

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AMONG THREE SELECTED SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS IN ACCRA METRO, GREATER ACCRA REGION

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and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
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award of the Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

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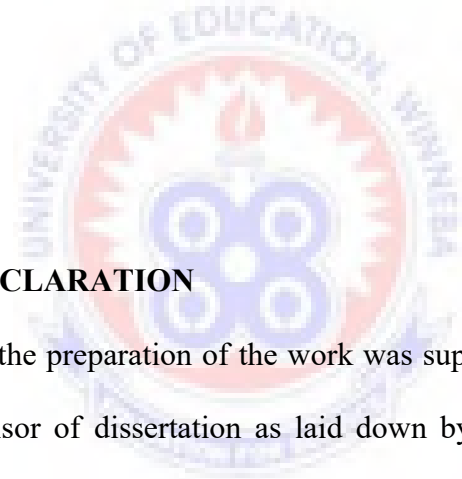
DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, ADDO KESSE, FRENZY declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotation and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE

DATE



SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, the preparation of the work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervisor of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. KWAME ANSONG-GYIMAH

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates conflict management practices in selected senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The study examines conflict management practices, the factors that influence conflict management and the challenges that are experienced in managing conflict in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region to achieve institutional performance. The study used exploratory design using qualitative approach to generate data from the primary and secondary sources. The study population comprises all the teaching staff of three selected senior high schools in Greater Accra. Out of this population, a sample of fifty-two participants were selected through purposive sampling technique. The data collection instruments were interview guide and observation checklist. Content analysis was used in analyzing the data collected. The findings show that, the integrating style of managing conflict was the most widely used conflict management style in the senior high schools in Greater Accra Region. This integrating style placed more emphasis on high concern for self and others as well. The main influencing factor in managing conflict in institutions was the culture of an organization. The major challenge encountered in managing conflict was lack of cooperation on the part of the two parties. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it was recommended that, the authorities should be given appropriate training on conflict management, should vary their leadership approach on the problem they are dealing with, as well as given special training on the proper way of managing conflict through internal meeting and seminars.

CHAPTERS ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Conflict has continuously become incapable of being avoided in every institution including educational institutions in Ghana. The changing nature of the communities in which people live may bring about inconsistency which might finally lead to conflict. Conflict is unavoidable in any human institution and it is an inseparable part of people's life Msila (2012). It is an inevitable part of organizational life since the goals of different stakeholders such as managers and staff are often incompatible (Jones, George & Hill, 2000). Conflict is generally regarded as disagreement regarding interests or ideas Esquivel & Kleiner (1997). Bagshow (1998), notes that conflict is a part of life in organizations as well as other areas of life, as people compete for jobs, resources, power, acknowledgment and security. According to Kisseadoo (2002), Conflict is defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals. Conflict generally refers to differences in opinions and perceptions concerning a particular issue at a particular period of time Rahim (2002). Webster's Dictionary also defines conflict as a clash, competition or mutual interference of opposing or incompatible forces or ideas, interest and wills. Conflict is an existing state of disagreement or hostility between two or more people Nicholson (1992). (Fisher, Ludin, Williams, Abdi & Smith, 2000), say that conflict is a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals. It can originate between two or more people, or between two or more groups. Within institutions, therefore, conflict may refer to the discord that occurs when the goals,

interests or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible and those individuals or groups block or frustrate each other's attempt to achieve their objectives.

According to Tjosvold (1993), conflict normally occurred when issues and interests change over time due to social, political and economic dynamisms in the society in which we live in. It may be triggered by ethnic, religious, racial and economic differences, or may arise from differences in values, beliefs and attitude regarding issues. Because of the unavoidable nature of conflicts in all institutions, there is therefore the need for institutions to learn to deal with them effectively to minimize their negative impact and maximize their positive impact on institutions Almost (2006). The inconsistencies which lead to conflict could institute both negative and positive result. However, the negative or positive effect of conflict on the individual and institution would essentially depend on how it is managed. Conflict management may involve the adaptation of certain practices termed as conflict management practices.

The issue of conflict management practices has become vital for the achievement of a goal to many human resource managers over the years. According to Rahim (2002), Conflict management practices refer to the process of using preferred strategies to handle a conflict with goals of limiting negative impact and enhancing positive impact. Kantek and Gezer (2009), assert that, they are simply the activities or remedies put in place to manage disagreements and incompatibilities in institutions in order to maintain peace, stability and also achieve greater output. Jeong (2000), also maintains that, conflict management practices refer to techniques and ideas designed to reduce the negative effects of conflict and enhance the positive outcomes for all parties involved. Regardless

of the fact that conflict management practices have been in practise for many decades, these practices and styles are seemingly without change as nature of conflicts change.

Conflict management does not wholly wipe out conflict, instead, competent management of conflicts attain positive result and reduce negative result to the minimum Tjosvold (1993). On the other hand, conflict management is the process of taking advantage on the positive result of conflict and eliminating the negative outcome. Simon and Peterson (2000), assert that, conflict management does not necessarily mean the total elimination of conflict as it is in the case of conflict resolution, but rather, the effective management of conflicts achieve a positive outcome out of a conflict situation, while reducing the negative outcome of the conflict to the minimum. Conflict management minimizes the negative impact of conflict. and promotes the positive outcome of conflict Cox (2003). In managing conflict, some institutions adapt methods such as coercion and negotiation. According to Baron (1990), coercion method is where force is used in dealing with conflicts, while negotiation method takes the form of mutual agreement between the two parties in managing the conflict situations.

Most prominent researchers in the field of conflict management are of the opinion that, in the interest of gaining the best from conflicts and reducing the negative outcome, diagnosis and intervention of the problem would be necessary Gordon (2003), Maccoby and Studder (1998). According to Gordon (2003), diagnosis is the stage where the actual cause of the conflict is detected, while the intervention stage is when appropriate solutions are identified to manage the problem. De Dreu and Gelfand (2008), state that, relying on intervention of the appropriate diagnosis yields to the rise of mutual relationship between the two processes. They further stated that, appropriate diagnosis of

the nature and causes of conflict could result to the adaptation of proper intervention to cause smooth and effective conflict management. It is based on this premise, that the researcher attempted to apply a useful conceptual approach to dive deep into the concept of conflict management and its influence on the selected senior high schools in Accra Metro, Greater Accra Region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Every educational institution is established to support teaching and learning processes for the successful development of every nation. It enables individuals to acquire adequate knowledge in making decisions concerning their jobs and other aspect of lives. Since senior high school is one of the educational institutions in Ghana, it is characterized by a network of human interactions associated with expressing divergent views, disagreements, differences, complaints, quarrels and many other varying behavioural traits and attitudes which affect the smooth operation of the institution. Conflict, which is an unavoidable phenomenon in all organizations is also present in senior high schools in Greater Accra Region of Ghana. To Amason and Sapienza (1997), conflict induces mainly negative and destructive outcomes such as anger, resentment, confusion, sadness and lack of cooperation, among others. It disrupts the smooth functioning of organizational processes, and creates chaos and disorder Arthur (2009). Rahim (2002), stated that, conflict being it organizational or interpersonal when not managed well may breed low morale and lack of cooperation among employees which at the long run could bring about poor organizational performance. He further stated that, conflict has created more problems in schools, however; little attention is paid to conflict

among school authorities and teaching staff. Managing conflict in senior high schools have been a major challenge for educators. To Roloff (1987), conflict management has not been a matter of great concern to all stakeholders in education. Tjosvold (1993), conflict management is not only the sole responsibility of the school head. For some school authorities, managing conflict in schools is waste of time, energy and uncompleted syllabus on the part of the teacher.

Studies by Msila (2012), have shown that, managing conflict in schools need to be a major problem that all stakeholders should take a serious concern because, unresolved conflict can create not only the loss of lives, properties, academic hours and academic calendars, but also negative impacts on the academic performance of the students, students drop-out of the schools and even create more problems in the society. Conflict management is one of the important aspects in solving conflict problems in the organizations in the world today. Senior high schools as an organization is not an exception particularly the three selected senior high schools in Accra Metro. It is against this background that this study sought to find out whether conflicts exist in the three selected senior high schools in Accra Metro and how are they managed to decrease the incidence of conflicts in the schools. Also, it sought to find out the challenges and the factors that influence conflict management in educational institutions in Ghana with emphasis on the three selected senior high schools in Accra Metro of Greater Accra Region.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate conflict management practices in selected senior high schools in Accra Metro. The focus of this study was to identify conflict management practices adapted by senior high schools in Greater Accra Region, some common factors that influence conflict management, as well as some challenges encountered in managing conflicts, and the roles play by conflict management in achieving institutional performance.

1.4 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study was to examine the conflict management practices in the selected senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region. The specific objectives were to;

1. find out conflict management practices that are adapted by senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region.
2. identify the factors that influence conflict management in the senior high schools in Greater Accra Region.
3. find out the challenges that are experienced in managing conflict in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region to achieve institutional performance.

1.5 Research Questions

In the attempt to dive into this research problem, the following research questions guided the study.

1. What kind of conflict management practices have been adapted by the senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region?
2. What are some of the common factors that influence conflict management in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region?
3. What are some of the challenges that senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region face in managing conflict to achieve institutional performance?

1.6 Justification of the Study

This study is useful to the management of senior high schools in Ghana because, it tries to supply very vital information about conflict management in senior high schools. This in turn, would assist the managerial board in schools to set up proper means to deal with conflict in educational institutions. Besides, this study would be pivotal to government ministries, more especially the ministry of education, in their endeavour to deal with conflict in schools to upgrade the educational standard in this country. In developing a curriculum for the Ghana Institute of Education by the Ministry of Education, this study would be useful to improve the ability of the administrations, the teachers, and the students in managing conflict in schools. This study deserves the needed attention, because it seeks to determine the common factors that influence institutional conflict. In addition, this study would assist to improve the performance of students,

because the findings would guide school heads to identify the roles play by conflict management in achieving institutional performance.

1.7 Delimitation

This study was delimited to conflict management practices in selected senior high schools in the Accra Metro in Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Nevertheless, conflict management practices in other senior high schools outside Accra Metro in Ghana and other countries were left out. Also, this study was restricted to the staff members of Accra Girls Senior High School, Accra Academy Senior High School and Presbyterian Senior High School.

1.8 Limitations

There were certain limitations in this study. The first limitation in this study was the difficulty in obtaining data for this research work, due to the fact that some of the respondents were off campus residents in the sample schools. The other limitation was that, some of the respondents were unwilling to respond to the questions posed to them. This was owing to the fact that, some of the respondents were trying to be secretive and concealed some important information with the purpose of protecting the image of their schools.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one focuses on the introduction aspects of the study. Chapter two consists with review of the related literature on conflict

management while the third chapter treats the methods of the study. Chapter four deals with the presentation of results and discussion of the findings of the study. The chapter five provides summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for future research.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Definition of Conflict

On a glance at some literature books, different writers have defined conflict in various ways. Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman (1998), explain that the fundamental nature of conflict seems to be disagreement, contradiction or incompatibility and thus, refers to any situation in which there are incompatible goals, cognitions or emotions within or between individuals or groups that lead to opposition or aggressive interaction. Conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur (Ramani & Zhimin, 2010). An activity that is incompatible with another is one that prevents, blocks or interferes with the occurrence or ineffectiveness of the second activity. Certo (2000), defines conflict as the struggles that result from incompatible or opposing needs, feelings, thoughts or demands within a person or between two or more people. Nelson and Quick (2000) define conflict as any situation in which incompatible goals, attitudes, emotions or behaviours lead to disagreement or opposition between two or more parties. Warren (2005), argued that conflict in the strictness of the world is a situation where parties either refuse to recognize the issue or oppose the change agent's proposal. Owens (2004), also viewed conflict as a situation in which two or more individuals operate within a unit which appears to be incompatible. Thus, conflict can be compared to a situation that makes one feel less effective.

Mullins (2005), views conflict as a behaviour intended to obstruct the achievement of some other person's goals. Gunn (2002), sees conflict as an inescapable part of human nature involving a misunderstanding or disagreement that causes a

problem or struggle to achieve goals between people, groups, or nations. McShane and Glinow (2000), define conflict as a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party. Horowitz and Borden (1995), maintain that conflict is a disagreement over social issues, beliefs and ideologies or specific behaviours that occur when two aspirations are incompatible or when two or more parties have divergent interests concerning the same issue. Conflict is a situation that misdirects individuals or groups either consciously or unconsciously, which may work negatively or positively for the achievement of the goals of educational institution. Fisher (1990), states that, conflict is incompatibility of goals, or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other.

According to Kogo (2002), conflict is any divergence of interests, objectives or priorities between individual, groups or organizations or nonconformity to requirement of a task; activity or process. In school situation, Adeyemi (2009), conflict is a form of dissent, a way of expressing opposition to the laws and norms of both school and the larger culture. Akinnubi (2012), conflict is a situation in which groups or countries have a serious disagreement. It is a situation that pervert individuals or groups consciously or unconsciously which may work negatively or positively for achievement of the school policy and set goals. There is no comprehensive definition of conflict, hence it has a plethora of definitions as it depends on the perceptiveness from which one is looking at the concept. From the above definitions from some authors, conflict can be defined as a natural disagreement between two or more people with opposing opinions, goals,

attitudes, beliefs, teachings, values, or expectations resulting in positive or negative outcome. Conflict is very complicated and large and it happens in all facets of life.

2.2 Views on Conflict

Historically, three views on conflict have been identified by Robbins (2003), Robbins (2005), and Vandever and Menefee (2010), as traditionalists, human relations or contemporary and interactionists views.

2.2.1 Traditionalists View (1930-1940)

Traditionalists believe that all conflicts should be avoided Vandever and Menefee (2010). This opinion is perhaps impracticable since lifecycle grants people with numerous conflicts. According Robbins (2003), traditionalists are of the view that, conflict must be avoided as it reflects malefaction within the group. Conflict is viewed negatively and associated with violence and destruction Robbins (2005). He further asserts that, for traditional view, all conflict should be avoided and much attention should be focused to the causes of conflict and to correct them in order to improve group and organizational performance. Traditionalists believe that, according to Vandever and Menefee (2010), most conflicts have negative connotations, invoke negative feelings and often lead to destruction.

2.2.2 The Human Relations View or Contemporary View (1940-1970)

Conflict is a natural occurrence in all groups. The human relations accept and believe that, conflict is a natural part of life and that, individuals and organizations need

to learn how to resolve them Robbins (2005). Most people accept and believe this to be the case as dispute happens from time to time. When encountered with life's conflicts, people need to learn how to handle them in a better and effective way to benefit a group's performance Vandever and Menefee (2010). He further stated that, human relations believe that conflict is a natural and inevitable event in all organizations. According to this view, conflict is accepted and cannot be eliminated, sometimes it may even benefit the organization. For Robbins et al, (2003), human relations believe that, conflict needs not necessarily be viewed negatively, but rather positively as a potential force in contributing to the performance of individual. Conflict is unavoidable as people have diverse assertiveness concerning day-to-day issues.

2.2.3 The Interactionists View

According to this view, conflict is not only a positive force, but is also necessary for groups to perform effectively Robbins et al, (2003). They further affirmed that, according to the interactionists, resolving conflict means challenging normal processes and procedures in an effort to improve individual productivity or introduce innovative systems. Conflict keeps groups changing and innovative. For Robbins (2005), conflict is absolutely necessary for the group to perform effectively, but not all conflicts are good. He again stated that, conflict can be identified as either functional or dysfunctional. Functional conflict or constructive conflict supports the goal of the organization and improves performance. Dysfunctional conflict or destructive conflict does not support the goal of the organization and hinder performance. Conflict is a part of people's lives and a natural phenomenon in all organizations. The interactionists interpret conflict in a totally

different way from traditionalists and people with a contemporary view. Conflict can be positive in work environments as it creates smooth functioning by better understanding of existing issues, but whenever a critical or major conflict occurs, it should be resolved, as the undesired level of conflict can be harmful and dysfunctional for the organization Vandever and Menefee, (2010).

Within a group, the members can take any one of the three views of conflict; traditionalists view, human relation view and interactionists view. Conflicts are an integral part of a human's life in all aspects. One cannot avoid conflicts in families, at work or even when watching the news on television Violetta (2012). Since conflicts are unavoidable and very difficult to eliminate, proper means of managing them must be adapted by educational institutions in order to minimize their destructive effects on the institutions.

2.3 Definition of Conflict Management

Different writers have given various definitions of conflict management. Snowden and Gorton (2002), define conflict management as the “efforts designed to prevent, ameliorate, or resolve disagreements between and among individuals and groups”. It is the effective process of minimizing the negative aspect of conflict while increasing the positive aspect in order to promote teaching and learning to improve the effectiveness of organization Cromwell (2012). According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2004), conflict management is the process of identifying the main causes of tension in relationships, be it interpersonal or intra-personal and dealing with them appropriately. Burton (1987) goes on to state that the significant feature of conflict management is that, it is an attempt by

the status quo to manage the dispute, or to avoid escalation of the conflict. To Robbins (2005), Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for management of conflict in organizational environment. Snowden and Gorton (2002), define conflict management as the “efforts designed to prevent, ameliorate, or resolve disagreements between and among individuals and groups”. Conflict management is the various strategies the individuals need to deal with everyday misunderstanding among individuals in the society or an organization. Conflict management is the ability to deal with everyday situations that involve interactions among different people with differences in position. It is different from conflict resolution in that the successful resolution of a conflict usually involves a third party intervention and this also meant that the issue once resolved is finished (Cassey and Cassey, 1977).

The above various definitions of conflict management can assist the researcher to obtain a broad understanding of the real nature of conflict management. The definitions highlighted on how to obtain the best out of conflict situations in order to make the individual or group more effective. Therefore, in order to make these targets achievable, some styles or practices have to be adapted. These kind of practices or styles are termed as the conflict management practices or styles.

2.4 Description of Conflict Management Styles

Conflict management styles are the outcome of one’s concern for achieving one’s objectives and one’s concern about the other person’s achieving his/her objectives

Kareen (1987). According to Kantek, and Gezer (2009), a number of researchers have conducted studies in the area of conflict management, nevertheless, they have not been capable of discovering one paramount style for managing conflict. They further maintained that, these researchers upheld that the relevance of any agreed conflict management style depends on factors such as the situation and the nature of the conflict. Moreover, they considered a conflict management style as appropriate for a particular situation if only it was able to provide effective solution to the problem. Rahim (2002), states that, there is no one best approach for managing conflict. Conflict management style is a general and consistent orientation toward the other party in the conflict issues, manifest in observable behaviors that form a pattern and share common characteristics over time (Kuhn & Poole, 2000).

Conflict management style has been and continues to be measured by a variety of classifications. Follett (1940), first conceptualized the first five-style classification of behavioral conflict- handling strategies in the 1920's. Follett reported findings of methods individuals typically use when dealing with conflict: domination, compromise, integration, avoidance and suppression. Based on Follett's (1940), classifications, Blake and Mouton (1984), grouped the various styles for handling interpersonal conflict into five types: forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising and problem solving. They explained that, problem solving results from high concern for productivity and people, forcing shows high concern for productivity and low concern for people, compromising is based on moderate concern for productivity and people, smoothing depends on low concern for productivity and high concern for people, and withdrawing represents low concern for productivity and low concern for people. Their work proposes that, conflict is

managed in different ways depending on whether the individuals, specifically managers, involved have high or low concern for production and high or low concern for people.

Thomas and Kilmann (1974), also developed a model for handling conflict that utilizes five styles: competing, collaborating, avoiding, accommodating and compromising. They stated that, competing style is high in concern for self, which is characterized by a drive to maximize individual gain, even at the expense of others, collaborating style constructs solutions to conflict to meet the needs of all parties involved, avoiding style is low in concern for self and disengages from conflict, accommodating style sacrifices self-interests to satisfy the needs of others and compromising ideally connects the midpoint between cooperativeness and assertiveness, and involves making concessions to arrive at a resolution of conflict. On the source of a cause of study of the articles of organizational communication instrument, Putman and Wilson (1982), came up with three conflict management style, which divides conflict management strategies into three elements as; non-confrontation or obliging, solution-oriented or integrating, and control or dominating. They assert that, non-confrontation or obliging strategies, manage conflict indirectly, by either simply avoiding disagreements by minimizing controversial issues, solution-oriented or integrating strategies, manage conflict by both searching for creative, integrative solutions and making compromises. Control or dominating strategies, manage conflict by arguing persistently for their positions and using non-verbal messages to emphasize demands.

Pruitt (1983), provided empirical evidence from laboratory studies that there are four styles of handling conflict: yielding, problem solving, inactive and contending. Based partially on Blake and Mouton's (1984) two level component, Pruitt's styles were

based on a two dimensional model consisting of assertiveness and cooperativeness. Pruitt called the style where there is low assertiveness and high cooperativeness as the “yielding style”, and where there is both high assertiveness and high cooperativeness as the “problem solving style”. He called the style where there is low assertiveness and low cooperativeness as the “inactive style”, and where there is high assertiveness and low cooperativeness as the “contending style”. Pruitt further suggested problem solving style as the most appropriate style where mutually beneficial options are required. He did not consider compromising style as a distinct conflict management style like some other authors such as Thomas and Kilmann (1974) asserted. However, other models identified by scholars such as Rahim (2002), classified these conflict management styles into five and placed more emphasis on compromising as a distinct style of managing conflict.

While numerous researchers proposed revisions of the preceding frameworks, Rahim and Bonoma’s (1979) conceptualization has been one of the most popular, with empirical evidence. Vivar (2006), suggesting it to be valid. Rahim and Bonoma (1979), differentiated the style of resolving interpersonal conflict into two basic dimensions: concern for self and concern for others. The first dimension explains the degree, high or low, to which a person attempts to satisfy his/her own concerns, while the second dimension explains the degree to which an individual tries to satisfy the needs or concerns of others. The combination of these two dimensions resulted in five specific styles of conflict management, known as integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising. Rahim’s conflict management model instrument is shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Five Conflict Management Styles on Handling Interpersonal Conflict.

High	Integrating Obliging Compromising	Low
Assertiveness (motivation to satisfy one's own interest)		High
Low	Dominating Avoiding	
	Cooperativeness (motivation to satisfy other party's interest)	

Source: Adopted from Rahim (2002)

Recent studies by Rahim (2002) have shown that integrating and compromising styles are more ideal for dealing with issues that are strategic in nature, while the other styles are more appropriate for managing day-to-day problems in the organization. The five conflict management styles have been explained below.

2.4.1 Integrating Style

Integrating style is characterized by both high concern for self and for others, that is high assertiveness and high cooperativeness. This style also used problem solving through diagnosis of the problem and then finding of appropriate interventions for the

right problems. It involves openness, exchange of information, and examination of differences to reach an effective solution acceptable to both parties. It is also associated with problem solving, which may lead to creative solutions. This style has been found to be useful in utilizing the skills and information of different individuals to generate solutions, and may be appropriate for dealing with strategic issues relating to objectives, policies and long-range planning Afzalur, Garret, and Buntzman (1992). Larson & Mildred (2000), were of the view that, problem solving which was also known as integrating style by Rahim (2002), was more appropriate when it came to dealing with social conflict. Issues which were strategic in nature also yield positive results when integrating style was used. This style deal with when one partners with the other part to achieve both of your goals. It is how one breaks free of the win-lose paradigm and seeks for win-win. This can be effective for complex scenarios, where one needs to find a novel solution. This can also mean reframing the challenge to create a bigger space and room for everybody's ideas. The downside is, it requires a high degree of trust, and reaching a consensus that can require a lot of time and effort to get everybody on board and to synthesize all the ideas.

2.4.2 Obliging Style

An obliging style involves low concern for self and high concern for others, that low assertiveness and high cooperativeness. This style is associated with attempting diminish differences and emphasize commonalities for the purpose of satisfying the needs of the other party. This style has been found to be used by an individual believing that he/she may be wrong and that the issue in question is much more important to the

other person involved. It can be used as a strategy when an individual is willing to make a concession with the hope of getting something in turn Afzalur, Garret, and Buntzman (1992). This style is appropriate when you cooperate to a high-degree. It may be at your own expense and actually work against your own goals, objectives, and desired outcomes. This approach is effective when the other party is the expert or has a better solution. It can also be effective for preserving future relations with the other party.

2.4.3 Dominating Style

A dominating style is characterized with by high concern for self and low concern for others, that is high assertiveness and low cooperativeness. This style has been identified with a win-lose perspective or with forcing behaviour by one individual over another as a means to win a position or resolve a conflict situation. An individual using a dominating style typically uses whatever measures necessary to win the objective, and as a result, ignore or minimizes the needs and expectations of the other party. This style is often used when the issues involved in a conflict seem relatively unimportant or when a quick decision is required. A dominating style may also be used by upper management for implementing strategies and policies, or when unpopular course of action must be implemented Afzalur, Garret, and Buntzman (1992). With this style, one acts in a very assertive way to achieve his/her goals, without seeking to cooperate with the other party, and it may be at the expense of the other party. This approach may be appropriate for emergencies when time is of the essence or when one needs quick, decisive action, and people are aware of and support the approach.

2.4.4 Avoiding Style

An avoiding style is associated with both low concern for self and others, that is, low assertiveness and low cooperativeness. This style is usually accompanied by withdrawal, as an individual using this style fails to satisfy both his/her concern as well as the concern of the other party. This style is often used when the potential ramifications of confronting the other party seem to outweigh the benefits of resolving the conflict. This style has often been found to be used when dealing with perceived tactical or minor issues Afzalur, Garrett, and Buntzman (1992). This is when one simply avoids the issue. One isn't helping the other party reach his/her goals, and he/she isn't assertively pursuing his/her own. This works when the issue is trivial or when one has no chance of winning. It can also be effective when the issue would be very costly or when the atmosphere is emotionally charged and one needs to create some space. Sometimes, issues will resolve themselves, but hope is not a strategy. In general, avoiding is not a good long term strategy.

2.4.5 Compromising Style

Compromising style is associated with an intermediate level of concern for both self and others, that is, moderate assertiveness and moderate cooperativeness. This style typically involves give and take, where both parties involved relinquish some aspect in order to arrive at a mutually acceptable decision. This style is often used when the goals of the conflicting parties are mutually exclusive, or when both parties are equally powerful, such labour union and management, who have reached an impasse. According to Afzalur, Garrett, and Buntzman (1992), this style is used when dealing with particular

strategic issues. This is the “lose-lose” scenario, where neither party really achieves what they want. This requires a moderate level of assertiveness and cooperation. It may be appropriate for scenarios where one needs a temporary solution or where both sides have equally important goals. The trap is to fall into compromising as an easy way out when collaborating would produce a better solution.

The table below shows the conflict management styles and where their strengths and advantages are appropriate, and where their weaknesses and disadvantages are inappropriate.

Table 1. Styles of Handling Interpersonal Conflict.

Conflict Management Styles	No.	Uses Strengths and Advantages Appropriate	No.	Danger of Inappropriate Use Weakness and Disadvantages Inappropriate
Integrating	1	To find a solution that integrate both sets of concern, as they are both important.	1	May waste time and energy on issues that are not important. As the process can take longer, it may frustrate some people. Problem solving skills may be meaningless as other parties are unconcerned about outcome.
	2	To merge insight from with different perspectives on a problem.	2	
	3	When commitment is needed to implement a solution.	3	
	4	When hard feelings have been interfered with an interpersonal working relationship.		
	5	When time is available for solving problems.		
Obliging	1	To build the relationship.	1	Ones needs are not met. One may begin to feel taken advantage of and resentful. He/she believes that he/she is right.
	2	When the issue is relatively unimportant to you but important to the other person.	2	
	3	When one has less experience or expertise than the other person.	3	
	4	When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important.		

Dominating	1	When quick, decisive action is important, such as emergencies.	1	May weaken relationships if it is perceived one won and the other person lost.
	2	When one's core values need to be defended.	2	One receives less input and ideas from others.
	3	When it is important to one to have it his/her own way.	3	Others may not buy in and may try to sabotage the decision.
	4	When unpopular course of action is implemented.	4	When both parties are equally powerful.
	5	when subordinates lack expertise to make technical decision.		
Avoiding	1	When the issue or relationship is unimportant.	1	Conflict may fester until is escalate.
	2	To prevent an immediate conflict.	2	The relationship remains superficial.
	3	When someone else can resolve the conflict more effective.	3	When prompt attention is needed.
	4	When one has little chance of satisfying his/her concern.		
Compromising	1	When an agreement needs to be reached – time is important.	1	Nobody really gets what they want or need.
	2	When mutually exclusive goals prevent collaboration.	2	The focus becomes what one did not manage to get regarding to needs or wants.
	3	To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues.	3	Problems reoccur as they were not fully explored and resolutions found did not truly work for those involved.
	4	As a backup mode when collaboration or competition is unsuccessful.		

Source: Adopted from Rahim (2002)

2.5 Factors that Influence Conflict Management in an Organization

For conflict management to be active, it should encompass vibrant changes at the macro-level within the organization, so that emotional conflict could significantly be lessened. Vital drives in definite capacities like leadership style, the culture of an organization, the structure of an organization, the policies of an organization, and period and location, can influence conflict management in an organization.

The factors that influence conflict management in an organization is shown by the diagram below. It could be seen clearly by the diagram that, conflict management in high schools is influenced by a number of factors that could be classified similar to the conceptual frame work developed for this study.

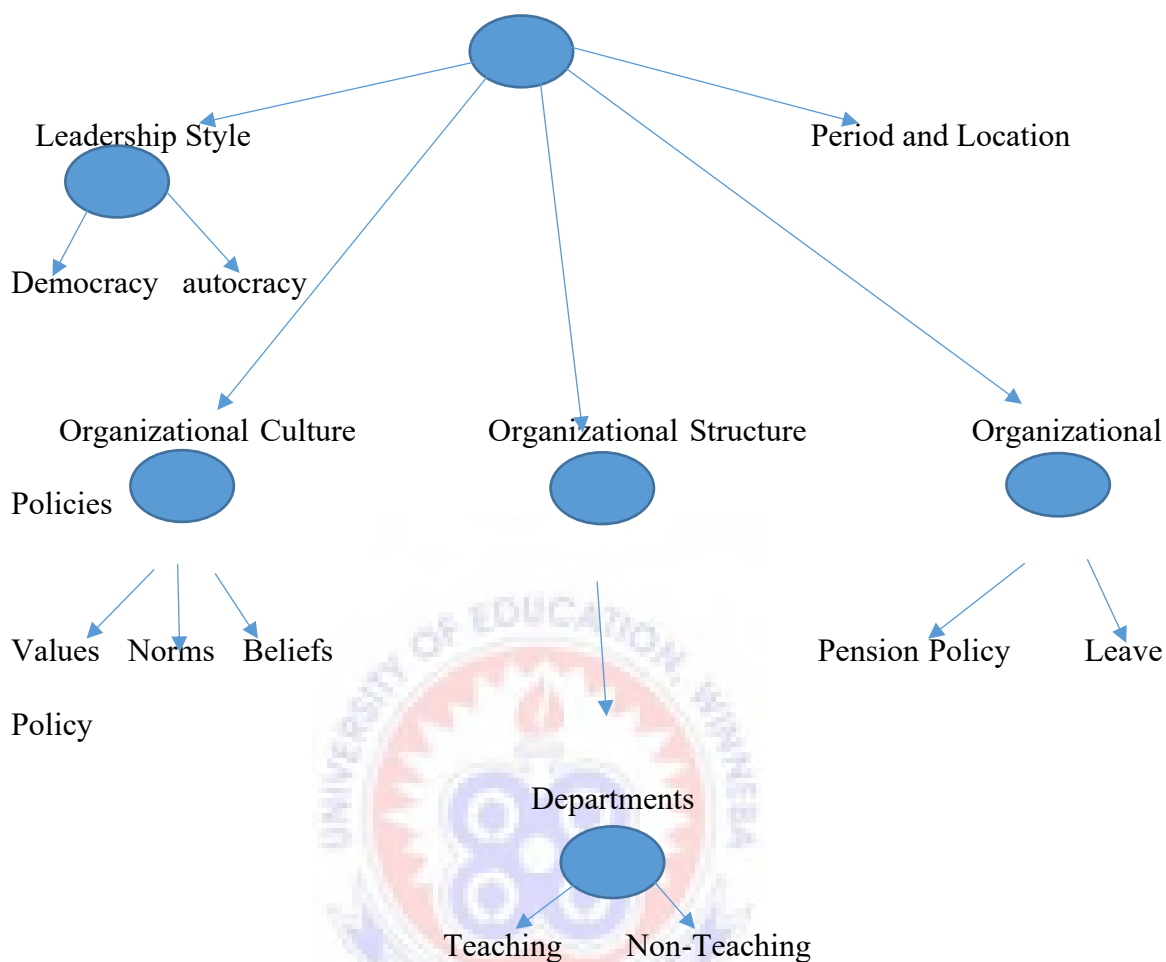


Figure 2: Factors that Influence Conflict Management

Source: Rahim (2002).

2.5.1 Leadership Style

Conflict management can be influenced by leadership style. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), leadership is defined as the practices that lead to positive influence. Kouzes and Posner (2012), define leadership along the lines of a practical process, influences and power, people, and more importantly, relationship within the confinement of purpose. Some organizations may have some leaders with specific leadership styles

that can motivate or demotivate conflict management in those organizations. There has been more empirical research on leadership theory formulated by Bass (1996). According to Bass (1996), the essence of theory of leadership is the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership. The two types of leadership are tied to influence followers and the effect of the leader on followers.

With transformational leadership, the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward the leader, and they are motivated to do more than they originally expected to do (Kouzes and Posner (2007)). For Kouzes and Posner (2012), the leader transforms and motivates followers by making them more aware of the importance of task outcomes, inducing them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organization, and activating their high orders. They further assert that, transformational leaders have a tendency to be more charismatic and they can use this quality to influence effective conflict management. In contrast, Bass (1996), states that, transactional leadership involves an exchange process that may result in follower compliance with leader requests but is not likely to generate enthusiasm and commitment to task objectives. In the same way, in organizations where leaders are transactional leaders, conflict management might likewise be influenced because of the absence of vital qualities on the part of the leaders in managing conflicts. For Bass (1996), transformational and transactional leadership are distinct but not mutually exclusive processes. Transformational leadership increases follower motivation and performance more than transactional leadership, but effective leaders use a combination of both types of leadership styles in managing conflict, for no leadership style is considered good or bad.

According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), for both decision and path-goal theories of leadership, there is no one best style for dealing with different issues but it all depends on the situation on the ground. They further assert that, all the styles of leadership could be appropriate at any point in time depending on the nature of the problem and the situation. Therefore, the appropriateness of any leadership style would depend on the situation. Whenever there is a mismatch between the leadership style and the conflict situation, effective conflict management may not be achieved. The most suitable style of leadership to be used could be determined after proper diagnosis has been effectively done Northouse (2013). There could be some form of conflicts that could best be handled by adopting a more autocratic or democratic style of leadership. This confirms the findings of the earlier scholars who suggested that, there is no one best style of leadership but it all depends on the situation on the ground.

2.5.2 The Culture of an Organization

The actual conflict management is mainly influenced positively by the culture of an organization that inspires honesty and risk taking and correspondingly sharing of convenient information. The culture of an organization encompasses values and behaviours that contributes to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization Jones (2010). Schein (2011), asserts that, the culture of an organization is a shared philosophy, ideologies, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, expectations, attitudes, norms, and values. This organizational culture represents the collective values, beliefs, and principles of organizational members. In the condition where the kind of culture dampens workers from challenging the current situation, workers might not completely

collaborate in the conflict management procedure and they would keep their views to themselves.

The culture of reinforcement could likewise be used well by managers to inspire conflict management activities in their particular organization. Reinforcement, according Deal and Brooks (2009), is anything that occurs after a behaviour that increases the likelihood of that behaviour occurring again. The system of reinforcement could possibly be employed to accomplish real performance and vision as well as enhancing long-term performance through remuneration for services. Frost (1991), agreed with the statement above by stating that, in every organization in which preferred activities are fortified through reinforcement, expected results are easily accomplished. The heads or directors of organizations are therefore encouraged to accept the reinforcement device to influence the issue of conflict management in their organizations.

2.5.3 The Structure of an Organization

The structure of an organization defines how activities such as task allocation, coordination, and supervision are directed towards the achievement of organizational aims Schemerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, (2008). It affects organizational action and provides the foundation on which standard operating procedure and routings rest. The structure of an organization includes the hierarchy, procedures, reward systems and many others Rahim and Bonoma (1979). From the above, it determines which individuals get to participate in which decision making processes, and thus to what their views shape the organization's actions. The structure of an organization can also be considered as the viewing glass or perspective through which individuals see their organization and its

environment. With this condition, change of the structure of the organization may positively or negatively influence the conflict management practices in the organization. Rahim (2002), advised that, the suitability of any structure would be influenced by the organizational environment. He further asserts that, the organizational structure could be more appropriate for department which responded to stable environment. It could possibly be construed that, the more the correspondence between the organizational structure, the more effective the management of conflict would be. Steinhoff and Owens (1989), remarks that, the alterations in the structure of the organization to influence conflict management within the organization was reproduced in innovative organizational systems like the integrated organization, effective establishment and level organizations.

2.5.4 The Policies of an Organization

According to Baron (1990), the policies of an organization take an excessive influence on the conflict management practices of an organization. Policies are general statements of how an organization want to behave. Some of these policies can influence conflict management practices positively or negatively. He further stated that, some policies that are flexible enough and permit workers to contribute efficiently in the conflict management process, can positively influence conflict management practices, while strict rules that do not permit workers to express their views and actively participate in the conflict management process can mainly influence conflict management negatively.

2.5.5 Period and Location

Period and location can have greater influence on conflict management. Vivar (2006), observed that, if the location is inappropriate to deal with conflict, the predictable result may possibly not be accomplished. The writer additionally suggested that, a peaceful atmosphere and a period when entirely every irritation is down as appropriate in order to achieve a positive response from both parties, would by and large attain a positive result. It could be deduced from the above that, conflict situation should not be dealt with instantly, else, it could worsen the problem at hand.

2.6 The Challenges of Conflict Management

Several challenges occur in managing conflict regardless of its numerous significant. These challenges split from the individual level to the organizational level. Various authors have identified some common challenges of conflict management as:

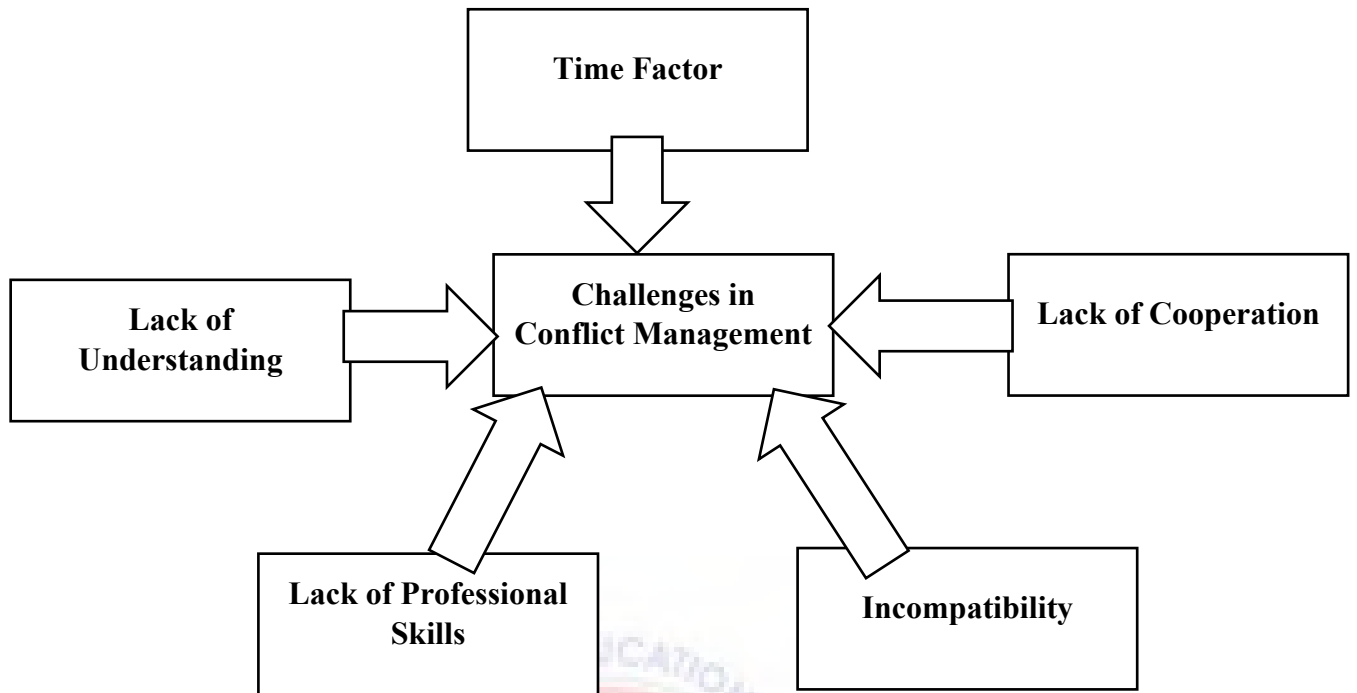


Figure 3: Challenges in Conflict Management

Source: Rahim (2002).

2.6.1 Time Factor

One of the main challenges in managing conflict is that, some of the conflict management styles generally turn out to be time consuming and this can cost an institution so much. In deciding on the suitable style for a specific conflict situation, a strategy which involves time consuming may be necessary and much of useful time would have to be stripped of so as to efficiently engage in a precise conflict management style. Runde and Flanagan (2007)), presented reliability of this argument on conflict management style. Moreover, management may get carried away by conflict management process such that, they may not realize it is eating into normal working hours. Time spent in managing conflict, if costed, could have been spent doing more productive things.

2.6.2 Lack of Understanding

One of the challenges that could be encountered in managing conflict is the occurrence of some form of errors Tjosvold (1992). One of such errors is the probability of solving a wrong problem. The writer additional stated that, this error generally occurred when there is lack of proper diagnosis of the problem and where there is inadequate understanding of the nature and cause of the conflict leading to the application of the wrong intervention to the problem. According to Robbins (2005), an understanding of the of the source of conflict improves the probability that the proper management style will be selected.

2.6.3 Lack of Cooperation

Another challenge that could be encountered is lack of cooperation on the part of the two parties involved in the conflict. When either of the parties or both parties are reluctant to take active part in the conflict management process, the success of the entire style may not be achieved De Church and Marks (2001). One of the parties or both parties may refuse to take part in the conflict management process when they probably feel so hurt about the problem. According to (Back and Back, 1994), for conflict management practice to succeed, the parties involved should be willing to take active part in the entire conflict management process. Darling and Fogliasso (1999), remained consistent with the declaration made by Back and Back (1994).

2.6.4 Lack of Professional Skills

Conflict between or among individuals or an organization is associated with emotions De Bono (1985). He again asserted that during conflict, strong emotions appear which can hurt feelings. When the one handling the conflict does not have the professional skills needed to deal with the problem, he/she may end up worsening the conflict situation. Conflict cannot be managed by anybody. According to Deutsch and Coleman (2000), when conflict is handled in an unhealthy way, it can be the cause of irreparable rifts, resentments, and break-ups. There are some technicalities required in managing conflicts. Choosing the appropriate conflict management style could be very challenging as suggested by Euwena, Van de Vliert, & Bakker, (2007). When a wrong style to handle a particular problem is adopted, the end results could be disastrous (Girard & Koch, 1999). It takes a professional to identify and choose the appropriate conflict management style to solve the right problem.

2.6.5 Incompatibility

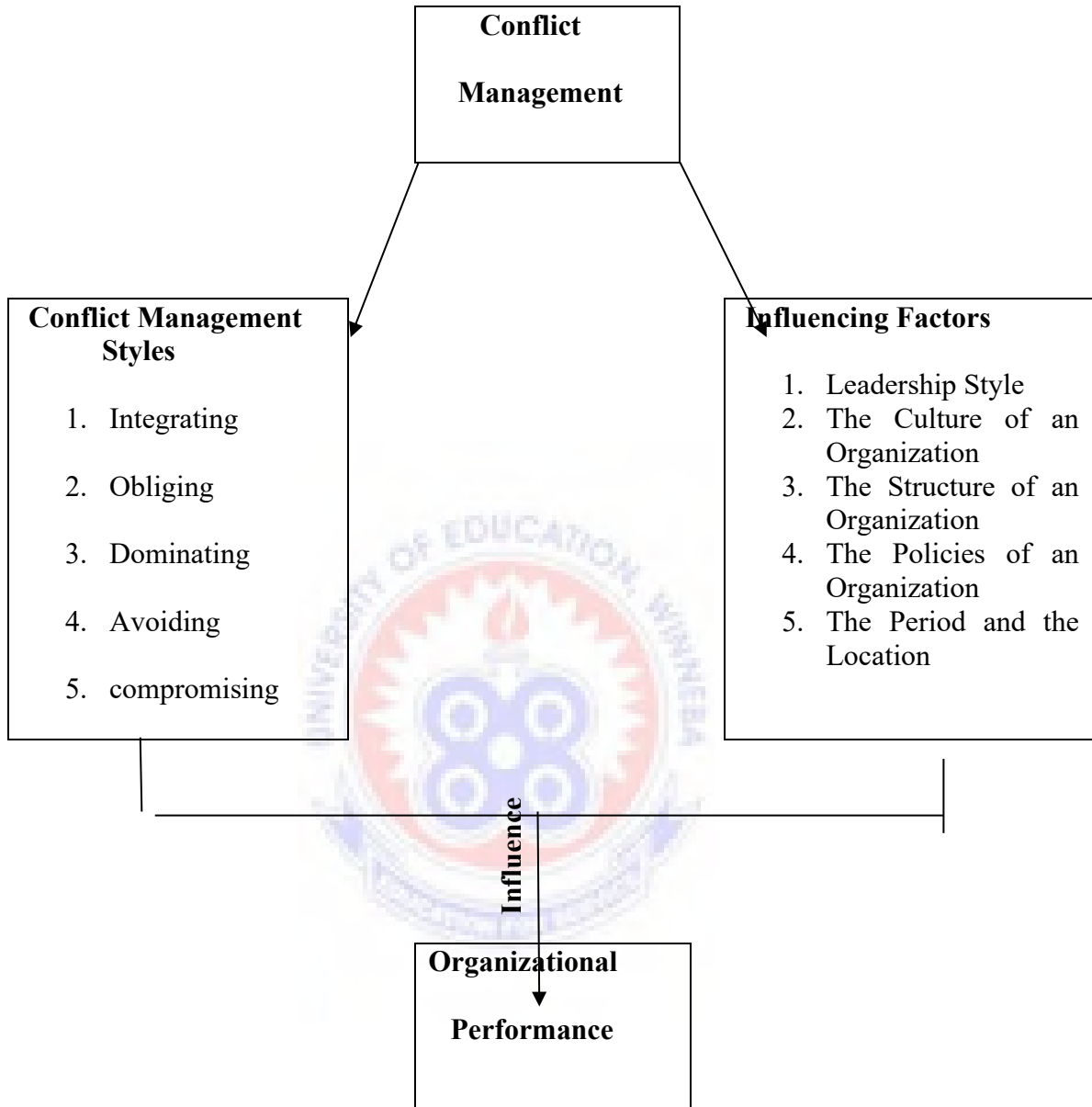
According Segai and Smith (2011), another challenge in handling conflict has to do with the two dimensions of conflict, namely; affective and substantive conflict. They further explained that, affective conflict which is also known as relational conflict, deals with incompatibilities relating to interpersonal relationships, while substantive conflict which is also known as task conflict deals with incompatibilities associated with group members. For Whetten and Cameron (2005), substantive conflict was measured as good conflict while affective conflict was measured as bad conflict. Rahim (2002), in his studies drew a conclusion that, there was a positive correlation between the two dimensions of conflict and this is considered as a challenge. Violetta (2012), also came

up with a conclusion parallel to Rahim's conclusion when he stated a positive correlation between the two dimensions of conflict. On the other hand, some researchers such as, Wamocha, Nasongo and Injendi (2012), concluded in their studies that there was relatively a negative correlation between affective and substantive conflict. In managing conflict under this perspective, incompatibilities need to be handled in a balanced manner.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical framework of this study, a conceptual framework was used to develop a conflict management model. The study partly adopted conflict management models of Rahim (2002), and Kouzes and Posner (2012). The conceptual model proposes conflict management styles and other factors such as, the culture of an organization, the structure of an organization, the policies of an organization, and period and location, that can influence conflict management in an organization to improve its general performance. This conceptualized model is presented in figure 2 below.

Figure 4. Conceptualized Model

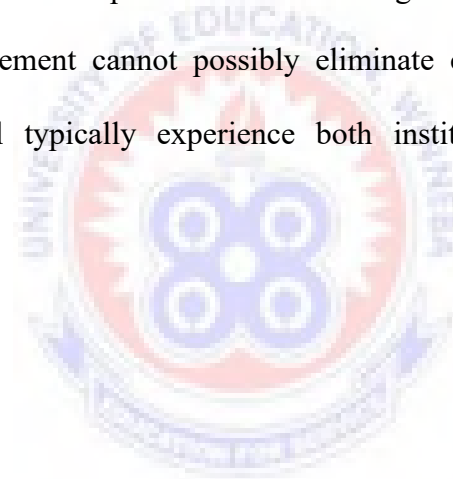


Source: Self Constructed Model, 2020

2.8 Summary

On the basis of theoretical studies of this work, it can be summarized that, conflict is inevitable phenomenon that exist in any human institution, and every organization should learn to deal with it using the appropriate measures. Conflict in organization has

both positive and negative effects. The positive effects improve group performance which could be greatly achieved when conflict is properly managed, by using the popular conflict management styles which include integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising. Some major factors that influence conflict management in human institution such as, leadership style, the culture of an organization, the structure of an organization, the policies of an organization, and period and location, are to be considered. Conflict can be managed as soon as it occurs, but there are some common challenges that directors encounter when managing conflict in organizations. This goes a long way to affect the overall performance of the organization at any particular point in time. Conflict management cannot possibly eliminate conflict totally, but those who manage it well, will typically experience both institutional benefits and personal satisfaction.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

Research methodology, according to Collis and Hussey (2003), is the overall approaches and perspectives to the research processes as a whole. To Kumar (2005), research method deals with the research instruments, the population, the sample, the sample techniques and the procedures for administering the research instruments. Research methodology also refers to the various distinct ways or tools which data can be collected and analyses. This method is chosen because it gives the researcher a sense of direction to conduct the study.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is the plan and structure of the entire research. Research design, according to Creswell (2008), is the plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The structure influences the technique for collection and analysis of data and provides the connection between empirical data as well as its conclusions in a logical sequence to the initial research question of the study, Baiden (2006). To Oppenheim (2003), it is a plan for turning the research questions and objectives into a research project which considers research methodology to be used.

In order to understand the research design of a study, it is important to clarify the research philosophy upon which the study is grounded. Sidhu (2002), reveals that a research philosophy is a belief about the way in which data on a phenomenon should be

gathered, analyzed and used. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), support this assertion and indicates that research philosophy is the logical starting point because philosophy, be it implicit or explicit, has a fundamental influence on the purpose of research and, subsequently, the approach taken in the management of the research. The design for any research study depends on the kind of research methods chosen Fisher (2007). The research design adopted for this study was exploratory survey design using qualitative method. According to Glass and Hopkins (1984), exploratory research is more concerned with finding out what is happening on the grounds. Peil (1982), also maintained that, exploratory research seeks to know 'why', and to 'explain' phenomenon. Exploratory research requires seeking for new understanding, asking questions and assessing phenomenon. The researcher adopted exploratory survey design because, he sought to explore and gather data on conflict management practices on the sampled schools and also obtain a deeper understanding of the concept.

For this study, the researcher employed qualitative method because, the researcher wanted to gain a deeper understanding of what the targeted population thinks about the topic. Qualitative research, according to Glass and Hopkin (1984), involves a range of philosophies, designs and specific techniques including in-depth interviews, participant and non-participant observation, focus groups, document analyses and a number of other methods of data collection. Gubrium and Holstein (1997), consider and maintain that, qualitative research method provides rich descriptions of people and interaction in their natural setting. Qualitative research produces insight into the sensitive nature of conflict management practices because it presents a wide range of different techniques for data collection. The researcher specifically used case study qualitative design for this research.

According to Thomas (2011), case study is used to describe an entity that forms a single unit such as a person, an organization or an institution. In qualitative design, there is less emphasis on counting numbers of people who think or behave in certain ways and more emphasis on explaining why people think and behave in certain ways Bent (2011). Participants in qualitative study often involve in smaller numbers of tools. To Neale (2009), this specific design is best used to answer how and when questions and is not well suited to generalizable what, when and who questions. With this design, it is more difficult to analyze; it does not fit neatly in standard categories; data collection is usually time consuming Thomas (2011). In adopting qualitative method, Hellriegel et al., (1998), state that the study proposed that, organizations exist as social entities and so the overall dynamics that influence individual and organizational conflict management needed to be explored. This qualitative research method assisted the researcher to construct standardized interviews and observations which provided data in the same form from all respondents.

3.3 Research Population

Neuman (2006), opines that, population is the total group of subjects that meet a designated set of criteria. He further adds that, it is the population that a sample size is taken. According to Walliman (2001), population in research refers to all the members and individuals targeted for the research. The targeted population, with regards to this study was all teaching staff of senior high schools in Greater Accra Region, precisely in Accra Metro. This study was purposely selected teaching staff of Accra Girls Senior High School, Accra Academy Senior High School and Presbyterian Senior High School to

represent the research population, due to their recent experience in conflict cases. The population for this study involved three (3) heads and forty-nine (49) teachers, which comprises two (2) headmasters, one (1) headmistress, thirty-eight (38) male teachers and eleven (11) female teachers, as shown on table 2 below.

Table 2. Population Retrieved for the Study

Position	Male	Female	Total
Heads	2	1	3
Teachers	38	11	49
Total	40	12	52
Percentage	76.9	23.1	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

According to Adentwi and Amartei (2012), sampling is the process of selecting a part of a given population to represent the whole population. To Kothari (2000), it is a sub-group or smaller group of the population which is selected to make sure that, it is a representative of the population with relevant characteristics. Trochim (2006), maintained that, it is the process of selecting units from a population of interest so that by studying the sample a generalized conclusion could be drawn. Borg and Gall (1983) state that, small samples are proper than large samples in terms of educational research projects. They further stated that, a study that examines intensely into the characteristics of a small

sample, gives greater information than a study that uses the same by collecting only shallow information on a large sample.

For this study, the research sample was selected to represent the reachable population due to the difficulty of the availability of the target population, in addition to the restrictions of time and finance. Borg and Gall (1983) assert that, in making decision on a proper sample size, at least 10% to 20% is required to have an opportunity of having representative sample. To have a proper sample for this study, 73.1% of the total population of the male teachers, 21.1% of female teachers and 5.8% of heads were taken. This gave a sample size of 52 participants, comprising 38 male teachers, 11 female teachers and 3 heads of the selected senior high schools in Accra Metro. This consideration was made because, the sample size was small and hence the population was easily handled.

Probability and non-probability sampling are the two main sampling techniques. In the probability sampling techniques, according to Amason and Sapienza (1997), all the entire members of the population have equal chance of being selected. To Glass and Hopkins (1984), non-probability sampling techniques presents a situation where members of the population are selected based on other factors aside probability. The researcher used simple random sampling to select the sampled schools. The respondents were selected through purposive, convenience, stratified random and proportion sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to select the heads of the sampled schools, because their views were calculated vital in drawing conclusions. The teachers were selected through convenience sampling, stratified random sampling and proportion sampling techniques. Convenience sampling was used to select teachers because of the

availability, nearness and closeness to the sampled schools. The teachers were stratified into two strata: males and females. The determined number of the teachers was randomly selected in proportion to the number of males and females. In this sampling technique, all the teachers were given equal chance to take part on the selection.

3.5 Data Collection Instrumentation

The research instruments were interview and observation. Patton (1990) asserts that, the choice of research instruments will base on the overall judgment on which type of data is required for a specific problem. Semi-structured interview and observation were used for this study. Silverman (2000), asserts that, there is extensive use of interview as a major technique for acquiring information using a well-designed document known as an interview guide. According to Barnett (1991), an interview guide is a well-designed document acquire information from interviewees. He further explained that, the interview guide gives the interviewer a sense of direction to acquire the required information from the interviewees so as to be on track of the appropriate questions to be asked. The interview guide was used to gather data from the heads and teachers of the selected senior high schools in Accra Metro. The respondents were interviewed because they dealt with conflict issues in the schools. Interviews were used because the study dealt with sensitive topics that attempted to elicit deeper responses that cannot easily be measured by questionnaires. Interview proceedings were transcribed. The interview schedules were consisted of open ended questions that were allowed probing during interviews. During the interview, data were recorded by writing down the responses. Interviews were conducted to gather information on conflicts management in the selected

senior high schools in Accra Metro of Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Specifically, the interview guide covered a range of literature review themes which include conflict management styles, influencing factors and challenges of conflict management. The interview guide used for the interview is shown in the appendix.

Observation, according to Chi (1997), is the basic structure of research methods in social science. To Alder and Alder (1994), observation is the essential tool that enables the interviewer to have access to the complete picture of a situation. It involves the recording or noting down some valuable points of the subject matter Chi (1997). This study picked up the observation method of the participants because it was basically allowed the researcher to focus on some observable behaviours that occurred among the respondents during all aspects of formal and informal interactions. The checklist for observation used, is shown in the appendix.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

A pilot testing was carried out by the researcher to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instrument, and to revise and improve the interview guide to make it more specific and effective in eliciting the needed responses. Saunders et al (2012), explain that, validity is concerned with just how accurately the observable measures actually represent the concept in question or whether, in fact, they represent something else. It is therefore important to think of specific validity threats and to try to think of what strategies are best to deal with these. Heppner and Heppner (2000), cited in Awang (2014), state that the instrument used in the collection of data must be construed in such a way that they collect valid data required in order to answer the research questions as

closely as possible. In order to establish satisfied and face validity, the in-depth interview guide was presented to experts in Test and Measurement in University of Educational, Winneba – Kumasi, who coordinated all the items of the guide to determine whether the instrument actually measured all that it was supposed to measure. To guarantee the validity of the instruments, it was pre-tested to increase its validity and relevance of the study. The interview guide was scrutinized for mistakes and oversights, ambiguity, legibility and relevance. After scrutiny and advice, the contents and impressions of the instrument were improved based on the authorities' advice and comments. The interview guide for both heads and teachers was the same. This was conducted to ensure validity of information to be collected. It also enabled the researcher to identify ambiguities in the guide.

Good research instruments collect data that is reliable and help the researcher to achieve the intended objectives of the study. To support this view, Noe, Hollenbeck, Fisher (2007), cited in Sprick (2013), argue that reliability is established when tests get same results if some participants are given same score under similar conditions. To confirm reliability of the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot study with one (1) headmaster and eleven (11) teachers, and arranged an interview in West African Senior High School in Accra, Greater Accra Region of Ghana, before the actual study. The School was not involved in the main study, however, shares parallel characteristics with the selected schools. The main purpose of the pilot study was to check on appropriateness and transparency of the guide on the instruments designed, significance of the information being sought, the language used and the content validity of the instruments from the responses given. The outcome of the pilot study illuminated bias in the

interviewing process by concentrating on the research interview guide, and eliminating opposing personal views by leading the participants to the answers. The participants that were targeted were closely managed to ensure that the data was not contaminated. The researcher did not divulge any information to any of the participants.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Before the conduction of the interview in the selected senior high schools in Accra Metro, the researcher obtained an introduction letter from the University of Education – Winneba, Kumasi campus, Faculty of Education and Communication Sciences, Department of Educational Leadership to give detailed explanation of the purpose of the study to the heads of the selected senior high schools, to seek permission to conduct a study in that setting, and also to seek the participants' consent to participate in the study. when the permission was granted to the researcher, a day and time, which was not more than a week, was fixed for the interviews.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data analysis was started after the interviews had been conducted. Data analysis is a process that involves inspecting, cleaning, coding and transforming data to change it into information that can be useful Babbie (2011). This study used a qualitative analysis because it involved categorizing of data from interviews and observations, and presented by using content analysis. The content analysis is a research tool which is used to regulate the presence of specific words or idea within sets of texts Patton (1990). This kind of method considered communication through texts and obtained the vital point of

social interactions and recognized the relationships among various ideas. Data from in-depth interviews was audio taped and transcribed. The transcripts were then organized into themes and categorized as they were emerged from the field. The findings were presented as they were found appropriate.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Payne and Payne (2004), are of the view that, ethical consideration is the embodiment of a moral stance that involves conducting research to achieve not just high professional standards of technical procedures, but also respect and protection for the people actively consenting to be studied. Some ethical issues such as, privacy, informed consent, paraphrasing and plagiarism, was considered by the researcher. Koomson (2007), stated that, it is unethical to involve participants in a research without informed consent, share information provided by the participants with any other user and allow another to identify the participants from the information provided, copying a study conducted by another person or person's words, ideas, or structure without acknowledging that person. In relation to this, the researcher deemed it necessary to make it a point to consider all the ethical issues because they can affect the trustworthiness of its final result.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter reports on the findings that emerged from the interviews conducted for this study, which relates to conflict management practices in three selected senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region. A total of fifty-two (52) teaching staff members were interviewed based on the objectives of this study. This chapter focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the objectives of this study. The demographic characteristics highlighted were sex, age, level of education, length of service and marital status. The objectives of the study were to find out conflict management practices that are adapted by senior high schools, identify the factors that influence conflict management in the senior high schools, determine the challenges that are experienced in managing conflict in senior high schools, and finally, find out the roles played by conflict management in senior high schools to achieve institutional performance.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were emphasized on sex, age and educational background. The decision for the overall interview of the respondents were mainly rested on the members of the teaching staff. Therefore, only the characteristics of the respondents selected from the three selected senior high schools were captured for analysis. The respondents were dominated by males which was a

reflection of female participation in the teaching profession in Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Only 23.1% of the total respondents were female, the rest were all males.

Table 3 below shows the age distribution of the respondents. The age of the respondents ranges from thirty (30) years to sixty (60) years.

Table 3. Age of Respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentage
30 – 40	22	42.0
41 – 50	25	48.0
51 – 60	5	10.0
Total	52	100.0

Source: Field work (2020)

Table 3 shown, presents the age distribution of the respondents in the three selected senior high schools in the Accra Metro. The findings indicate the age distribution of the respondents that, a majority of them were in age between forty-one (41) and fifty (50) years, which represents 48.0%, followed by those between thirty (30) and forty (40) years, with their percentage as 42.0, while the least were between fifty-one (51) and sixty (60), which represents 10.0%.

Table 4. Level of Education of the Respondents.

Level of Education	Respondents	Percentage
Diploma	3	5.8
First Degree	26	50.0
Second Degree	23	44.2
Total	52	100.0

Source: Field work (2020)

Table 4 shows the level of education of the respondents. The findings present highest educational attainment of the teachers that, the majority of the teachers 50.0%, had First Degree. The remainder was fairly split with 44.2% had Second Degree and 5.8% were also Diploma holders.

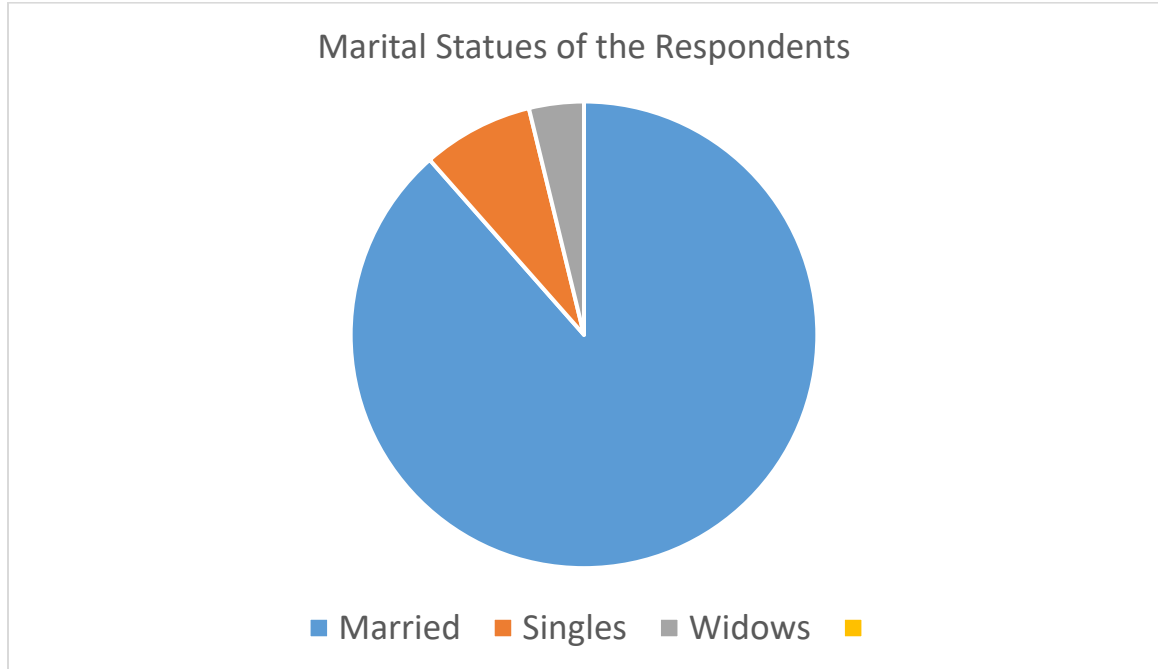
Table 5. Length of Service of the Respondents.

Length of Service	Respondents	Percentage
11 – 20	25	48.1
21 – 30	21	40.4
31 – 40	6	11.5
Total	52	100.0

Source: Field work (2020)

Table 5 presents the findings of the length of service of the respondents. The majority of the respondents had taught for 11 to 20 years with 48.1%, followed by those who had taught for 21 to 30 years with 40.4%. The least of the respondent had taught for 31 to 40 years, with the percentage of 11.5.

Figure 5. Marital Status of the Respondents.



Source: Field work (2020)

Figure 3 gives the pictorial presentation of the marital status of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were married with 46(88.5%), followed by those who were singles with 4(7.7%), while the others were widows with 2(3.8%).

4.2 Analysis of the Research Interview

The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with fifty-two teaching staff members of three selected senior high schools in the Accra Metro, and they generated some exciting findings. During the analysis of the information, individual tape-recorded interview was transcribed. At the interview point, all the notes that were copied, were correspondingly analyzed as part of the evidence of the interview. In order to scrutinize and explore data, the recorded data and the notes were categorized into broad headings and sub-headings in line with the research objectives and the interview guide.

With this, there were four main headings identified after analyzing the qualitative data. The headings were: the issues of conflict management practices in senior high schools; factors that influence conflict management; the challenges and the roles played by conflict management to achieve institutional performance.

4.3 The Issues of Conflict Management Practices

In order to attain the best out of the issues of conflict management practices in senior high schools, conflict management styles were adapted. In view of the adaptability of the numerous conflict management styles, integrated style, high assertiveness and high cooperativeness, was well-thought-out as the best frequently adapted style according to the responses given by the respondents. According to the respondents, integrated style which recorded the highest point was closely followed by the compromising style, the obliging style and the avoiding style. Dominating style, high assertiveness and low cooperativeness, recorded the minimum point as suggested by the respondents. Most of the respondents opted for integrating style because they affirmed that, it accorded with the achievement of higher self-interest as well as the interest of others. This was in line with statement of Rahim (2002). A variety of opinions were expressed by the respondents in their response to some of the questions asked from the interview guide based on integrating style. For instance, a male respondent remarked that:

“.....as far as everyone treasures the best for him/herself, each and every one should also do as much as possible at any given time to consider the interest of others as well.”

A female respondent also stated that:

“.....when it gets to issues like managing conflict, we must remain slightly religious. Each one should learn to care for the interest of the other and avoid selfishness, simply because we want to satisfy our interest.”

Figure 6 below denotes the five distinctive conflict management styles as suggested by the respondents.

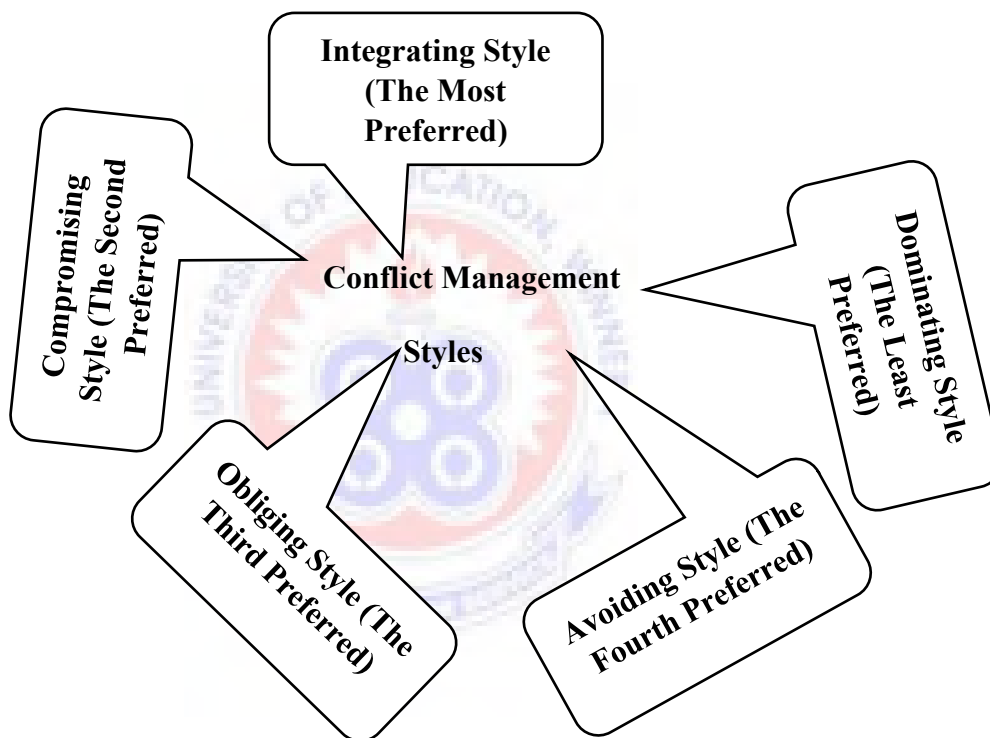


Figure 6. Conflict Management Styles

Source: Field work (2020)

Compromising style, which involves moderate assertiveness and moderate cooperativeness, was strongly advocated by some of the respondents. This was due to the fact that, it is also associated with an intermediate level of concern for both self and others. This style usually comprises give and take, where both parties involved must turn down some aspect in order to attain a mutually satisfactory decision. As compared to

integrating style, this type of style does not call for high concern for one's own self and others. Some of the respondents were of the view that, managing conflict essentially required the act of giving out something in order to obtain something in return. This justified their reason for choosing the compromising style. For instance, a male respondent shared his views on this as:

"..... both parties involved in conflict ought to be ready to turn down some aspect of emotions in order to obtain something in return."

Obliging style, low assertiveness and high cooperativeness, according to the responses by the respondents, score few points in terms of its adaptability in achieving the set targets of the school when it comes to managing conflict. This was mainly because most of the respondents thought that, this style was difficult to be implemented, as it is associated with attempting to diminish differences and highlights on commonalities for the purpose of satisfying the needs of the other party. Some of the respondents expressed their views on this issue. For example, a female respondent noted that:

".....I am not in the position to stoop so low for the other party, most especially when I am aware that the other party is at fault; that would awfully be an insult to my personality."

On this same issue, a male respondent commented that:

".....everyone would take me for a fool, if I descend myself so low for the other party when actually is obvious that the other party is at fault. That would automatically tarnish my reputation."

The dominating style, high assertiveness and low cooperativeness, was measured by the respondents to be self-centered in nature, as it had been identified with win-low

viewpoint. This style does not care about the interest of others. At this point, one party tries to satisfy his/her own interest by ignoring the interest of the other party. Here, it was considered by some of the respondents that, in the issue of managing conflict without thinking about the other party's interest could lead to a situation where the destructive aspect of conflict would greatly maximize at the expense of the constructive aspect. Some of the respondents came up with their opinion on the reasons why they do not prefer this type of style. For instance, a male respondent stated that: “..... *with the intention of managing conflict issues in a cordial manner, you must not be hostile to the interest of the party.*”

The avoiding style, low assertiveness and low cooperativeness, was likewise considered efficient by several respondents, as this type of style generally goes along with withdrawal. Moreover, a number of the respondents affirmed that, conflict possibly could best be avoided when certain complications and discrepancies are overlooked. For example, a female respondent pointed out that:

“.....*at times, the ideal way to deal with an issue of conflict is to ignore the problem on board.*”

A male respondent also commented that:

“.....*in as much as everybody needs peace and order to enhance the academic performance of the school, the best way to avoid conflict is to pay no attention to the problem.*”

The assertion of the above views of the respondents was strongly denied by Thomas (1976), and he rather thinks that, the ideal way of dealing with any conflict situation was to actually acknowledge the problem and deal with it. However, VanSant

(2003), strongly confirmed the views of the respondents, when the author commented that, the ideal way to avoid conflict is to overlook the problem.

4.4 The Factors that Influence Conflict Management

The researcher asked the respondents to pinpoint some of the factors that influence conflict management practices. They pointed out leadership style as one of the factors. Leadership style was noted by some of the respondents as a vital factor. Some of them even commented that, the leadership style practiced by some of the leaders of institutions from time to time could make it extremely tough to manage conflicts. For example, a female respondent asserted that: *“.....some of the leaders may be so strict and autocratic, such that, it discourages the parties from opening up. In the same way, a leader may be so paternalistic or democratic such that he/she is able to play the role of a mediator effectively in managing the problem and also encourage the parties to open up.”*

The above quote is consistent with the hypothetical statement made by Bass (1996). The assertion stated that the leadership style adapted by leaders in any given institution may go a long way to influence the management of conflict in the institution. Another factor that was identified by the respondents that influence conflict management in senior high schools was the culture of an organization. According to the responses of the respondents, culture played a key role in terms of managing conflict in high schools. From the interview, it was considered by the majority of the respondents that, the culture of an organization was the major factor that influenced conflict management, because the major tool for promoting conflict management practices, or affecting conflict

management practices negatively was the culture of an organization. This same assertion was noted by Frost (1991), Schein (2011) and Bulach et al. (2012). Some of comments by the respondents affirmed this statement. For example, a male respondent stated that:

“.....in my school, the established culture is such that, when there is a misunderstanding between two parties or among a group, it becomes very difficult to get the parties on a common platform to handle the problem.”

The quote above points to the idea that, an organization’s shared philosophy, ideologies, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, expectations, attitudes, norms, and values, could be connected with conflict management in the organization, since the culture of the organization may impede or promote the management of conflict. This was consistent with the academic argument made by Mullins (2005). Based on this, another male respondent commented that:

“..... the culture in my school creates good atmosphere for conflict to be managed as it is less formal and flexible in nature.”

Contrary to the above first quote on culture, the close quote above implied that, the culture of an organization, which represents the collective values, beliefs, norms, attitude and principles, could help to promote conflict management in an organization.

This concept is in line with the assertion made by Jones (2010).

Furthermore, the respondents identified the structure of an organization as one of the factors. According to the responses of the respondents, it was obvious that, organizational structure influenced conflict management practices because, it is through the structure of an organization that task allocation, coordination, and supervision are directed towards

the achievement of the organizational aims. A considerable number of the respondents commented on the organizational structure. For example, a male respondent stated that:

“.....in my school, the structure is conducive for managing conflict, in the grounds that, when there is misunderstanding between two parties, we the teachers get to participate in decision making processes.”

The quote above is consistent with the academic assertion made by Rahim and Bonoma (1979). The assertion stated that, organizational structure determines which individuals get to participate in which decision making processes, and thus their views shape the organization's actions to influence conflict management.

The policies of an organization were another factor identified by the respondents as one of the factors that influence conflict management. It was obvious from the responses of the respondents that; policies of an organizations contribute in conflict management practices in high schools. For example, a female respondent commented that:

“.....the institutional policies can slow down effective management of conflict through the formation of a kind of tension and formality among workers.”

In addition to the above that the respondents pointed out as factors that influenced conflict management practices in high schools was period and location. They suggested period and location as one of the influential factors of conflict management because, a peaceful atmosphere and a period when entirely every irritation is down may generally achieve a positive outcome. A number of respondents commented on this issue. For instance, a male respondent stated that: *“..... if a suitable period and location is not chosen to deal with conflict, a required outcome of conflict management may not be*

achieved. Again, trying to manage conflicts when irritations of both parties are still very high, is measured as wrong timing.”

According to the above quote, period and location for managing conflict is also associated with conflict management. With this view, some periods could be regarded as inappropriate timing for managing conflict, while other periods are also regarded as the right timing when it comes to conflict management.

The factors that were analyzed above influence conflict management practices in difference dimensions, but the major factor that was noted by the respondents that influences conflict management in high schools was the culture of an organization.

4.5 The Challenges of Conflict Management

When the various respondents were asked to identify some of the challenges encountered in managing conflict, they named lack of cooperation as one of the challenges. It was observed from the responses by the respondents that, cooperation on the side of the parties affected in the conflict was actually needed for the effective management of conflict in educational institutions. It was noted by the respondents that, a relatively larger percentage of the targeted population regarded lack of cooperation as the commonest challenge encountered in managing conflict in senior high schools. A sizeable number of respondents annotated that, the parties affected in the conflict may be unwilling to stop holding on to the issue and this could make it very difficult to manage such issues. Some of the respondents gave out their personal observation on this. For example, a female teacher commented that:

“.....to cooperate is like making it possible for me to surrender, which I may be unwilling to do in spite of what I expect to be true about the situation.”

The above quote maintains the notion that, the cooperation of the parties affected in any conflict situation is at all times essential in the management of conflict. This indicates that, parties involved in conflict are needed to be accessible and also be prepared to make peace. This affirmation was logical with the model argument made by Jehn and Mannix (2001) that, lack of cooperation was regarded as the greatest demanding challenge among all other challenges faced in managing conflict in organizations. On the other hand, Rahim (2002), showed intense disagreement with this argument.

One more challenge that the respondents considered was lack of professional skills in managing conflict situations. It was clearly noted from the respondents that, some degree of professionalism and skills were expected in managing conflict successfully. This means that, some degree of education would be required to prepare leaders and managers of educational institutions to efficiently manage conflict situations in senior high schools. Some respondents evinced their opinions on this statement. For instance, one of the male respondents affirmed that, *“.....managing conflict issues is a practical activity and it needs some practical mechanisms. Conflict management does not require little effort as it might look like; it entails artistic deal of skills.....”*

The above quote by the respondent evidently confirms the idea that, professionalism and skills are essential in managing conflict. This is with the same opinion with the argument made by Nicolson (1992). The respondents additionally remarked that, if leaders and managers lack the appropriate skills to manage conflict, they

may possibly be worsening the problem. some respondents stated their opinions. For example, a female respondent stated that:

“.....in my school, the demand of managing conflict successfully has resulted to the exploitation of definite programs which is designed educate workers to handle individual differences among themselves and variety of views.”

Beside the above challenges of conflict management, the respondents mentioned incompatibility as one of the challenges in managing conflict. It was noticed for the responses of the respondents that, incompatibility on the part of the parties involved in the conflict was actually necessary for the effective management of conflict in institutions. A considerable number of the respondents stated that, the parties involved in the conflict may be incompatible, and this could make it actually difficult to manage conflict issue. For instance, a male respondent commented that: *“.....in order to manage conflict appropriately, incompatibilities need to be handled in a balanced manner.”*

The above quote contributes to the idea that, handling of the incompatibilities of parties involved in conflict situation in an appropriate manner, is very significant in the management of conflict. This indicates that, the parties involved in conflict are required to be conformable and be ready to make reconciliation. This assertion was in agreement with the argument made by Denohue and Kott (1992) that, incompatibilities relating to interpersonal relationship is very challenging to conflict management.

Lack of understanding was another challenge of conflict management that the respondents identified. It was obvious from the respondents that; some level of understanding was required to manage conflict successfully. This points out that, some

level of understanding of the nature and the cause of conflict would be needed in order to prepare leaders and managers of institutions to effectively manage conflict situations in their various schools. Most of the respondents evinced their opinions on this issue. For instance, a female respondent stated that:

“.....the errors of solving wrong problem do occur because of inadequate understanding of the source of problem.”

The above quote by the respondent evidently confirms the notion that, adequate understanding of a problem is essential in managing conflict. This is consistent with the argument made by Bramsen (2004). The respondents further came up with the view that, if the leaders lack adequate understanding of conflict issue, they may end up worsening the problem on board. Some of the respondents expressed their views. For example, a male respondent stated that:

“..... lack of proper identification of the nature and cause of a problem, leads to the application of erroneous intervention to the problem.”

In addition, the respondents also considered conflict management as time demanding. In pursuing a successful implementation of a specific conflict management style, may involve a great deal of time, such that the institutions in their endeavor to manage conflict may endanger their productive hours. This was in order with the argument made by Brown (2012). Some of the respondents gave their comment on this statement. For example, a female respondent commented that:

“.....in certain cases, offhand meetings are arranged to address definite conflict issues, which actually affect the productive hours for the improvement of academic performance of the institution.”

The above quote evidently indicates that, the entire conflict management styles and procedures could contribute to low productivity to some extent.

Lack of cooperation, lack of professional skills, lack of understanding, time factor and incompatibility, are all challenges that could be encountered in managing conflict. But from the responses of the respondents, lack of cooperation between the parties was regarded by the respondents as the most common and pressing challenge encountered in managing conflict. On the other hand, in spite of the difficulties encountered in managing conflict, the roles of conflict management cannot be underestimated.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher discovered that, integrating style of conflict management was the best adapted style, and dominating style was the least adapted style. Again, it was noted by the researcher that, the culture of an organizational was found as the most influencing factor in managing conflict. Moreover, the major challenge in conflict management was found to be lack of professional skills. The actual roles played by conflict management in the institutional growth comprised of, acquisition of new knowledge, maximizing constructive conflict and minimizing destructive conflict, strengthen of bond between the employees and the management, promotion of advocacy and the enhancement of organizational growth.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions deduced from the findings and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how the management of the selected senior high schools in Accra Metro, practice conflict management in making a decision on conflict situations with the view of promoting institutional growth. To achieve this purpose, three objectives were set and they were to:

1. Find out conflict management practices that are adapted by senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region.
2. Identify the factors that influence conflict management in the senior high schools in Greater Accra Region.
3. Determine the challenges that are experienced in managing conflict in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region.

In order to achieve these objectives, three research questions were formulated to guide the study and they were:

1. What kind of conflict management practices have been adapted by the senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region?

2. What are some of the common factors that influence conflict management in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region?
3. What are some of the challenges that senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region face in managing conflict?

The study used exploratory survey with qualitative method. The population of the study was 3 heads and 49 teachers. The sample size was 52 participants. The sampling techniques used to select the participants were purposive, convenience, stratified random and proportion sampling techniques, while simple random sampling was used to select the schools. The instrument used for data collection was interview and observation. The data collected was analyzed using percentages.

The key findings

5.1.1 Conflict Management Practices in Senior High Schools in Greater Accra

Among the distinct conflict management styles practiced in senior high schools, it was established by the researcher that, majority of the senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region usually adopt the integrating style of managing conflict, while only a few senior high schools adapt the dominating style. The compromising style was the next most preferred style after the integrating style. It was then closely followed by the obliging style and then the avoiding style with the dominating style being the least preferred. The results of the findings further revealed that, most of the senior high schools frown on the dominating style because majority of the respondents considered this style as being too selfish in nature, and the respondents also claimed it does not usually lead to

a peaceful management of conflict, but rather, breeds bitterness and hatred between the parties involved.

5.1.2 Factors that Influence Conflict Management

The researcher findings revealed that, of all the factors that influence conflict management, the culture of organization stood out as the most influencing factor. This was closely followed by period and location. The least influencing factor according to the findings was organizational policies. Most of the respondents considered the culture of an organization as the most pressing influence because, they believed the kind of culture and relationships with the institution greatly affects the style of conflict management to be used. The respondents also considered the period and location as another important factor after organizational culture. This was due to the fact that the period and location, depending on its appropriateness, could either make the management of conflict a success or a failure. Also a considerable number of the respondents also considered leadership style as an important factor.

5.1.3 The Challenges of Conflict Management

From this study conducted, several conflict management challenges were identified by the respondents. Some of them were lack of professional skills in handling conflict, lack of cooperation and time factor. Of all these challenges, lack of cooperation was considered to be the most prominent followed by lack of professional skills on the part of the leaders. A greater number of the respondents interviewed established that, lack of cooperation is the major challenge in managing conflict because, cooperation on the

part of the parties is always needed for a successful management of conflict. They also established that, without some level of professionalism, managing conflict may become a very difficult task for heads of educational institutions.

5.2 Conclusion

The study evaluated conflict management in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. It basically focused on areas like the factors that influence conflict management, the different conflict management styles, the challenges of conflict management and the role played by conflict management in institutional growth. The study concluded that, the most influencing factor in ensuring effective management of conflict was the culture of the organization, and the most commonly adapted conflict management style was the integrating style. The findings gathered therefore support the point that, for conflict to be managed effectively within educational institutions, there must be the need to modify the culture of the institution. Moreover, the study also concluded that, the major challenge encountered in managing conflict was lack of cooperation from the parties involved.

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are being made for the improvement of conflict management practices in the Greater Accra Region, precisely in the Accra Metro.

5.3.1 Conflict Management Practices

The authorities of the selected senior high schools in the Accra Metro should be given proper conflict management training to enlighten them on the concept of conflict management. This will broaden their understanding on the need to manage conflict and the right approach to manage it. Again, they should use appropriate conflict management style to manage conflict.

The authorities of educational institutions should adapt integrating style for managing conflict, and they should avoid dominating style while dealing with conflict. They should be mindful of the untoward outcome of an avoiding style for dealing with conflict, and they should use the most appropriate style according to the situation and the persons involved.

5.3.2 Factors that Influence Conflict Management

The authorities of the selected senior high schools in the Accra Metro should develop the culture of the institution in such a way that, it will exhibit some form of flexibility and dynamism. They should adjust the institutional culture in a way that will favour the effectiveness of conflict management, such as encouraging some level of openness and cordiality among workers in the institution.

The authorities should vary their leadership approaches base on the problem they are dealing with. They should also adopt a more paternalistic and democratic leadership style when dealing with sensitive issues. Again, they should try as much as possible to apply an autocratic style to deal with problems in certain situations.

Authorities should pay much attention to period and location before they manage conflict, because conflict management can either lead to an expected result or worsen the situation. They should deal with conflict when tempers are down.

5.3.3 The Challenges of Conflict Management

The authorities of the selected schools should be given proper training so as to understand the nature and cause of conflict and its impact on the parties involved. They should diagnose the problem and understand the source and manage the undesirable results of the conflict in their emerging point before it breaks out of proportion.

The authorities should be given special training on the appropriate way of managing conflict through internal meetings and seminars. They should also be trained to acquire professional skills which is essential in conflict management. Again, they should be educated to accommodate each other's behaviour and differences.

The authorities should be given proper conflict management training for adopting appropriate strategies for managing interpersonal problems, so that they will not spend much productive time in managing simply conflict issues.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

1. The study was restricted to conflict management practices in the selected senior high schools in the Accra Metro. It is suggested that future research will be carried through all the senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region.
2. It is suggested that future research will be carried through all the senior high schools across Ghana.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION – WINNEBA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI

FAUCULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SELECTED HEADS AND TEACHERS OF THE
SELECTED SECONDARY HIGH SCHOOL IN ACCRA METRO**

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Age of the interviewee
2. The educational qualification of the interviewee.
3. How many years have you been working in this institution?
4. The marital status of the interviewee

SECTION B: THE ISSUES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

5. How often does conflict occur in this institution?
6. Which parties usually get involve in conflict in this institution?
7. Are the conflicts which usually occurred in this institution easily resolve?
8. Do conflicts have any positive impact on academy performance?
9. What are some of them, if the answer is yes?
10. How many conflict management styles do you know?
11. Which of them is/are normally adapted in your institution in managing conflict?

SECTION C: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE

12. In your school, what are some of the factors that influence conflict management?
13. Does conflict management have any positive impact in the general academic performance in this school?
14. What are some of them if your answer is yes?
15. Among all the conflict management styles, which one of them would you recommend for the heads of educational institutions?
16. Why would you recommend that conflict management style?
17. Do you have any other comment?

SECTION D: CHALLENGES THAT ARE EXPERIENCED IN MANAGING CONFLICT

18. What triggers you to manage conflicts in this institution?
19. In this institution, which discretion do you normally take to manage conflict?
20. Do your school face any challenges in attempting to manage conflict?
21. What are some of the challenges that the school face in managing conflict?
22. In your opinion, what can be done to overcome the challenges in managing conflict?
23. Among all the conflict management styles, which one of them would you recommend for the heads of educational institutions?
24. Why would you recommend that conflict management style?
25. Do you have any other comment?

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION – WINNEBA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI

FAUCULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

**CHECKLIST FOR OBSERVATION FOR SELECTED HEADS AND TEACHERS
OF THE SELECTED SECONDARY HIGH SCHOOL IN ACCRA METRO**

1. Complete participant observation.
2. 52 teaching staff from the three selected senior high schools in Accra Metro will be observed.
3. Observation of gestures of the participants and the kind of language they will use.
4. The observation will involve prolong engagement.
5. Well prepared to accept a range of sensory input, that is, using all the senses and possibly the intuition, to gather data.
6. Significant time will be invested into the observations.
7. Ensuring that, the observations will not yield any new knowledge before ending the process.
8. Recording will take place as soon as observations occur.