

**AKENTEN APPIAH- MENKAH UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND  
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT (AA-MUSTED) KUMASI**

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE  
KPANDO MUNICIPALITY: PERCEIVED EFFECTS ON EDUCATIONAL  
ADMINISTRATION**



**EMMANUEL SENYO AGORTEY**

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**A Dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education  
and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
Akenten Appiah- Menkah University of Skills and Entrepreneurial Development,  
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(Educational Leadership) Degree.**

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## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, EMMANUEL SENYO AGORTEY, declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been all identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for any other degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....



### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the Akenten Appiah- Menkah University of Skills and Entrepreneurial Development, Kumasi.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: REV. FR. DR. FRANCIS. K. SAM

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my love and ever caring and responsible father Mr. Maxwell Agortey and my lovely and supportive mother Margaret Dzotor.



## TABLE OF CONTENT

CONTENT	PAGE
DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 The Purpose of the Study	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study	6
1.5 Research Questions	6
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Delimitation of the Study	9
1.8 Limitation of the Study	9
1.9 Organization of the Study	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Concept of Conflict	11
2.3 Sources of Conflict	14

2.4 Types of Conflict	20
2.5 Effects of Conflict	24
2.6 Negative Effects of Conflicts	24
2.7 Positive Effects of Conflicts	26
2.8 Conflict Management	28
2.9 Challenges in Managing Conflicts	34
2.10 Summary	36
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>38</b>
3.1 Introduction	38
3.2 Research Design	38
3.3 Population of the Study	39
3.4 Sample Sampling	39
3.5 Sampling Technique	40
3.6 Data Collection Instrument	41
3.7 Pilot Testing	42
3.8 Reliability and Validity	43
3.9 Data Collection Procedure	44
3.10. Analysis of Data	44
3.11 Ethical Considerations	45



<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS</b>	
<b>FINDINGS</b>	<b>46</b>
4.1 Introduction	46
4.2 Analysis of background Data	46
4.3 Analysis of Result Based on Research Questions	49
4.2.1 Research Question One	49
4.4 Discussion of Results	56
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>62</b>
5.1 Introduction	62
5.2 Summary of the Study	62
5.3 Conclusion of the Study	64
5.4 Recommendations	64
REFERENCES	65
APPENDIX	73





## LIST OF TABLES

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
4.1: Gender Distribution of the Respondent	46
4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents	47
4.3: Work Experience of the Respondents	48
4.4: Educational Qualification of the Respondents	48
4.5: Causes of Conflicts	50
4.6: Effects of Conflicts on Schools	52
4.7: Strategies of Managing Conflicts	54



## ABSTRACT

The study investigated conflict management in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality: implications on educational administration. The objectives of the study were to examine the causes of conflict in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality, assess the effects of conflict on public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and to explore the strategies adopted in managing conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and to make appropriate recommendations. In doing so, sample size of 170 including head teachers and teachers were selected for the study out of a target population of 269. A Likert survey design was employed which focused on the administering of closed ended questionnaires. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was Cronbach alpha of 0.78. Data was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages. The study established that autocratic style of leadership, favoritism in appointments to key positions and power struggle were the main causes of conflicts in senior high schools. The study further revealed that conflicts can result in break in healthy communication, divisiveness and bitterness, suspicion and mistrust. Finally, the study identified a range of strategies including regular staff meetings, free flow of information, and dialogue with conflicting parties and the involvement of all teachers in decision-making which were employed by headmasters to manage conflicts. It is therefore recommended that the Ghana Education Service should organize In-service training for teachers and heads of schools on conflict identification and management. Educational administrators should communicate transparently and practice fairness so that they can create trust and good relationships among staff.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Conflict at work is certain, however, the result may be influenced by the manner in which the conflict is managed. In this light, Governments, whether in developed or developing nations, usually allocate huge sums of money in training appropriate manpower and providing the needed infrastructure for the smooth running of schools and therefore one of the last phenomena that one would expect to find in schools is conflict (Afful-Broni, 2012). Yet in today's complex and ever changing world conflict is a fact of life.

Loomis and Loomis (1965) believe that conflict is an ever present reality in human relations, and that there is no known institution that is exempt from it.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Conflict has gradually become an unavoidable situation in every institution including educational institutions in Ghana. The dynamic nature of the society in which we reside may bring about incompatibilities which may eventually lead to conflicts.

According to Rahim (2002), conflict generally refers to differences in opinions and perceptions concerning a particular issue at a particular period of time. It usually arises when issues and interests change over time due to social, political and economic dynamisms in the society in which we live in. 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 incompatibilities which lead to conflict could bring

about both negative and positive outcomes. However, the positive or negative impact of conflict on the individual and institution would basically depend on how it is managed. Managing conflict may require the adaptation of certain practices known as conflict management practices.

Ursing (2003) stated that conflict is the differences in perspectives, beliefs, actions or interests which are sometimes verbalized and sometimes they are not. When these differences are verbalized it is easier to become aware of it but when they are not verbalized the managers would have to observe the actions of those who perceive the conflict. These actions could sometimes be misunderstood which could compound the conflict.

Mankoe (2007) also defined conflict as the pursuit of incompatible or at least seemingly incompatible goals, such that gains to one side come out of the expense of the other. Conflicts could be so destructive that, it can bring administrative work to a halt. Even though one can deduce that a conflict has some traces of goodness such as renewed commitment of the feuding parties, the consequential devastation could be overwhelming.

According to Armstrong (2009) an optimal level of conflict in an organization impacts positively on the performance of the organization. Managing conflict constructively and developing its effective conflict resolutions procedures encourages the development of value, attitude, knowledge and civic standards in the institutions. Since conflict has both positive as well as negative consequences it must be analyzed and managed carefully. The conflict handling style of a manager also determines how conflict is managed (Armstrong, 2009).

Conflict in organizations occurs at different levels, is of different form and from different sources (Champoux, 2003). Some types of conflict may be less detrimental or even beneficial to group performance (Jehn, 1995) and thus may have either positive or negative effects on organizational performance depending on the nature of the conflict and the way it is managed (Armstrong, 2009).

Conflict, a state of mind and therefore has to be perceived by the parties involved. There is therefore a need for causes of the conflict to be diagnosed and managed effectively to avert conflict's consequential destructiveness. For any organization to be effective and efficient in achieving its goals, the people in the organization need to have a shared vision of what they are striving to achieve, as well as clear objectives for each team / department and individual. Ways of recognizing and resolving conflict amongst people is needed so that the conflict does not become so serious that co-operation is impossible. All members of any organization need to have ways of keeping conflict to a minimum and of solving problems caused by conflict, before conflict becomes a major obstacle to work. The absence of conflict usually signals the absence of meaningful interaction. Conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. However, the manner in which conflict is handled determines whether it is constructive or destructive.

Conflicts in themselves have a lot of goodness if well managed. They are sometimes healthy; for their absence may mean that, important differences among individuals are suppressed or covered up but if managed well, they promote creativity, innovation and improved performance since there would be renewed commitment. Conflict can be productive and in fact become a necessary part of positive interpersonal

relationship, creating problem-solving and group cohesiveness to enhance leadership (Wilson as cited in Afful-Broni, 2012).

Poor management of conflicts, however, can lead to hostility, infighting, divisiveness and disintegration. McCarthy (2007) also states that destructive conflict undermines relationships, distracts team members from their common goals, and encourages them to give any conflict a wide berth in the future. When relationships are negatively affected as a result of conflict the possibility that productivity will be affected negatively is very high. This means that conflict should not be swept under the carpet if it is perceived in the organization. Unresolved conflicts lead to pairing-of and clique-forming (Garner, 2012) which could mar or tarnish the reputation of the organization. These are all negative attributes that hamper institutional progress.

Afzal, Khan and Ali (2009) further observed that when conflict is handled unskillfully and dissipately, it becomes bad but when it is handled morally and creatively, it ceases to be frightening and crippling, and it results in growth, maturity, and empowerment for individual, group and organization.

Sagim as cited in Afful-Broni (2012) points out that conflict resolution is the process aimed at resolving a dispute or conflict. Successful conflict resolution occurs by listening to and providing opportunities to meet the needs of all parties and to adequately address interests, so that, each party is satisfied with the outcome (Weaver, 2003). Conflict practitioners talk about finding the win-win outcome for parties involved, versus the win lose dynamic found in most conflicts. While conflict resolution engages conflict once it has already started conflict prevention' aims to end conflicts before they start or before they lead to verbal, physical, or legal fighting or violence. It is obviously

necessary for administration to be able to recognize conflict, to view its constructive as well as destructive potential, and to learn how to manage conflict and to apply conflict management styles in a practical way. Conflict management in any secondary school should be a priority of any school manager who engenders to have good performance. Success of any institution therefore depends on how well conflict is managed for the common good of everyone within the organization. With recent spate of conflicts in senior high schools in and its potential effects in Ghana, this study therefore investigates into the causes of conflicts in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and the strategies adopted to manage them.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Educational institutions have administrators who are charged with the responsibility of maintaining stability in order to achieve institutional goals. Conflicts in Ghanaian public senior high school are on the rise in the recent past (myjoyonline.com, August 2, 2010).

According to Mankoe as cited in Gyan and Tandoh-Offin (2014) government over the years has expressed concern over the disturbances in learning institutions where in some cases, students have destroyed property and even attacked teachers. In other instances, teachers and head masters and even parents engage in one form of conflict or another. Some of the emergencies that arise as a result of conflicts include; arson attack, riots and violence which results in injury and loss of property and life. Kpando Municipality is not left out.

The Ghana Education Service has various channels through which senior high schools could employ to address grievances and resolve conflicts. Of particular interest to the researcher is why in spite of this, conflicts situations are still poorly managed resulting in serious consequences on academic work.

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

The purpose of the study is to investigate conflict management of public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality, and its perceived effects on educational administration.

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

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the causes of conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality.
2. Assess the effects of conflict on public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality
3. Explore the strategies adopted in managing conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and to make appropriate recommendations.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the causes of conflicts in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?



2. In what ways do conflicts affect public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?
3. How is conflict managed in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?

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

Education in general could be a vital tool in achieving the goals of any nation in the world. The same is with education in Ghana. Children in Ghana usually turn up to become more responsible when they are able to acquire the needed knowledge and skills through formal education in schools. Through education, the children learn to be independent in accomplishing certain tasks such as taking leadership positions. They learn to work on their own without the help of a third party in accomplishing their responsibilities.

When conflict which is an unavoidable phenomenon is well managed, teachers working in educational institutions would gain high morale and would always be willing to put up their best in fulfilling their responsibilities as mentors to the pupils.

This also helps to improve the overall performance of the teachers which could be evident in the performance of the pupils. Through education, the pupils could acquire skills in dealing with conflicts of all forms as they carry on with their day-to-day activities.

Cooperation among staff could easily be attained when there is effective management of conflict in institutions. This could be achieved when the problems and conflicts within the organization are resolved amicably ensuring unity and understanding among the workers.

Individuals in their various homes could adapt the conflict management styles described in this study in managing their interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts. For instance, resolving conflict within one's own self.

Also, other stakeholders of education such as parents and government would benefit from this study because some of the conflict management styles discussed in this study could be adapted by these stakeholders in managing conflicts. For example, in a case where a teacher punishes a child severely, some form of tension or misunderstanding could arise between the teacher and the parent of the ward but through conflict management, mutual understanding could be achieved.

The study would assist the ministry of education and specifically the Ghana Education Service in developing a curriculum that can be used to enhance the capacity of the administrators, the teachers, and the students in handling conflicts in schools. This would help to reduce organizational school conflicts.

The study is worthy because it addresses the causes of institutional conflict and be able not only to propose solution to improve stability in the educational institutions but also in other public organizations/sectors in Ghana prone to all sorts of conflicts.

Furthermore, the findings of the study will provide useful information to guide the formulation and modification of policies related to conflict and its management in organizations in general and schools in particular. The findings would further help the Ghana Education Service (GES) to structure its training programmers to ensure teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge for effective conflict management. Lastly, results of the study will contribute to the existing limited literature on conflict and its management in schools.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study was limited to only Ghana Education Service (GES), specifically only headmasters, teachers and students in both Kpando Technical Institute and Kpando Senior High school. The study would further focus on other municipals and district schools in Ghana

### **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

The study had a number of limitations.

First, the limitation of this study was related to the study area which was in only two senior high schools in the Municipality. It is therefore difficult to generalize the findings to other Municipality.

Another limitation of the study is in terms of the generalizability of the results. The views of the respondents in this study may be different from others functioning in different contexts. Consequently, the results of this study may not generalize to other populism working under different conditions.

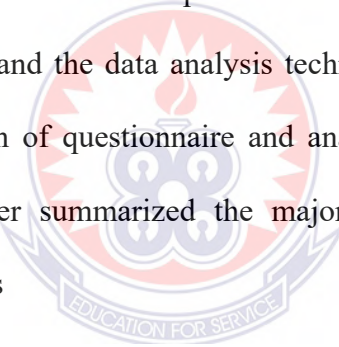
The study also relied solely on the instrument use for data collection. This was due to its convenience to both the researcher and the participants. The use of interview in addition with the questionnaire could have helped obtain more insight into issues in the findings.

Another limitation was related to the sample of the population which consisted of mostly teachers. This meant that major stakeholders like parents and students were left out in the survey. Their inclusion could have immense impact on the study, and provide credible basis for the generalization of the results.

This means that the findings of the study can only be generalized to the population of the study and not to senior high schools outside the study. In spite of these limitations, it could be said that the findings of this study are valid based on the responses to the questionnaire and the analysis.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the entire dissertation was structured into five different chapters. Chapter one comprised of a number of items ranging from introduction of the dissertation to organization of the study. Related literature on the topic was reviewed in chapter two while chapter three dealt with the methodology which entailed the methods used and the data analysis techniques used for the study. Chapter four tackled the conduction of questionnaire and analyzing of data while chapter five which was the last chapter summarized the major findings, drew conclusions and suggested recommendations

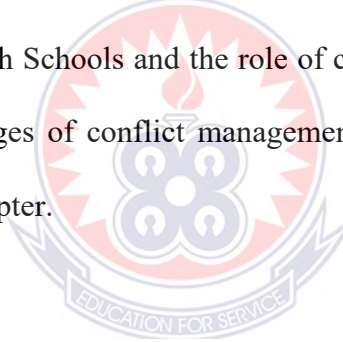


## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Introduction

Chapter one outlined the context within which the research was undertaken and set out the research objectives, research questions, the research methodologies and the scope of the research. This chapter does a critical review of literature done on conflict management. It begins with a discussion on conflict management as an important issue educational institutions have to deal with. This was then followed by discussion on various conflict management styles and the challenges encountered in managing conflicts. The chapter then further examined the factors which influence conflict management in Senior High Schools and the role of conflict management in institutional growth as well as challenges of conflict management. The chapter concludes with the various issues raise the chapter.



#### 2.2 Concept of Conflict

Several attempts have been made by various authorities at defining conflict in modern societies. However, no single definition stands out so clearly and distinct (Dzisi, 2014).

Owens concludes that the literature on conflict indicates that there is no consensus on what constitutes a specific definition of conflict. Interestingly, most of the definitions perceive conflict to be synonymous with antagonism, opposition, disagreement, discord, combat, competition and encounter.

For Sagimo (2002), conflict connotes a stressful, unhappy, distressing, depressing, annoying and frustrating state of affairs.

Weaver (2003) define conflict as a felt struggle between two or more independent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals or differences in desires for esteem, control and connectedness.

Awedoba (2009) also described conflict as a relationship between two or more parties that centers on differences, disagreements on issues of common interest or concern, divergence, incompatibilities, clash of wills and the like. It may involve antagonism and opposition.

Adesanya (2010) further expatiated on the description to mean an expression of animosity, arguments, disputes, confrontations, unrests, war, chaos or venting of other forms of hostilities over non-reconciled differences. These descriptions portray the fact that conflict as a process, incubates the capacity to slowly or speedily graduate into a complex phenomenon when wrongly handled.

Mankoe (2007), also defined conflict as the pursuit of incompatible or at least seemingly incompatible goals, such that gains to one side come out of the expense of the other.

According to Bekoe and Quartey (2013), conflict is the expression of disagreement over something important to both or all sides of a dispute. This clearly shows that conflict could be between two or more individuals or groups.

Afful-Broni (2012) describes conflict as a disagreement or incompatibility in wants, values and aspirations of two or more persons or groups. It may also entail differences in people's opinions, beliefs and priorities.

Conflict also consists of the actions that we take to express our feelings, articulate our perceptions, and get our needs met in a way that has the potential for interfering with someone else's ability to get his or her needs met (Mayer, 2001).

The author observes that this conflict behavior may involve a direct attempt to make something happen at someone else's expense. It may be an exercise of power. It may be violent. It may be destructive. Conversely, the behavior may be conciliatory, constructive, and friendly. But, whatever its tone, the purpose of conflict behavior is either to express the conflict or to get one's needs met (Mayer, 2001). Conflict may be viewed as occurring along cognitive (perception), emotional (feeling), and behavioral (action) dimensions. This three-dimensional perspective can help us understand the complexities of conflict and why a conflict sometimes seems to proceed in contradictory directions (Mayer, 2001).

As a set of perceptions, conflict is a belief or understanding that one's own needs, interests, wants, or values are incompatible with someone else's. There are both objective and subjective elements to this cognitive dimension. Conflict also involves an emotional reaction to a situation or interaction that signals a disagreement of some kind. The emotions felt might be fear, sadness, bitterness, anger, or hopelessness, or some amalgam of these. And in conflicts, it does not take two to tango. Often a conflict exists because one person feels in conflict with another, even though those feelings are not reciprocated by or even known to the other person. The behavioral component may be minimal, but the conflict is still very real to the person experiencing the feelings.

Uline (2003) views conflict as a natural part of collective human experience. He goes on to say that conflict can be avoided and suppressed. Conflict in schools can be

identified by specific indicators, such as poor discipline, low morale, few staff meetings, communication breakdown and interpersonal friction (Tshigwane, 2008). Regardless of how the conflict is defined, it is possible for anyone to change his or her conflict behaviors because these behaviors are not inborn but rather developed repertoire of skills and communication practices that we can learn, refine, and practice (Welman 2005). The perceptions and attitudes of parties in a conflict are crucial elements that can influence a conflict to manifest functionally or dysfunction ally in organizations, especially in a school setting.

### **2.3 Sources of Conflict**

Conflict is almost synonymous with human life. Wherever individual or groups come into contact socially, geographically, ideologically or politically, conflict is inevitable since they all have divergent views and goals (Dzisi, 2014).

Conflict can be traced to several sources. Salleh and Adulpakdee (2012) indicated that essentially the causes of conflict can be classified into two namely, structural and personal factors. According to them, the structural factors include specialization, interdependence, common resources, goal differences, authority relationship, status inconsistencies and jurisdictional ambiguities. The personal factors include skills and abilities, personalities, perception, values and ethics, emotions, communication barriers and lastly cultural differences.

Amuhaya (2010) suggests that individuals have styles, values, beliefs, principles and slogans in life and these determine their choices and objectives. When these choices and objectives contradict, it means people are interested in different things and this can



create conflict. He added that conflict might arise when two individuals or groups interact in the same state of affairs but these individuals see the issue from different perspectives because of different sets of settings, awareness, background, disposition, reason or outlook, and this may cause conflict to arise.

Nyamajiwa (2000) has identified some causes or sources of conflict within an organization. These include inadequate information, role conflict/collision, and differences in goals, values, and competition for limited resources, responsibility, personnel, space, tools and equipment, access to superiors. In an organization such as a school, a number of these sources of conflict could be applicable to schools and class teachers.

Other causes of conflict in educational institutions at different levels include communication gap between authorities and other workers, rules, procedures and policies (Adeyemi & Ademilua, 2012), lack of communication and disagreements and work interdependence (Amuhaya, 2010).

Additionally, other possible causes of conflict are ambiguously defined responsibilities (Salleh & Adulpakdee, 2012), different target goals among teachers, and difference in perception (Ramani & Zhimin, 2010; Amuhaya, 2010).

Furthermore, inadequate welfare package for staff; forceful and compulsory retirement/retrenchment of employees; administrative incompetence; personality clashes; role conflict; unimpressive conditions of service; favoritism; misunderstanding of motives and non-involvement of students in the administration of the school, lack or inadequate knowledge about management of conflict by administrators together with the

absence of laid down procedures for the management of conflicts in schools (Obuobisadarko, 2014) are all causes of conflict.

McNamara, (2007) is also of the opinion that determinants of conflicts in most of the educational institutions can be traced to various leadership styles and variation in school organizational structure, Owens as cited in Dzisi (2014), classified causes of conflict into three basic types: competition for scarce resources, autonomy and goal divergence. Competition for scarce resources is where resources available to an organization are too insufficient to meet the requirements of the subunits to do their work and this makes the units struggle over the meager resources especially when it comes to budgetary allocations.

He went on to explain autonomy as when one party seeks to control activities “belonging” to another unit and the second unit seeks to fend off such “interference”, that is, the second unit attempts to protect its autonomy; while goal divergence occurs when two parties in an organization must work together but cannot agree on how to do Afful-Broni (2007) could not agree more when he outlined eleven solid origins of conflict which are worthy of note especially as they relate to educational institutions. His first focus was on choice of administrative personnel as a source of conflict. In any given organization, the appointment of leadership will be met with some resistance from certain quarters. There may be instances when some individuals anticipated having a particular person chosen, appointed or elected to the vacant leadership position and where that may not materialize, the new administrator may not find co-operation with these individuals. In such a situation, there is bound to be conflict whenever the new leader proposes, recommends and sends out a directive. There are also tribal differences as a source of

conflict. Within every community, there are sub-communities or sub cultures whose beliefs and practices vary from one another.

In almost every institution, one is most likely to find certain individuals or a group who were perhaps part of or close to the era of the pioneering working team but may find themselves at the lower section of the organogram due to low academic qualification. Another source of conflict is competition for scarce resources. There are times when within a financial organization, the cause of conflict can be traced to various units, departments or individuals struggling for the same scarce resource. For example, it is possible for two workers to have a seriously furious argument over who has the priority to use particular office equipment or the departments only laptop or television for a particular programmer.

Additionally, Afful-Broni (2007) talks of economic circumstances as a cause of conflict. The rich and the poor have always lived in contact with each other and usually hold each other in unspoken disdain. In a particular bank, there could be tension among the staff because of the perception by some that, others who are rich is attempting to look down on them. Such a situation can also persist among clients. In furtherance to the afore-mentioned, differences in ideologies or politics abound in any given society and financial institutions are no exception. As societies grow to be more democratic and people begin to find their voices and regain confidence, individuals like staff members would want to have a say in how administrative decisions are made and implemented which may promote conflict.

Afful-Broni (2007) also specified that age difference which is also referred to as ‘generation gap’ can be a source of conflict in the banking community. Since people of

the same age groups are likely to get along more easily than those of different generation, it is important that when conflicts arise, people look beyond the real issues at stake to possible differences in belief, values, preferences and attitudes which are usually age-related.

Furthermore, Afful-Broni (2007) outlined power struggle as another major cause of conflict in almost every organization. Power has been described as one of the greatest aphrodisiacs of all time and to hold on to it at all cost, becomes strong and can create conflict especially when the administrator decides to implement a certain decision in a particular way at all cost in disagreement with his subordinates. Finally, social injustice and exclusion can easily create conflict in financial institutions. Even though such institutions are formal organizations in which membership and their upgrading are based on qualification, levels of operation and performance, there are some informal and traditional realities that creep into the educational institutions and can be the root of conflict. In educational establishments, when some individuals are always relegated to the background in the decision-making and implementation processes, conflict will definitely arise.

Afful-Broni (2012) suggests that while the choice of the leadership of a community can be the source of conflict, religious, tribal or ethnic differences are also some major causes of conflict in almost any heterogeneous community in Ghana and elsewhere. He further stated that in some cases, generation or age differences, either in birth or membership of the institution can be a source of conflict. It has also been discovered that the struggle for power and the competition for the available scarce resources could serve as grounds for conflict (Botchwey as cited in Afful-Broni (2012)).

Nyamajiwa (2000) cites several sources of conflict including goal incompatibility, unavailability of resources, performance expectations and organizational structures. Goal incompatibility occurs when there is a lack of agreement concerning the direction of evaluating task accomplishment. This source of conflict is said to be the most frequent in an organization. In an organization such as the school, individual teachers may bring with them different time and goal orientations that may create a state of high differentiation.

Further to that, Nyamajiwa recognizes that conflict within an organization can be caused by competition for limited resources. He asserts that at a school for instance books and furniture are mostly in short supply. Another source of conflict is activity or performance of one person in a group that affects the subsequent performance of other members. In other words, one member's work cannot begin until another member provides some needed information. In many organizations, the structure or role is a potential source of conflict. There can be function conflict in a functional structure and division conflict in a product structure. In a school, this type of conflict can be seen in the relationship between the head and the teachers. The problem lies in the view points of each member and their roles in schools.

Conflict in schools is attributed to rumor mongering, domineering attitudes of principals, communication breakdown, resources problem and lack of opportunities for promotion.

Cetin and Hancock as cited in Almost (2006) concludes that poor management behavior of principals, religious fanaticism, misunderstanding, communication breakdown, violation of school rules and regulations, unclear definition of responsibilities, and gossiping as some of the triggers to conflicts in senior high schools.

## 2.4 Types of Conflict

The issues about types of conflict seem quite controversial since they attract varied opinions from various authorities across the world.

Ikeda et al (2005) identifies two types of conflict in organizations, namely: interpersonal conflicts with supervisors or colleagues and inter-group conflicts which are within different sections of an organization. This clearly shows that wherever there is human interaction there is the likelihood of conflict.

Mankoe (2007) also identifies four types of conflict, namely: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group and inter-group conflicts. By Mankoe's exposition, it does not necessarily need two individuals or groups for conflict to prevail. An individual can even be engulfed by conflict sometimes out of indecision. This presupposes that humanity and conflict are inseparable.

Hoy and Miskel cited in Afful Broni (2007), also classified conflict under four major types, such as: conflict about goals, conflicts about opinions, interpersonal conflicts and procedure conflicts.

Afful-Broni observes that conflict about goals arises when the desired end of the dissertation is not agreed upon by various stakeholders within a given environment like the school. Conflict about opinion, on the other hand, relate to situations where individual opinions vary tremendously with each holding on strongly to what they have come to discover as facts, while interpersonal conflicts result from differences in personal characteristics. Procedural conflicts arise where people differ in the procedures that they believe ought to be used in achieving set goals or disagreements over how to handle issues.

On the other hand, postulate two essential types of conflict in organizations that is, vertical and horizontal. To them, vertical conflict occurs in groups of different hierarchical levels for example conflict between an administrator and person(s) over whom the former has authority or oversight responsibility; whereas the horizontal conflict occurs between or among people of the same status as far as authority and power are concerned.

DeCenzo (1997) also identified four major types of conflict such as Role, Power, Crisis and Maintenance conflicts. He sees role conflict as a situation where the institutional head in his ambition to meet the demands of the institution's mission statement, may have to squeeze the organizational budget and in the process censor some motivational needs of the staff. He is likely to incur the displeasure or wrath of the staff under such circumstance. Power conflict is a psychological confrontation that depends largely on the personalities involved and it relates to power-play. Crisis conflict, on the other hand, refers to spontaneous situations that are often suddenly dumped on the manager whereas the maintenance conflict reflects the kind of conflict arising out of attempts to resolve a prevailing precarious situation.

DeCenzo's (1997) opinions establish the fact that, conflict is unassuming and can erupt at any time so long as a human institution like the bank exists and operates.

According to Kirkwood as cited in Afful-Broni (2012), various types of conflict that exist in organizations include data conflicts, structural conflicts, relationship conflicts, and interest conflicts. Conflicts can lead to disputes, grievances, lawsuits, complaints, strikes, and disciplinary actions. Conflict can occur at a number of levels of human functioning. Conflict in your head between opposing motives or ideas is shown by

your “internal dialogue” and is at the intrapersonal level. Beyond that, the primary concern here is with social conflict, that is, conflict between people whether they are acting as individuals, as members of groups, or as representatives of organizations or nations.

**Interpersonal conflict:**

This occurs when two people have incompatible needs, goals, or approaches in their relationship. Communication breakdown is often an important source of interpersonal conflict and learning communication skills is valuable in preventing and resolving such difficulties. At the same time, very real differences occur between people that cannot be resolved by any amount of improved communication. “Personality conflict” refers to very strong differences in motives, values or styles in dealing with people that are not resolvable. For example, if both parties in a relationship have a high need for power and both want to be dominant in the relationship, there is no way for both to be satisfied, and a power struggle ensues. Common tactics used in interpersonal power struggles include the exaggerated use of rewards and punishments, deception and evasion, threats and emotional blackmail, and flattery or ingratiation. Unresolved power conflict usually recycles and escalates to the point of relationship breakdown and termination (Fisher, 1990).

**Role conflict:**

This involves very real differences in role definitions, expectations or responsibilities between individuals who are interdependent in a social system. If there are ambiguities in role definitions in an organization or unclear boundaries of responsibilities, then the stage is set for interpersonal friction between the persons



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

**Inter-group conflict:**

This type of conflict occurs between collections of people such as ethnic or racial groups, departments or levels of decision making in the same organization, and union and management. Competition for scarce resources is a common source of inter-group conflict, and societies have developed numerous regulatory mechanisms, such as collective bargaining and mediation, for dealing with inter-group conflict in less disruptive ways. Social-psychological processes are very important in inter-group conflict (Fisher, 1990).

Group members tend to develop stereotypes (oversimplified negative beliefs) of the opposing group, tend to blame them for their own problems (scape-goating), and practice discrimination against them. These classic symptoms of inter-group conflict can be just as evident in organizations as in race relations in community settings. Inter-group conflict is especially tense and prone to escalation and intractability when group identities are threatened.

The costs of destructive inter-group conflict can be extremely high for a society in both economic and social terms.

**Multi-party conflict:**

This type of conflict occurs in societies when different interest groups and organizations have varying priorities over resource management and policy development.

These complex conflicts typically involve a combination of economic, value and power sources. This complexity is often beyond the reach of traditional authoritative or adversarial procedures, and more collaborative approaches to building consensus are required for resolution (Cormick et al., 1996). **International conflict:**

This type of conflict occurs between states at the global level. Competition for resources certainly plays a part, but value and power conflict are often intertwined and sometimes predominate.

The differences are articulated through the channels of diplomacy in a constant game of give and take, or threat and counter threat, sometimes for the highest of stakes. Mechanisms of propaganda can lead to many of the same social psychological distortions that characterize interpersonal and inter-group conflict (Fisher, 1990).

## **2.5 Effects of Conflict**

Conflict is like a double-edged sword and so has equally positive and negative implications. Mankoe (2007) confirms this opinion when he claims that, in everyday life, there has traditionally been emphasis on the negative and dysfunctional aspects of conflict. He explains that, the definition of conflict as the existence of incompatible goals, thoughts or emotions, may portray at once that all conflicts are bad and therefore exert negative impact on organizational effectiveness. Conflict can be positive or negative.

## **2.6 Negative Effects of Conflicts**

Even though it may be obvious that conflict often comes with a cost, what may not be known is the extent to which this cost can go. Experts in the field of conflict have, however, established that, it has a devastating impact on any given society.

Afful-Broni (2007) contends that conflict is inimical to organizational growth and progress. Afful-Broni observes that the negative effect of conflict include break in communication, suspicion and mistrust, weakening of family spirit, loss of valuables, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis.

Further, Mankoe (2007) observes that, frequent and powerful conflicts can have a devastating impact upon the behavior of people in organizations. He further explains that conflict often develops into hostility which also causes people to withdraw physically and psychologically. A further exposition on this assertion is that, in the case of educational institutions, physical withdrawal takes the form of absenteeism, tiredness and negative turnover which is often written off by administrators as laziness on the part of workers. Psychological withdrawal on the other hand, takes the form of alienation, apathy and indifference.

The following are known to be some of the classic outcomes of conflicts: break in healthy communication, suspicion and mistrust, weakening of family spirit, hatred and the desire to cause harm even to hitherto loved ones, loss of valuables, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis (Thomas, 1977). Also, a poorly managed conflict will produce outcomes inimical to the progress, growth and development of organizations, including schools. This is based on the idea that conflicts ineffectively handled will diverts energy from the real task; destroys morale; polarizes individuals and groups; deepens differences; obstructs cooperative action; produces irresponsible behavior; creates suspicion and distrust; and decreases productivity. Schools where conflicts have not been properly managed will demonstrate ineffectiveness and inefficiency, as not only personnel and students will be affected dysfunction ally but also

the system in general. That is, negative conflicts have the capacity, if unchecked, to snowball into perpetual decline in the productivity of school personnel and consequently low quality of education in a country. Many in school have also ended in anarchy on campuses; some disorganize timing of school activities, destruct life and properties and in most cases, render school environments complement insecure for serious academic activities.

In addition to these, many known school conflicts have resulted in protracted disharmony in school staff interpersonal relationship, increased indiscipline among students, disarmed school authorities, clogged channel of progressive communication and rendered institutions of learning ungovernable (Agbonna, 2009)

Van der Bank (1995) posited that if educators in a school are willing to disagree but fight too much without resolutions, objectives may not be met and the school's performance will diminish thus contributing to the collapse of the school. A critical examination of the above submissions portrays conflict as an unworthy course and should not be entertained by any serious minded human being. Even though its positive characteristics have been well established, the repercussions far outweigh the positives and are so devastating.

## **2.7 Positive Effects of Conflicts**

The situation in which the impression is created that conflict has only negative and devastating repercussion is just unfortunate (Dzisi, 2014). Hellriegel as cited in Mankoe (2007) contends that, conflicts in organizations can be a positive force.

Afful Broni (2007) outlines some ways in which conflict impacts positively on organizations such as the school. For him, a section or department which may have been overlooked over certain issues could use conflict to call attention to their plight. It also produces changes in the established ways of doing things thereby enhancing group restructuring. Conflict further presents opportunities for issues to be clarified, re-defined and sharpened. He further explained that, conflict improves the decision-making processes in financial institutions; as stakeholders who were not formerly involved in deliberations or in the taking of decisions that affect their lives may now be included in support of the positive elements of conflict.

Zikmann (1992) writes that, effectively managed conflicts can help identify previously undetected problems and attitudes. They can also help clarify uncertainties and improve overall cooperation.

Conflict can therefore be deemed to be a vehicle or tool by which an organization like the school can effectively galvanize previously undetected human resource for its progress march. Conflicts in themselves have a lot of goodness if well managed. They are sometimes healthy; for their absence may mean that, important differences among individuals are suppressed or covered up but if managed well, they promote creativity, innovation and improved performance since there would be renewed commitment. Some of the known positive effects of conflicts are that they help to gain recognition for a group, be it large or small; conflicts are sometimes responsible for group restructuring, the definition and sharpening of community agenda, improvement in decision-making, and the strengthening of group cohesion (David and Suttoni, 2004). It could be deduced that conflicts, no matter what they do, and how they come about, need to be well handled,

so that their effects do not overwhelm a community, including and especially the leadership.

It is also critical to state that not all conflicts can be resolved completely, and not all of them can be handled without a lot of tact (Sagimo, 2002). Conflict can cause unimaginable havocs when ignored or allowed to escalate unabated in a school. Conflict has the capacity to destabilize any organization, if the mechanisms for containment are ineffective (David & Sutton, 2014).

Henry, (2009) admonishes leaders and organizations to effectively manage conflicts so as to help stimulate people towards greater work efforts, cooperation and creativity.

## **2.8 Conflict Management**

Conflict management is a deliberate intervention by managers to stimulate and encourage beneficial or helpful conflict and to resolve, suppress or prevent harmful conflict.

According to Tshigwane (2008) conflict management is a process that takes cognizance of the stages of its unfolding, from potential conflict situations to outbreaks that might require conflict resolution strategies.

Conflict management implies a pro-active approach of expecting that there will be conflict and then focusing on how to manage it (Hancock 2006).

Dzisi (2014) refers to conflict management is the process of planning to avoid conflict where possible and organizing to resolve conflict where it does happen, as rapidly and smoothly as possible. For any organization to be effective and efficient in

achieving its goals, the people in the organization need to have a shared vision of what they are striving to achieve, as well as clear objectives for each team and individual. Ways of recognizing and resolving conflict amongst people is needed so that the conflict does not become so serious that co-operation is impossible. All members of any organization need to have ways of keeping conflict to a minimum - and of solving problems caused by conflict, before conflict becomes a major obstacle to work.

Conflict management has become part of an effective management style. As a result of its effectiveness as management style, conflict management can no longer be ignored by education leaders and they should make provision for handling and solving conflict within the context of the school (Loock 2003).

Conflict management strategies in secondary schools entail assembling, coordinating, planning and monitoring all the organizational activities within a school set-up, especially in the sense of a conflict management process.

Ramani and Zhimin (2010) stated that from the perspective of administrators, there are five major approaches in managing conflict in schools. These include having regular meetings for the upset individuals or groups to air their grievances; inviting resource people from the education office; and dialogue with the parties involved in the conflict with the school guidance department.

Others are consultation with prefects on regular basis to identify areas of conflict; and punishing those involved in conflict by assigning them with harsh tasks, corporal punishment and suspending the parties involved.

Rahim as cited in Kreitner and Kinicki (2001), on his part stated that five different conflict styles are available for handling conflict and these are integrating, obliging,

dominating, avoiding, and compromising. They added that there is no one best style since each has its strengths and weaknesses.

Hanson as cited in Obuobisa-Darko (2014) identified six conflict management strategies. These range from avoidance, non-attention, physical separation, limited interaction, compromise and confrontation. Some of the conflict management strategies have been discussed below;

**Integrating (Problem solving) style:**

When using the Integrating (Problem solving) style, Kreitner and Kinicki as cited in obuobisa, (2014) stated that parties in the conflict confront the issues and supportively identify the problem, come up with alternative solutions and choose the most suitable one. Integrating strategy focuses on gathering and organizing information; at the same time, it encourages creative thinking and welcomes diverse perspectives. This strategy enable parties involve in conflict to pool all their information together, put their differences on the table and examine them along with any data that might contribute to a resolution. This leads to the development of alternative solution which addresses all parts of the conflict, other than the initial solutions of the parties. What this implies in the school system is that, both the school authority and students must be able and willing to contribute time, energy, and resources to finding and implementing a solution.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001 indicated that even though this style is suitable in addressing complex issues related to misunderstanding it is not suitable when dealing with issues rooted in opposing value systems. The main advantage according to them is, there is a long lasting impact of outcomes since the fundamental problems are identified



and addressed. The weakness is, more time is consumed to arrive at a solution as compared with other styles.

### **Accommodating Style:**

The adoption of Obligation (Smoothing) style described by Robbins and Judge (2009) as accommodating Style. Accommodating results in the individual neglecting his/her own concerns and interest to enable him/her satisfy the needs or concerns of the other party.

It focuses on playing down interests and focusing on commonalities (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). This style, according to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001), is appropriate and efficient to use when you are likely to get smoothing return ultimately. Thus, when using accommodating, teachers allow other teacher to have their way at the expense of their preference. The advantage one gets is, it encourages cooperation but the disadvantage is that it does not deal with the causal problems.

However, accommodating is not likely to be a suitable long-term conflict approach in a committed relationship.

### **Competing Style:**

The competing style has been described as a situation when one party in conflict has a high concern for self and a low concern for others when dealing with a conflict situation then the individual has adopted the dominating style (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001, and Robbins & Judge, 2009). It is a way of ignoring the needs and expectations of the other party in the conflict and pursuing one's own interest using forceful tactics (Rahim, 2002) and relies on formal authority to force compliance (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001).

### **Avoidance Style:**

The avoidance style has been explained by Kreitner and Kinicki (2001) that, one party passively withdraws from the problem or actively suppresses the issue.

In other words, conflict avoidance occurs when one party in a potential conflict ignores the conflicting issues or denies the significant of the conflict to his life.

Rahim (2002) stated that it is characterized by inaction and passivity as well allows problems to foster out of control. It is a way of not addressing the conflict, or a tactical way of postponing the conflict for a better time, if at all such time will come. In this, neither of the parties involved is able to address the conflict but rather individuals simply pretend the conflict does not exist and hope it will 'die a natural death'. Note that in this situation, the principal or teacher is unassertive, and uncooperative. There is no intention to pursue one's own needs or the needs of the school. It connotes the process of withdrawing from conflict situations in the school that might cause unpleasantness for the principal or teacher. Avoiding a conflict neither effectively resolves the conflict nor eliminates it and therefore ultimately, the conflict will have to be tackled. However, under certain conditions, avoidance may be the most appropriate temporary alternative.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2001) indicated that this style is efficient and appropriate to adopt when dealing with issues that are trivial and inappropriate for difficult and worsening issues.

### **Compromising Style:**

Compromise reflects splitting the difference or giving up something to get something (Hanson, 1991). This style deals with sharing, the willingness to give up something to help make decision that are acceptable to both. There is no distinct winner

or loser, and the decision arrived at is likely not to be ideal for either of the groups. Thus, it is give and take where parties are concerned for both self and other (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001).

Compromising strategy is a middle of the road strategy that gets every one talking about issues and moves one closer to each other and to a resolution. In compromise, each person has something to give and something to take.

In the school system compromise is more effective when issues are complex and parties in conflict looking for middle ground, and willing to exchange concessions. Hence, negotiation and bargaining are complementary skills. This style, according to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001), is appropriate when parties in the conflict situation have opposite goals or possess equal power.

Results from a study carried out by Blay (2006) indicated that school administrators are more likely to adopt avoiding and compromising strategies than teachers are. He added that both administrators and teachers in private schools have a tendency to use compromising, avoiding and competing strategies than their counterparts at the public schools. Compromise is generally effective when the conflicting groups are relatively equal in strength. In situations where one of the groups is significantly stronger or in a better position than the second group, a compromise strategy would not work because the stronger group would hold out for a one-sided solution.

### **Collaborating Style:**

Collaborating conflict management style is the situation where the people involved want to satisfy fully the other party's concerns. It has to do with the 'win-win' approach in which each party to a conflict wins by becoming a problem solver and a

collaborating conflict participant (Ike, 2012). The approach involves exploring and coming up with integrative, win-win solution to issues related to conflict.

The objective of parties involved is to address the problem by clarifying differences rather than accommodating different points of view (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Both individuals involved in the conflict honestly look for the most accurate ways to solve the conflict. An important feature is information sharing which enables all stakeholders to identify the common goals and potential solutions that satisfy all (McShane & Von-Glinow, 2000).

The strategies discussed above have been agreed upon across institutions, especially among those engaged in conflict management. Conflicts should not be denied but rather identified and admitted as being in existence (Thomas, 1977). Conflict situations need to be objectively studied; effective communication ought to be developed; dialogue and deliberation must be encouraged; and members of community need to be helped to recognize conflict as part and parcel of life (Hoy & Miskel, 2005).

## **2.9 Challenges in Managing Conflicts**

Effective conflict management is very critical to the progress of every educational establishment. However, the process is daunting and most often confronted challenges.

Toku (2014) maintains that one of the major challenges of conflict management is that, some of the conflict management styles usually turn out to be time consuming and this may cost the institution so much. In choosing the appropriate style for a particular conflict situation, a time consuming approach may be required and much of productive

time would have to be forfeited in order to effectively employ a particular conflict management style.

De Drue and Weingart (2003) also showed consistency with this argument on conflict management style. Also, managers may get carried away by the conflict management process such that, they may not realize it is eating into normal working hours.

According to Mitroff and Featheringham as cited in Toku (2014)), one of the challenges that could be encountered in managing conflict is the occurrence of some form of errors. One of such errors is the probability of solving a wrong problem. The authors further contend that, this error usually 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.

Another challenge that could be encountered is lack of cooperation on the part of the two parties involved in the conflict (Toku, 2014). 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. 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 Cronin and Weingart (2007), conflict between or among people is associated with emotions. When the person handling the conflict does not have the professional skills needed to deal with the problem, he/she may end up worsening the situation. Conflict cannot just be managed by anybody. There are some technicalities required in managing conflicts. Choosing the appropriate conflict management style

could be very challenging but managers still need to jump this heddle and manage the problem. When a wrong approach to handling a particular problem is adopted, the end results could be disastrous (Brooks, 2009). It takes a professional to identify and choose the appropriate conflict management style to solve the right problem. Another challenge in handling conflict has to do with the two dimensions of conflicts, namely; affective and substantive conflict.

According to De Drue as cited in Toku (2014), affective conflict which is also known as relationship conflict deals with incompatibilities relating to interpersonal relationships while substantive conflict also known as task conflict deals with incompatibilities associated with group members.

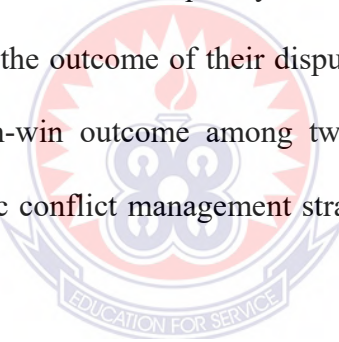
Rahim (2002) in his studies drew a conclusion that, there was a positive correlation between the two dimensions of conflict and this is considered as a challenge.

Simmons and Petersons (2000) in their studies also drew a conclusion similar to Rahim's conclusion when they reported a positive correlation between the two dimensions of conflict which were around 0.34 and 0.88. However, some few researchers concluded in their studies that there was rather a negative correlation between affective and substantive conflict.

## **2.10 Summary**

From the literature conflict connotes a stressful, unhappy, distressing, depressing, annoying and frustrating state of affairs. It is seen as struggle between two or more independent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals or differences. The literature also points out that conflict is like a double-edged

sword and so has equally positive and negative implications. Positively, conflicts are sometimes responsible for group restructuring, improvement in decision making, and the strengthening of group cohesion. Negatively, conflict can lead to break in communication, suspicion and mistrust, weakening of family spirit, loss of valuables, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis. Conflict management strategies generally include avoidance, compromising, competing and integrating. In secondary schools conflict management entails assembling, coordinating, planning and monitoring all the organizational activities within a school set-up. Successful conflict management occurs through listening to and providing opportunities to meet the needs of all parties and to adequately address varied parties' interests, so that each party is satisfied with the outcome of their dispute. Conflict management strategies that involve finding a win-win outcome among two or more parties are successful. However, win-lose dynamic conflict management strategies are also suitable in peculiar disagreement cases.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter details how the research was conducted and analyzed. It describes the methodology that was used in the study. It includes an account of the research design, population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collections procedure, pilot test, data processing and analysis.

A research methodology is the tool and procedure that is applied by the researcher to find answers to the questions raised. When choosing a research method, the type of research question posed and the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events should be considered. The research methodology is influenced by the researcher's general orientation to life or philosophy of life. For the purpose of this study the quantitative approach was used. After thorough consideration, the decision was taken to utilize a survey design to share more light on the general issues of conflicts in senior high schools.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive survey design as the researcher is interested in gathering information on conflict management as it exists in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality. A descriptive survey attempts to describe characteristics of subjects or phenomena, opinions, attitudes, preferences and perception of persons of interest to the researcher.



that descriptive approach is designed to obtain information concerning the current phenomenon and wherever possible to draw valid general conclusions from facts discussed.

Cohen (2007) remind us that survey research involves collecting data to answer questions concerning the phenomenon under study, and is used to describe the nature of existing conditions, identify standards against which existing conditions can be compared, and/or investigate the relationships that may exist between events.

Descriptive research according to Babbie (2012) has the capability of putting into perspective the context in which a problem exists. The research design is therefore descriptive survey as it only seeks to report on the perception of participants without influencing it in anyway. It is on the basis of the foregoing reasons that the design was found suitable for this study.

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

The population of the study was made up of all headmasters, assistant heads and teachers in Kpando Technical Institute and Kpando Senior High School in the Kpando Municipality. It is estimated that the two senior high schools have a staff population of 269.

### **3.4 Sample**

Sample is indispensable to the researcher because usually time, money and effort involve in the research do not permit the researcher to study all the possible members of the population.

According to Cohen and Morrison (2007) the key concept in sampling is representativeness. On this account, a sample size of 170 was selected which comprised of headmasters, assistant headmasters and teachers from a population of 269.

### **3.5 Sampling Technique**

The study employed convenience sampling technique to select a sample size of 170 teachers convenience random sampling also known as grab sampling or opportunity sampling is a type of non-probability that involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is close at hand. It can lead to expedited data collection, ease of research, ready availability and cost effectiveness hence the researcher's decision to use it.

After the convenience sampling was done the researcher went further to adopt other multi stage sampling techniques.

First purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample size of 12, comprising two headmasters, six assistant headmasters/headmistress, two senior house masters/mistresses, and two guidance and counseling co-coordinators. This technique was deemed appropriate because this category of the population have rich experience in managing conflict on daily basis.

Purposive sampling involves the researcher deliberately selecting participants or locations for the study in order to fully comprehend the problem and/or answer the research question (Creswell, 2009).

Gall, Borg, and Gall (2003), opine that in purposive sampling. “the goal is to select cases that are likely to be information rich’ with respect to the purposes of the study”.

In other words, the researcher chooses specific cases to maximize the potential for learning from those cases (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

Secondly, simple random sampling technique was used to select 158 teachers for the study. Simple random sampling is a sampling procedure where each and every item in the population is given equal chance of inclusion in the sample.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instrument**

Data collection is a deliberate, conscious, systematic process that focuses on both the data and the process of the research activities so that others may comprehend how the study performed and can judge its adequacy, strength, and ethics.

To achieve the objectives of the study, a 28-item questionnaire was used to determine the conflict management in public Senior High school in Kpando municipality. The questionnaire was made up of two main parts.

The first part (section A) consists of four (4) items of general demographic nature (such as age, gender, qualification and working experience).

The second part of the questionnaire sought to determine conflict management and implications for educational administration was grouped in three areas: (a) causes of conflict (b) effects of conflict in public senior high school, and (c) strategies used in managing conflict in public senior high school.

The survey utilized a Likert type scale. Likert scales typically ask for the extent of agreement with an attitude item (Gall et al., 2003). The use of a Likert scale allowed me to obtain more information of the respondents' perspectives that is beyond simply asking for an agree/disagree response (David & Sutton, 2004). The questionnaire was used because, it allows respondents to remain anonymous when they answer the questions (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003), Respondents can also complete a questionnaire at a time when it is convenient for them and the answers are much easier to code and analyze (David & Sutton, 2004).

According to O' Leary (2004), a good survey has the potential to reach a large number of respondents, generate standardized, quantifiable, empirical data and offer confidentiality/anonymity. The close-ended type of questionnaire was used for the study. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) contend that the use of the self-completion questionnaire has a low response rate and usually requires extensive follow up plans to increase the response. For David and Sutton (2004), a rate of 50% or less can be the norm.

### **3.7 Pilot Testing**

A pilot test was conducted on 12 teachers from Kpando Technical Institute as a way of finding out whether the questionnaire would be able to elicit the right information. A pilot test is conducted prior to embarking on a full-scale research investigation.

According to Welman (2005), the pilot test essentially administers the questionnaire instrument to a limited number of subjects from the same population as that for which the dissertation is intended. In the view of Cresswell (2009), pilot testing is

important to establish the face validity for an instrument and to improve questions, form and the scale.

### **3.8 Reliability and Validity**

A key issue for any investigative enquiry is its credibility - the extent to which the data that have been obtained are both relevant and valuable. To make this assessment, it is necessary to consider how reliable and valid the data are (Anderson, 2011).

Validity refers to the degree to which the sample of the test represents the content that the test is designed to measure. In order to maintain consistency and relevance to the problem, questionnaire items were formulated around aspects of the problem being investigated.

Content validity is determined by expert judgment. For this reason, my supervisor scrutinized the instrument to ensure that it addresses all the possible areas that it is intended to measure, as well as its appropriateness, completeness and accuracy. A data collection instrument must be reliable. This means it should have the ability to consistently yield the same results when repeated measurements are undertaken of the same individuals under the same conditions.

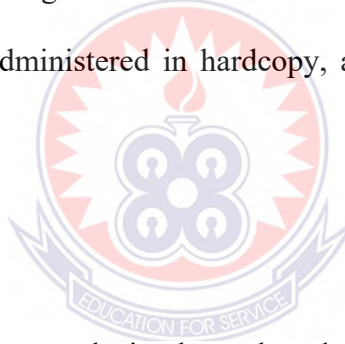
O'Leary (2004) describes reliability as being concerned with internal consistency; that is, whether data collected, measured or generated are the same under repeated trials. To determine the reliability of the research instruments, the researcher conducted a test of the questionnaire through piloting which yielded a Cronbach's 'alpha' of 0.78 indicating a high level of reliability suggesting that a similar level of reliability might be achieved in another setting.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedure**

The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher to respondents in their various schools. In order to seek permission, the researcher got introductory letters from the HOD Educational Leadership to the two schools and copied all the Heads of Department in the schools to administer the questionnaires.

In all 85 teachers were selected from Kpando Technical Institute in which the questionnaires were administered at the school's dining hall. There were 85 teachers selected from Kpando Senior High School of which the questionnaires were administered at the conference room of the school.

The respondents were guided as to how to complete the questionnaire. A total of 170 questionnaires were administered in hardcopy, and out of which 170 representing 100% were returned.



### **3.10. Analysis of Data**

Before the actual data analysis, the gathered data was validated, edited and then coded. During the validation process, the questions were checked to determine whether an accurate or acceptable sample was obtained in terms of proportion of the issued questionnaire. They were also checked to verify completeness.

The researcher used Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) computer software programmer, frequency counts and percentages as well as tables were collected for the analysis.

Martin and Acuna (2002) observe that SPSS is able to handle large amount of data, and given its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposefully designed for social sciences, it is quite efficient.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) explain that ethical considerations and ethical behavior are as important in research as they are in any other field of human activity. The questionnaire will always be an intrusion into the life of the respondent, be it in terms of time taken to complete the instrument, the level of threat or sensitivity of the questions, or the possible invasion of privacy (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

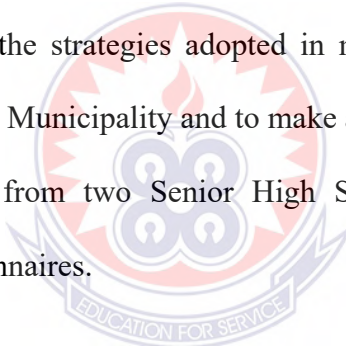
In this study, every precaution was used to ensure the confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy of the data and the participants involved as ethically as possible. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and that participation was voluntary. They were also made aware that they could decide on which question to respond to and that they could also decide to withdraw from participating in the study if they felt so without any consequences.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

Chapter three dealt with the research methodology, data collection instruments, the sources of data and the methods for analyzing the data. This chapter focuses on the results obtained after analyzing the data collected and also discussion of the results, indicating whether the objectives for the study were met or not. The objectives for the study were to examine the causes of conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality, assess the effects of conflict on public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and explore the strategies adopted in managing conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and to make appropriate recommendations. The data were collected from two Senior High Schools in the region of Kpando Municipality using questionnaires.



#### 4.2 Analysis of background Data

Background data of respondents covered are gender, age, highest educational qualification and working experience.

Respondents were required to indicate their sex.

**Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of the Respondent**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	129	75.9
Female	41	24.1
Total	170	100%



Table 4.1 showed that majority 129 which represents 75.9% of the participants in the study were males, while females constituted minority of 41 representing 24.1%. The numbers of females were not as many in the schools hence the few slots for them.

The respondents were requested to indicate their age in the questionnaire. The results were as presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30	27	15.9
31-40	73	42.9
41-50	59	34.7
Above 50	11	6.5
Total	170	100%

Majority of the respondents 73(42.9%) were within the age bracket of 31 to 40 years followed by the age bracket of 41 to 50 years 59(34.7%), above 50 years 11(6.5%) being the lowest and the age bracket of 30 years and below were 27(15.9). It appeared therefore that majority of the teachers in secondary schools in Kpando Municipality were aged 31 to 40 years; an indication that the respondents were mature with enough experience in their various areas of work and hence better understanding of conflict issues in school setups.

The respondents were requested to indicate their work experience in the questionnaire.

The results were as presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Work Experience of the Respondents**

<b>Work experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below 2 years	29	17.1
3 to 4 years	21	12.4
5 to 7 years	29	17.1
More than 7 years	91	53.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100</b>

The analysis of the results on Table 3 indicated that 29(17.1%) respondents had a work experience of below 2 years, 21(12.4%) had worked 3 and 4 years, 29(17.1%) had worked for 5 to 7 years while 91(53.5%) had worked for more than 7 years. This indicated that most of the teachers had a long experience in senior high schools and had experienced organizational conflict and how it was managed. It was however not clear whether their experience impacted positively on their understanding of conflicts.

**Table 4.4: Educational Qualification of the Respondents**

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
WASSCE/'O' LEVEL	12	7.1
Higher National Diploma holders	38	22.4
Bachelor's degree	98	57.6
Master's degree	22	12.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100</b>

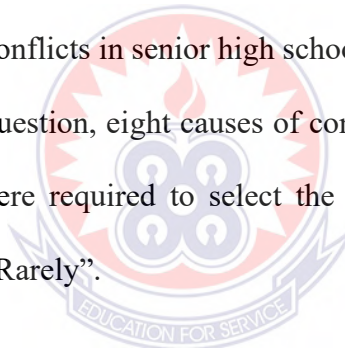
The educational levels of the respondents were considered quite impressive, as they ranged from WASSCE/'O' level to Master's degree in various educational disciplines. From Table 4.4, respondents with Bachelor's degree ranked highest with 98(57.6%) followed by Higher National Diploma 12(7.1%), WASSCE/'O' level and Master's degree holders both got 22(12.9%) being the list. This shows that respondents are knowledgeable and well trained enough to understand the concept of conflict management.

### **4.3 Analysis of Result Based on Research Questions**

#### **4.2.1 Research Question One**

1. What are the causes of conflicts in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?

In relation to this question, eight causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools were presented. Respondents were required to select the factor that caused conflicts "Very often", "Sometimes" and "Rarely".



**Table 4.5 presents information on the factors that caused conflicts in senior high school.**

**Table 4.5: Causes of Conflicts**

<b>Causes of conflicts</b>	<b>Very often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
Autocratic style of leadership	97(57.1%)	73(42.9%)	0(0%)
Competition for common but scarce resources	72(42.4%)	72(42.4%)	26(15.3%)
Favoritism in appointments to key positions	93(54.7%)	67(39.4%)	10(5.9%)
Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities	55(32.4%)	86(50.6%)	29(17.1%)
Power struggle	107(62.9%)	44(25.9%)	19(11.2%)
Laxity among teachers	18(10.6%)	123(72.4%)	29(17.1%)
Personality clash	51(30%)	110(64.7%)	9(5.3%)
Poor communication	50(29.4%)	92(54.1%)	28(16.5%)

From Table 4.5 above, it turned out that autocratic style of leadership, competition for common but scarce resources, favoritism in appointment to key positions and power struggle were believed to be the main factors responsible for conflicts in senior high school as a good number of the respondents chose very often as their responses. For example, on the issue of autocratic style of leadership, while majority 97(57.1%) of the respondents claimed it very often led to conflict, 73(42.9%) said it was sometimes and none 0(10%) responded that it rarely led to conflicts.

In another vein, 72(42.4%) of respondents were on the view that competition for common but scarce resources contributed very often to conflicts in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality the same as those who responded with sometimes. 26(15.3%)

rejected the claim and were of the view that competition for common but scarce resources rarely causes conflict.

On the issue of favoritism in appointments to key positions, Table 4.5, showed that majority 93(54.7%) of the respondents asserted that very often it caused conflict. On the contrary, 67(39.4%) of the respondents observed that it sometimes caused conflict while 10(5.9%) suggested it is rarely.

Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities was found to be sometimes responsible for conflicts in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality by 86(50.6%) of respondents as against 55(32.4%) who were of the view that very often it leads to conflicts. On the other hand, only 29(17.1%) asserted that lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities rarely causes conflict in the public senior high school in the Kpando Municipality.

Power struggle was also found to cause conflicts very often in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality as claimed by majority 107(62.9%) of the respondents. However, 44(25.9%) said it was sometimes and 19(11.2%) said it was rarely.

Laxity among teachers was seen by 123(72.4%) of respondents as sometimes a cause of conflict in the public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and 29(17.1%) intimated it rarely causes conflict. However, 18(10.6%) of the respondents claim it often causes conflict.

Personality clash was found by 51(30%) of respondents to contribute to cause conflicts in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality. 110(64.7%) of the

respondents observed that personality clash sometimes caused conflicts and 9(5.3%) claimed it rarely caused conflicts.

On the issue of poor communication, 50(29.4%) of the respondents agree that it often causes conflict, majority 92(54.1%) of respondents were of a different view that it sometimes causes conflict and not always. Lastly 28(16.5%) of the respondents intimated poor communication rarely causes conflict in the Kpando Municipality.

## **Research Question 2: In what ways do conflicts affect senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality\*?**

**Table 4.6: Effects of Conflicts on Schools**

<b>Effects of conflicts on schools</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Break in healthy communication	38(22.4%)	110(64.7%)	22(12.9%)	0(0%)
Divisiveness and bitterness	58(34.1%)	86(50.6%)	26(15.3%)	0(0%)
Mutual suspicions and mistrust	28(16.5%)	114(67%)	28(16.5%)	0(0%)
Helps to raise and address problems	20(11.8%)	80(47%)	61(35.9%)	9(5.3%)
Enhance effective decision-making	32(18.8%)	38(22.4%)	83(48.8%)	17(10%)
Strengthening of group Cohesion/unity	50(29.4%)	42(24.7%)	70(41.2%)	8(4.7%)
Promotes creativity	30(17.6%)	69(40.6%)	41(24.1%)	30(17.6%)
Disruption of timing of school Activities	42(24.7%)	98(57.6%)	30(17.6%)	0(0%)

From Table 4.6, break in healthy communication, divisiveness and bitterness, mutual suspicions and mistrust and helping to raise and address problems were identified as effects of conflicts in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality.

For instance, majority 38(22.4%) and 110(64.7%) either strongly agreed or agreed that conflict can result in break in healthy communication, however, 22(12.9%) and 0(0%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed to the assertion.

In relation to divisiveness and bitterness, while majority 58(34.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 86(50.6%) simply agreed. On the contrary, while 26(15.3%) disagreed, 0(0%) strongly disagreed.

Similarly, with respect to mutual suspicion and mistrust, while majority 28(16.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the assertion, 114(67%) agreed. However, 28(16.5) and 0(0%) either strongly disagreed or agreed to the statement.

On the issue of helping to raise and address problems, Table 4.6, showed that 20(11.8%) strongly agreed to the claim, while 80(47%) agreed, 61(35.9%) either disagreed and 9(5.3%) strongly disagreed.

On the issue of Strengthening of group cohesion/unity, while majority 50(29.4%) of the respondents disagreed, 42(24.7%) of them held a contrary view.

Similarly, majority 41(24.1%) of the respondents disagreed that conflict can promote creativity while 30(17.6%) strongly disagree to the assertion. On the contrary, 69(30.6%) of the respondents agreed and 30(17.6%) strongly agreed.

Results from Table 4.6 further showed that majority of the respondents 83(48.8%) and 17(10%) either disagree or strongly disagreed that conflict promotes effective decision-making.

However, 32(18.8%) strongly agreed and 38(22.4%) agreed to the assertion.

Finally, Table 4.6 showed that while 42(24.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the claim the conflict disrupts timing of activities of the school, 98(57.6%) agreed to the claim. However, 0(0%) strongly disagreed and 30(17.6%) of the respondents agreed.

### **Research Question Three: How are conflict managed in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?**

**Table 4.7: Strategies of Managing Conflicts**

<b>Strategies of Managing Conflicts</b>	<b>Very often</b>	<b>sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
Head acts as a mediator	75(44.1%)	95(55.9%)	0(0%)
Head dialogues with conflicting parties	116(68.2%)	27(15.9%)	27(15.9%)
Head's establishment of Grievances Procedure	88(51.8%)	66(38.8%)	16(9.4%)
Head showing Fairness in dealing with all staff members	40(23.5%)	103(60.6%)	27(15.9%)
Head ignore conflict whenever it occurs	40(23.5%)	100(58.8%)	30(17.6%)
Head's Involvement of all teachers in decision making	87(51.2%)	63(37%)	20(11.8%)
Open and effective communication by the head	100(58.8%)	40(23.5%)	30(17.6%)
Regular staff meetings by the head	98(57.6%)	62(36.5%)	10(5.9%)



From Table 4.7, Regular staff meetings, open and effective communication, involvement of all teachers in decision-making and establishment of grievances procedure ranked high as the strategies employed by senior high schools to manage conflicts. From the results on Table 4.7, majority of the respondents 98(57.6%) said Regular staff meetings was used very often, while 62(36.5%) claimed this was used sometimes. Only 10(5.9%) of the respondents observed it was rarely used.

Open and effective communication, 100(58.8%) of the respondents claimed this was used very often, while 40(23.5%) of the respondents said sometimes. However, 30 of respondents which represent 17.6% claimed it was rarely used.

The results further showed that majority 87(51.2%) of the respondents were on the view that involvement of all teachers in decision-making was used very often, while 63(37%) believed it was sometimes and 20(11.8%) Of the respondents claimed it was rarely used.

Table 4.7 further showed that senior high school sometimes use Grievances Procedure to address conflict, demonstrate fairness in dealing with all staff members or ignore conflict whenever it occurs.

From Table 4.7, majority of the respondents thus 88(51.8%) claimed the headmasters very often use Grievances Procedure to manage conflict, 66(38.8%) said it was used sometimes used and 16(9.4%) claimed headmasters rarely use this strategy.

With respect to ignoring conflict whenever it occurs, 100(58.8%) observed that it was used sometimes, while 40(23.5%) of the respondents claimed it was used very often. However, 30(17.6%) of respondents said it was rarely used. The challenge of conflict lies in how one chooses to deal with it. Ignoring or avoiding conflict is an ineffective attitude

for problem solving. The inability to deal with conflict respectfully, constructively and in a timely manner will quickly undermine the leaders credibility and the progress of an organization.

In relation to Acting as a mediator, 0(0%) of the respondents believed the headmaster rarely acts as a mediator in conflicts in the school. However, 95(55.9%) of the respondents pointed out that it was used sometimes, while 75(44.1%) of the respondents claimed it was very often used.

Similarly, 116(68.2%) of the respondents were on the view that schools very often used dialogue as a way of managing conflicts, 27(15.9%) of the respondents were of the view that dialogue by headmasters of senior high schools were both sometimes and rarely used.

#### **4.4 Discussion of Results**

##### **Research Question One: What are the causes of Conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Kpando Municipality?**

From Table 4.5, autocratic style of leadership, favoritism in appointments to key positions and power struggle were ranked high as the factors responsible for conflicts in senior high school. On the issue of autocratic style of leadership 97(57.1%) of the respondents claimed it contributed to conflict very often.

Table 4.5 further showed that majority 93(54.7%) of respondents were on the view that favoritism in appointment to key positions contributed very often to conflicts in senior high schools in Kpando Municipality. Favoritism in appointments to key positions is the second highest factor driving conflict as attested to by 93(54.7%) of the

respondents. This is in line with what many theorists posit that schools sometimes favor some teachers at the expense of others and this fosters a sense of resentment, anger and hatred. He contends that it is this resentment that brews rumors, jealousy and conflict at work place.

Power struggle was also found to cause conflicts very often in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality as claimed by majority 107(62.9%) of the respondents. This study corroborates a study by Afful-Broni (2012) which found that conflicts sometimes arise through the struggle to have control over power or authority. He notes that sometimes within the school, it is common to find especially the old and new staff or those with the highest qualification and those with the least qualification seeking to outdo each other in order to have control of authority. This inevitably leads to conflict.

Finally, Table 4.5 clearly showed that competition for common but scarce resources ranked same as being very often and sometimes among the causes of conflicts. This was claimed by 72(42.4%) of the respondents for both. The results of this study contrasts with the earlier findings of Henry (2009), which stated that employees compete in organization because of limited resources. This competition can take the form of financial, promotion, manpower, equipment, etc. Dowling and Osborn (2001) also reported in their conflict study that resources are available assets which may include time, money and material possessions and affects the incidences of conflict to a large extent. In this instance, individuals try to have their share of the available limited resources and most likely step on each other's toes in the course of the struggle or competition resulting in the emergence of conflict.

## **Research Question 2: In what ways do conflicts affect senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?**

From Table 4.6, break in healthy communication, divisiveness and bitterness, mutual suspicions and mistrust and helping to raise and address problems were identified as effects of conflicts on senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality.

For instance, majority 38(22.4%) and 110(64.7%) either strongly agreed or agreed that conflict can result in break in healthy communication.

In relation to divisiveness and bitterness, 86(50.6%) of the respondents agreed, similarly, with respect to divisiveness and bitterness, 58(34.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the assertion,

On the issue of helping to raise and address problems, Table 4.6, showed that 20(11.8%) strongly agreed to the claim. This result confirms the position of Afful-Broni (2007) who contents that conflict is inimical to organizational growth and progress. He outlines the negative effect of conflict to include break in communication, suspicion and mistrust, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis.

Afful-Broni (2007) argues that conflict impacts positively on organizations such as the school. For him, conflict further presents opportunities for issues to be clarified, redefined and sharpened.

On the issue of strengthening of group cohesion/unity, majority 70(41.2%) of the respondents disagreed. Similarly, 41(29.4%) of the respondents disagreed that conflict can promote creativity and 30(17.6%) even strongly disagreed to the assertion. On the contrary, 69(40.6%) of the respondents agreed and 30(17.6%) strongly agreed.

Results from Table 4.6 further showed that majority of the respondents 83(48.8%) and 17(10%) either disagree or strongly disagreed that conflict promotes effective decision-making. Similarly, 30(17.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that conflicts can promote creativity. This finding is inconsistent with the position of writers) who argues that moderate levels of conflict can have a positive influence on the team and the organization. Anderson (2004) stressed the point that conflict can stimulate creativity. Team members can come out with differing approaches on achieving goals so that at the end the decision is a creative compromise that was not obvious before (Anderson, 2011).

### **Research Question 3: How is conflict managed in senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?**

From Table 4.7, regular staff meetings, open and effective communication, involvement of all teachers in decision-making, dialogue with conflicting parties and establishment of grievances procedure ranked high as the strategies employed by senior high schools to manage conflicts.

From the results on Table 4.7, majority of the respondents 98(57.6%) claimed regular staff meetings was used very often. For open and effective communication, 100(58.8%) of the respondents claimed this was used very often. It is believed the easiest way to prevent conflict is to ensure regular meetings. The school head therefore needs to constantly meet with all sectors of the institution to speak out and set the record straight to avoid distortions that may lead to conflict. It is a reality that the root cause of most conflict is born out of poor communication or the inability to control one's emotions. For him, clear concise, accurate, and timely communication of information will help to ease

both the number and severity of conflicts. The results further showed that majority 87(51.2%) of the respondents were on the view that involvement of all teachers in decision-making was used very often, while 63(37%) believed it was sometimes. When a staff is made to participate in decision-making, it generates a sense of ownership by the staff in the pursuit of organizational goals, nurtures the generation of ideas, and helps build trust and respect.

Table 4.7 further showed that senior high schools equally use grievances procedure to address conflict.

From the table demonstration of fairness in dealing with all staff members or ignore conflict whenever it occurs were sometimes used by senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality.

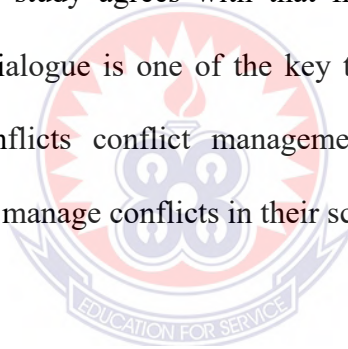
From Table 4.7, majority of the 100(58.8%) claimed the headmasters sometimes use ignoring to manage conflict, 40(23.5%) said it was used very often and 30(17.6%) claimed headmasters rarely use this strategy. This confirms the assertion of Mankoe (2007) that some managers deliberately avoid conflicts as a way of dealing with it. The challenge of conflict lies in how one chooses to deal with it. Ignoring or avoiding conflict is an ineffective attitude for problem solving. The inability to deal with conflict respectfully, constructively and in a timely manner will quickly undermine the leader's credibility and the progress of an organization. Uline et al. (2003) supported that conflicts that are avoided and poorly managed can wreak havoc on both individuals and organizations. Conflict can cause unimaginable havocs when ignored or allowed to escalate unabated in a school. Conflict has the capacity to destabilize any organization, if the mechanisms for containment are ineffective (Almost, 2006). Hancock, (2006)

admonishes leaders and organizations to effectively manage conflicts so as to help stimulate people towards greater work efforts, cooperation and creativity.

In relation to Acting as a mediator, 0(60%) of the respondents believed the headmaster rarely acts as a mediator in conflicts in the school. However, 95(55.9%) of the respondents pointed out that it was used sometimes, while 75(44.1%) of the respondents claimed it was rarely used.

On the contrary, 116(68.2%) of the respondents were on the view that schools very often promote dialogue as a way of managing conflicts. This shows that schools do not encourage dialogue and deliberation to manage conflicts.

The results of this study agrees with that from Afful-Broni (2012) who in a similar study found that dialogue is one of the key to approaches employed by school administrators handle conflicts conflict management. This useful approach is not exploited by the schools to manage conflicts in their schools.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This is the final chapter which provides a brief overview of the study, highlighting major findings to draw conclusions and to suggest recommendations. This chapter is categorized into three sections for which the first part dealt with the summary of the study, the second section discussed the conclusion and the third dealt with recommendations.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the conflict management in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipal and its implications for educational administration. Hence, three objectives were set out and these were to:

1. Examine the causes of conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality;
2. Assess the effects of conflict on public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality;
3. Explore the strategies adopted in managing conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and to make appropriate recommendations.

To achieve these objectives, the descriptive research design was employed with questionnaire around the following three research questions:

1. What are the causes of conflicts in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?



2. In what ways do conflicts affect public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?
3. How are conflicts managed in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality?

### **Main Findings**

1. The first research question examined the causes of conflict in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality. The study revealed that conflicts in public senior high schools were caused primarily by autocratic style of leadership, competition for common but scarce resources, favoritism in appointments to key positions and power struggle. This was attested to by majority of the respondents. Contrary to expectation the study revealed that personality clash, poor communication and ranked least among the causes of conflicts.
2. The second research question asked the participants to identify the effects of conflicts in senior high schools. Majority of the participants identified break in healthy communication, divisiveness and bitterness, mutual suspicions and mistrust as well as helping to raise and address issues as the main effects of conflicts. However, participants rejected nearly all the items that portrayed conflict as positive.
3. The third research question asked what strategies of senior high schools employ to manage conflicts in their schools. This study revealed several strategies use to deal with conflicts. From the results on Table 4.7, majority of the respondents said regular staff meetings, grievance procedures, open and effective communication

and the involvement of all teachers in decision-making. The study however found that there is sometimes fairness in dealing with all staff members, and also headmasters either ignored conflicts or were reluctant to encourage dialogue and deliberation to manage conflicts.

### **5.3 Conclusion of the Study**

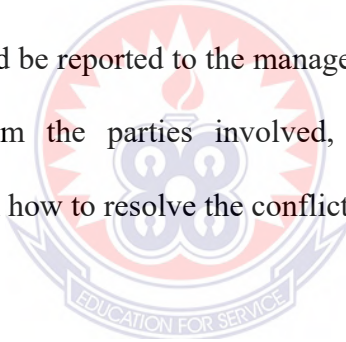
The study indicates that the major causes of conflicts in public senior high school are autocratic style of leadership, poor communication and favoritisms in appointment to positions. Head of schools are not well-trained in effective leadership skills and conflict management. This has the potential to affect the proper management of schools.

Conflict is generally viewed negatively by both teachers in public senior high schools hence their failure to appreciate the positive value of conflict in terms of improving creativity and proper decision-making. The study also revealed that the most used means of managing conflict among head masters of public senior high school in the Kpando Municipality are regular staff meeting, open and regular communication and the involvement of teachers in decision making. Grievance procedures are not followed very often, while conflicts are either ignored or avoided and dialogue not encouraged.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

Having analyzed the collected data, the presented findings on chapter five and conclusion, this part of the research report presents the proposed recommendations of the findings as outlined below:

1. The Ghana Education Service should organize In-service training for teachers and schools on conflict identification and management to equip them with necessary knowledge and skills in dealing positively with conflicts in the schools. Moreover the headteachers should also organize seminars and workshops aimed at improving rapport between schools and their staff and building good working relations between them.
2. Educational administrators should communicate transparently, practice fairness and transparency so that they can create trust and good relationships among staff.
3. Ghana Educations Services should put in place to resolve conflict for proper grievances, procedures. For instance, when any disagreements arise among the employees, it should be reported to the management and then management should get statements from the parties involved, brainstorm the issue and make recommendation on how to resolve the conflict.



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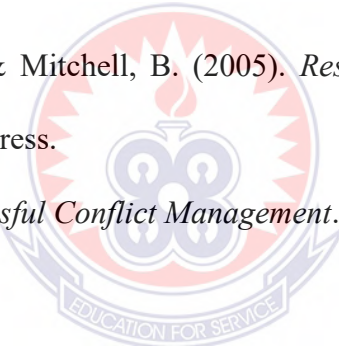
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## **APPENDIX**

### **AKENTEN APPPIAH- MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT KUMASI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRES**

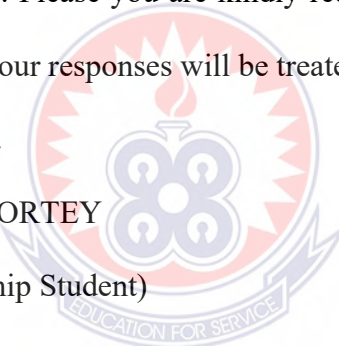
Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information on the study of the conflict management in public senior high schools in the Kpando Municipality and its reviewed effects on educational administration. The information being sought is meant to be used for only academic purposes. Please you are kindly requested to respond to the questions as frankly as possible. All your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for participating.

EMMANUEL SENYO AGORTEY

(M.A. Educational Leadership Student)



### SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Listed in this section are four items on background information. For each item, kindly tick (✓) in the appropriate box as applicable to you.

1. Sex:            Male        [ ]        Female        [ ]

2. Age:            Below 30 [ ]        31 – 40 [ ]        41 – 50 [ ]        Above 50 [ ]

3. Working experience:

Below 2 years [ ]        3 to 4 years [ ]        5 to 7 years [ ]        More than 7  
years [ ]

4. Highest qualification

WASSCE/'O' LEVEL [ ]        HND [ ]        Bachelor Degree [ ]        Master's Degree [ ]



### SECTION B: CAUSES OF CONFLICTS

This section seeks to find out the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as causes of conflicts in senior high schools. Please, tick (✓) the appropriate column that most adequately reflects your opinion with respect to the given statements.

Scale of answers 1= Very often, 2= Sometimes, and 3= rarely.

Causes of conflicts	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely
Autocratic style of leadership			
Competition for common but scarce resources			
Favoritism in appointments to key positions			
Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities.			
Laxity among teachers			
Personality clash			
Power struggle among staff			
Poor communication			

**SECTION C: EFFECTS OF CONFLICTS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

This section seeks to find out the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as effects of conflicts in senior high schools. Please, tick (√) the appropriate column that most adequately reflects your opinion with respect to the given statements. Scale of answers 1= strongly agree, 2=agree, 3= =disagree and 4=strongly disagree

<b>Effects of conflicts on schools</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Break in healthy communication				
Disruption of timing of school activities				
Divisiveness and bitterness				
Helps to raise and address problems				
Mutual suspicions and mistrust				
Promotes creativity				
Enhance effective decision making				
Strengthening of group cohesion/unity				

**SECTION D: STRATEGIES FOR MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS**

This section seeks to find out which of the following measures are used in dealing with acts of indiscipline in Senior High Schools. Please, tick (✓) the appropriate column that most adequately reflects your view in relation to the given statement.

<b>Measures for Maintaining Discipline</b>	<b>Very often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
Acts as a mediator			
Dialogue with conflicting parties			
Establishment of grievances procedure			
Fairness in dealing with all staff members			
Ignore conflict whenever it occurs search for solutions			
Involvement of all teachers in decision-making			
Open and effective communication			
Regular staff meetings			