research Johnson (2007) has shown that the negative aspects of conflict arise when conflict is affective and when team members engage in blocking behaviour. In such a situation, team members feel defeated and demeaned and there is a climate of mistrust, parties concentrate on their own narrow interests, poor quality decisions are made and achievement of organisational goals is blocked.

Previous studies have shown that, teachers spend less time in conflict than most people believe (DiPaola and Hoy 2001). Conflicts in which teachers were involved were largely cognitive and contributing to school improvement by questioning the status quo. Adomi and Anie (2005) teachers tend to clash over inequitable distribution of resources, non-instructional responsibilities perceived as barriers to teacher performance and student achievement, and confusion over who makes the final decision. Di Paola and Hoy further found that militant teachers were not only conflict-oriented but also catalysts for change. On this basis the researcher argue that chief executives who want to use conflict constructively and maintain

organizational harmony should be able to understand different perceptions, catalyse growth and efficiency and resolve issues that prevent individual productivity.

Griffin (1994) in an authoritarian school, the teachers see themselves as having no role in preventing strikes. They believe their business is restricted to teaching and relegate enforcing rules to the principal. They feel they have no means of handling students' indiscipline since it does not occur in the classroom. Harrison (1998) observes that teachers might even give latent support to student strike since it usually targets the principal whose authoritarian figure towers above both students and teachers alike.

The belief on the transformation role of organization is reflected on two fronts. First, the commitment the government, households, communities, and the private sector have had in investing in organization. Second, the consistency in organizational reform efforts and the debates, which have been going on in the country, particularly in the last decade show that organizations are full of challenges, opportunities and prospects. Kenya, since 1992 to 2008 witnessed increased levels of poverty, limited access to social services, increased incidence of diseases (including HIV/AIDS) and dependency on the more industrialized nations. Besides, the period ushered in many cases of bad governance, increased ethnic tension and conflict and, more worrying, increased gender- related violence at both household and national levels. Such experience provided major challenges for organizations as social institutions for change and development of human resources.

To make education relevant to the social needs of Kenya as a country, there was need for a critical re-examination on what our educational institutions aim at, and how what was managed socially affected the products. While the focus was on learning institutions, it was pertinent to note that the promise of choice to make education socially relevant lay on the ability of the heads of educational institutions as the chief executive officers, who clearly articulated and practiced conflict management role for their development. The role of conflict management in organizational performance was, therefore, crucial for effective and efficient organization of educational institutions. The chief executive or a school manager, that is the principal, is responsible for the overall organization, control and maintenance of standards in the school (Okumbe, 2001). A principal is, therefore, a manager of school and is accountable for all that happens in the school. He is in charge of a community of variety of staff and students and it is to her/him that they look upon for guidance and direction, (Iravo, 2002).

The first school-based conflict management programme began in New York City in 1972. Peer mediation programmes appeared by the early 1980s in San Francisco, Chicago and New York. In Canada, the first high school peer mediation programme was initiated in Ottawa in 1987. Presently, there are over 350 conflict management programmes in schools in the United States of America. These programmes have been initiated in most Canadian provinces (Picard, 1990). The Edmonton Catholic School District in Canada is committed to working cooperatively and responsibly with the personnel of its institution. At the same time, Edmonton Catholic Schools recognize that with over 3000 employees, over 31,000 students, and with approximately 48,000 parents and guardians all engaged in the education of

Edmonton Catholic School personnel, differences in approaches, interpretation and opinion may occur. Therefore, protocol and procedures are established to deal with school conflict. It is against this background that the researcher looked at the Kenyan case regarding the role of conflict management in educational organizations.

Olembo *et. al* (1992) in appreciating the importance of management in education essentially provides awareness of the skills, values, and knowledge required for competent and professional management of educational institutions in Kenya. They do not spell out the role of conflict management as one of the functions on the bodies that are entrusted with the administrative tasks of the educational institutions. Conflict management is one of the important aspects in solving most of the problems in organizations in the world today (Luis, 2006).

Corporal punishment was legal not only in Kenya, but also in a number of other African countries. Governments complained that there were not enough resources and trained personnel to reduce the size of big school organizations, which some managers found difficult to manage without strict measures of discipline (UNESCO, 2000). In Tanzania, a few school conflicts were reported and in some of those conflicts, students lost their lives after severe discipline measures in schools. A legal ban on corporal punishment in schools has not improved matters in Ethiopia. School organizations continue to experience conflicts despite several attempts to stop this phenomenon (Swedish Save the Children, an NGO based in Addis Ababa, 2007). The organization has published the report on strict measures of discipline in Ethiopia, which is campaigning against the practice in schools as well as in homes. In Sudan, managers of school organizations say schools run by missionaries in the south

organize guidance and counseling programmes for its members to identify reasons for their misbehaviour. But they warn that ever growing school organizations might force them to switch to severe discipline measures to deal with conflict, Peter Newell, co-coordinator of EPOCH – worldwide, an NGO campaigning against strict discipline measures.

Experts disagree with the view that conflict in secondary schools can be tackled only by strict discipline measures. In countries where the practice was banned decades ago, schools are not falling a part due to conflict. Beating cannot be an excuse for lack of resources. This problem could be addressed adequately through the role of conflict management in conflict resolution. This appears not to be practiced in most of Kenyan secondary schools where school organizational conflict has become a common phenomenon. In Kenya, most of the chief executives of educational institutions spend over 20 percent of their time dealing with conflict and too little towards their resolution (MoE, 2001). They need to be well-grounded in conflict management, the phenomenon this study focused on.

A principal's public and professional reputation depend more on the standard of stability in his school than on any other single factor that is, good stability brings good results in every field of school endeavor (Griffin, 1994). A principal who lets any form of conflict out of his hands is risking trouble. Should an instance of mass conflict occur, the wise principal will resist the temptation to find a scapegoat, be it the Ministry of Education, the board of governors, politicians, parents and staff but instead, take a long hard look at his own conflict management methods/techniques? If his school organization becomes unstable in any way, then it implies that



foundations of management in conflict resolution were not established in the school, and the blame for this is his/hers.

Starehe has never had any organizational conflict (Griffin, 1994). One reason for this, among many others, stems from well-established tenets of the role of conflict management in organizational performance. Sound management in conflict resolution in organization is an essential ingredient in the creation of a happy and industrious institution, performing properly its function of training the citizens and shaping human resources of tomorrow. It was against these disclosures, that it became imperative that the role of conflict management in the public educational institutions in Kenya is wanting. Institutional conflict is the biggest problem bothering the government and the society. This phenomenon facing the educational institutions management is as a result of inadequate role of conflict management in organizations.

The Center for Conflict Resolution in Schools (CCROSS) was founded in 2003. Currently staffed entirely by volunteers, CCROSS is a non-profit centre working with school administration to develop and promote effective conflict resolution strategies in Kenyan schools. One key distinction between school conflicts in Kenya as compared to the West was that whereas in the latter, most school conflicts arose out of "relatively" petty inter-personal differences. In Kenya, educational institutions conflicts were in a form of dissent, a way of expressing opposition to the laws and norms of both institution and the larger culture. (CCROSS, 2004). The main aim of this study was to examine the effect of conflict management in performance of public secondary schools in Kenya.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter details how the research was conducted and analyzed. The chapter describes the research design, population, sampling frame, sample and sampling technique, data collection methods, data collections procedure, pilot test, data processing and analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study was both qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative, broadly defined, means ‘a research that produces discreet numerical or quantifiable data (Simons, 2007). Descriptive survey design was adopted in conducting this study. This is because descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings, but often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems (Orodho, 2003). The researcher used descriptive approach which was appropriate for this study because it involved fact-finding and enquiries to determine the conflict resolution as it existed in secondary school organizations. It was more than just a collection of data because the researcher was involved in measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation of data. Kombo and Tromp, (2007) further observe that descriptive approach is designed to obtain information concerning the current phenomenon and wherever possible to draw valid general conclusions from facts discussed. To effectively achieve this objective, the researcher administered a questionnaire to a sample of chief executive officers of educational organizations. The researcher did carry out survey on these individuals to

find out approaches, effects, challenges and attitudes used in managing conflict. In this study independent variables were identified as awareness and approaches.

### 3.3 Target Population

The target population of this study was drawn from all the 140 public educational institutions shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Target Population of Schools**

<b>Types of Schools In Machakos County</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
Boys Boarding Secondary Schools	10
Girls Boarding Secondary Schools	19
Mixed Boarding Secondary Schools	24
Mixed Day Secondary Schools	64
Boys Day Secondary Schools	22
Girls Day Secondary Schools	01
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>

All the 140 public secondary schools from Machakos County which were prone to educational institution conflicts composed the target population. The target respondents were 140 school principals. Though educational organization conflict is a common phenomenon in Kenyan public secondary schools, it was more pronounced in Machakos County (Machakos Education Office, 2004).

### 3.4 Sampling Frame

This subsection details how a sample of 43 respondents was obtained from a population of 140 school principals. The section describes the sampling frame and sample size. In this study, the legally recognized individuals involved in the actual management of secondary schools were very crucial. They are the informed specialists who tend to have ideas and experience. The Education Act (1968)

recognizes principals as chief executive officers of secondary schools. An optimum sample is the one that fulfills the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. This sample should be in a range of 10%-30% (Serekan 2009). An optimum proportion of 30% was drawn from each category of the target population of schools to satisfy these requirements of optimality and representativeness. From each of the selected school, the principal was selected. Therefore, forty-three principals were selected as the chief executive officers in-charge of management of the school organizations. Saunders and Lewis (2003) defined key informants as contact persons who help field researcher gain information about the research setting. Therefore, the total respondents were 43 principals as described in the sampling matrix table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Sampling Matrix for Schools**

<b>Types of Schools In Machakos County</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sampling Percent</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Boys Boarding Secondary Schools	10	30	3
Girls Boarding Secondary Schools	19	30	6
Mixed Boarding Secondary Schools	24	30	7
Mixed Day Secondary Schools	64	30	19
Boys Day Secondary Schools	22	30	7
Girls Day Secondary Schools	01	30	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>43</b>

### **3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The researcher used a combination of both probability and non-probability sampling designs. Simple random sampling (probability) was used to get the desired sample from each category of school, while the non-probability method used, was purposive sampling. This latter method was used to identify 43 informed specialists (the chief executive officers who were charged with the responsibility of managing secondary school organizations.

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

The study employed both primary and secondary data as follows:

#### **a) Primary Data**

Primary data were gathered through the administration of a questionnaire to a cross-section of respondents drawn from various categories of school organizations.

#### **b) Instrument**

The instrument for this study was developed by the researcher under the supervision and guidance of the eminent University Supervisors hereby appointed. This instrument was the “Principals questionnaire (Appendix II) on the role of conflict management in educational institutions performance”. The questionnaire contained both structured and semi-structured questions. The questionnaire sought from the respondents whether they could link: conflict management and the performance of schools; awareness of conflict in organization help in solving conflict and the approaches used by various CEOs in management and resolution of conflicts in organizations. They also compared the relationship between the management of conflict and the performance of their school organizations and came up with recommendations for improving conflict resolution in their respective educational institutions. It was important to find out whether they linked organizational school performance to prudent management of conflict. The questionnaire further required them to reflect the extent of conflict in their respective secondary schools. Semi-structured questions elicited a lot of good qualitative data (Fraenken and Wallen, 2000). The instrument was administered to the school principals as the chief executive officers of school organizations.

### **c) Secondary Data**

Sources of secondary data were from various textbooks, journals, media and internet reports (both print and electronic). The research site was Machakos County (Appendix IV). This site was suitable because boarding and day primary schools, which fed the secondary schools in the county, were populated with children from virtually all parts of the country. The competitive provincial schools in the county also admitted students nationally and were run by personnel from the rest of the republic. The county was therefore a fair representation of the rest of the country. The data gathered were subjected to both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Principally, the researcher used bivariate tabular (also known as cross break) analysis.

Bivariate tabular analysis is used in trying to summarize the intersections of independent and dependent variables in order to understand the relationship (if any) between those variables (Connor, 2003- [www.georgetown.edu/cball/webtools/web\\_chi.html](http://www.georgetown.edu/cball/webtools/web_chi.html), retrieved 30th October, 2009). The main statistical procedure used was chi-square. Chi-square is a non-parametric test of statistical significance for bivariate tabular analysis. Typically, the hypothesis tested with chi-square is whether or not two different samples (of people, text, and others) are different enough in some characteristics or aspects of their behaviour that we can generalize from samples that the populations from which our samples are drawn are also different in the behaviour or characteristic. Qualitatively, the researcher used documentary and content analysis.

### **3.7 Data Collections Procedure**

Concerning data collection, a semi- structured questionnaire was developed for use in the study. The data which were purely qualitative was coded for analysis purposes. This was followed by the recruitment of four research assistants who covered all the districts in Machakos County. To ensure an understanding of the research problem and research methodology, including how to administer the instrument, one-day training for the research assistants was held. The appropriate numbers of copies of the research instrument were made available. They were distributed to the four research assistants to cover the entire county in collecting the data from the respondents. In each of the secondary school sampled, the researcher set off the process by administering the questionnaire cover letters (Appendix I) and questionnaires to principals. The researcher continued to liaise with the research assistants on daily basis throughout the exercise. Appointments were made in advance with the respondents. The research was conducted between April and August 2008. This was appropriate time for the researcher; furthermore, this is the time when many educational institutions experienced a lot of organizational conflict. After the end of data collection, the research assistants surrendered the completed questionnaires and any other materials from the various respondents together with their field notes which included general impressions on the research process. The questionnaires were brought in one place in order to be analyzed.

### **3.8 Pilot Test**

The researcher pre-tested the instrument using 5 respondents to ensure the correct information was obtained in relationship with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire content, structure, sequence, meaning of questions was appropriately

designed. No ambiguities were raised. The data obtained were analyzed as prescribed in data analysis section 3.9 of this study. The results formed part of the final results of this study.

#### **a) Validity of Research Instruments**

The study instrument was content-validated. Donald and Pamela (2001) posit that content validity is determined by expert judgment. The university supervisors scrutinized the instrument to find out whether it addressed all the possible areas that were intended to measure, ensured its appropriateness, completeness and accuracy. They were relied upon to determine whether items in the instrument were adequate representation of all the areas that were under investigation.

#### **b) Reliability of Research Instruments**

The researcher piloted the instrument to 5 principals who were drawn from the sample of 43 principals. One principal was picked at random from each category with more than one respondent indicated in the sampling matrix for schools table 3.2 of this study. The data obtained were subjected to data analysis in section 3.9 and was part of the final data of this study.

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Kothari (2009) reliability refers to consistency of measurement; the more reliable an instrument is, the more consistent the measure. The researcher used split-half procedure to test the reliability of the principals' questionnaire through piloting. This procedure was chosen over the other methods such as the Kuder- Richardson approaches for its simplicity yet accurate (Fraenkel and Warren, 2000). The instrument was piloted. It tested the basic emerging variables of this study described in the conceptual framework.



The open- ended questions scored by giving a mark for a relevant response and a zero for irrelevant and blank responses. The questionnaires selected were divided into two equal halves taking odd numbered items against the even numbered items. The scores of the halves were then correlated using the split – half measure of reliability. This yielded a half test coefficient. The Spearman – Brown Prophecy formula for the full test was employed to obtain a total test coefficient of the instruments. They were considered reliable since the reliability fell between 0.7 - 1.0, which are considered adequate (Fraenkel and Warren, 2000).

### **3.9 Data Processing and Analysis**

The data gathered were subjected to descriptive and non –parametric analysis. Before the actual data analysis, the gathered data were validated, edited and then coded. During the validation process, the questions were checked to determine whether an accurate or acceptable sample was obtained in terms of proportion of the issued questionnaire. They were also checked to verify completeness. The questionnaires were scrutinized to find out whether there were errors and omissions, ambiguous, inadequate, illegible and irrelevant responses. After going through all the questionnaires, uniform categories of responses were identified, classified and entered into appropriate category in a computer worksheet using SPSS for both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Swift and Piff (2005) observe that in any study, it is imperative that an appropriate analytical technique be adopted that brings out the quantitative meaning of the data. In this study, the following were considered upon which the analysis

were done: the scale by which variables were measured; nature of data; number of variables to be analyzed; relationship between variables; and the number of samples to be involved.

This study intended to determine whether there were significant differences in the position taken by the different categories of respondents on conflict, in line with the objectives of this study. The variables measured quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were characterized by descriptive statistics. The purpose of descriptive statistics was to enable the researcher to meaningfully describe a distribution of scores or measurements using a few indices or statistics. The types of statistics or indices used depended on type of variables in this study and the scale of measurement used (for example ratio, interval, ordinal and normal). This test was also part of the inferential statistics, meaning that the chain of reasoning for inferential statistics applied. The major independent variables of this study were the effect of conflict management; awareness of conflicts in origination and approaches to solving conflicts shown in the conceptual framework. Quite a number of data in this study were analyzed and reported in proportions. It was also necessary to employ inferential procedures to further give meaning to the data. In this case, the statistical test that the researcher used was multiple correlation and regression. This test was used because the variables were measured at interval or ratio scales because the more representative a sample was, the more generalizable the results were to the population (Arora and Arora, 2003).

Correlation analysis was used to show relationship among various variables. Although a correlation coefficient indicated the relationship between the variables, significance of the correlation was really the probability of obtaining similar results

through chance. Multiple regression equation used determined the strength and directions of the association between the variables because the piece of information formed the basis for selecting variables for further statistical analysis.

#### **a) Data Processing**

Descriptive statistics and quantitative models were used to present the data. The data were presented in tables as well as graphs for easy reference.

#### **b) Analytical Techniques**

Both qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques were used for analysis. This is because the responses in closed-ended questions in the questionnaire were coded for quantitative analyses, while the open-ended questions were qualitatively analyzed. Achievement of the secondary school organizational broad goals and operational objectives were used to measure the performance. Multiple regression models were used to determine effect of conflict management that determines performance of educational institutions. A two tailed *t*-test and chi test were used to analyze the null hypotheses of the study. Regression and ANOVA analysis were used to analyze the overall effect of conflict management in the performance of secondary schools in Kenya.

#### **c) Variables and Their Measurements**

The variables that were used in this study were: Awareness and approaches with environment being the intervening variable. The measurements of these variables that influence organizational performance were as follows:

##### **i) Measurement of Organizational Performance**

Organizational performance is measured by appraising five dimensions of performance: return on investment, margin on sales, capacity utilization, customer satisfaction and product quality (Muhammad *et. al* 2009).

**ii) Measurement of Approaches to Conflicts**

**Table 3.3: Measurement of approaches**

<b>Variable Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
Approaches	Defined by:	
	a) Resolution	1-2-3-4-5
	b) Negotiation	1-2-3-4-5
	c) Stimulation	1-2-3-4-5

{1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Frequently, 5= Always}

**iii) Multiple regression models for determinants of performance in schools**

Using a variation of the Evan’s growth model estimated as Ordinary Least Square, the analysis was done using the equation:

$$Op = \beta_1 + \beta_2 E_{ff} + \beta_3 A_{ws} + \beta_4 A_{pp} + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Where

Op = Organizational performance

E<sub>ff</sub> = Effect

A<sub>ws</sub> = Awareness

A<sub>pp</sub> = Approaches

β<sub>1</sub> = Constant of analysis

ε = Error factor

β<sub>2-n</sub> (β<sub>2</sub> - β<sub>14</sub>) = Correlation coefficients

**iv) ANOVA**

ANOVA analysis was further used to confirm the effect between conflict management and performance in secondary schools, table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: Effects of Conflict Management in the Perfomnce of Schools**

	<b>Un standardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Model	$\beta$	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)					
RESNDEX					

a Dependent Variable: PERFORMDEX

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The main focus of this chapter is the research findings and discussion of the results of the research. The discussion is tied to the overall objective of the study which, is to examine the effect of conflict management in organizational performance with a view to solving the current phenomenon of conflicts being experienced in public secondary school organizations and make them more effective, efficient and conducive for the development of human resources; and to examine the effect of conflict management in the resolutions of conflicts in educational institutions in Kenya. An attempt is made to address each of the four objectives drawn from this broad objective, namely, to: i) establish the effect of conflict management in the performance of secondary school organizations ii) determine whether the CEOs in public secondary school organizations being aware of conflicts help towards conflict resolution and management. iii) examine conflict resolution and management approaches used by public secondary schools managers. iv) evaluate the role of environment in conflict management and the performance of school organizations.

The data used in this study were both qualitative and quantitative and were obtained through administration of questionnaire to 43 chief executive officers/principals of public secondary schools in Machakos County as managers

charged with the responsibility of running/managing the educational institutions/organizations.

Four study hypotheses were tested, namely:

- 1) There is no significant difference between effect of conflict management and the performance of public secondary schools.
- 2) There is no significant difference between the CEOs who are aware of conflicts in their respective school organizations and conflict management.
- 3) There is no significant difference in management of conflict, between managers who practice conflict approaches and those who do not.
- 4) There is no significant difference between the role of environment in conflict management and performance of school organizations.

In addition to the general objective and specific objectives, therefore, the analysis and discussion also took into consideration the four hypotheses enumerated above.

#### **4.2 The Response Rate**

A sample of 43 principals/chief executive officers was drawn from the target population of 140 chief executives. Forty one out of forty-three questionnaires administered were received. This represented a 95.35% response rate of the questionnaire which was intended to give a general picture of the problems the chief executive officers were facing in the process of resolving conflicts with a view to enhancing organizational performance in organizations/educational institutions. Arora and Arora, (2003) contend that a questionnaire that produces above 75% response rate has done extremely well.

#### **SECTION A: PRELIMINARY INFORMATION RELATED TO THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of conflict management in performance of public secondary school organizations in Kenya. The researcher found it important to establish the general characteristics of the respondents under which the researcher would justifiably make inferences from their responses.

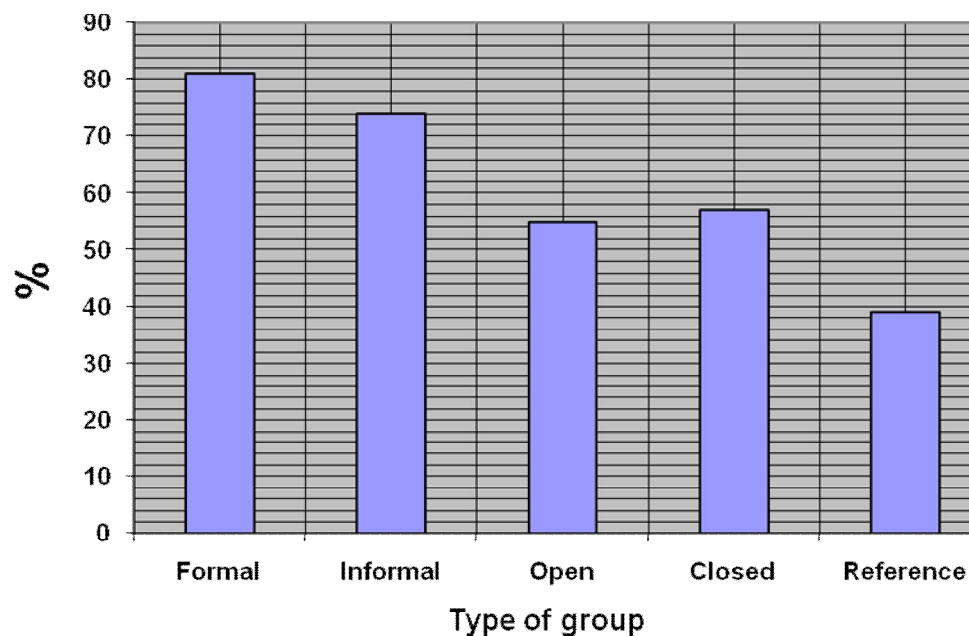
### 4.3 Understanding of Groups in Organizations

#### a) Existence of groups in schools.

The researcher sought to find out whether groups existed in educational institutions. The survey indicated that in all schools groups do exist (100%). Organizing effective performance managers ensure that different individuals and groups in organizations are performing various activities assigned to them.

#### b) Classification of Groups in Schools.

To understand the nature of groups in educational institutions, the study sought to find out the classification of these groups and the results from the field study are as tabulated in figure 3.



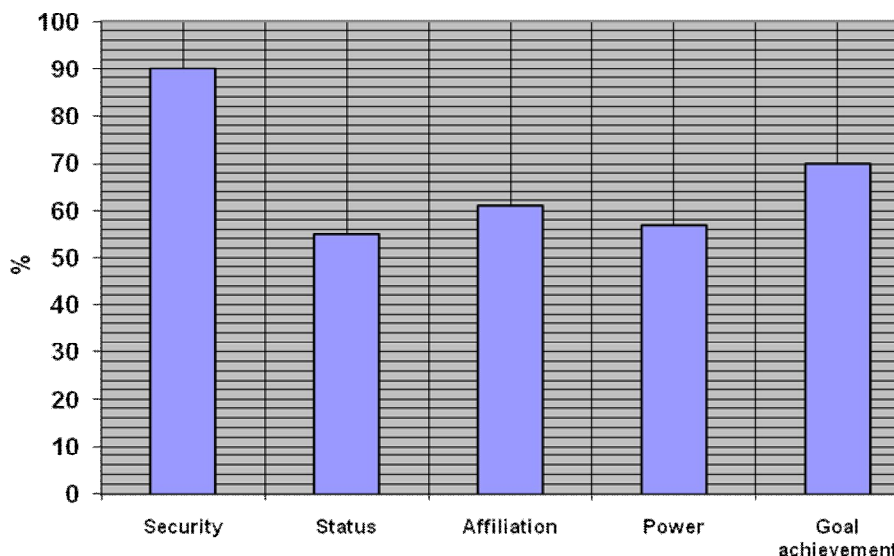


**Figure 3: Classification/types of groups found in a school**

The types of groups found in schools were: formal, informal, open, closed and reference. The result of the analysis above indicates that 81.5% of the groups found in schools were formal groups. Further, the study findings indicate that the least type of group in educational institutions is the reference group 38.5%. But 72% said that informal groups also exist in educational institutions. While 58.5% and 56.5% said closed and open groups do exist. These are groups that factor in interest of individuals and have a well-laid chain of command such as chairman, secretary and treasurer. Such officials are charged with the task of leading the group including resolving conflicts as well giving or terminating membership to such a group. The researcher found out that the formal type of group has fewer conflicts probably because of its structured nature.

**c) Influences of Personnel in Joining Groups in Schools.**

The study findings with regard to this effect of people joining groups are as shown in figure 4.



**Figure 4: Reasons for Joining Groups**

The analysis in figure 4 shows that (90%) of the respondents said that security is one of the main reasons why people join groups in educational institutions. The researcher found that basically the most important reason why most groups were formed in the first place was to guard against the interest of the members and this is a form of security. A large number of the study respondents that is (70%) cited goal achievement as the main reason why people join groups. 59% of the respondents said affiliation contributed to individuals joining groups. And 53% each said that individuals joined groups because of status and power. This study understands these reasons for joining groups to be the interest of the members of any group and easily have an effect to conflict management and resolution.

## **SECTION B: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Conflict is an ever-present and some say necessary dynamic in today's workplace environment. It can be the barrier to productivity or the catalyst for innovation and progressive problem-solving. How chief executives and managers understand the effects of conflict in organization and handle them largely depend on the awareness and approaches of conflict management and resolution.

### **4.4 Variable One: Effect of Conflict in School Organizations**

It was necessary that the study establish the effect of conflict in the performance of public secondary school organizations in Kenya as the main objective of this study. It is worth noting, performance of any organization is fundamental because it increases the successfulness of stakeholders needs including satisfaction of customer, employee, suppliers, local community stakeholders, and shareholders. While the importance of performance organizations is difficult to quantify it is evident that in

virtually all texts, research, and case studies on organizational improvement conflict management plays a central role (Beardwell and Claydon, 2007). Performance is primarily about assessing the extent to which an organization has achieved its broad goals or done the right things effectively and efficiently. Effect of conflict in school organizations therefore includes:

**a) Effect of Personnel in the School Organization**

The table 4.1 shows the behaviours of personnel and the effects they have in the performance of an organizational.

**Table 4.1: Effects of Conflicts in School Organizations**

<b>Problem Encountered</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Insubordination	25	60.9
Absenteeism	38	92.7
Friction or fighting etc	30	73.2
Drunkenness	19	46.3
Stealing	29	70.7
Drug abuse	23	56.1
Rudeness	30	73.2
Dissatisfaction	27	65.9
Peer group influence	34	82.9

The leading conflict 84 behavior encountered in the school organizations was absenteeism. All, which is 92.7% of the respondents, said that this was a major effect of conflict. The role played by peer influence is quite significant as 82.9% of the respondents reported that it was due to peer group pressure that conflict arose. The problem of peer group pressure may be also contributing to all the other effects that arise at the school organizations. Schools also were faced with also friction/fighting and rudeness at 73.2%. These two were each cited to be effects of conflict in school organizations. Though not among the top three conflict effects encountered in school organizations, stealing was cited 70.7% of the times, followed by dissatisfaction 65.9% and insubordination 60.9%. Drug abuse including drunkenness seemed to be

gaining ground in the schools as this was reported by 56.1% and 46.3% respectively of all heads as a problem. This is a problem of concern to the school chief executives.

From the findings it is important that before examining the attribution processes used by managers in determining the causes of performance deficiencies, it is useful to discuss determinants of personnel performance (Brewsfer *et. al* 2007). The behaviours of school organizations personnel affect the school in performance of its broad goals/objectives. Performance in an organization refers to output results from various activities assigned to all personnel's either as an individual or in groups (Cole, 2006).

In conclusion on this variable, the leading human resource challenge encountered in the educational institutions was absenteeism followed by peer influence in the second position. Friction/fighting and rudeness ranked third. Though, not among the top three; stealing, dissatisfaction and insubordination including drunkenness seemed to be gaining ground.

### **b) Negative (Dysfunctional) Conflict in School Organization**

#### **i) Involvement**

The study also sought to know if educational institutions had had any form of negative conflicts for the last ten years. All public secondary schools surveyed, 97.6% had been involved in some form of dysfunctional conflict since 2001 to 2010 except 2.4%.

#### **ii) Effects**

Further, the study found that schools that had had negative conflicts had the following effects as exhibited in table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Negative (Dysfunctional) Conflict in School Organization**

<b>Effect of Conflict</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Violent and aggression	30	73.2
Destruction of school property	27	65.9
Loss of life	2	4.9
Poor performance in all the school activities	29	70.7
Riots or strikes etc	30	73.2
Stigmatization	21	51.2
Personnel turnover or dropout	25	60.9
Vandalism or theft etc	23	56.1

Violence and aggression; riots or strikes were the leading factors of negative effect on school organization. They were reported by 73.2% each, of all respondents. The school organizations were also very much affected by poor performances in all school activity (70.7%). Institutions with negative effects as a result of ineffective conflict management also reported 65.9% were involved in destruction of property while personnel turnover or dropout stood at 60.9%. These five are the most common results of negative effect in conflict management in the performance of school organizations. Vandalism or theft had 56.1% and stigmatization (51.2%) contributed to a large extent of undesired environment for the development of human resources in school organizations as its core business. Loss of life is the least of all the effects of negative conflict. Although it ranks low at 4.9%, it is still a serious matter as life was lost when conflict occurred.

**c) Effects of Inter-group Conflicts in Organizations**

**i) Effects of Dysfunctional Conflict (Changes within the Groups)**

The study went ahead to find out the effect of dysfunctional conflict on changes within the groups shown in table 4.3.

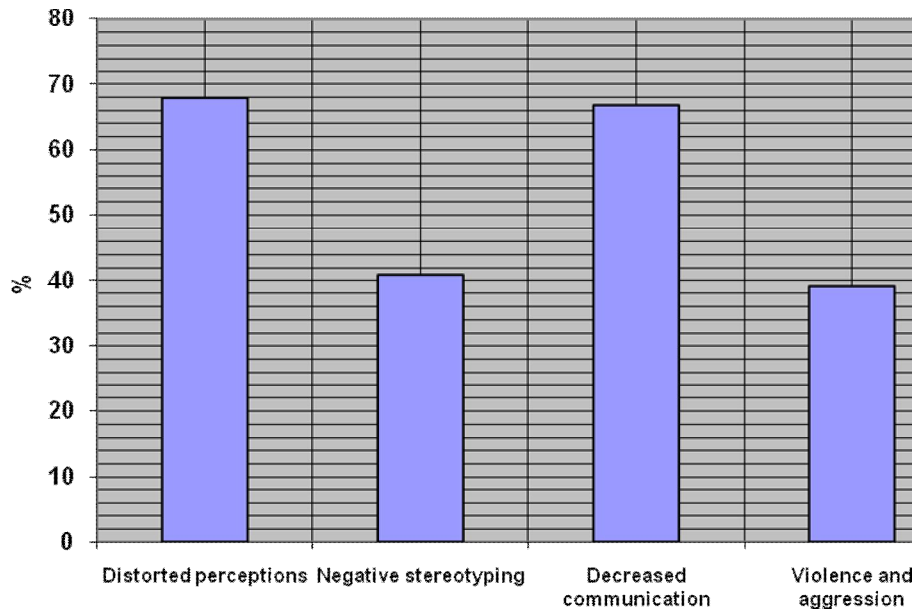
**Table 4.3: Effects of Inter-group Conflicts in Shool Organizations**

<b>Effect of conflict</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Increased group cohesiveness	33	80.5
Rise in autocratic leadership	36	87.8
Focus on activity	19	46.3
Emphasis on loyalty	21	51.2

The study findings indicate that majority 36 (87.8%) of the respondents said that dysfunctional conflict brings rise to autocratic leadership in an organization. The analysis also indicates that 33 (80.5%) of the respondents said that dysfunctional conflict causes increased group cohesiveness. 21 (51.2%) and 19 (46.3%) indicated that dysfunctional conflict encourages emphasis on loyalty and focus on activity in an organization respectively. Not all conflicts are bad and not all conflicts are good, according to Hocker and Wilmot (1995). People tend to view conflict as a negative force operating against successful completion of group or common goals. The study in this respect understands that conflict can create negative impact to groups but may also lead to positive effects depending on the nature of the conflict.

**ii) Effect of Dysfunctional Conflict on Personnel (Changes between Groups)**

The effect of dysfunctional conflict on personnel (changes between groups) is tabulated in figure 5.



***Figure 5: Effect of dysfunctional conflict on personnel (changes between groups))***

The analysis indicates that 68% of the respondents were of the opinion that distorted perception is one of the major repercussions of dysfunctional conflict between groups. This was followed closely by decreased communication in the organization at 67%. Negative stereotyping and violence aggression had 39% each.

The researcher found that conflict can be potentially destructive in groups especially when it consumes individual members` energies instead of concentrating on other productive activities of the organization. However, conflict can interfere with group process and create so much interpersonal hostility that group members may become unwilling or unable to work with others in achieving the organizational objectives. Unresolved conflicts tends to grow into bigger conflicts, the more it grows, the greater the chance of collecting more problems.

In summary effect of conflict management in performance of secondary schools, was found to have both positive effects and negative effects. Positive effects were: diffusion of more serious conflict, stimulation of a search for new facts or resolutions, increase in group cohesion and performance and assessment of power or ability. While the negative effects resulted to: impediments to smooth working, diminishing output, obstructions in the decision-making process and formation of competing affiliations within the organization. The focus in this study was to achieve balanced secondary schools organizational performance through effective management of conflict.

#### **4.5 Variable Two: Awareness of Conflicts in Organizations**

To fulfill the stated objective mentioned above of this study which was to determine whether the chief executives in public secondary schools being aware of conflicts help towards conflict management and resolution the researcher sought to find out whether the managers of school institutions understood the causes of inter-group conflicts, human resource challenges in solving organizational conflicts and the attitudes managers have on conflict management and resolution.

##### **a) Causes of Intergroup Conflict**

First, the study sought to find out the causes of inter-group conflict. The research findings with regard to cause of inter-group conflict are as tabulated in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Causes of Inter-group Conflict**

<b>Source of conflict</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Work independence	29	70.7
Difference in goals (limited resources & reward structure)	31	75.6
Differences in perception	27	65.9
Increased demand for specialist	29	70.7



The findings indicate that 31 (75.6%) of the respondents cited goal differences as the main cause of inter-group conflict. Further the study findings indicate that 29 (70.7%) each, of the respondents said that work independence and increased demand for specialist were the second causes of inter-group conflict. While 27 (65.9%) said differences in perception were the causes of conflicts in school organizations.

In an education institution, there are many causes of conflicts; however, conflicts within an individual usually arise when a person is uncertain about what task is expected to do, if not clearly defined by the supervisor or the person in charge. Furthermore, if the tasks of individuals working as a group are not clearly defined by the management they will lead to more conflicts. Conflict between individuals may result from role-related pressures. Conflicts would arise between individuals and groups if the goals are not specified for individuals within a group. Group members may disagree about facts or opinions from authorities. The interpretation of evidence may be questioned. Disagreement about the substance of the discussion is called task conflict. Task conflict can be productive by improving the quality of decisions and critical thinking processes. Another potential area for conflict is the interpersonal relationships within the organization.

#### **b) Human Resource Challenges facing Schools in Conflict Resolutions**

The researcher sought to find out the human resources challenges facing educational institutions in conflict resolutions.

**i) Dealing with Discipline of Personnel in Schools**

This study attempted also to determine how school managers dealt with indiscipline of personnel in the schools table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Dealing with Discipline of School Personnel**

<b>Dealing with Discipline of Personnel</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Suspension	38	92.7
Expulsion or sack	34	82.9
Guidance & counseling	27	65.9
Use discipline committees	31	75.6
Use Experts or specialists	11	26.8
Use corporal punishment	27	65.9

The study findings indicate that suspension is the most common form of disciplinary action taken by chief executives of schools in dealing with cases of indiscipline and conflict. Managers used (92.7%). This is followed by expulsion/sack 82.9% and use of discipline committees (75.6%). Guiding and counseling and use of corporal punishment shared equal (65.9%) while use of experts (26.8%) was not popularly used by chief executives in dealing with indiscipline of personnel in institutions.

**ii) Capacity to deal with Conflict Management and Resolution**

In this study, the school managers were also asked if the schools had the capacity to deal with problems related to conflict resolution and if they did what capacity did they have table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Capacity to Deal with Problems Related to Conflict Resolution**

<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Trained personnel in conflict resolution	8	19.5
Resources and sourcing policies	8	19.5
Conflict resolution policies	8	19.5
Hiring and firing policies	7	17.1
Personnel development policies	8	19.5
Compensation and rewarding structures	10	24.4
Allocation and delegation of duties policies	10	24.4
Industrial relations policies	10	24.4
Management policies	12	29.3

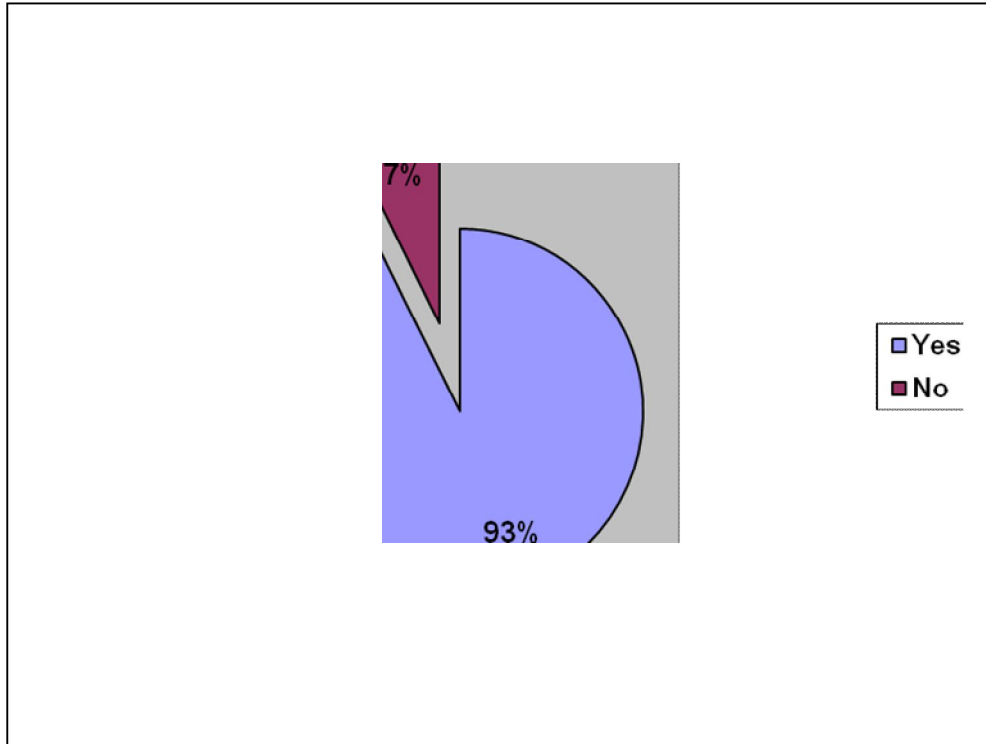
All respondents indicated that they did not have adequate capacity to deal with conflict whenever it arose in their respective educational institutions. They all had less than 30% capacity to deal with problems related to conflict resolution. It can be said that even though schools have some form of capacity to deal with conflicts, this capacity is far below what it may take to effectively manage conflicts in schools. This should be an area of concern to policy-makers in the education sector. This explains why schools continue to have cases of conflicts both among the students and among other members of the school community including the management.

**d) Attitude of the School Management towards Conflict Resolution and Management in School Organizations**

Further to the objective, the researcher was to find out the attitude of the school management towards conflict resolution. This is because attitude is very important and the different viewpoints expressed go a long way in determining the success or failure of conflict resolution processes. Attitude is when people see things differently because of differences in understanding and viewpoints. Most of these differences are usually not important.

**i) Presence of Conflicts in Educational Institutions**

First, the study sought to find out whether the educational institutions experience conflict as shown in figure 6.



***Figure 6: Does your school experience conflicts***

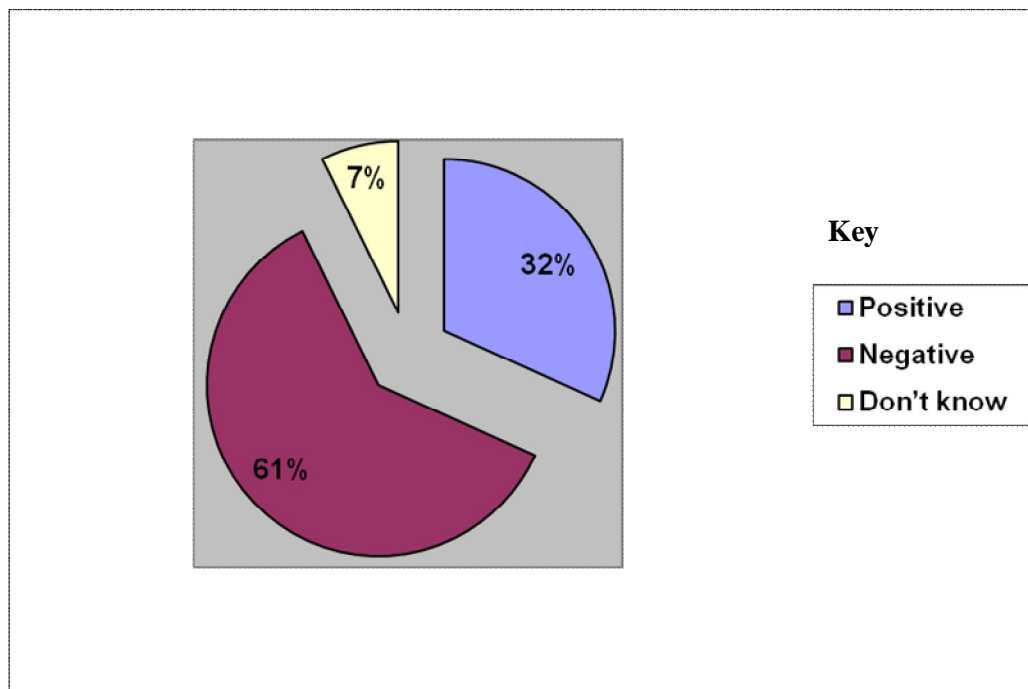
The study findings indicate that 93% of the respondents said that their schools experience conflict while 7% did not respond.

From the findings, it means that all schools experience one form of conflict or another at any one time. Conflicts arise when two groups or individuals interacting in

the same situation see the situation differently because of different sets of settings, information pertaining to the universe, background, disposition, reason or outlook. In a particular mood, individuals think and perceive in a certain manner. For example, the half-full glass of one individual can be half-empty to another. Obviously both individuals convey the same thing, but they do so differently owing to contrasting perceptions and dispositions.

## ii) Types of Conflicts Experienced in Educational Institutions

On establishing that all schools experience conflict, the study went ahead to find out the type of conflict experienced according to the school managers. The study findings are as shown in figure 7.



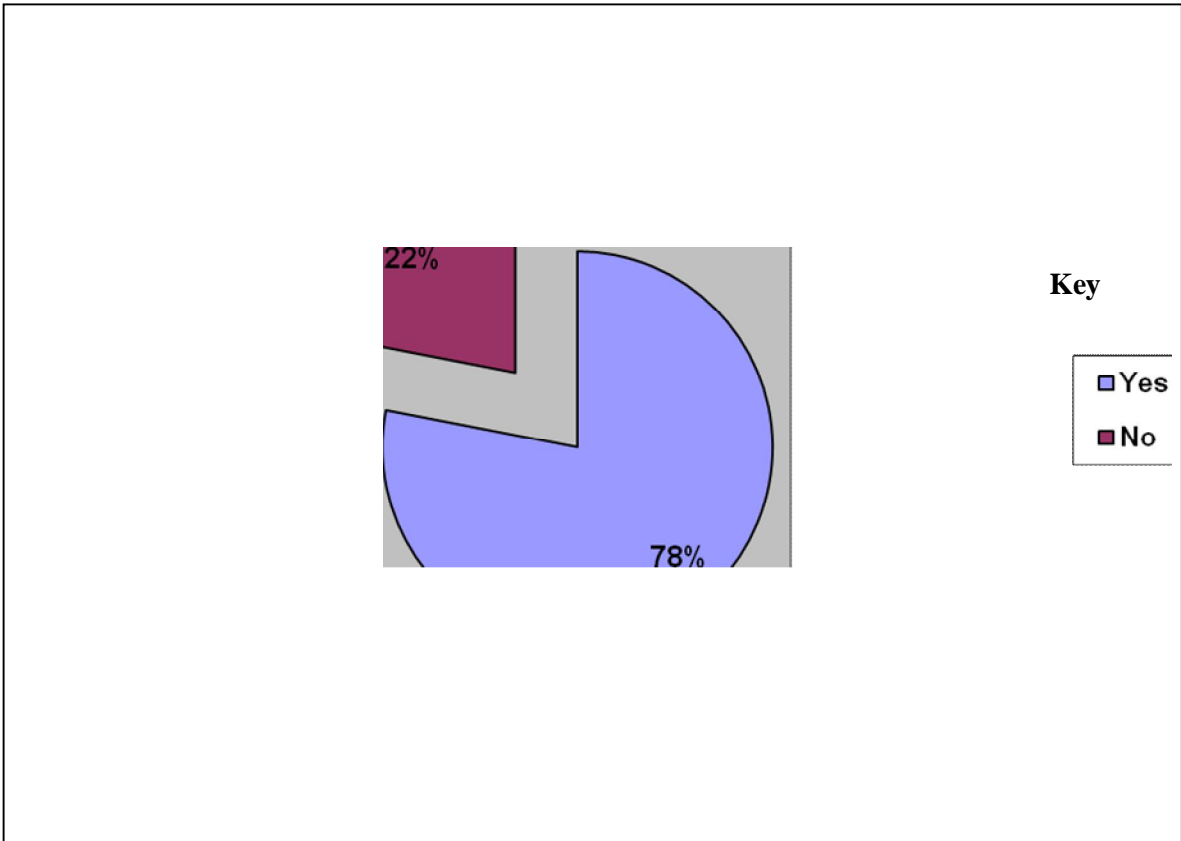
**Figure 7: Type of conflict the school experiences**

The analysis above indicated that 61% of the respondents said that the conflict experienced in their school is negative. 32% indicated that conflict experience in the schools was positive and 7% did not know what experience the conflicts have on their organization.

The study found out that most of the respondents were not aware of positive conflict and that they viewed every conflict from a negative perspective. People have different styles, principles, values, beliefs and slogans which determine their choices and objectives. When choices contradict, people want different things that can create conflict situations. For example, a risk-taking manager would be in conflict with a risk-minimizing supervisor who believes in firm control and a well-kept routine. However, it is important to note that when managed, some conflicts can be beneficial.

### **iii) Should Principals strive to eliminate Conflict in their Jurisdiction?**

On establishing the understanding of the school managers on conflict, the study went ahead to find out if principals who are the school managers should strive to eliminate conflict in their jurisdictions. The study findings are as tabulated in figure 8 below.



**Figure 8: Principals should strive to eliminate conflict**

The analysis indicates that majority (78%) of the respondents are in agreement that principals should strive to resolve conflicts. Minority 22% indicated that not all conflicts in an organization should be eliminated. This is because conflict improves decision-making outcomes, especially on task-related conflict and group productivity by increasing the quality through constructive criticism and individuals adopting a devil advocate role.

Research by Ford (2007) has also found that task related conflict is beneficial to the organization since it allows the exchange of ideas and assist better performance amongst the group members. Other benefits include improved group

learning and accuracy in situation assessment (Jones and Hill, 2000), promoted the development of new ideas and approaches (Adomi) and achieve high quality decisions since individuals confront problems (Schwenk and Valacich, 1994). Conflict is seen as a productive force that can stimulate members of the organization to increase their knowledge and skills and contribute to organizational innovation and productivity.

#### **4.6 Variable Three: Approaches used by Managers in Public Secondary schools in Conflict Resolution and Management**

Whether dealing with individuals or groups, the definition of conflict is the same: “unresolved differences.” Therefore, the processes are very similar. In both of these settings, dealing with conflict means resolving differences in ways that help each side get the work done and function together more effectively. The approach, that chief executive takes to reach this resolution is critical to the performance of any organization. This study delves deep among others, into three approaches (resolution, negotiation and stimulation) for resolving conflicts in organizations.

##### **a) Conflict Resolution Handling Technique**

The researcher in this section sought to find out whether the educational institutions chief executives were using resolution conflict handling technique. The respondents were to indicate how often they use various strategies under this technique to manage appropriately the inter-group conflict through resolution. These solutions were as shown in the table 4.7.



**Table 4.7: Resolution conflict handling technique**

Strategy	Never	Rarely	Some times	Frequently	Always	Total
1. I argue my case with my personnel to show the merits of my position	5.50%	21.7%	5.50 %	36.7%	31.7%	100%
2. I negotiate with my personnel so that a compromise can be reached	14.6 %	9.7%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
3. I try to satisfy the expectations of my personnel	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
4. I try to investigate an issue with my personnel to find a solution acceptable to us	4.8%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	43.9%	100%
5. I am firm in pursuing my side of the issue	10.0%	36.7%	0.0%	21.7%	31.7%	100%
6. I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my personnel to myself	2.4%	12.2%	04.8 %	41.5%	39.0%	100%
7. I hold on to my solution to a problem	14.6 %	9.7%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
8. I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
9. I exchange accurate information with my personnel to solve a problem together	0.0%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
10. I avoid open discussion of my differences with my personnel	0.0%	41.5%	0.0%	46.3%	9.7%	100%
11. I accommodate the wishes of my personnel	10.0%	21.7%	0.0%	36.7%	31.7%	100%
12. I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best way possible	2.4%	12.2%	04.8 %	41.5%	39.0%	2.4%
13. I propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks	04.8%	12.2%	2.4%	41.5%	39.0%	2.4%
14. I go along with the suggestions of my personnel	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
15. I try to keep my disagreement with my personnel to myself in order to avoid hard feelings	0.0%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%

The findings indicate that majority of the respondents understand that conflict management is an all-inclusive process and the personnel be they juniors must be able to feel that they are organized and that their contribution to the solution

of a conflict is vital. In addition, 31 (75.6%) of the respondents said that they frequently or always negotiate with the personnel so that a compromise can be reached. This can be interpreted to mean that the study respondents emphasize on a team-approach to resolving a conflict. Twenty-eight (70%) of the study respondents said that they frequently or always argue their cases with their personnel to show the merits of the position they have taken. This position is contradicted where 10 (24.3%) of the same respondents said that, they rarely try to investigate an issue with the personnel to find a solution acceptable to them. This contradiction can mean on one hand the will to resolve a conflict but on the other hand taking too much power on oneself without giving any leeway to the personnel to participate in finding a solution. The study found that this is among the causes and drawbacks to effectively managing conflicts in educational institutions under study. This line of argument where managers lean on their side without much attention to the other personnel is supported where 22 (53.6%) of the respondents argued that they are firm in pursuing their side of the issue. This waters any prospects for consensus and be a process that shows more discontent among the personnel involved.

After finding out this contradictory statements, the researcher decided to conduct a one sample t-test with a test value of 2.5 which indicates indecisiveness of items which all the respondents never/rarely do  $P < 0.05$  if the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) is less than 2.5 or always/frequently do if the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) is more than 2.5 as shown in table 4.8 in order to have an overview of where the study respondents stand with regard to solution conflict handling technique.

**Table 4.8: One Sample Statistics for Resolution Conflict Handling Technique**

Strategy	n	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	s
1. I argue my case with my personnel to show the merits of my position	41	2.4930	.9691
2. I negotiate with my personnel so that a compromise can be reached	41	2.7183	.8973
3. I try to satisfy the expectations of my personnel	41	2.3571	1.2163
4. I try to investigate an issue with my personnel to find a solution acceptable to us	40	2.1014	.9873
5. I am firm in pursuing my side of the issue	39	2.5942	.9750
6. I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my personnel to myself	41	2.4930	.9691
7. I hold on to my solution to a problem	41	2.7183	.8973
8. I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made	41	2.3571	1.2163
9. I exchange accurate information with my personnel to solve a problem together	40	2.1014	.9873
10. I avoid open discussion of my differences with my personnel	39	3.5942	.9750
11. I accommodate the wishes of my personnel	40	2.3768	1.0161
12. I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best way possible	41	2.4930	.9691
13. I propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks	40	3.7183	.6973
14. I go along with the suggestions of my personnel	41	2.9571	1.6163
15. I try to keep my disagreement with my personnel to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.	37	2.1014	.9873

The analysis above shows that there exists a difference in terms of frequency of use of resolution strategy conflict handling technique. A closer look of the analysis above indicates that majority ( $\bar{X}=3.7$ ) said that they frequently propose middle ground for breaking deadlocks. This item had the majority agreeing since it had the lowest dispersion rate among all items in this category ( $s = 0.69$ ).

It is also important to note that even though a good number of the respondents ( $\bar{X} = 2.95$ ) argued that they frequently get along with suggestions of their personnel, it is very vital to note that the item had the highest dispersion rate among all items in this category ( $s = 1.6$ ). This implies that even though a good number get along with the suggestions of their personnel, a good number on the other hand do not get along with suggestions of their personnel. This may be because of the different attitudes of the study respondents towards conflict resolution and their understanding of what conflict resolution involves.

In this approach managers of school organizations must realize that because causes of conflict differ, the means of resolving conflict will also differ, depending on circumstances. Choice of appropriate conflict resolution method depends on many factors including reasons why the conflict occurred and the specific relationship between the manager and the conflicting groups. Some of the techniques for solving intergroup conflict that has reached levels dysfunctional to the school organization could include: problem solving, super ordinate goals, expansion of resources, avoidance, smoothing, compromise, authoritative command, altering the human and structural variables, and identifying a common enemy.

#### **b) Negotiation Conflict Handling Technique**

In this section, the study sought to find out how frequently the respondents were using negotiation as a conflict handling technique. This and more findings with regard to use of negotiation as a conflict handling technique are as tabulated in table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Negotiation Conflict Handling Technique**

Strategy	Never	Rarely	Some times	Frequently	Always	Total
1. I use collaborative process in order to have joint gains with my personnel	10.0%	36.7%	0.0%	21.7%	31.7%	100%
2. I try collaborative effort to create value where none previously existed with personnel	2.4%	12.2%	04.8%	41.5%	39.0%	100%
3. I try to bring personnel with differing interests together to forge an agreement	14.6 %	9.7%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
4. I impress all the affected personnel with a walk-away feeling like they have won	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
5. I thoroughly understand the personnel's needs and position regarding the issues to be resolved	0.0%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
6. I always come to the negotiations with a full appreciation of the personnel values, beliefs and wants that drive their actions	0.0%	41.5%	0.0%	46.3%	9.7%	100%
7. I develop an understanding and evaluating personnel options available to resolve the conflict	10.0%	21.7%	0.0%	36.7%	31.7%	100%
8. Use the bad-guy member of the negotiating group advocate positions so much out of line that whatever the good guy says sounds reasonable to the personnel	2.4%	12.2%	04.8%	41.5%	39.0%	100%
9. I involve getting an additional concession or perk after an agreement has been reached with the personnel	04.8%	12.2%	2.4%	41.5%	39.0%	100%
10. I try to use joint problem solution with my personnel	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
11. I do not commit quickly to unfavorable terms of personnel	0.0%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
12. I try to use splitting the difference when my personnel come to an impasse	10.0%	36.7%	0.0%	21.7%	31.7%	100%
13. I use ridiculously low offers and/or concessions to lower the personnel expectations	14.6 %	49.7%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
14. I try to understand the relevant traits of the personnel negotiations	9.7%	9.7%	14.6 %	17.0%	48.7%	100%
15. I look beneath the roles my personnel play and ask what really motivates the individual(s)	5.50%	36.7%	5.50%	21.7%	31.7%	100%
16. I try to show my personnel high level of trust leading to greater openness and sharing of information	14.6 %	9.7%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
17. I confidently express my personnel that I am firm on position when in actual sense I am flexible	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
18. I use a mediator to allow an impartial person to work with my personnel to reach agreement that benefits both personnel and the school as a whole	4.8%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	43.9%	100%

The study findings were encouraging to note 48.7% of the respondents said that they do the following to personnel in their school organizations during the negotiations of conflicts: bring them together, impress them, understand them, joint problem solution, thorough understanding, commit to unfavorable terms, use

ridiculously low offers, understand relevant traits, show high level of trust, confidently express. Use of a mediator was 43.9%, while 39% of the respondents indicated that they: collaborate effort, use the bad-guy, and involve getting and additional concession with personnel. But 31.7% indicated that they: use collaborative process, develop an understanding, use splitting the difference, look beneath the roles and find out what really motivates personnel in organizations. The least 9.7% was when the managers of secondary schools came to the negotiations with a full appreciation of the personnel values, beliefs and wants that drove their actions.

In view of the findings managers of secondary schools should acknowledge the negotiation process as a collaborative pursuit of joint gains and a collaborative effort to create value where none previously existed. It is a win-win approach. If done poorly, the process can be described as a street fight. Negotiation entails having two sides, with differing or conflicting interests, come together to forge an agreement. Usually, each side will bring to the process a series of proposals that then are discussed and acted upon. Everyone is familiar with the importance of bargaining to settle union disputes, formulate trade pacts, handle hostage situations, and reach arms agreements. Managers in school organizations perform the same function on a continuing basis, negotiating with students, subordinates (none and teaching staffs), superiors (none government, government or agents and others), vendors, communities, and customers daily. This will include: group negotiation and pre-negotiation tasks (such as understanding the other side, knowing all the options, negotiation tactics, impact of personalization on the negotiation process, role of trust, alternatives to direct negotiations).

To have a conclusive view on the above issues, the researcher conducted a one sample t-test with a test value of 2.5 which indicates indecisiveness of items which all the respondents never or rarely do  $P < 0.05$  if the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) is less than 2.5 or always/frequently do if the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) is more than 2.5 as shown in table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: One Sample Statistics for Negotiation Conflict Handling Technique**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S</b>
1. I use collaborative process in order to have joint gains with my personnel	41	2.4930	.9691
2. I try collaborative effort to create value where none previously existed with personnel	41	2.7183	.8973
3. I try to bring personnel with differing interests together to forge an agreement	41	2.3571	1.2163
4. I impress all the affected personnel with a walk-away feeling like they have won	40	2.1014	.9873
5. I thoroughly understand the personnel's needs and position regarding the issues to be resolved	41	2.5942	.9750
6. I always come to the negotiations with a full appreciation of the personnel values, beliefs and wants that drive their actions	41	2.4930	.9691
7. I develop an understanding and evaluating personnel options available to resolve the conflict	41	2.7183	.8973
8. Use the bad-guy member of the negotiating group advocate positions so much out of line that whatever the good guy says sounds reasonable to the personnel	41	2.3571	1.2163
9. I involve getting an additional concession or perk after an agreement has been reached with the personnel	40	2.1014	.9873
10. I try to use joint problem solution with my personnel	41	3.5942	.6750
11. I do not commit quickly to unfavorable terms of personnel	40	2.3768	1.0161
12. I try to use splitting the difference when my personnel come to an impasse	41	2.4930	.9691
13. I use ridiculously low offers and/or concessions to lower the personnel expectations	40	2.7183	.8973
14. I try to understand the relevant traits of the personnel negotiations	41	2.3571	1.2163
15. I look beneath the roles my personnel play and ask what really motivates the individual(s)	41	1.1014	.9873
16. I try to show my personnel high level of trust leading to greater openness and sharing of information	40	2.1014	.9873
17. I confidently express my personnel that I am firm on position when in actual sense I am flexible	39	2.5942	.9750
18. I use a mediator to allow an impartial person to work with my personnel to reach agreement that benefits both personnel and the school as a whole	40	2.3768	1.0161

The analysis above indicates that the respondents try to use joint problem solution with their personnel as the item scored a  $\chi$  of 3.5. The issue also had the



highest agreement rate with a standard deviation of 0.65 implying very low dispersion; meaning the respondents coalesced on the always and frequently use option with regard to this item.

It is also important to note that the item that had the lowest mean among all in this section showcases the major deficiencies of the respondents since the findings indicate that the respondents never or rarely do care about what really motivates the individuals. The item also had a low dispersion rate implying that most of the respondents behave the same way. The study understands that it is important to understand the motivation behind the personnel so that one stands in well-versed position to understand why some personnel behave the way they behave. This can only be done by digging into the motivation behind the personnel.

### **c) Stimulating Conflict Handling Technique**

The findings from the study with regard to use of stimulation as a conflict handling technique are as tabulated in table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Stimulating Conflict Handling Technique**

Strategy	Never	Rarely	Some times	Frequently	Always	Total
1. Stimulate functional conflict among my personnel in order to contribute positively to school performance	10.0%	36.7%	0.0%	21.7%	31.7%	100%
2. I intelligently use the school's communication channels to stimulate beneficial conflict to personnel	14.6 %	9.7%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
3. I hire or transfer individuals whose attitudes, values and background differ from those of the personnel present	0.0%	9.7%	14.6 %	26.8%	48.7%	100%
4. I suspend or expel personnel who do not adhere to the schools regulation and norms	0.0%	24.3%	0.0%	26.8%	48.7%	100%
5. I change the structure of the organization not only to help resolve my personnel conflict, but also to create conflict	0.0%	41.5%	0.0%	48.7%	9.7%	100%
6. I use various incentives such as awards, recognition etc for outstanding performance, which often stimulate competition among my personnel	10.0%	21.7%	0.0%	36.7%	31.7%	100%

The study findings above indicate that three strategies were rated at 20 (48.7%) each, that is, the respondents said that they always intelligently use the schools communication channels to stimulate beneficial conflict to personnel; hire or transfer individuals whose attitudes, values and background differ from those of the personnel present; suspend or expel personnel who do not adhere to the schools rules and regulations. However, it is important also to note that 13 (31.7%) of the respondents said they always stimulate functional conflict among personnel's in order to contribute positively to school performance; use various incentives such as awards, recognition and others for outstanding performance, which often stimulate competition among personnel. This is very disappointing as it's a form of escapism; instead of dealing with the problem, they transfer the problem to somewhere else and this will later boil down to a crisis. Further, most of the respondents are not ready to

give-in whereas we know that all-inclusive conflict resolution process involves give-and-take.

Here while managers of secondary schools may assume lack of conflict in their respective school organizations may prove beneficial in the short run, it could lead to situations where one group holds tremendous influence over another. For example, observers of the Starehe, Strathmore school organizations and others style of participative management question whether the lack of conflict between the school managers and personnel in those secondary schools is healthy. However this approach provides techniques (such as communication, bringing outside individuals into the group, altering the school organization's structure and stimulating competition) that have stimulated conflict to a functional level, where it contributes positively to organizational performance.

To have a conclusive view on the above issues, the researcher conducted a one sample t-test with a test value of 2.5 which indicates indecisiveness of items which all the respondents never or rarely do  $P < 0.05$  if the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) is less than 2.5 or always/frequently do if the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) is more than 2.5 as shown in table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: One Sample Statistics for Stimulating Conflict Handling Technique**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Stimulate functional conflict among my personnel in order to contribute positively to school performance	39	2.5942	.9750
2. I intelligently use the school's communication channels to stimulate beneficial conflict to personnel	40	3.3768	1.0161
3. I hire or transfer individuals whose attitudes, values and background differ from those of the personnel present	41	2.4930	.9691
4. I suspend or expel personnel who do not adhere to the schools regulation and norms	40	2.7183	.8973
5. I change the structure of the organization not only to help resolve my personnel conflict, but also to create conflict	40	2.3571	1.2163
6. I use various incentives such as awards, recognition etc for outstanding performance, which often stimulate competition among my personnel	39	2.5792	.9721

On overall, from the analysis above it is very clear that stimulation as a conflict handling tactic is very much practiced by the COEs of secondary schools. It is also very important to note that most of the respondents are not ready to give-in whereas we know that all-inclusive conflict resolution process involves give-and-take.

#### **d) Most widely used Technique in Conflict Management**

First, the study sought to find out the most widely used technique in conflict management. The results from the study are as shown in table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Widely used Technique in Conflict Management**

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Resolution	17	41.5
Negotiation	16	39.1
Stimulation	38	92.7

The data obtained indicate that most principals used the stimulation tactic 92.7% in conflict management. The resolution tactic was used (41.5%) and the negotiation tactic was least popular that is 39.1%.

It was important to find out the most approach used by secondary school organizations CEOs in solving conflicts in their respective school organizations. This is because groups placed in a conflict situation tend to react in fairly predictable ways, in changes that occur within groups and between groups as a result of dysfunctional intergroup conflict. To be able to effectively reduce school conflict, managers in secondary school organizations should understand common causes of school personnel conflict (that is perceived diminution of authority, social and physical differences, dependence on personnel knowledge, different loyalties and others) and use the right approach to solve secondary school organizational conflict.

#### **4.7 Variable Four: Role of Environment in Organizational Conflict Resolution and Management**

Environment was the intervening variable. The study was to evaluate the role it has in conflict management and the performance of school organizations. The respondents' views were therefore sought on the following environmental issues: the extend by which respondents agree that there is required an organizational policies and structures necessary in conflict resolution in school organizations, human resource strategy which constitute guides to decision-making in schools and legal framework governing school organizations in Kenya. All these aspects of environmental variable are important in enhancing conflict management in school organizations summarized in the table 4.14

**Table 4.14: Role of Environment in Organizational Conflict Resolution and Management**

<b>Environment</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Policies and Structures	68%	26%	6%	100%
Human resource strategy	46%	29%	25%	100%
Legal framework	50%	38%	12%	100%

Sixty eighty percent and 26% of the respondents strongly agree and agree that an organization require necessary policies and structures in order to resolve conflicts in school organizations. Six percent disagree. Forty six percent and 29% of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that human resource strategy constitute guides to decision-making in conflict management in school organizations. Twenty five percent disagree. Fifty percent and 38% of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that legal framework is important in governing school organizations. They provide guidelines in which conflict resolution in school organizations is enhanced.

Further, from the findings, conflict management is the process of removing cognitive barriers to agreement. Conflict is, therefore, considered contained when it ceases to interfere with activities of the groups involved. The positive aspect of collaboration overcomes restraining aspect of conflict. Since various issues contributes to conflicts in our educational institutions do induce conflict, skillful management of conflicts is a potent strategy. This can be achieved by changing the interaction pattern by introducing a responsive environment in a school organization.

One of the reasons why public secondary schools continue to experience conflicts included lack of being aware of conflicts in the school organization. Well defined handling techniques of conflicts and the effect of conflict management in the performance of public secondary school organizations. The environment should act to fill this gap by providing efficient and effective decision making in achieving the desired organizational performance. To operate together where there is lack of trust and separates them if conflict originates from difference in principles, the structure should bring conflicting units to an agreement to eliminate undue struggle for policy and any other factors to control. It should also ensure that all the groups are encouraged to resolve conflict at various levels and are ready to compromise, with controlling power/CEO being fair to all parties.

#### **4.8 Organizational Performance**

Organizational performance is measured by appraising five dimensions of performance: return on investment, margin on sales, capacity utilization, customer satisfaction and product quality (Muhammad *et. al* 2009). Market orientation fundamentally establishes tenets of organization behaviour with respect to organization's business constituents (customers, competitors, internal functions) which unequivocally make impact on organization performance (DeDreu and Weingart 2003). Organizational performance measure gets important issues such as product quality, customer satisfaction, and new product development. The perceived market performance focuses more narrowly on economic outcomes such as profitability and market share. Job or work structures are also used to enhance organization performance by allowing skilled and motivated employees to become more involved in determining what work is to be done and how it is to be performed (Allen and Ann 1999).

### **a) Groups of Personnel requiring attention in Conflict Resolution**

A school community is made up of the teaching staff, the non-teaching staff and the students. Each of these groups does have personnel conflicts from time to time. Taking into account of this, the study also wanted to determine which among these three groups required a lot of attention in conflict management table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Personnel that require a lot of Attention in School Management**

<b>Require a lot of attention</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Teaching staff	25	61
Non-teaching staff	15	36.6
Students personnel	39	95.1

Among the three groups, the study found that most respondents felt that students (95.1%) required more attention in conflict resolution, followed by the teachers 61% and lastly, the non-teaching staff 36.6%. Respondents felt that particular groups needed more attention. It is important, from the findings that students are victims of mob-psychology and therefore, needed more attention in conflict resolution. These data also show that teachers, being mediators of conflicts in school as well as leaders of most activities in schools should also get attention on conflict management issues.

The study revealed that students being the majority needed more attention in conflict resolution than the two other groups. The main reason advanced for this is that students are the majority. There may be a lot of conflicts among this group either among themselves or between them and the teachers which in turn may adversely affect the output in terms of examination performances. Performance of an organization can be expressed in non financial and financial terms (Guest, 2000). Excellent performance of national examination (such as KCSE) is one of the goals of



secondary school organizations need to achieve as a result of appropriate conflict management and resolution.

#### **b) Performance of School Organizations**

It is worth noting, performance measurement is fundamental to school organizations because it increases the successfulness of stakeholders needs including customers, employee, suppliers, local community stakeholders, and shareholders. While the importance of performance measurement is difficult to quantify it is evident that in virtually all texts, research, and case studies on organizational improvement, performance measurement plays a central role (Beardwell and Claydon, 2007). Performance is primarily about assessing the extent to which an organization has achieved its broad goals or done the right things effectively and efficiently. It was necessary to look at the management and the performance of school organization. This was the main objective of this study. The findings are as indicated in table 4.16.

**Table 4.16: Performance of School Organizations**

<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
i) Schools which do not experience personnel conflict perform well in all the school activities and have more returns on investment in terms of quality (passes of students in national exams and improved services from the rest of school personnel).	29	70
ii) Generally the discipline/behavior of personnel is good in the school where conflict management is practiced.	37	90
iii) Schools that practice conflict resolution functions utilize effective and efficient in capacity utilization.	34	83.3
iv) Schools principals who are knowledgeable about the role of management in conflict resolution experience less or non-personnel conflict in their respective schools and customers are satisfied.	34	83.3
v) Training of school principals in conflict resolution contributes significantly to the reduction of personnel conflict in a school organization.	40	97.5
vi) Principals who foster dysfunctional conflict by dealing with problems could surprisingly experience various forms of organizational conflict.	36	86.7
vii) Schools that practice management in conflict resolution realize organizational survival hence produces responsible/quality future human resources.	37	90
viii) Schools that use management in conflict resolutions as a function realize positive impact in their respective school organizations	27	66.7

All respondents 97.5% except one indicated that training of school principals in conflict resolution contributes significantly to the reduction of personnel conflict in a school organization. Further (90%) each, respondents indicate that generally the discipline/behavior of personnel is good in the school where conflict management is practiced and realize organizational survival hence produces responsible future human resources. And (86.7%) principals who foster dysfunctional conflict by dealing with problems could surprisingly experience various forms of organizational conflict in their schools. About 83.3% each, of respondents indicated that schools

that practice conflict resolution functions are effective and efficient and experience less on personnel conflict respectively. In general (70%) of the respondents said that schools which do not experience personnel conflict do perform well in all the school activities while (66.7%) said schools that use management in conflict resolutions as a function realize positive impact in their respective school organizations.

Relationship between conflict management in the performance of school organizations seem to be clear. When the management is knowledgeable in conflict management and at the same time put into practice this knowledge, the schools will experience less conflict and do well in all activities that is: return on investment, excellent rating of its students, proper utilization of staff/personnel, customer satisfactions and produces responsible students/quality human resources other areas in the entire organization. The converse is also true that school managers who do not have the knowledge and do not practice this function may experience other forms of organizational conflicts and affect school performance.

#### **4.9 Recommendations for Improving Conflict Resolution and Management**

The role of school management in personnel conflict resolution cannot be underestimated. As a follow-up of this, the study asked school principal, to suggest some recommendations that could be used by the CEOs of school organizations in order to reduce school organization conflict. Their responses are tabulated table 4.17.

**Table 4.17: Recommendations to Resolve School Organization Conflict**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1. Proper communication	5	12.2
2. Encourage participative discussion	4	9.8
3. Elimination of mistrust between teachers and head teachers	1	2.4
4. Amicable conflict resolution measures	4	9.8
5. Teachers and support staff should be obedient	3	7.3
6. Encourage transparency	2	4.8
7. Teachers be trained on conflict management	4	9.8
8. Encourage students practice high level of maturity	1	2.4
9. Student leaders to take control in absence of teachers	3	7.3
10. Train principals on conflict management before appointment	7	17.1
11. Democratization of all elective posts to reduce conflicts	4	9.8
12. Draw a clear distinction of roles of each organization	3	7.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>

Most principals felt that training principals in conflict management will go a long way in reducing personnel conflict in the schools. Thus 17.1% of all the principals chose this as the number one factor in managing conflict. Proper communication 12.2% was also cited as an important factor in managing conflict. The other four recommendations that scored 9.8% each in conflict management are encouraging participative discussion, amicable conflict resolution measures, teacher to get training on conflict management and the democratization of all elective posts to reduce conflicts. Teachers and support staff should be obedient (7.3%) student leaders to take control in absence of teachers 7.3% and draw a clear distinction of roles of each organization (7.3%) followed by 2.4% each, said elimination of mistrust between teachers and principals encourage students practice high level of maturity.

#### 4.9 Test of Null Hypotheses

The researcher did the test of hypotheses used in the study in order to find out whether the data collected was valid and to determine their accuracy. In the hypothesis testing the main aim is whether to accept the null hypothesis or not to accept the null hypothesis (Kothari, 2009).

##### Hypothesis One

**H<sub>0</sub>:** The first null hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between conflict management and performance of educational institutions. To test this hypothesis, contingency table, chi-square test and regression analysis were used to analyze the magnitude and direction of the relationship in table 4.18.

**Table 4.18: Contingency of Conflict Resolution and Performance in Schools**

		<b>Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Conflict resolution	Effective	21	2	23
	Not effective	3	15	18
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>41</b>

Five percent level of significance =  $P < 0.05$

Chi-square critical value

Where  $\alpha = 0.05$  &  $n = 41$

$$\chi^2_{\alpha} = 3.841$$

This is calculated through a table 4.19 as shown.

**Table 4.19: Chi-square**

<i>Cell</i>	<i>O<sub>i</sub></i>	<i>λ<sub>i</sub></i>	<i>O<sub>i</sub> - λ<sub>i</sub></i>	<i>(O<sub>i</sub> - λ<sub>i</sub>)<sup>2</sup></i>	$\frac{(O_i - \lambda_i)^2}{\lambda_i}$
1, 1	21	13.5	7.5	56.25	4.17
1, 2	02	9.5	- 7.5	56.25	5.92
2, 1	03	10.5	- 7.5	56.25	5.35
2, 2	15	7.5	7.5	56.25	7.5

**Chi-square computed**

The sum of the last column gives  $(\chi^2_c) = 22.94$

At the 95% confidence level and a degree of freedom of  $= (2-1) (2-1) = 1$ ,  $\chi^2_a = 3.841$ .

Since  $\chi^2_c$  is more than  $\chi^2_a$ , we reject the null hypothesis  $H_0$  and accept the alternate hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that conflict resolutions have a relationship/influences performance organizations table 4.20.

**Table 4.20: Results for Regression Analysis of Conflict Resolution against Performance Index**

Model Summary

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.690	.353	.107	.1452

a Predictors: (Constant), CONNDEX

The regression analysis shows a strong relationship  $r = 0.69$  and  $r^2 = 0.353$  which shows that 35.3% of the change/improvement in performance of educational institutions can be explained by the on-going activities of conflict resolution. This relationship is not weak and can be used to explain/predict the rate of performance of

secondary schools in Kenya by studying the activities/trend/style of conflict resolution

**Table 4.21: Results for ANOVA Analysis of Conflict Resolution against Performance Index**

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	.168	1	.168	7.964	.07
Residual	1.202	29	2.109E-02		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.370</b>	<b>30</b>			

a Predictors: (Constant), CONNDEX

b Dependent Variable: PERFORMDEX

**Table 4.22: Coefficients**

Model	Un standardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.228	.094		2.429	.018
RESNDEX	.412	.146	.350	2.822	.007

a Dependent Variable: PERFORMDEX

Further on the beta coefficient of the resulting regression model  $t=2.822$  indicates that the beta coefficient is significantly greater than 0,  $p=0.07$  which is less than  $p=0.05$  the test statistic. This confirms that essentially there is a strong relationship between conflict resolution and performance of educational institutions. It is, therefore, the conviction of the researcher that the style of conflict resolution should be aligned with the expectations as well as needs if performance in educational institutions is to be achieved as the ultimate aim of the learning institutions since the study has established that effectiveness in conflict resolution is

bound to result in improved working and living standards and subsequent performance of educational institutions.

Relationship between conflict and the management seems to be clear. When the management is knowledgeable in conflict management and at the same time put into practice this knowledge, the educational institutions will experience less conflict and do well in all other areas. The converse is also true that chief executives who do not have the knowledge and do not practice this role may experience other forms of organizational conflicts and affect school performance.

### **Hypothesis Two**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** School Chief Executive Officers being aware of conflicts in their respective institutions have no bearing on conflict resolution. The main concern here was to determine whether the CEOs in public secondary schools understood conflicts; causes and effects of conflicts; human resource challenges and attitudes towards conflict resolution and management. Whether there existed any differences in terms of conflict resolution between managers who are more and less aware of conflicts in their jurisdictions as shown in table 4.23.



**Table 4.23: Independent Samples T-test for Level of Awareness and Conflict Resolution**

	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Level of awareness								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.068	.795	.083	58	.934	1.143E-02	.1372	-.2633	.2861
Equal variances not assumed			.083	50.328	.934	1.143E-02	.1383	-.2664	.2893

The mean of managers who are less aware in terms of conflict resolution was 3.0400 while those who were more aware of conflicts were 3.0286. The Independent sample t-test above shows that there is no significant difference (0.934) in terms of conflict resolution between managers who are more aware and those that are less aware at 95% confidence level. This implies that the difference in the level of awareness does not significantly affect conflict resolution contrary to expectations.

### Hypothesis Three

**H<sub>0</sub>:** The third null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference in management of conflict, between managers who practice conflict handling techniques and those who do not. The results are presented in table 4.24.

**Table 4.24: Results for the ANOVA analysis**

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F
Between (factors)	937.39	K-1 2	468.695	5.547
Within (error)	1563.21	N-K 39	82274	
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>		

To test whether the difference in means in relation to use of conflict handling techniques was significant, analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistic was used. This parametric test was used to test the hypothesis that use of conflict handling techniques has no significant influence on conflict management. The result of analysis indicated that there was statistically significant difference among the means scores FCA 5.547 at 0.05. It was concluded that use of conflict handling techniques has an influence on effective management of conflict in educational institutions.

### Hypothesis Four

**H<sub>0</sub>:** The fourth null hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference between the role of environment in conflict management and performance of school organizations. The results are summarized in table 4.25

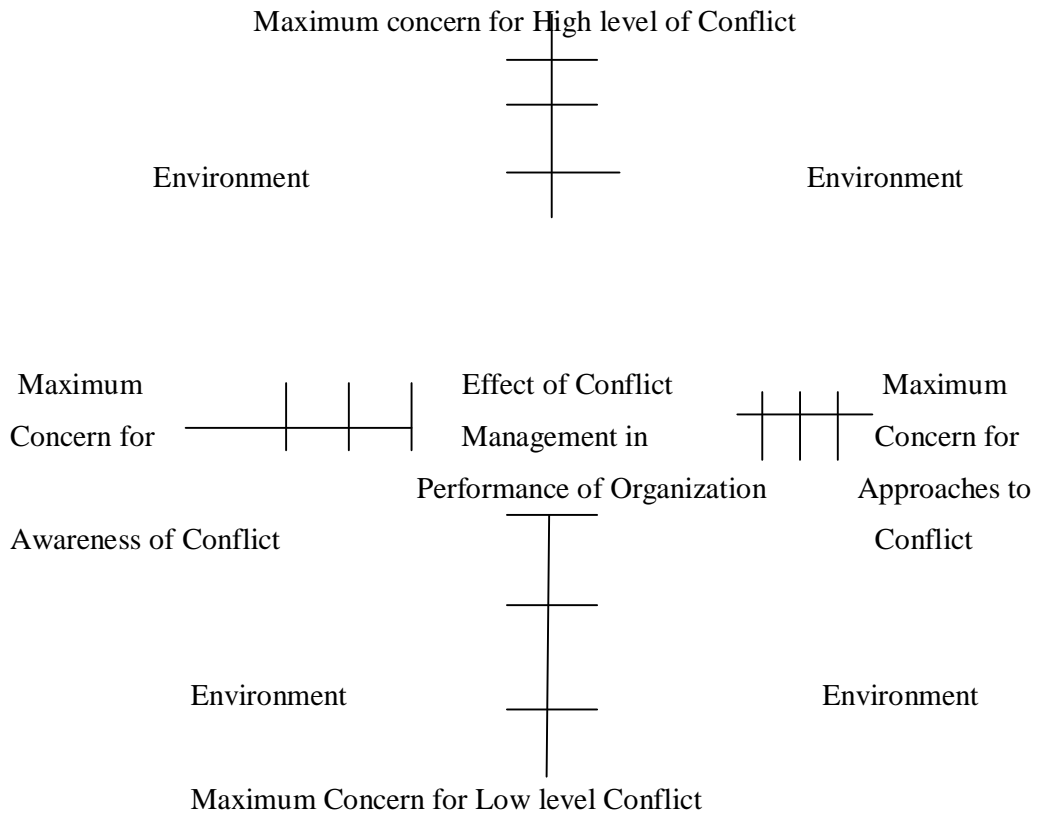
**Table 4.25: Results for Stepwise Regression analysis**

Step	In/Out	Variable	Multiple Corr	R-squared	F-Stat	Significance
1	Out	Environment	0.8114	0.3530	18.6251	0.0000

To test whether there was any significant difference between the role of environment and conflict management in the performance of public secondary school organizations stepwise regression was used. The results were zero. This showed that, environment as an intervening variable was important in the process of conflict management and resolution in school organizations in Kenya.

#### 4.9 Proposed Researcher’s Conflict Management Model in School Performance

From this research thesis and empirical studies under review, the researcher developed a conflict model figure 9. In the model the researcher proposes it be used as among alternatives in effective conflict management in organizational performance.



**Figure 9: Proposed Conflict Management Model in Schools**

The model portrays a two dimensional approach to conflict management, with concern for both high and low levels of being represented by the vertical axis, while maximum concern for both awareness of conflicts in an organization and approaches in handling conflicts is depicted along the horizontal axis. By pairing the two concerns and their value combinations we can identify three pure management roles, with each reflecting different systems of values. The fact that a chief executive prefers a given management role does not mean he or she will not use other management roles. Indeed, the model assumes that everyone uses each one of the management role at a time or another. However, the study proposes an environment role as being the intervening role under which the efficient and effective organizational performance is enhanced or achieved if practiced well.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The cumulative data were analyzed using quantitative analysis and presented in form of tables. This chapter provides research summary, conclusion, recommendations and issues for further research drawn from the analysis of the data in chapter 4.

Efforts at answering these questions entailed administration of questionnaires to 43 chief executive officers/principals of public secondary schools in Machakos District as managers charged with the responsibility of running/managing the educational institutions/organizations. The data gathered have been treated to a variety of statistical (quantitative) and qualitative analysis techniques in an endeavor to answer the research questions and study hypotheses.

#### **5.2 Summary of Research Findings**

This section presents the findings from the study in comparison to what other scholars say as noted under literature review or on the basis of the findings and discussion in chapter four, this sub-section attempts a summary of findings for each of the specific areas covered in the study:

##### **5.2.1 Demographic Information of the Respondents**

From the findings the researcher established essential characteristics of the presence of two or more people interacting with one another, sharing common ideology, and perceiving themselves as a group. People in educational institutions

join groups for personal security, status, self-esteem, affiliation, power and goal achievement. Groups develop through a standard sequence that is forming, storming, norming, and performing. Groups are essential in solving conflict in educational institutions hence CEOs should know more about group forming and their intended/likely implication on the effective conflict management in the performance of organizations. The effectiveness of group decision-making depends on the nature of the task, the people, and social influence. At the same time, personnel adjust their behaviours at any time in order to meet the expectations of the group to which they belong. Groups are also suitable in educational institutions for performing tasks requiring a high level of socio-technical interdependence.

### **5.2.2 Effects of Conflicts in School Organizations**

Violence and aggression; riots or strikes were the leading factors of negative effect on school organization. They were reported by 73.2% each, of all respondents. The school organizations were also very much affected by poor performances in all school activity (70.7%). Institutions with negative effects as a result of ineffective conflict management also reported 65.9% were involved in destruction of property while personnel turnover or dropout stood at 60.9%. These five are the most common results of negative effect in conflict management in the performance of school organizations. Vandalism or theft had 56.1% and stigmatization (51.2%) also contributed to a large extent of undesired environment for the development of human resources in school organizations as its core business. Loss of life is the least of all the effects of negative conflict. Although it ranks low at 4.9%, it is still a serious matter as life was lost when conflict occurred.

The effect of conflicts in the performance public secondary schools was found to have negative effects at most. Though positive effects were: diffusion of more serious conflict, stimulation of a search for new facts or resolutions, increase in group cohesion and performance and assessment of power or ability. While the negative effects resulted to: impediments to smooth working, diminishing output, obstructions in the decision-making process and formation of competing affiliations within the public secondary schools in Kenya.

Not all conflicts are bad and not all conflicts are good, according to Hocker and Wilmot (1995). People tend to view conflict as a negative force operating against successful completion of group or common goals. The study in this respect understands that conflict can create negative impact to groups but may also lead to positive effects depending on the nature of the conflict.

### **5.2.3 Awareness of Conflicts in Organization**

To fulfill one of the stated objective of this study which was to determine whether the chief executives in public secondary schools being aware of conflicts help towards conflict management and resolution the researcher sought to find out whether the managers of school institutions understood the causes of inter-group conflicts, effects of conflicts in an organization, human resource challenges in solving organizational conflicts and the attitudes managers have on conflict management and resolution.

#### **a) Causes of Conflict in Organizations**

In an organization, there are many causes of conflicts; however, conflicts within an individual usually arise when a person is uncertain about what task is expected to do, if not clearly defined by the supervisor or the person in charge. Furthermore, if the

tasks of individuals working as a group are not clearly defined by the management they will lead to more conflicts. Conflict between individuals may result from role-related pressures. Conflicts would arise between individuals and groups if the goals are not specified for individuals within a group. Group members may disagree about facts or opinions from authorities. The interpretation of evidence may be questioned. Disagreement about the substance of the discussion is called task conflict. Task conflict can be productive by improving the quality of decisions and critical thinking processes. Another potential area for conflict is the interpersonal relationships within the organization.

#### **b) Human Resource Challenges Facing Institutions in Conflict Resolutions**

The leading human resource challenge encountered in the educational institutions was absenteeism followed by peer influence in the second position. Friction/fighting and rudeness ranked third. Though, not among the top three; stealing, dissatisfaction and insubordination including drunkenness seemed to be gaining ground.

All but three respondents said that this was a major cause of conflict. Thus this problem caused conflict 92.7%. The role played by peer influence is quite significant as 82.9% of the respondents reported that it was due to peer group pressure that conflict arose. The problem of peer group pressure may also be contributing to all the other problems that arise at the educational institutions. Institutions also were faced with the problem of friction/fighting and rudeness. These two were each cited to be conflict problem encountered 73.2% of the time. Stealing was cited 70.7% of the times, followed by dissatisfaction 65.9% and insubordination 60.9%. Drug abuse including drunkenness was reported by 56.1% and 46.3%



respectively of all heads as a problem. This is a problem of concern to the school manager.

The study findings indicate that suspension is the most common form of disciplinary action taken by chief executives of schools in dealing with cases of indiscipline and conflict. Managers used it 92.7%. This is followed by expulsion/sack 82.9% and use of discipline committees 75.6%. Guiding and counseling and use of corporal punishment shared equal 65.9% while use of experts 26.8% was not popularly used by chief executives in dealing with indiscipline of personnel in institutions.

### **c) Attitude of the School Management towards Conflict Resolution**

Majority were in agreement that principals should strive to resolve conflicts. This is because conflict improves decision-making outcomes, especially on task-related conflict and group productivity by increasing the quality through constructive criticism and individuals adopting a devil advocate role.

The study findings indicate that 93% of the respondents said that their schools experienced conflict. This means that all schools experience one form of conflict or another at any one time. Conflicts arise when two groups or individuals interacting in the same situation see the situation differently because of different sets of settings, information pertaining to the universe, awareness, background, disposition, reason or outlook. In a particular mood, individuals think and perceive in a certain manner. For example, the half-full glass of one individual can be half-empty to another. Obviously both individuals convey the same thing, but they do so differently owing to contrasting perceptions and dispositions.

The analysis indicated that 61% of the respondents said that the conflict experienced in their school is negative. The study found that most of the respondents were not aware of positive conflict and that they viewed every conflict from a negative perspective. People have different styles, principles, values, beliefs and slogans which determine their choices and objectives. When choices contradict, people want different things and that can create conflict situations. For example, a risk-taking manager would be in conflict with a risk-minimizing supervisor who believes in firm control and a well-kept routine. However, it is important to note that when managed, some conflicts can be beneficial. Conflicts occur as a result of bargaining or different goals accompanied by differing attitudes of reality; disagreements over what constitute reality, may lead to conflicts. Major factors include different goals, different time horizons, inaccurate attitudes and status in congruency.

The analysis indicates that majority (78%) of the respondents are in agreement that principals should strive to resolve conflicts. This is because conflict improves decision-making outcomes, especially on task-related conflict and group productivity by increasing the quality through constructive criticism and individuals adopting a devil advocate role. Research has also found that task-related conflict is beneficial to the organization since it allows the exchange of ideas and assists better performance amongst the group members (Ford, 2007).

#### **5.2.4 Approaches used in Conflict Resolution and Management**

The approaches used in conflict resolution and management by educational institutions CEOs, were three:

### **a) Conflict Resolution and Management**

Resolution technique strategies had 41.5%. The findings indicate that majority of the respondents understand that conflict management is an all-inclusive process and the personnel be they juniors must be able to feel that they are organized and that their contribution to the solution of a conflict is vital. In addition, 31 (75.6%) of the respondents said that they frequently or always negotiate with the personnel so that a compromise can be reached. This can be interpreted to mean that the study respondents emphasize on a team-approach to resolving a conflict.

### **b) Conflict Negotiation and Management**

Thirty nine percent of the respondents used negotiation technique strategies. The study findings indicate that 20 (49.7%) of the study respondents indicated that they rarely or never use collaborative process in order to have joint gains with their personnel. Most of the study respondents were non-committal with regard to use of an all-inclusive negotiation strategies as a conflict handling technique. For example, it is important to note that 13 (31.7%) of the respondents said that they always use splitting the difference when there is an impasse in any conflict. In fact, 9 (21.7%) also admitted that they frequently use splitting the difference when an impasse arises. This is an escape route and its benefits are always short-lived.

### **c) Conflict Stimulation and Management**

A majority (92.7%) used stimulation technique strategies. Here, hire or transfers of individuals with differing views, reserved communication, suspension and expulsion of personnel's were rated 48.7% each. Stimulate functional conflict and use of various incentives as bribes had 31.7% each. This is very disappointing as it is a form of escapism, instead of solving the problem; they transfer it somewhere else and this later boil to conflict. Further, most of the respondents are not ready to give-in

whereas we know that all-inclusive conflict resolution process involves give-and-take.

### **5.2.5 Role of Environment in Organizational Conflict Resolution and Management**

Further, from the findings, conflict management is the process of removing cognitive barriers to agreement. Conflict is, therefore, considered contained when it ceases to interfere with activities of the groups involved. The positive aspect of collaboration overcomes restraining aspect of conflict. Since various issues contributes to conflicts in our educational institutions do induce conflict, skillful management of conflicts is a potent strategy. This can be achieved by changing the interaction pattern by introducing a responsive environment in a school organization. One of the reasons why public secondary schools continue to experience conflicts included lack of being aware of conflicts in the school organization. Well defined handling techniques of conflicts and the effect of conflict management in the performance of public secondary school organizations. The environment should act to fill this gap by providing efficient and effective decision making in achieving the desired organizational performance. To operate together where there is lack of trust and separates them if conflict originates from difference in principles, the structure should bring conflicting units to an agreement to eliminate undue struggle for policy and any other factors to control. It should also ensure that all the groups are encouraged to resolve conflict at various levels and are ready to compromise, with controlling power/CEO being fair to all parties.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

In conclusion, all respondents except one indicated that there is definitely a big connection between conflict management and the performance of organizations that is (97.5) said that training of school principals in conflict resolution contributes significantly to the management of school organizations. Further (90%) each, responses from the survey are showing that schools where management practiced well conflict management realizes good discipline and organizational survival. And (86.7%) principals who foster dysfunctional conflict by dealing with problems could surprisingly experience various forms of organizational conflict in their schools. About 83.3% each, of respondents indicated that schools that practice conflict resolution functions are effective and efficient and experience less on personnel conflict respectively. In general (70%) of the respondents said that schools which do not experience personnel conflict do perform well in all the school activities while (66.7) said schools that use management in conflict resolutions as a function realize positive impact in their respective school organizations.

Relationship between conflict management in the performance of school organizations seem to be clear. When the management is knowledgeable in conflict management and at the same time put into practice this knowledge, the schools will experience less conflict and do well in all other areas. The converse is also true that school managers who do not have the knowledge and do not practice this function may experience other forms of organizational conflicts and affect school performance.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

Most principals felt that training principals on conflict management will go a long way in reducing personnel conflict in the schools. Thus, 17.1% of all the principals chose this as the number one factor in managing conflict. Proper communication (12.2%) was also cited as an important factor in managing conflict. The other four recommendations that scored 9.8% each in conflict management are encouraging participative discussion, amicable conflict resolution measures, teacher to get training on conflict management and the democratization of all elective posts to reduce conflicts. Teachers and support staff should be obedient (7.3%), student leaders to take control in absence of teachers (7.3%) and draw a clear distinction of roles of each organization (7.3%) followed by 2.4% each, said elimination of mistrust between teachers and principals encourage students practice high level of maturity.

Finally, the researchers, view on the effect of conflict management in the performance of public secondary school organizations is that conflict permeates all human relations and its potential can be a source of health and growth as well as destruction. Setting a school climate requires an understanding of this implication. Conflict can be managed and potentially resolved on a continuum ranging from simple negotiations between two people to organizational arbitration involving multi-disciplines in an enabling environment. Research show that conflict is often needed in organizations. Conflict often addresses problems that are faced daily in the working environment and it may lead to better working relationships among staff if appropriately handled.

Indeed, most modern school organizations/educational institutions view conflict resolution as an inevitable aspect of organizational life, which can be used to foster healthy working socio-cultural environment. Studies have shown that cognitive conflict may result in high quality solutions and team effectiveness. For instance by facilitating open communication about alternatives, cognitive conflict encourages innovative thinking and creative solutions to challenges that faces organizations on a daily basis. Once conflicting parties have reached consensus, team members support the decisions and team decisions are easier to implement. This approach organizations management has been found to develop and enhance solidarity among team members. Industrial psychologists have asserted that it even heightens motivation which ideally builds foundation for desirable organizational productivity.

If public secondary schools chief executive officers view conflict occurrence positively then, it stands to benefit the entire educational system in many ways; these ranges from quality of decisions regarding policies and structures governing school environment, human resource strategies and legal framework applications. Building more synergy and cohesion among team members requires not only a role in conflict management but also ability to diagnose the conflict at the initial latent stages of its evolution. The aftermath of all these positive motives is the creation of energetic educational institution climate that can effectively deal with signs or symptoms of conflict.

Out of experience, educational institutions can sometimes be characterised by stressful conditions due to various factors. However, a key factor in stress

management is the ability to express ones' feelings and anxieties to someone else. If the organization has provided adequate communication channels and appropriate leadership training, then stress may not degenerate into conflict.

To ensure effective conflict management, organizations need to incorporate key managerial actions within the context of organizational structure. Managers need primarily to review job descriptions in order to ensure that job roles do not conflict. The development of procedures for routine tasks with the input of employees would motivate employees as they would feel that their contribution to organizational performance in terms of attracting hardworking personnel's, realizing high numbers of admission of students, capacity utilizations of the personnel's, stakeholders/customer satisfaction and quality products/services are essential and publicly recognized.

The conduct of basic training of employees in regard to interpersonal communications, conflict management and delegation would result in new initiatives and in intentionally-built relationships between organizational members. Managers should meet with their subordinates regularly and ask about challenges, problems and issues. They should also ask for regular reports about accomplished issues and plans for the upcoming period.

Public secondary schools CEOs should also focus on facts. There is a positive relationship between reliance on facts and low inter-personal conflict. Focusing on facts allows managers to address on the real issues involved in strategic decision-making and not on the personalities of the employees. Also, the use of alternative solutions diffuses conflict by shifting the process over a range of choices, avoiding



black and white solutions. The use of humor creates a collaborative framework and it works as a releasing mechanism during the stressful strategic decision-making process. Within this context, democratic leadership maintains a balanced power structure avoiding forced consensus. For solving any conflict, the study recommends the following rules:

- a) Make sure that good relationships are the first priority: As far as possible, make sure that you treat the other calmly and that you try to build mutual respect. Do your best to be courteous to one-another and remain constructive under pressure;
- b) Keep people and problems separate: Recognize that in many cases, the other person is not just "being difficult" – real and valid differences can lie behind conflictive positions. By separating the problem from the person, real issues can be debated without damaging working relationships;
- c) Pay attention to the interests that are being presented: By listening carefully you'll most-likely understand why the person is adopting his or her position;
- d) Listen first; talk second: To solve a problem effectively you have to understand where the other person is coming from before defending your own position;
- e) Set out the "Facts": Agree and establish the objective, observable elements that will have an impact on the decision; and
- f) Explore options together: Be open to the idea that a third position may exist, and that you can get to this idea jointly.
- g) To ensure success in conflict management and resolution in organizations environment plays an important role.

## **5.5 Areas for further Research**

Since the study has concluded that change/improvement in performance of educational institutions can be explained by the on-going activities of conflict resolution and that this relationship is not weak, the researcher would like to recommend the following areas for further study in line with the major findings of the study:

- i) How perceptions affects effective achievement of conflict management in organizations.
- ii) Evaluate various techniques used by the CEOs in conflict resolution and the performance of organizations.
- iii) Influence of the stakeholders in the management and resolution of conflict in organizations.
- iv) Determine the role of environment in conflict management and the performance of organizations.

## REFERENCES

- Adomi, E. E. and Anie S. O. (2005). *Conflict Management in Nigerian University*. J. Library Manage. Volume 27: pp. 520-530.
- Adler, N. J. (2008). *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Mason, Thomson southern Western.
- Alan, P. (2007). *Human Resource Management in a Business Context*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Seng Lee Press. Singapore.
- Allen, C. A., Ann C. M. (1999). "The Effects of Past Performance of Top Management Team Conflict in Strategic Decision Making". *International Journal of Conflict Management*. Volume 10 Issue 4: pp. 340-359.
- Amason, A. C. (1996). "Distinguishing the Effects of Functional and Dysfunctional Conflict on strategic decision-making: teams". *Academy of Management Journal*. Vol. No. 39, pp. 1.
- Arora, P. N. and Arora S. (2003). *Statistics for Management*. S.Chand&Company Publisher, New Delhi. India.
- Armstrong, M. (2009). *A handbook of Personnel Management Practice*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Kogan Page Limited, London.
- Ayoko, B. O., Hartel E. J. C. (2006). "Cultural diversity and leadership, cross

Cultural Management”, *An International Journal*. Vol. 13, No. 4, pp 345-360

Bean, R. (1994). *Comparative Industrial Relations: An introduction to cross National Perspective*. Routledge, London.

Beardwell, J. and Claydon T. (2007). *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Approach*. Pearson Education, Harlow.

Belcourt, M. and McBey K. J. (2009). *Strategic Human Resources Planning*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Saurabh Printers Pvt. Ltd.

Berry, J. (1997). “Consulting’s New Breed”. *Journal of Management Consulting*. Vol. 7 Issue 8: pp. 184-321.

Brewsfer, C., Sparrow P. and Vernon G. (2007). *International Human Resource Management*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Chartered Institute of Personnel Development. Longman, London.

Bricoe, D. R. And Schuler R. S. (2004). *International Human Resource Management*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Routledge, London.

Browarys, M. and Price R. (2008). *Understanding Cross Cultural Management*. Pearson Education, Harlow.

Brown, L. D. (2002). *Managing Conflict of Organizational Interface*. Addison-Wesley Publishers, Massachusetts.

Cole, G. A. (2007). *Personnel and human resource Management : 5th Edition*. Thomson Learning High Holborn House 50-51 Benford Row, London.

Cole, G. A. (2006). *Strategic Management : Theory and Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Thomson Learning High Holborn House 50-51 Benford Row, London.

Cooper, D. R. and Schindler P. S. (2008). *Business Research Methods*. International Edition. McGraw-Hill, Boston.

Corwin, R. G. (2001). *Staff Conflicts in Public Schools*. The Ohio State University, Columbus.

Costantino, C. A. and Sickles M. C. (1996). *Designing Conflict Management Systems*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Daily Nation (September, 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009). “*Kenyatta University Resumes after One Academic Year Wasted on Strike*”. Daily Nation, Nairobi.

Daily Nation (October, 21<sup>st</sup> 1999). “*University Unrests Affect the Higher Education*”. Daily Nation, Nairobi.

Daily Nation (June, 8<sup>th</sup> 1998). “*Four Students Perish in a School Riot*”. Daily

Nation, Nairobi.

Dana, D. (2001). *Conflict Resolution: Mediation tools for Everyday work life*.

McGraw–Hill, NewYork.

Daves, W. F. and Holland C. L. (1989). “The Structure of Conflict Behaviour of Managers assessed with self and subordinate ratings”, *Journal of Human Relations*. Vol. 8, no. pp.741 – 56.

De Dreu, C. K. W. and Weingart R. L. (2003). “Task versus Relationship Conflict, Team Performance, and Team Member Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis”. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Vol. 88, No. 4, pp. 741-749.

De Drue, C. And Van De Vliet (1997). *Productive Conflict: the importance of Conflict Management and Conflict Issue*. Sage Publications, London.

Deeks, C. G. and Rasmussen G. O. (2002). “For an Overview and the Chronicle in the NewZealand”. *Journal of Industrial Relations for an Overview of Current Events*. Vol.13, no. pp. 12-14

Dertouzos, M. (1998). “Working with New Technology”. *Harvard Management Update*, Vol.2, no. pp. 3-6.

Dessler, G. (2008). *Human Resource Management*. 11<sup>th</sup> Edition. Prentice-Hall of India, New Delhi

- DiPaola, F. M. and Hoy K. W. (2001). "Formalization, Conflict, and Change: Constructive and destructive consequences in schools". *International Journal of Educational Management*. Vol.15 no. 5 pp.238-244.
- Donald, R. C. and Pamela S. S. (2001). *Business Research Methods*. Seventh Edition. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., New York.
- Dowling, P. J., Festing M. and Engle A. D. (2008). *International Human Resource Management*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Thomson Learning, London.
- DuBrin, A. J. C. (1992). *Human Relations; A job Oriented Approach*. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs.
- Duffy, G., Grosch J. and Olezak P. (1991). *Community Mediation: A Handbook for Practioners and Researchers*. The Guilford Press, New York.
- Drucker, P., F.; Dyson E., Handy C., Saffo P, and Senge P.M. (1997). "Looking Ahead: "Implications of the Present". *Harvard Business Review*. September-October, pp 2-10.
- Drucker, P. F. (1998). *Developing the Future Organization Symposium Conducted In Partnership with the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce Management Forum*.

Ford, J. (2007). *Organisational Conflict Management*

[www.mediate.com/pfriendly.cfm.id=1250](http://www.mediate.com/pfriendly.cfm.id=1250).

Fraenken, J. R and Wallen N. E. (2000). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. McGraw Hill, London.

Fried, Y., Ben-David H. A.; Tiegs R. B.; Avital N.; and Yeverechyahu U. (1998).

‘The Interactive Effect of Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity on Job Performance’. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. Vol. 5 no. pp 76-84

General, N. and Kelly S. (1997). “The unimportance of labels; the diffusion of the Human Resource Management/personnel functions”. *Industrial Relations Journal*. Vol. 28, no. pp. 55.

Gerber, P. D., Nel P. S. and Van Dyk P. S. (1987). *Human Resources Management*, Third Edition. Johannesburg: International Thomson Publishing, Southern Africa.

Gibson, J. L., Ivancevich J. M. and Donnely. J. H. (1994). *Organizations; Behavior Structure, Process*, Eighth Edition. Macmillan, New York.

Ghosh, B. (2009). *Human Resources Development and Management*. Vikas Publishing House PVT Ltd., New Delhi.



- Guest, D. (2000). "Personnel and HRM: Can you tell the Difference". *Journal in Personnel Management*. Vol. 6 no. pp 127-136
- Griffin, W. R. (2006). *Management*. AITBS Publishers.
- Griffin, G. (1994). *School Mastery; Straight Talk about Boarding School Management in Kenya*: Lectern Publication Ltd., Nairobi.
- Graham, H. T. and Bennett R. (1993). *Human Resources Management*. Business Handbooks, London.
- Gupta, C. B. (2008). *Human Resource Management*. 9<sup>th</sup> Ed. Sultan Chand&Sons, New Delhi.
- Hall, D. T. and Goodale J. G. (1986). *Human Resources Management: Strategy, Design and Implementation*. Glenview, Illinois.
- Harrison, J. A. (1998). "School Governance: Is the Clash between Teachers and Principals Inevitable", *Journal of Educational Administration*, vol.36, no.1, pp 59-82.
- Huck, S. W. (2000). *Reading Statistics and Research*. 3rd Ed. Addison Wesley Longman Inc., New York.
- Iravo, A. M. (2002). *Preparation of School Principals and Implications on*

*their Administrative Performance*. Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, University of Nairobi.

Jehn, K. A. and Mannix E. (2001). "The Dynamic Nature of Conflict: A longitudinal Study of Intergroup Conflict and Group Performance". *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 44 no.6, pp. 238-251.

Jehn, K. A.; Thatcher M. B. S. and Zanutoo E. (2003). "*Gracks in Diversity Research: The Effects of Diversity Fault lines on Conflict and Performance*". Kluwer Academic Publishers, India.

Jones, G. R., Gorge J. M. and Hill C. W. L. (2000). *Contemporary Management*. McGraw-Hill, Boston.

Johnson, J. (2007). *Turning Chaos into Success*. [Http://www.softwaremag.com](http://www.softwaremag.com)

Kothari, S. K. (2009). *Research Methodology*. New Age International (P) Ltd. Publishers. New Delhi.

Koontz, H. and Wehrich H. (2007). *Essentials of Management an International Perspective*. 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Ltd., New Delhi.

Kombo, D. K. and Tromp D. L. A. (2007). *Proposal and Thesis Writing-An Introduction*. Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa, Nairobi.

- Knippen, J. T. and Green T. B. (1999). Handling Conflicts. *Journal of Workplace Learning*. Vol. 11, no. pp. 27-32.
- Leap, T. L. and Orino M. D. (1993). *Personnel-Human Resource Management*,  
\_Second Edition. Macmillan, New York.
- Lira, M. E.; Ripoll P.; Peiro M. J. and Gonzalez P. (2006). “The Role of Group Potency and Information and Communication Technologies in the Relationship between task Conflict and Team Effectiveness”. *Alongitudinal Study Computers in Human Behaviour*. Vol. 23 no. 6 pp.2888-2903.
- Luis, R. G., David B. B. and Robert L. C. (2004). *Managing Human Resources*. Pearson Education Inc. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, UK
- Maund, L. (1999). *Understanding People and Organizations’; An Introduction to Organizational Behaviour*. Stanley Thorns (Publishers) Ltd., London.
- Medina, J. F.; Munduate L. M.; Dorado M. A.; and Guerra M. J. (2005). “Types of Intergroup Conflict and Effective Reactions”. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. Vol. 20 no.314, pp. 219-230.
- Miles, M. and Michael H. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Sage Publications, London.
- Ministry of Education (2008). *Report on School Unrest*. Government Press, Nairobi.

- Ministry of Education (1999). *School Management Guide*. Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Nairobi.
- Ministry of Education (2001). *Report of the Task Force on student Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools*. Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Nairobi.
- Mugenda, O. M. and Megenda A. G. (2003). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Acts Press, Nairobi.
- Muhammad, A. K.; Hasan A.; Kashif ur R. (2009). "Impact of Task Conflict on Employee's Performance of Financial Institutions". *European Journal of Scientific Research*. Vol.27 no.4, pp. 479-487.
- Murthy, R. P. (2006). *Management Science and Industrial Management*. Pragon International Publishers, New Delhi.
- Mbwesa, K. J. (2009). *Introduction to Management Research: A student's Handbook*. Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Nairobi, Kenya.
- McClelland, M. K. and Sandra F. G. (1998). Whole System Change in Education. *Arizona Organization Development Network Newsletter*.
- Newstrom, W. J. and Davis K. (1993). "*Organizational Behaviour*". 9<sup>th</sup> Ed. McGraw-Hill, New York.

- Noe, R. A., Hellenbeck J. R. Gerhart B. and Wright P. M. (2004). *Fundamentals Human Resource Management*. McGraw-Hill, Irwin.
- Nzuve, N. M. S. (1997). *Management of Human Resources: A Kenyan Perspective*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Tech & Bro Associates Publishers, Nairobi
- Okumbe, J. A. (2001). *Human Resources Management: Education Perspective*. Sunlitho Ltd., Nairobi.
- Olembo, J. O., Wanga P. E. and Karagu N. M. (1992). *Management in Education*. ERAP, Nairobi.
- Orodho, A. J. (2003). *Essentials of Educational and Social Sciences Research Method*. Masola Publishers, Nairobi.
- Ozigi, A. O. (1977). *A handbook on School Administration and Management*. McMillan Nigeria Publisher, Ibadan.
- Patrick, J. M. (2008). *Management*. Barron's Educational Series, New York.
- Passos, M. A. and Caetano A. (2005). "Exploring the effects of intergroup conflict and past performance feedback on team effectiveness". *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. Vol. 20 No. 34 pp. 231-244.
- Picard, C. (1990). *Peer Mediation Training Manual*. Picard and associates, Toronto

- Porter, M. and Michael E. (1998). Clusters and the New Economies of Competition.  
*Business Review: Harvard Journal* Vol.76 no.6, pp. 77-90.
- Rao, S. (2007). *Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations*. Himalayan Publishing House, Mumbai.
- Rahim, A. M. (2000). *Managing Conflict in Organization*. Third Edition Greenwood Publishers, UK.
- Republic of Kenya. (2008). *Ministry of Education Report*. Government Printer, Nairobi.
- Republic of Kenya. (2004). *Machakos Education Office Report*. Machakos.
- Republic of Kenya. (2002). *Ministry of Education Report*. Government Printer Nairobi.
- Republic of Kenya. (1968). *Education Act*. Government Press, Nairobi.
- Robey, D. (1991). *Designing Organizations*. 3rd Ed. MA; Richard D. Irwin, Boston.
- Robert, B. D.; Janet V. .D. and Maria P. A. (2008). *Managing Human Behaviour in Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Sage, London.
- Robbins, P. S. Coulter M. (2004). *Management*. Seventh Edition. Pearson Education

(Singapore) Pte. Ltd.

Robbins, S. P. and Decenzo D. A. (1998). *Fundamentals of Management: Essential Concepts and Applications*. 2nd edition. Englewood Cliffs Prentice-Hall. England.

Rubin, J. R. and Luck J. L. (1992). *Marketing Research*. Prentice-Hall of India, New Delhi.

Saunders, M. and Lewis P. (2003). *Research Methods for Business Student*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Harlow Prentice-Hall, England.

Safe Horizon Mediation Program. (2009). *Free Community Mediation and Conflict Resolution Service to the New York City*. <http://www.safehorizon.org/Mediation>.

Serekan, U. (2006). *Research Methods for Business. A skill Building Approach*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Longman, London.

Stephen, M. and Julia R. (1995). "Business Values Management and Conflict Handling: Issues in Contemporary Singapore". *Journal of Management Development*. Vol. 14 no. 4 pp.56-70.

Slack, T. and Parent M. M. (2005). *Understanding sport organizations: The Application of Organizational Theory*. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).

Simons, T. I. and Peterson R. S. (2000). "Task Conflict and Relationship Conflict on Top Management Teams: The Pivotal Role of Intergroup trust". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Vol. 85 no.143 pp. 109-111.

Simons, T. (2007). Your Research in Perspective in Research Methods Resources for Researchers. *Lecturers and Students, Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)*.

Ssekamwa, J. C. (2001). *Strikes in Ugandas Educational Institutions and How to Prevent or Manage them*. Unpublished paper presented to MA students, Makerere University

Swift, L. and Piff S. (2005). *Quantitative methods for Business Management and Finance*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Macmillan, Palgrave.

Thomas, B. (2004). "The inexorable link between conflict and change". *Journal of Quality and Participation summer*. Vol. 14 no. 4 pg.56-70

Thomas, G. C. and Christopher G. W. (2001). *Organization Development and Change*. Seventh Edition. Southern-Western College Publishers, Thomas Learning.

Thomas, K. C. (1996). *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.: McGraw-Hill, Boston.



- Thomas, K. (1976). *“Conflict and Conflict Management”*. M. D. Dunette, Ed.  
Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Rand McNally.  
Chicago.
- The Standard (August 18, 2008). *“School Unrest Blamed on Poor Management”*.  
The Standard, Nairobi.
- The Standard (July 23, 2004). *“School Heads to Answer for Conflict.”* The Standard,  
Nairobi.
- The Standard (July 23, 2000). *“Primary Schools Joins Fray of School Strikes.”* The  
Standard, Nairobi.
- The Standard (June 14, 1991). *“Tragic at St. Kizito Mixed Secondary School Riot.”*  
The Standard, Nairobi.
- University of South Africa (2007). *Learning Connections of Conflict Approaches*.  
[http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/learningconnections/student/learning  
Advisors/plagiarism.asp](http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/learningconnections/student/learningAdvisors/plagiarism.asp) 16/05/2007
- Van, Dyk P. S., Nel P. S., Loedolf P. and Van Z. (1992). *Training Management: a  
Multi- Disciplinary Approach to Human Resources Development in Southern  
Africa*.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix I: Questionnaire Cover Letter**

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on the effect of conflict management in public secondary schools. The study is being carried out in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Human Resource Management of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

The information in this questionnaire will be treated with confidentiality and in no instance will your name be mentioned in this research. Also, the information will not be used for any other purpose other than for this research.

Your assistance in facilitating the same will be highly appreciated. A copy of this research paper will be available to you upon request.

Thank you very much.

**Mike A. Iravo**

**Appendix II: Questionnaire for principals**

**EFFECT OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA**

This questionnaire is to assist the researcher to gather some information on the above subject. The information you give will be treated confidentially and will be only for research purpose.

Thanks.

**(Please Tick/fill appropriately)**

**1) A group is defined as two or more individuals interacting and interdependent, who come together to achieve particular objectives.**

a) Do groups exist in your school?

Yes

No

b) If yes in Question 1 above, how do you classify types of groups found in your school?

i. Formal (command, task, interest or friendship) groups

ii. Informal (satisfy members social needs, interacting) groups

iii. Open (constantly changing membership, frame of reference, time perspective, equilibrium) groups

iv. Closed (stable in membership) groups

v. Reference (social comparison, source of personal attitudes, beliefs and values)

c) There is no one single reason as to why individuals join groups. In your school organization what reasons influences individuals in joining groups picked in Q2?

- 1. Security
- 2. Status
- 3. Affiliation
- 4. Power
- 5. Goal achievement
- 6. Others (specify).....

**2) What is the effect of conflict management in the performance of public secondary school in Kenya?**

a) Has your school organization ever been involved in any form of negative (dysfunctional) conflict since 2001 to date? A) Yes  b) No

b) If yes in (a), what effect did the conflict have on your school?(Tick appropriately)

- (i) Violent and aggression
- (ii) Destruction of school property
- (iii) Loss of life
- (iv) Poor performance in all the school activities
- (v) Riots or Strikes etc.
- (vi) Stigmatization
- (vii) Personnel turnover or dropout
- (viii) Vandalism or theft etc.

Others(specify).....  
.....  
.....  
.....

c) What conflict problems have you encountered from the personnel in your school? Tick

- (i) Insubordination
- (ii) Absenteeism
- (iii) Friction or fighting etc.
- (iv) Drunkenness
- (v) Stealing
- (vi) Drug abuse
- (vii) Rudeness
- (viii) Dissatisfaction
- (ix) Peer group influence

Others(specify).....  
.....  
.....  
.....

d) How does dysfunctional inter-group conflict affect the personnel in your school? (Tick those that affect changes within groups in your school).

- a) Increased group cohesiveness (i.e. competition; conflicts; or external threats etc. Usually results in group members putting aside individuals differences and closing ranks)

- b) Rise in autocratic leadership (i.e. when threats are perceived for example when school personnel make demands that is unnecessary)
- c) Focus on activity (i.e. when there is less concern for individual member satisfaction)
- d) Emphasis on loyalty (i.e. unexpected enforcement of obedience, loyalty, rules and regulations etc.)

(Tick those that affect changes between groups in your school).

- a) Distorted perceptions (i.e. when each group perceives itself more important than the other)
- b) Negative stereotyping (i.e. when each group see fewer difference within their unit that actually exist and greater differences between groups than actual exist)
- c) Decreased communication (i.e. when communication between the groups in conflict usually break down affecting decision-making process)
- d) Violence and aggression (i.e. riots, strikes, wars, etc)

**3) Do the CEOs who are aware of the conflicts in their public secondary school organizations solve conflicts effectively?**

i) Every group comes into at least partial conflict with every other group with which it interacts. In your school what are the causes of inter-group conflict?

(Please tick those that are common in your school)

- a) Work interdependence that is pooled, sequential and reciprocal interdependences

- b) Difference in goals that is when sub-units In the organization become specialized than developing dissimilar goals (resources & rewards)
- c) Difference in attitudes that is goals, time horizon, status in congruency and inaccurate perception.
- d) Increased demand for specialists that is line and staff persons.

ii) How does the school deal with personnel as an hr-challenge?

Indiscipline Tick

- Suspension
- Expulsion or sack
- Guidance & counseling
- Use discipline committees
- Use experts or specialists
- Use corporal punishment

Others

(Specify).....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

What capacity does it have? Tick

- Trained personnel in conflict resolution
- Resource and sourcing policies
- Conflict resolutions policies
- Hiring and firing policies
- Personnel development policies

Compensation and rewarding structures

Allocation and delegation of duties polices

Industrial relations polices

Management polices

Others(Specify).....

.....

.....

.....

iii) What the attitudes of managers in public secondary schools have towards conflicts?

a) Conflict can be defined as differences of opinion that influence the interaction between interdependent parties. Does your school organization experience conflict?

Yes

No

b) If yes in (a), do conflict in your school have:-

Positive (functional) effect?      Yes          No   

Negative (dysfunctional) effect?      Yes          No   

h) In your own opinion do you think Principals should strive to eliminate both types of conflict in (b)?

Yes          No   

**4) Are the conflict resolution and management approaches used by public secondary school organizations managers in Kenya in solving the conflicts?**



Direction for part a, b and c seeking information on how school executives are involved in management in the conflict resolution in their school organizations. Against each of the approaches given, please circle around the number which best describes how often the principal of a school carries out various conflict areas. The meaning of each number is given below.

**{1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Frequently, 5= Always }**

a) How do you manage inter-group conflict through resolution? For each of the items (tactics) below indicate how often you rely on the tactic by circling the appropriate number.

**Resolution Conflict -Handing Tactics**

- (i) I argue my case with my personnel to show the merits of my position 1-2-3-4-5
- (ii) I negotiate with my personnel so that a compromise can be reached 1-2-3-4-5
- (iii) I try to satisfy the expectations of my personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (iv) I try to investigate an issue with my personnel to find a solution acceptable to us 1-2-3-4-5
- (v) I am firm in pursuing my side of the issue 1-2-3-4-5
- (vi) I attempt to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my personnel to myself. 1-2-3-4-5
- (vii) I hold on to my solution to a problem 1-2-3-4-5
- (viii) I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made 1-2-3-4-5
- (ix) I exchange accurate information with my personnel to solve a problem together 1-2-3-4-5
- (x) I avoid open discussion of my differences with my personnel 1-2-3-4-5

- (xi) I accommodate the wishes of my personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (xii) I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way 1-2-3-4-5
- (xiii) I propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks 1-2-3-4-5
- (xiv) I go along with the suggestions of my personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (xv) I try to keep my disagreement with my personnel to myself in order to avoid hard feelings 1-2-3-4-5

b) How do you manage inter-group conflict through negotiation? For each of the items (tactics) below, indicate how often you rely on that tactic by circling the appropriate number

**Negotiation Conflict -Handling tactics**

- (i) I use collaborative process in order to have joint gains with my personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (ii) I try collaborative effort to create value where non previously existed with personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (iii) I try to bring personnel with differing interests together to forge an agreement 1-2-3-4-5
- (iv) I impress all the affected personnel walk away feeling like they have won 1-2-3-4-5
- (v) I thoroughly understand the personnel's needs and position regarding the issues to be resolved. 1-2-3-4-5
- (vi) I always come to the negotiations with a full appreciation of the personnel values, beliefs and wants that drive their actions 1-2-3-4-5

- (vii) I develop an understanding and evaluating personnel options available to resolve the conflict. 1-2-3-4-5
- (viii) Use the bad-guy member of the negotiating group advocate positions so much out of line that whatever the good guy says sounds reasonable to the personnel. 1-2-3-4-5
- (ix) I involve getting an additional concession or perk after an agreement has been reached with the personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (x) I try to use joint problem solution with my personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (xi) I do not commit quickly to unfavorable terms of personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- (xii) I try to use splitting the difference when my personnel come to an impasse 1-2-3-4-5
- (xiii) I use ridiculously low offers and (or) concessions to lower the personnel expectations 1-2-3-4-5
- (xiv) I try to understand the relevant traits of the personnel negotiations 1-2-3-4-5
- (xv) I look beneath the roles my personnel play and ask what really motivates the individual(s) 1-2-3-4-5
- (xvi) I try to show my personnel high level of trust leading to greater openness and sharing of information 1-2-3-4-5
- (xvi) I confidently impress my personnel that I am firm on position when in actual sense I am flexible 1-2-3-4-5
- (xvii) I use a mediator to allow an impartial person to work with my personnel to reach agreement that benefits both personnel and the school as a whole 1-2-3-4-5

c) How do you manage intergroup conflict through stimulation? For each of the items (tactics) below, indicate how often you rely on that tactic by cycling the appropriate number.

**Stimulating Conflict-Handling Tactics**

- i) Stimulate functional conflict among my personnel in order to contribute positive to school performance 1-2-3-4-5
  - ii) I intelligently use the school’s communication channels to stimulate beneficial conflict to personnel 1-2-3-4-5
  - iii) I hire or transfer individuals whose attitudes; values and background differ from those of the personnel present 1-2-3-4-5
  - iv) I suspend or expel personnel who do not adhere to the school’s regulation and norms 1-2-3-4-5
  - v) I change the structure of the organization not only to help resolve my personnel conflict, but also to create conflict 1-2-3-4-5
  - vi) I use various incentives such as awards, recognition etc. for outstanding performance, which often stimulate competition among my personnel 1-2-3-4-5
- d) From the above approaches which one/s do you prefer using more? Tick the ones you use most: Resolution    Negotiation    Stimulation

**5. What is the role of environment in conflict management and the performance of school organization?**

Environment as an intervening variable has a role in conflict management and the performance of school organizations. To what extent do you strongly agree, agree or disagree that there is required an organizational policies and structures

necessary in conflict resolution in school organizations, human resource strategy which constitute guides to decision-making in schools and legal framework governing school organizations in Kenya. For each of the items below, indicate how often you strongly agree, agree and disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
(i)	Policies and Structures	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(ii)	Human Resource Strategy	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(iii)	Legal framework	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**6. Organizational performance is important for the survival of an organization.**

a) In a school organization which of the following groups of personnel require a lot of attention in conflict resolution for it to realize good organizational performance?

- (i) Teaching staff
- (ii) Non-Teaching staff
- (iii) Students personnel

e) Give reasons to why you think each group picked in (d) requires a lot of attention in conflict resolution in your school? Fill in the space provided

- (ii) .....
- .....
- (iii) .....
- .....

b) Effective conflict management has an implication in the organization performance? Please indicate the outcomes of the school that practices effective conflict management.

(i) Schools, which do not experience personnel conflict tend to perform well in all the school activities and have more returns on investment in terms of quality (passes from students and services from the rest of the personnel.

(ii) Generally the discipline/behaviour of personnel is good in the schools where conflict resolution is well practiced

(iii) Schools that practice conflict resolution functions are effective and efficient in capacity utilization

(iv) School principals who are knowledgeable about the role of management in conflict resolution experience less or non-personnel conflict in their respective schools and customers are satisfied

(v) Training of school principals in conflict resolution contributes significantly to the reduction of personnel conflict in a school organization.

(vi) Schools that use management in conflict resolution as a function realize positive impact in their respective school organizations

(vii) Schools that practice management in conflict resolution realizes organizational survival hence produces responsible/ quality future human resources

(viii) Principals who foster dysfunctional conflict by dealing with

problems could surprisingly experience various forms of

organizational conflict

Others(Specify).....

.....

.....

**7) As a principal, what suggestions would you like to propose or recommend in an effort to reducing school organizational conflict? Fill in the space and explain**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Appendix III: Names of zones and districts in Machakos County**



## **Appendix IV: Location of Machakos in Kenya**