

DECLARATION

I, MBULELO GRATITUDE van DOU declare that the thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education submitted at North-West University, Mafikeng campus, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university, that it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR PRINCIPALS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

In South Africa, little is documented on the strategies for addressing conflicts in schools and on the problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools. Principals exist in a world of problems that always have the potential to result in serious conflicts. Their abilities to solve problems and manage conflict efficiently and effectively are important measures of their school leadership.

Current literature in conflict management, particularly in developed countries like U.S.A. and the U.K. concentrates on the issues that the frequency of conflict has destructive consequences for some schools. The apparent inability of many of those involved to manage conflict in schools constructively pointed to a serious need for programmes to be formulated with regard to actions to be taken and training that is needed for principals to manage conflict. These studies show that the very nature of schools invites conflict because schools are composed of individuals that have diverse and conflicting values, personalities, goals, perceptions and interests.

The purpose of this study was to determine from the literature the nature and scope of conflict management in schools and to investigate empirically the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools. Furthermore, to examine the current conflict management models for schools with the ultimate aim of developing a conflict management model for secondary schools principals in the North West Province.

The study also examined existing conflict management models. The conflict management models investigated revolve around the idea that in any organization there is a we-them distinction between the parties. Energies are directed towards the other party in an atmosphere of total victory. Each party

in a conflict situation, sees the issue from its own perspective, rather than defining the problem in terms of mutual needs.

There are important theories that provide a background to the concept of conflict. Researchers have advanced different theories to explain the origin of conflict. Swindle (1996), Rahim (1990), Benyon and Solomon (1997), Cronk (1997), Bloch (1997) and others have proposed a wide spectrum of theories to account for the rise of conflict.

According to bureaucratic theory, the existence of conflict in an organization is evidence of organization breakdown and that there has been a failure on the part of the management to plan adequately or to exercise sufficient power and control. On the other hand, the human relation theory view conflict as an especially negative and evidence of failure to develop appropriate norms in the organization.

Maslow argues that there exists in people a wide range of needs, which determine behaviour and motivation. In his hierarchy of needs theory, he postulates that people have physical needs such as a need for shelter and food. He also states that, people have needs for security, for love, for recognition, for self-esteem and fulfilment. The theory of needs as a driving force for human actions has been advanced by other scholars, such as Adair (1995), Jones and Jones (1995) and Burton (1997). They state that the failure to satisfy the needs mentioned above, results in frustration, insecurity, withdrawal and a persistence to fulfil them even in socially unacceptable ways that may result in conflict.

The majority of the respondents 378 (90%) viewed intensive training in conflict management as an extremely important required skill for the principals, meaning that not possessing this skill would render it highly impossible for the principals to manage conflicts in schools effectively and efficiently. Principals spend most of their time dealing with or resolving conflicts caused by teachers, parents and learners. Most of these problems emanate from not

complying with some of the policies of the Department of Education. It is therefore, of paramount importance that the Department of Education organizes workshops on the modern trends of conflict management and resolution strategies for the principals. For the principals to manage conflicts effectively and efficiently, they must be prepared to undergo training in conflict management and resolution strategies.

These findings support what is suggested by the literature consulted. The literature consulted revealed that lack of viable conflict management in schools could be ascribed to the fact that the Department of Education does not give conflict management in schools the attention that it deserves.

The survey population was drawn from twelve educational districts of the North West Province. From all the secondary schools in the North West Province (N = 365) a random sampling (n=500) was selected by randomly samples of 5 secondary schools in each of the twelve educational districts of the North West Province.

In each of the fifty (50) randomly selected secondary schools in the North West Province: 1 principal; 1 deputy principal, 3 heads of departments and 5 teachers were requested to complete the questionnaires. Thus the sample of (n=500) was composed of ten (10) respondents from each of the fifty (50) randomly selected secondary schools in the twelve educational districts of the North West Province.

A computer-aided statistical analysis was employed. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)-programme was used to compute the results of the study. The first step in the analysis of data was to compute descriptive data for each respondent in the study. These include statistics like frequency distribution, percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and chi-square.

The study also revealed that the majority of the respondents were of the opinion that conflict is a product of many factors that go wrong in the school. Evaluation of teachers and incompetence of certain teachers have emerged

as one of the important causes of conflict in most schools. Misunderstandings, insulting remarks and racist remarks were ranked high under the causes of conflict in schools.

Major findings of this investigation revealed that conflicts in schools are caused by problems arising from not complying with some of the policies of the Education Department; unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers; scarcity of resources; clash of personality traits and abrupt changes. Effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools were also revealed in this investigation. Conflicts that drag over a period of time impede the culture of learning and teaching; conflict produces irresponsible behaviour; conflict decreases expected production; conflict destroys morale and conflict diverts energy that could have been used to achieve the vision and mission of the school.

Problems identified by Everard and Morris (1990) and Robbins (1995) in the U.K. help us to understand problems in developed countries. For example, the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools as experienced by principals in the U.K. and U.S.A. However, it is noted that principals in developing countries are also concerned about the problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies, how lack of conflict management affects the overall performance of the school and essential skills needed by principals to manage conflicts effectively and efficiently.

Little attention is paid to develop comprehensive conflict management models for principals, more especially in developing countries like South Africa. Similarly, little is written about how the principals go about resolving conflicts in schools.

The theoretical framework provided forms the basic rationale for developing a conflict management model for principals; a comprehensive conflict management model was developed. The main purpose of this study, was to

develop a conflict management model that could be used by principals as a guide when solving conflicts that usually emerge in schools.

The study recommends that, since lack of viable conflict management strategies affect the overall academic performance of the learners and conflict is inevitable; the principals must be well prepared and equipped to manage all forms of conflicts that emerge in schools. Principals have a great responsibility of managing conflict to such an extent that it does not escalate to a point where it ruins the aims of learning. The majority of the respondents indicated that it is extremely important for the principals to possess conflict management skills, styles, techniques and conflict resolution strategies if they want to curb conflicts in schools.

A poor principal manages conflict in one of the following ways: He swallows it and develops ulcers, or he spits it out and digests his colleagues with a barrage of threats and bureaucratic clichés, or he avails himself of cloak-and-dagger strategies – whereby his integrity and credibility as a leader are sometimes permanently destroyed by his own senseless behaviour.

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1. ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Conflict in a work environment is inevitable. When people work together, there will be degrees of conflict, because people will not always be in perfect agreement on all issues, goals or perceptions. This leads to conflict (Boulding, 1994; Kahn, 1994).

Common definitions of conflict tend to be associated with negative features and situations which give rise to inefficiency, ineffectiveness or dysfunctional consequences (Hunger, 1996; Stern, 1996; Tjosvold, 1995; Neale, 1996). The traditional view of conflict is that it is bad for organizations (Clayton, 1992; Smith, 1992). Conflict is perceived as disruptive and unnatural and represents a form of deviant behaviour, which should be controlled and changed. Extreme cases of conflict in organizations can have very upsetting, or even tragic consequences for some people and can have adverse effects on organizational performance (Robbins, 1994; Caffasella, 1994). Conflict situations can give rise to excessive emotional or physical stress (Jones, 1995; Steenkamp, 1993; Downs, 1998; Thompson, 1997; Herold, 1998; Cosier, 1997).

Even if organizations have taken great care to try and avoid conflict, it will still occur. Conflict will continue to emerge despite attempts by principals to suppress it (March, 1996; Robbins, 1996; Stoner, 1996).

Within the context of this chapter, an orientation to this study is provided. A statement of the problem is provided to facilitate an understanding of the problem under investigation. Following that, the research methodology is given and concepts relevant to the study are defined.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Principals exist in a world of problems that always have the potential to become seriously conflictual. Their abilities to solve problems and manage conflict are important measures of their school leadership (Johnson, 1994; Vecchio, 1991).

People do not always work smoothly together in an organization. Conflict is an element of interpersonal relationships in organizations. Conflict arises if there is disagreement among two or more individuals, groups, or organizations. This disagreement may be relatively superficial or very strong. It may be short-lived or exist for months or even years and it may be work-related or personal. Conflict may manifest itself in a variety of ways. People may compete with one another, glare at one another, shout, or withdraw (Kelly, 1990; Kok, 1992).

Mlambo (1995) says the level of conflict in some secondary schools in South Africa has risen to a point where schools have become unproductive. School boycotts, vandalism and violence in schools have resulted in poor performance, high dropout rate by pupils and withdrawal of parents from school matters, demotivation and non-effective functioning by school teachers. An investigation of the principals' perceptions of conflict in their schools found that this perception influenced their strategies for managing conflict (Mosoge, 1989; Mathibela, 1994; Ngcongco, 1993).

According to Van der Westhuizen (1991) and Mlambo (1995) education in South Africa has, however, been repeatedly and violently disturbed by school boycotts, unrest and violence. This has occurred mostly because of apartheid education system. Conflict upsets the whole school system and because school activities cannot function normally, there is an unavoidable drop in standards. In this way the learners themselves suffer (Van der Westhuizen, 1991; Mlambo, 1995).

Current literature in conflict management, particularly in developed countries like U.S.A and the U.K., concentrates on the issues that the frequency of conflict has destructive consequences for some schools. The apparent inability of many of those involved to manage conflict in schools constructively pointed to a serious need for programmes to be formulated with regard to actions to be taken and training that is needed for principals to manage conflict (Katz, 1994; Graham-Brown, 1991; Blase, 1991).

There is a considerable body of literature in the U.S.A and the U.K on conflict management. These studies show that the very nature of organisations invites conflict, because organisations are composed of many groups that have diverse and conflicting interests (Brown, 1996; Mitchell, 1996). The very fact that people stand in different relationships to organisational rules provides the basic for conflict. Conflict is inherent in the fact that some people get to lay down the rules while others are expected to follow them; conflict can lead to a rejection of managerial decisions and plans; lowered work morale; higher staff turnover; increased absenteeism; sabotage and other forms of reduced productivity and work commitment (Mills, 1991; Murgatroyd, 1991; Schilling, 1988).

Most people assume that conflict must be avoided because it connotes antagonism, hostility, unpleasantness and dissension. Indeed, managers and management theorists have traditionally viewed conflict as a problem to be avoided (Clayton, 1987; Swart, 1989). In recent years, however, we have come to recognize that although conflict can be a major problem, certain kinds of conflict may also be beneficial (Catherine, 1990; Mazibuko, 1999).

A moderate level of conflict among group or organizational members can spark motivation, creativity, innovation, initiative and raise performance. Too much conflict can produce undesirable results such as hostility and lack of co-operation which lower performance. Principals must find and maintain the optimal amount of conflict that fosters performance (Robin and Gregory, 1994; Baloyi, 1999).

Conflict becomes a dangerous and disrupting force when personal glory is seen as the most important result of the exercise by one or both of the parties involved (Etzioni, 1994; Scott, 1996; Lawrence, 1996, Sorensen, 1995). Should ego considerations receive preference, conflict will assume increasingly unhealthy proportions, and at the same time, meaningful and effective solutions will become increasingly difficult to achieve. A variety of counter-productive elements emerge which can eventually paralyse the whole organization. Decision-making becomes problematical because neither of the parties is prepared to make any concessions (Van der Westhuizen, 1991; Mlambo, 1995).

An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags on for too long, while the institution itself is damaged in every way imaginable (Hlatshwayo, 1997). The immediate and future constructive objectives of the organisation are lost from sight totally in the heat of conflict. Still more dangerous and counter-productive is a situation where the conflict is never allowed into the open. It then becomes a smouldering grievance, which causes continuous damage to job satisfaction and productivity. The organizational climate of the institution and the effectiveness of the whole organization are also damaged. Nothing can be more paralysing than a situation where parties do not even make the effort of discussing the true differences any longer (Van der Westhuizen, 1991; Mosoge, 1989; Kirstan, 1996).

As long as conflict is handled cordially and constructively, it is probably serving a useful purpose in the organization. On the other hand, when working relationships are disrupted and the conflict has reached destructive levels, it has likely become dysfunctional (Theron, 1994; Du Toit, 1990). Principals must find and maintain the optimal amount of conflict that fosters performance (Litterer, 1994).

From a survey of practicing principals, who reported that they spend approximately 20 per cent of their time dealing with conflict situations,

Thomas & Roger (1994) recorded a number of negative outcomes of conflict as follows:

- Some people felt defeated and demeaned;
- The distance between people increased;
- A climate of mistrust and suspicion developed;
- Individuals and groups concentrated on their own narrow interests;
- Resistance developed rather than teamwork;
- An increase employee turnover; and
- Conflict is fatal to the effectiveness of the institution and particularly for the personnel morale.

The researcher is a head of department in a secondary school. He has observed situations whereby conflict arises from the fact that some teachers do not comply with the rules, policies and regulations of the education department. Scarcity of resources, unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers, abrupt changes and lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies by some principals, have caused conflicts in some schools. This has resulted in poor performance of the learners, continuous damage to job satisfaction and lowering of morale among teachers.

This state of affairs has prompted the researcher to investigate strategies that are likely to help principals and teachers resolve conflicts. Thus the researcher seeks to investigate the perceptions of principals and teachers on the extent of conflict situations in schools and the ways of overcoming them.

The following research questions provide the focus of this research: -

- What are the problems of conflict management in schools?;
- What are the types and causes of conflict in schools?;
- How viable are the current conflict management strategies used by principals in schools?; and

- How does lack of viable conflict management strategies affect the overall performance of the school?

In summary, little is documented on the strategies for addressing conflict in schools and on the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management in school settings. Lack of conflict management is a problem on its own, because there is no institution that can achieve its vision and mission if conflict manifests itself or if it drags on for too long without any amicable solution.

It is therefore the main aim of this study to collect data on the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, so as to develop a conflict management model that can be used by principals as a guide to trace and resolve problems that cause conflict in schools.

1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY

From the above mentioned research questions that provide the focus of this research, the aims of the research are: -

Aim 1: To determine from the literature, the nature and scope of conflict management.

Aim 2: To determine from the literature the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

Aim 3: To examine the current conflict management models for schools.

Aim 4: To determine empirically the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

Aim 5: To develop a conflict management model for principals.

1.4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses were investigated:

Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of principals and the teachers?:

- on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools?;
- on the effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools; and
- on the causes of conflicts in schools?

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This investigation was conducted through the following strategies:

1.5.1 Literature review

In the review of literature, a thorough study of primary and secondary sources was made with the intention of collecting data on the problems faced by principals and teachers on their role in conflict management and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school.

1.5.2 Empirical research

1.5.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed and pre-tested. The aim of the questionnaire was to collect data from principals and teachers in the North West Province on issues and challenges facing them in their role of conflict management and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school.

1.5.2.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with principals and teachers who were randomly selected to participate in the study. The main aim of the interview was to gather their views on issues and challenges facing them in their role of conflict management, and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school.

1.5.2.3 Population and sampling

From a list of secondary schools in the North West Province (N=365), a random sampling of (n = 500) was made. Fifty (50) principals, 50 deputy principals, 150 heads of departments and 250 teachers were requested to complete the questionnaire. Thus the sample of (n = 500) was composed of ten respondents: 1 principal; 1 deputy principal; 3 heads of departments; and 5 teachers from each of the 50 randomly selected secondary schools in the North West Province.

1.5.2.4 Limitations of the study

In this study the research was carried out in the North West Province of South Africa. When the study was conducted, the researcher was not aware that there were no models used by the principals as guides to manage conflict in schools effectively and efficiently. Since the intention of the study was to develop a conflict management model (CMM) that could be used by principals as a guide to manage conflict, it is the researcher's belief that the findings and the model developed, would benefit principals to improve the quality and standard of conflict management in schools. Whether or not the conflict management model (CMM) will be effectively or successfully utilised, this cannot be ascertained in this study.

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS

With the assistance of statistical consultant of the North West University, computer aided statistical analysis was employed. The computation of frequencies (f), percentages, means, standard deviation (SD), chi-square tests, chi-square goodness-of-fit tests, t-tests, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Correlation Analysis were conducted.

1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Conflict refers to a disagreement between two or more organizational members or groups arising from the fact that they must share scarce resources or work activities or from the fact that they have different status, values or perceptions (Thompson, 1995: 275).

Conflict occurs because people have different perceptions, beliefs and goals. A number of definitions of conflict appears in the literature. For the sake of this research, conflict is defined as an overt behaviour that is purposely designed to inhibit the attainment of goals by another person or group. It results when an individual or group of people thinks a perceived need or needs of the individual or groups of people have been frustrated or is about to be frustrated.

The purposeful blocking of goals may be active or passive (Gray & Starke 1988). For example, if one group of teachers fails to do their share of the organization of an aspect of a parent evening and the output of this group is the input for another group, the other group will be blocked and will be unable to reach its goal. Furthermore, the resulting disagreement may be expressed either formally or informally. In formal conflict, the parties involved describe their disagreement clearly, while none of the parties in informal conflict communicates the source of disagreement explicitly.

Conflict management refers to methods to manage all forms of tension between members of staff with the intention of effective functioning of the organization (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 302). According to Jones (1995) conflict management refers to intervention strategies designed to reduce excessive conflict or to increase insufficient conflict. Van der Westhuizen (1991) defines conflict management as the methods used to manage all forms of tension including severe conflict of tension between members of staff with the intention of effective functioning of the organisation.

Secondary schools refer to post primary schools with grade 12 as the highest class.

1.8 CHAPTER HEADINGS

Chapter 1: Orientation

Chapter 2: The nature and scope of conflict management in schools.

Chapter 3: Problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools.

Chapter 4: An overview of conflict management models for schools.

Chapter 5: Research methodology.

Chapter 6: Analysis and interpretation of data.

Chapter 7: Conflict management model for principals

Chapter 8: Summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion.

1.9 SUMMARY

In this introductory chapter, a brief orientation to the study was provided outlining the problem to be investigated, and formulating the aims of the study. The major focus of the study was to investigate the issues and challenges facing principals and teachers in their role of conflict management in the North West Province, and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school with the intention of developing a conflict management model for principals.

2. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter on the nature and scope of conflict management in schools discusses briefly the conflict process; sources of conflict in an educational organization; types of conflict in educational organizations; effects of conflicts on educational organizations; effective ways of dealing with problematic issues; functions of conflict in educational organizations; perception and conceptualisation of the conflict; conflict management in educational organizations; preventing or reducing unnecessary conflict; guidelines for conflict management; conflict resolution in educational organizations; the principal as mediator of conflicts and evaluation of conflict management.

Conflict is a universal phenomenon wherever people, with their diverse, unique natures, work for the same organization. It is present in a wide range of social relationships and can occur in particular individuals, between different individuals and between groups. Whether conflict has negative or positive consequences, or both, depends largely on the approach followed and the nature of the solution.

Teachers encounter conflict situations daily, either as participants or as mediators (Maurer 1991). The role of these teachers in managing conflict requires exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to think critically and creatively.

2.2 FURTHER DEFINITIONS OF CONFLICT

Allcorn (1999) states that, when two or more parties have to work together to achieve a certain goal, conflict is almost inevitable. This does not mean that

the two parties will necessarily fight with each other, but that they will have differences of opinion that could lead to a general breakdown in cooperation

2.2.1 What is conflict?

Conflict can be defined as differences of opinion that influence the interaction between interdependent parties (Gerber, 1998; Nel, 1998 & van Dyk, 1998).

Kroon (1990) further refers to conflict as perceived or experienced incompatible differences within the individual or between two or more individuals, which may lead to some or other form of opposition. This definition includes all kinds of conflict – subtle, indirect, controlled, that which stems from aggressive actions such as strikes, riots or war, or the typical experience of mixed feelings.

2.2.2 What causes conflict?

According to Schein (1990) and Robbins (1994), conflict in organizations has various causes, the most common of which are discussed below.

2.2.2.1 Win-lose situations

It often happens that two groups pursue the same goal, which they cannot both simultaneously achieve. For example, two rugby teams playing against each other both want to win. The problem is that only one team can be the victor. In other words, the two groups (teams) are in a win-lose situation. This does not have any adverse effects, because the two teams are not interdependent.

The same type of situation is often found in organizations and here it causes conflict because groups in an organization are indeed interdependent.

2.2.2.2 The method by which the organization's goals should be achieved

Conflict between individuals and groups about how the organization's goals should be achieved is often more serious than conflict due to other causes. Handy (1995) points out that, conflict is particularly serious when the various groups must compete for a larger share of the budget.

Serious conflict can, for example, arise if the production department attempts to increase the organization's profits by reducing the range of products and increasing their quality, while it is the strategy of the marketing department in pursuing the same goal to market a greater variety of products.

2.2.2.3 Non-concurring status

According to Bass and Ryterband (1998), from childhood onwards, people have a natural inclination to want to know where they stand in relation to other people. As a child you knew that you had to obey and respect your parents. As the eldest child in the house you may have had certain privileges and responsibilities. For example, you may have been allowed to sit in the front of the car when your family drove somewhere. You will also remember how you fought when your younger brother or sister took your place in the front seat. You had a certain status in the family hierarchy that you not only insisted on, but you were also proud of.

The same is true of organizations. For most people it is very important to know what their relative status in an organization is and where they stand in relation to other people. However, organizations have a variety of status hierarchies that are constantly changing. One can, however, differentiate between high-status employees and low-status employees.

2.2.2.4 Perceptual differences

Argyle (1999) is of the view that each person's perception of the world and of his or her environment differs from that of other people. A person acts in accordance with this perception. Perceptual differences come to the fore through, among other things, group membership and interaction between groups.

The principal may, for example, be worried about the price of a certain expensive prescribed book, while the teacher is more concerned about its usefulness. Where there are differences between people or groups, there is usually conflict.

2.2.2.5 Change

An organization must be able to adapt to changing circumstances in order to survive and thrive. Its survival will be threatened if it persists with time-consuming and complicated production processes in a highly competitive marketing environment while better and more effective production equipment is available. The organization is therefore, constantly forced to adapt, which may be to its own advantage as well as that of the employees (Huse and Bowditch, 1997).

Most people, however, tend to cling to the familiar and strongly resist new developments or changes imposed on them from the outside. This happens because people know their present work. Change creates uncertainty that employees resent. This normal human reaction causes conflict in an organization, which nevertheless often gives rise to new ideas that are to the advantage of the organization.

Putnam and Poole in Smit and Cronjé (1997) further developed a definition of conflict that is useful to highlight several critical components in the

organizational arena. They define conflict as the interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposition of goals, aims and values, and who see the other party as potentially interfering with the realization of these goals. This definition highlights three general characteristics of conflict, namely interdependence, interaction and incompatible goals.

In an organization, the nature of goal incompatibility may vary substantially. Many organizational conflicts stem from contradictory ideas about the distribution of organizational resources. Management and labour negotiate about working conditions and the distribution of salaries, or the top management team argues about what capital investments to make in the coming financial year (Janis, 1992).

Incompatibility is not sufficient condition for organizational conflict. It is only when the behaviours of the organizational members are interdependent that conflict arises. For example, one manager may believe in participative decision making, while another may believe in an authoritative management style. This incompatibility may exist harmoniously until their work demands that they become interdependent. If they are asked to work together on a project, conflict could well ensue.

The last critical component in conflict is interaction. Conflict involves the expression of incompatibility, not the mere existence thereof. This highlights the importance of communication in dealing with conflict. Conflict can be both destructive and productive. It can destroy work relationships or create a needed impetus for organizational change and development. Through communication, organizational members create and work through conflicts in ways that may be either functional or dysfunctional.

In summary, as the examples above illustrate, organizational conflict can take place at a variety of levels. At the interpersonal level, individual members of the organization may have incompatible goals, leading to conflict. Intergroup conflict considers aggregates of people within an organization, such as work

teams, departments and labour unions, as parties to conflict. Interorganizational conflict involves disputes between two or more organizations, such as an organization and its suppliers or competitors. This level of conflict emphasises the significance of the environment in which the organization operates.

2.2.3 Conflict management

We have now developed a conceptualisation of conflict by defining it and noting the levels at which it can materialise. The next section discusses how conflict can be managed.

According to Jay (1995) avoidance is a technique whereby the conflicting parties withdraw from the conflict. Not surprisingly, this technique is rarely effective. Problem solving involves a face-to-face meeting of the conflicting parties for the purpose of identifying the problem and resolving it through open discussion. Another way of managing conflict is to formulate a shared goal that cannot be attained without the cooperation of each of the conflicting parties. Where possible, resources can be expanded to create a win-win solution to conflict.

Playing down differences between the conflicting parties and emphasising their common interests can also manage conflict. The latter is called smoothing. When each of the conflicting parties gives up something of value, this is called compromise. Management may decide to use authoritative command to resolve the conflict and to communicate its desires to the conflicting parties. The formal organizational structure can also be changed to resolve conflict. This will result in a change of the communication patterns of the conflicting parties. Examples are job redesign and the creation of coordinating positions. A general strategy for dealing with organizational conflict is negotiation. Negotiation can be defined as a process of interaction (communication) between parties, directed at reaching some form of

agreement that will hold and that is based upon common interests. with the purpose of resolving conflict, despite widely dividing differences. This is achieved basically through the establishment of common ground and the creation of alternatives.

Lussier (1997) confirms that a conflict exists whenever people are in disagreement and opposition. In the work place, conflict is inevitable; you cannot avoid it. Managers need strong conflict resolution and negotiation skills if they want to be successful. Constructive conflict management is one of the most important skills you can acquire. How well you handle conflict affects your job satisfaction and success.

In this section, conflict management will be discussed under the five conflict management styles. When you are in conflict, you have five conflict management styles to choose from. The five styles are based on two dimensions of concerns for others' needs and concern for your own needs which result in three types of behaviour.

2.2.3.1 Managing conflict

Mullins (1994) further states that a conflict exists whenever people are in disagreement and opposition. In the work place, conflict is inevitable; you cannot avoid it. Managers need strong conflict resolution and negotiation skills if they want to be successful. Constructive conflict management is one of the most important skills you can acquire. How well you handle conflict affects your job satisfaction and success.

This section discusses how conflict can be functional or dysfunctional and the five conflict management styles.

2.2.3.1.1 Conflict can be dysfunctional or functional

Likert (1997) argues that people often think of conflict as fighting and view it as disruptive. When conflict prevents the achievement of organizational objectives, it is negative or dysfunctional conflict. However, it can be positive. Functional conflict exists when disagreement and opposition support the achievement of organizational objectives. Functional conflict increases the quality of group decisions. The question today is not whether conflict is negative or positive, but how to manage conflict to benefit the organization.

Too little or too much conflict is usually dysfunctional. If people are not willing to disagree and optimise, or if they fight too much without resolution, objectives may not be met and performance will be lower than optimal. Too much conflict, and not knowing how to resolve it, results in violence. A balance of conflict is functional to organizations because it optimises performance outcomes. Challenging present methods and presenting innovative change causes conflict, but leads to improved performance.

2.2.4 Conflict management styles

According to Sayles (1997) when you are in conflict, you have five conflict management styles to choose from. The five styles are based on two dimensions of concerns – concern for others' needs and concern for your own needs which result in three types of behaviour. A low concern for your own needs and a high concern for others' needs result in passive behaviour. A high concern for your own needs and a low concern for others' needs result in aggressive behaviour. A moderate or high concern for your own needs and others' needs result in assertive behaviour. Each conflict behaviour style results in a different combination of win-lose situations. The five styles, along with concern for needs and win-lose combinations are discussed in the following section in order of passive, aggressive and behaviour.

2.2.4.1 Avoiding conflict styles

Shaw (1996) says, the avoiding conflict style user attempts to passively ignore the conflict rather than resolve it. When one avoids a conflict, one is being unassertive and uncooperative. People avoid the conflict by refusing to take a stance, escaping the conflict by mentally withdrawing and by physically leaving. A lose-lose situation is created because the conflict is not resolved.

2.2.4.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of the avoiding conflict style.

The advantage of the avoiding style is that it may maintain relationships that would be hurt through conflict resolution. The disadvantage of this style is the fact that conflicts do not get resolved. An overuse of this style leads to conflict within the individual. People tend to walk all over the avoider. Some managers allow employees to break rules without confronting them. Avoiding problems usually does not make them go away; the problems usually get worse. The longer you wait to confront others, the more difficult the confrontation usually becomes.

2.2.4.1.2 Appropriate use of the avoiding conflict style.

The avoiding style is appropriate to use when: (1) the conflict is trivial, (2) your stake in the issue is not high, (3) confrontation will damage an important relationship, (4) you don't have time to resolve the conflict, or (5) emotions are high. When you don't have time to resolve the conflict or people are emotional, you should confront the person(s) later. However, it is inappropriate to repeatedly avoid confrontation until you get so upset that you end up yelling at the other person(s). This passive-aggressive behaviour tends to make the situation worse by hurting human relations. Often people do not realize they are doing something that bothers you (that you are in conflict) and, when approached properly, are willing to change. The proper approach is explained with the collaborating conflict style.

2.2.4.2 Accommodating conflict style.

According to Tuckman (1995) the accommodating conflict style user attempts to resolve the conflict by passively giving in to the other party. When you use the accommodating style, you are being unassertive but cooperative. You attempt to satisfy the other party while neglecting your own needs by letting others get their own way. A win-lose situation is created.

A common difference between the avoiding and accommodating styles is based on behaviour. With the avoiding style, you don't have to do anything you really don't want to do, but you do with the accommodating style. For example, if you are talking to someone who makes a statement that you disagree with, you can say nothing to avoid a conflict and change the subject or stop the conversation. For example, you have to put up a display with someone and the person wants to do it in a certain way. If you disagree and do not want to do it the other person's way but say nothing and put it the other person's way, you have done something you really did not want to do.

2.2.4.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of the accommodating conflict style

The advantage of the accommodating style is that relationships are maintained by doing things the other person's way. The disadvantage is that giving in may be counterproductive. The accommodated person may have a better solution, such as a better way to put up the display. An overuse of this style tends to lead to people taking advantage of the accommodator and the type of relation the accommodator tries to maintain is usually lost.

2.2.4.2.2. Appropriate use of the accommodating conflict style.

The accommodating style is appropriate when:

- the person enjoys being a follower;
- maintaining the relationship outweighs all other considerations;
- the changes agreed to are not important to the accommodator, but are to the other party;
- the time to resolve the conflict is limited; and
- you have an autocratic boss who uses the forcing style.

2.2.4.3 Forcing conflict style.

According to Whyte (1998) the forcing conflict style user attempts to resolve the conflict by using aggressive behaviour to get his or her own way. When one uses the forcing style, one becomes uncooperative and aggressive; and does whatever it takes to satisfy ones own needs at the expense of others. Forcers use authority, threaten, intimidate and call for majority rule when they know they will win. Forcers commonly enjoy dealing with avoiders and accommodators. If you try to get others to change without being willing to change yourself, regardless of the mean, then you use the forcing style. A win-lose situation is created.

2.2.4.3.1 Advantages and disadvantages of the forcing style.

The advantage of the forcing style is that better organizational decisions, rather than less effective, compromised decisions will be made when the forcer is correct. The disadvantage is that overuse of this style leads to hostility and resentment towards its user. Forcers tend to have poor human relations. However, some of them do not care about people.

2.2.4.3.2 Appropriate use of the forcing style.

Some managers commonly use their position of power to force others to do things their way. The forcing style is appropriate to use when:

- unpopular action must be taken on important issues;
- commitment by others to proposed action is not crucial to its implementation;
- maintaining relationships is not crucial; and
- the conflict resolution is urgent.

2.2.4.4 Negotiating conflict style.

Handy (1995) goes on to say that, the negotiating conflict style user attempts to resolve the conflict through assertive give-and-take concessions. It is also called the compromising style. When you use the compromising approach you are moderate in assertiveness and cooperation. An I-win-part-I-lose-part situation is created through compromise.

2.2.4.4.1 Advantages and disadvantages of the negotiating conflict style.

The advantage of the negotiating conflict style is that the conflict is resolved relatively quickly and working relationships are maintained. The disadvantage is that the compromise often leads to counterproductive results such as sub optimum decisions. An overuse of this style leads to people playing games such as asking twice as much as they need in order to get what they want. It is commonly used during collective bargaining.

2.2.4.4.2 Appropriate use of the negotiating conflict style.

The negotiating conflict style is appropriate to use when:

- the issues are complex and critical and there is no simple and clear solution;
- parties have about equal power and are interested in different solutions;
- a solution will only be temporary; and
- time is short.

2.2.4.5 Collaborating conflict style.

According to Bass and Ryterband (1998), the collaborating conflict style user assertively attempts to jointly resolve the conflict with the best solution agreeable to all parties. It is also called the problem-solving style. When you use the collaborating approach you are being assertive and cooperative. Although avoiders and accommodators are concerned about others' needs, and forcers about their own needs, the collaborator is concerned about finding the best solution to the problem that is satisfactory to all parties. Unlike the forcer, the collaborator is willing to change if a better solution is presented. While negotiating is often based on secret information, collaboration is based on an open and honest communication. This is the only style that creates a true win-win situation.

A common difference between negotiating and collaborating is the solution. Continuing the putting up of a display example: With negotiation, the two people may trade off by putting up one display the one person's way and the next display the other person's way. This way they win and lose. With collaboration, the two people work together to develop one display method that they both like. It may be some form of both or simply one person's, if after an explanation, the other person really agrees that the method is better. The key to collaboration is agreeing that the solution is the best possible one.

2.2.4.5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of the collaborating style.

The advantage of the collaborating style is that it tends to lead to the best solution to the conflict using assertive behaviour. The disadvantage is that the skill, effort and time it takes to resolve the conflict are usually greater and longer than with other styles. There are situations mentioned under negotiation, where collaboration is difficult and when a forcer prevents its use. The collaborative style offers the most benefit to the individual, group and organization.

2.2.4.5.2 Appropriate use of the collaborating conflict styles.

The collaborating style is appropriate when:

- you are dealing with an important issue that requires an optimal solution; compromise would result in sub optimising;
- people are willing to place the group goal before self-interest; members will truly collaborate;
- maintaining relationships is important;
- time is available; and
- it is a peer conflict.

In summary, the situational perspective states that there is no one best style for resolving all conflicts. A person's preferred style tends to meet his or her needs. Some people enjoy forcing, while others prefer to avoid conflict and so forth. As with all management functions, success lies in one's ability to use the appropriate style to meet the situation

Kroon (1990) concludes by stating that conflict management refers to the manager's efforts to find a harmonious balance between conflict and co-operation.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CONFLICT IN ORGANIZATIONS

2.3.1 The conflict process

Conflict does not appear suddenly, it passes through a series of progressive stages as tension builds up. The stages of conflict development according to Rue & Byars (1992) are:

- Stage 1: Latent conflict. At this stage the basic conditions for conflict exist but have not yet been recognized;
- Stage 2: Perceived conflict. The cause of the conflict is recognized by one or both parties;
- Stage 3: Felt conflict. Tension is beginning to build between the parties, although no real struggle has started;
- Stage 4: Manifest conflict. The struggle is under way and the behaviour of the parties make the existence of the conflict apparent to others who are not directly involved; and
- Stage 5: Conflict aftermath. Management has ended the conflict, resolution or suppression. This establishes new conditions that will lead either to more effective cooperation or to new conflict that may be more severe than the first.

2.3.2 Sources of conflict in educational organizations

The conditions that trigger the episode of conflict will be referred to as the sources of conflict. A few sources of conflict may be identified (Umstot 1984; Gray & Starke 1988; Gorton 1987; Johnson 1994).

Role conflict is a set of expectations associated with a given position in a group or organization. Role conflict occurs when different people, including the person filling the role, disagree on how that role should be performed. For

example, a principal sees it as her role to evaluate teachers in the classroom, while experienced teachers feel that the principal should make no attempt to do so.

Communication problems develop because not all groups have the same information. Each group therefore, takes a position based on its view of the world and the information it has. On the other hand, people or groups who do not communicate are more likely to find themselves in conflict. When people do not communicate, there is a greater chance of misunderstanding and mistrust, which are the main causes of emotional conflict. Sometimes communication problems are also caused by technical jargon that is so frequently used in organizations.

Task dependency arises when someone has to be relied upon to do a job. This can happen when, for example, the sports organizer has to determine the dates and places of all sports meetings before the refreshments committee can make the necessary arrangements.

Domination results in conflict because most people do not like to be controlled by others. An autocratic leader, for example, can be the source of a great deal of conflict in an organization.

Personal skills, abilities and characteristics can have a tremendous influence on the quality and nature of interpersonal relations in an organization. Aggression, tolerance and domination can affect the way in which a person deals with potential conflict. These qualities will also determine whether conflict arises or not. If managers tend to perceive people in a certain way (for example, if they are quick to infer laziness or incompetence from only limited evidence, their responses to certain situation can be a source of conflict). In addition, some people enjoy being argumentative and combative (Vecchio 1991). Studies also show that conflict-prone people are likely to possess certain traits. For example, highly

authoritarian people are likely to antagonize their colleagues by escalating otherwise trivial differences. On the other hand, people with low esteem may more readily feel threatened by others and therefore tend to overreact.

Structural factors. The following structural factors may influence conflict:

The size of the organization has a significant influence upon the occurrence of conflict. It was found that conflict is greater in larger organizations (Vecchio 1991). The increase in size is associated with less goal clarity, greater formality, increased specialization, more supervisory levels and increased opportunities for information to become distorted.

It also appears that differences among staff members in terms of authority and values may be sources of conflict (Vecchio 1991). Differences among staff members, however, can have beneficial effects on performance in the organization. The diversity that exists in heterogeneous groups can be a source of fresh ideas and challenge members to improve their performance.

The participation of staff might be another source of conflict. Research on this topic showed that when subordinate participation is greater, levels of conflict tend to be higher. Increased participation in decision-making does not ensure that a person's point of view will prevail, since a subordinate can be involved in decision-making but the lack of authority to have his or her preferences can be put into action.

The environment of the organization. The factors that have been discussed so far have been factors inside the organization that cause conflict.

Gray & Starke (1988) say that changes in the organization's environment, which it usually has no control over, can cause major conflict within the organization. The changes in the education system in South Africa have led, among other things, to the reduction of subsidies in schools. Teachers were

laid off at many of the schools. The pressure to reorganize at schools has caused real problems and conflict in allocating staff to classes and subjects.

2.3.3 Types of conflict in educational organizations

Leadership can become confused in attempting to deal with conflict in an organization unless the leader understands and can interpret the nature of the conflict he/she is dealing with. Leaders must therefore examine types of conflicts and their associated influence on educational organizations.

2.3.3.1 Private moral codes

Barnard (1998) asserted that human behaviour is controlled by private moral codes. These moral codes are derived from different bases including a social environment base contained in political, economical and religious grounds, a physical-environmental base contained in biological properties and phylogenetic history grounds; a technological practice base; an educational base and a training base. Barnard noted that these moral codes are absorbed positively from the environment or negatively by lack of concrete experience. He explained that some individual codes are negatively influenced by lack of concrete experience. He explained that some individual codes are superior and command stronger validity or power. Barnard explained that individuals experience conflicts as a direct result of the specific codes of behaviour pulling them in different directions (Hodgkinson 1991).

2.3.3.2 Argyris's four types of conflicts

Argyris (1997) claimed that conflict occurs when a person is not able to act in a specific situation and that all conflicts involve the tension of opposite needs being enacted at the same time. He developed the following four types of conflicts from his theory:

- when a person desires to do two things which he/she likes equally well but he can do only one;
- when the person has the choice of doing only two things, neither of which he/she likes;
- when the person has the choice of doing something he/she likes, but runs the risk of punishment; and
- when the person has alternative choices of doing something he/she likes but runs the risk of punishment. For Argyris, conflict arises as a matter of choice with the risk of punishment.

2.3.3.3 Substantive conflict

Guetzkow and Cyr (1984) categorized organizational conflicts and identified what they called substantive conflict. These were conflicts rooted in the substance of the task. They manifest themselves in job related frustrations and emotions and spark conflicts of affective aspects of the interpersonal relations.

2.3.3.4 Coser's types of conflicts

Coser (1996) identified two types of conflicts:

- Realistic conflict that he referred to as conflicts that arise from frustration that is directed at presumed frustrating object; and
- Non-realistic conflict that is motivated by the need for tension release of at least one of the participant. This type of conflict has resulted from the simple lust to fight. Bernard (1995) supported Coser's notion that some people love to pit their wits against worthy opponents.

2.3.3.5 Beck and Betz's types of conflicts

Beck and Betz (1985) examined organizational conflict in schools and identified two types of conflicts namely:

- Intra-stratum conflict between groups or individuals of equal power;
and
- Inter- conflict between groups or individuals of unequal power.

School conflicts are inter-stratum and the conflicting parties have power based within the organization.

2.3.3.6 Generic typologies

Apart from the lust for the fight idea developed by Coser, theorists have created two generic typologies namely:

- Those which occur within the organization between organizational members; and
- Those, which occur between competing organizations.

These theorists maintain that those who are dealing with conflicts in educational institutions must recognize that the principal is more responsible in dealing with those conflicts that occur within the organization between organization members; while the superintendent deals more with those conflicts that occur between competing organizations.

2.3.4 Effects of conflicts on educational organizations

Owens (1995) explained that the effects of conflicts on organizations must be handled with care because the powerful hostility arising from conflicts can

have devastating impacts upon the behaviour of the people in the organization.

2.3.4.1 Psychological withdrawal

Psychological withdrawal from hostility including behaviour such as alienation, apathy and indifference are common behavioural symptoms that can affect the functioning of organizations.

2.3.4.2 Physical withdrawal

Physical withdrawal such as absence, tardiness and staff turnover occurs widely in response to conflict in schools that are often written off as laziness on the part of teachers who have been spoiled by soft administrative practices.

2.3.4.3 Ineffective management

Ineffective management of conflict such as a hard posed policy of punishment for offence, can create a climate that exacerbates the situation and develop a downward spiral of mounting frustration, deteriorating organizational climate and increasing destruction. Effective management of conflict, on the other hand, means treating conflict as a problem to be managed rather than be solved and emphasizes the collaborative essence of an organization. Such management can lead to productive outcomes and enhance the health of the organization. Conflict, in itself, is neither good nor bad. Its impact on the organization and the behaviour of its people is largely dependent upon the way in which it is treated.

2.3.4.4. Organizational performance

The effects of conflict to educational organizations may be observed in the organizational performance. Owens (1995) stated that, to speak of organizational conflict, as good or bad, functional or dysfunctional, one must specify the criteria used in judging. While some people believe that conflict is bad, others see conflict as good and seek it. Owens (1995) notes that conflict impacts on the performance of the organization as a system, therefore, relating to the institutional culture, interaction-influence system. Hence the function or dysfunctional outcomes of conflict on educational organization should be considered in terms of the organizational health, adaptability and stability.

2.3.4.5 Encourage institutional problem-solving mechanism

Based on modern motivation theory, conflicts are important challenges because they encourage institutional problem solving and motivate participative leadership, which fosters the growth of good ideas from the people in the organization during the process of decision-making. In this respect Thomas (1992) observed that:

- The confrontation of divergent views often produces ideas of superior quality; and
- Divergent views are apt to be based upon different evidence. Disagreements may thus confront an individual with factors, which he had previously ignored and help him to arrive at a more comprehensive view, which synthesizes elements of his own and others' positions.

2.3.5. Effective ways of dealing with problematic issues

Conflict makes people seek more effective ways of dealing with issues, which, in turn, improves organizational functioning, cohesiveness, clarified

relationships and clearer problem solving procedures. Deutsch (1993) speaking of society in general observed that conflict within a group frequently helps to revitalize existent norms or contributes to the emergence of new norms. In this sense, social conflict is a mechanism for adjustment of norms adequate to new conditions.

A flexible society benefits from conflict because such behaviour helps to create and modify norms and assures its continuance under changed conditions.

2.3.5.1 Catastrophic incidences

Deutsch (1993) cautioned that rigid systems that suppress conflict, actually maximize the dangers of catastrophic breakdown. In Tanzania such catastrophic incidences in educational and non-educational organizations are currently rampant. In the past five years, the University of Dar Es Salaam, some secondary schools and other non-educational government institutions experienced such upheavals. A very painful incidence worth noting happened in one secondary school where about fifty students were burnt to death in the dormitory. The cause was religious conflict. In another incident, a headmaster was stoned by angry students in a boarding school and was permanently crippled. The cause of the conflict was the denial of permission to hold students' dance after the examinations.

2.4 FUNCTIONS OF CONFLICT IN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Argyris (1997) spoke of conflict as having both positive and negative characteristics: Conflict can be used to build the personality as well as distort or even destroy it.

Owens (1995) explained that educational organizations exist to foster cooperation and human endeavour in order to achieve goals that are difficult to achieve individually. Organizational ideals emphasize cooperation, harmony and collaboration. Although recent literature talks very little about conflict in schools, conflict is pervasive in all human experiences.

2.4.1 Enhancement of progress

Conflict enhances progress and development in organizations if it is well harnessed. Owens (1995) claims that it is not possible to get all people in an organization completely harmonious. Such a group would be without any progress.

2.4.2 A system's primary defence

Ruben (1998), discussing communication and conflict said that conflict is not only essential to the growth, change and evolution within organizational system; but it is a system's primary defence against stagnation, detachment, entropy and eventual extinction. This means that conflict, as viewed by Ruben, is an important force in an organization's growing and life survival. Conflict is a dynamic process.

2.4.3 Control over the organizations

Corwin (1999) saw conflict as encouraging more control over the organizations by increasing leaders interest in subordinates. Assael (1989) noted that inter- organizational conflict is beneficial when a more equitable allocation of the balance of power and economic resources result in the formation of new countervailing forces, greater balance and stability within the system. Conflict can promote equity in power and resource sharing in the organizations.

2.4.4 A key variable in the feedback loop of an organization

Pondy (1997) argued that conflict is a key variable in the feedback loop of an organization. A conflicting situation can provide leaders with clues of trouble in their organization when principals direct their attention to improve the areas of conflict. He also suggested that the following conflicts could be useful for leaders who wish to develop more control in their leadership capabilities:

- A confusing situation within the organization to cover unstated objectives;
- A diversion among his/her subordinates so that he/she might be called in to mediate the dispute he/she instigated; and
- A conflict situation with an out-group to maintain or increase the cohesiveness of his/her in-group. According to Pondy; conflicts can be tools to be used skilfully by principals to achieve successful leadership in an organization.

2.4.5 Perception of different types of conflict

Each party views and conceptualises the conflict situation differently. Conceptualisations will differ because perceptions are based on unique individual concerns and limited information (Johnson 1994). It is important that each person involved in conflict should define the conflict issue. There are different levels of conflict which are dealt with in the following paragraphs.

2.4.5.1 Intrapersonal conflict

Intrapersonal conflict is conflict that occurs within an individual (Rue & Byars 1992). There may be an internal conflict because:

- The person does not feel that it is morally "right" to do a certain thing,

- Two different people (especially superiors) make contradictory demands;
and
- A certain job in a certain way will help the person at the expense of colleagues (Gray & Starke 1988), or the person has to choose between goals with both positive and negative results (Rue & Byars 1992).

2.4.5.2 Interpersonal conflict

This is the most widespread and visible kind of conflict in schools and other organizations in which people are involved in carrying out an organizational mission.

Interpersonal conflict (between two or more people) is the result of many factors (Rue & Byars 1992). People with opposing personalities often find themselves in conflict because they rub each other up the wrong way: for example, the extroverted and the introverted, the pessimistic and optimistic and the impulsive and the level headed. Certain prejudices based on personal background or ethnic origin can also lead to interpersonal conflict, including-naturally-racial and religious conflicts. There are also more subtle forms of prejudice, such as those of a graduate in relation to someone who only has a diploma. Another cause of interpersonal conflict is a person's dissatisfaction with her roles in relation to the roles of others. A teacher may be comfortable with both principal and colleagues, but if a colleague is promoted, that teacher may no longer be able to accept her role in relation to the new appointment.

2.4.5.3 Intergroup conflict

Intergroup conflict involves conflict between groups of people, irrespective of the size of the group. Intergroup conflict can also arise between two or more separate groups in the organization. For example, if the Grade 0 teacher

wants to arrange a special parent evening, the other teachers may not want to participate in this event.

2.4.5.4 Conflict management in educational organizations

Managers differ in their ways of dealing with conflict (Vecchio, 1991). Thomas identified five major styles of conflict management that managers can adopt namely: force, collaboration, compromise, avoidance and accommodation.

2.4.5.4.1 Conflict management styles (behaviours)

2.4.5.4.1.1 Force

Using force, authority or power to resolve conflict leads to a forced or imposed solution. Force can include the use of institutional authority and power, reward and punishment, bribery and even physical force. An example of reward would be a principal saying to the Grade 0 teacher doing hall duty: "If you arrive on time, I'll make sure that you are given this job next year too." A threat of punishment would be: "If you arrive late, I shall be obliged to make a note on your life."

Force can serve a purpose in emergencies or in the following circumstances (Umstot 1984):

- When rapid, decisive action is crucial, such as in the case of fire;
- For important matters requiring the institution of unpopular measures such as reducing the consumption of photo-copying paper; and
- For matters that are crucial to the well-being of the organization

2.4.5.4.1.2 Compromise (agreement)

A compromise solution entails give and take (Maurer 1991). It is employed when there is a balance of power between the parties, or when resources have to be shared, for example when there is a limited stock of school stationery. This strategy is often used to achieve temporary solutions to difficult problems. A major problem with a compromise is that participants may feel that it is weak and ineffective and that it restricts their chances of attaining their goals.

If parties do see that compromise is essential, they must also understand that it is necessary for both parties to compromise. "Typically, individuals or groups who are in conflict do not think about the need to modify their own position but assume that the other party is the one who should or must change" (Gorton 1987). Because parties are frequently convinced that they are right and the other side is wrong, it is difficult to persuade them that there has to be give and take on both sides before progress can be made.

An advantage of the compromise is that no one really loses (Maurer 1991). Take this extract from a conversation between two teacher leaders as an example: "Next year I want school to begin at 7:15, but you prefer 7:45. Why don't we settle for 7:30?"

The disadvantage of this approach is that both parties end up with less than they had hoped for. Compromise means that you give in order to receive. This means that there may be dissatisfaction after the agreement, and the parties might try to negotiate again at a later stage in order to get what they wanted in the first place.

Compromise can be used in the following circumstances:

- When goals are important but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes;

- When opponents with equal power are committed to mutually exclusive goals;
- To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues; and
- As a backup when collaborating or force is unsuccessful.

2.4.5.4.1.3 Collaboration

Collaborating involves an attempt to satisfy the concerns of both sides through honest discussion (Vecchio 1991). Creative approaches to conflict reduction for example, sharing of resources may actually lead to both parties being materially better off. The focus of this style is on negotiating, looking for the middle ground and searching for solutions that are satisfactory or acceptable to both parties (Hoy & Miskel 1991). Collaboration is sometimes difficult to achieve but often yields innovative results (Van Fleet 1991).

Collaboration is regarded as the most effective form of conflict management. The main idea here is to cooperate in order to resolve the conflict permanently. Gorton (1987) explains the principle as follows:

It is based on the assumptions that the parties to the conflict are people of worthy motives and good will, that agreement is possible, that each party has something valuable to contribute to the process of resolving the conflict, and that the final resolution need not ignore basic interests of all sides.

The advantage of this kind of approach is that it involves all the parties (Sweeney & Lindsay 1991). The change is therefore more lasting and it is also of higher quality because it is the best of the many alternatives discussed.

The disadvantage of the collaboration model is that it takes time to implement it. No school or organization can afford to use this model to the exclusion of

all other models, but it should be used for very important matters such as major policy decisions.

This management style is sometimes equated with the problem solving approach (Everard & Morris 1990). The following steps constitute a workable and straightforward application of the problem-solving approach:

- Define the problem. Formulate the problem in clear language;
- Look for solution (alternatives). Generate a number of solutions without expressing judgment;
- Choose a suitable solution. The parties decide which solution would be best for both of them;
- Implement the decision; and
- Evaluate the implementation. Has it produced the desired results?

2.4.5.4.1.4 Avoidance

Any strategy aimed at avoiding major confrontation or conflict is known as avoidance. It can be used as a delaying tactic, but this can cause problems. Avoidance techniques do not actually resolve the situation, but attempt to evade it (Gorton 1987). They may be justified in situations in which the other party has the authority, power and influence to impose his or her will, or when a more active or aggressive approach is likely to have negative consequences.

Avoidance can be used in the following circumstances:

- When the conflict is about a trivial matter or if more important matters warrant attention;
- When people see that there is no possibility of their needs being met or their goals attained;

- When the potential disruption anticipated in solving the problem seems greater than the potential benefits of doing so;
- When people first have to be allowed to cool down and gain perspective; and
- When gathering information supersedes immediate decisions (Umstot 1984).

2.4.5.4.1.5 Accommodation

The accommodating style at its simplest form may merely involve giving in to another's wishes (Vecchio 1991). This approach is recommended when two groups have compatible goals, but do not need to interact in order to reach their goals (Van Fleet 1991). The two groups will have friendly meetings to decide how they will both work towards their goals and accomplish their interdependent tasks while expending the least time and energy.

Accommodation can be used in the following instances:

- When you find that you are wrong - to allow a better position to be heard, to learn and to show reasonableness;
- When issues are more important to others than to you - to satisfy others and maintain co-operation;
- To build social credits for later issues;
- To minimize loss when you are outmatched and losing;
- When harmony and stability are especially important; and
- To allow subordinates to develop by learning from mistakes.

2.4.6 Preventing or reducing unnecessary conflict

There is a great deal that principals and teachers can do to prevent or reduce conflict in the school. This includes the following (Steers 1988):

- Emphasize organizational objectives and effectiveness:
- Principals can reduce conflict by focusing on the objectives of the school and dedication to them. When organizational objectives are emphasized, staff members usually see the overall picture and are able to cooperate to attain those objectives:
- Give well-structured tasks:
- Conflict is less likely to occur if activities are well defined and are understood and accepted. Specifying or structuring tasks increases clarity. Conflict can easily occur if there is any lack of clarity about tasks:
- Facilitate intergroup communication;
- Incorrect perceptions of the abilities, objectives and motivation of others often lead to conflict. Encouraging more dialogue between staff members therefore helps to prevent conflict. When groups and people know more about each other, suspicion is reduced and teamwork becomes possible:
and
- Avoid win-lose situations

These situations increase the potential for conflict. If there is a problem with scarce resources, the teacher leader can investigate forms of resource sharing with a view to organizational effectiveness.

- Personality and behaviour

Teachers should not forget that people's behaviour could be a cause of conflict (Gorton 1987). The way in which they take decisions, exercise their authority and treat people, for example, can give rise to conflict. In many cases such conflict is unavoidable and is part of the price that has to be paid in the course of carrying out the necessary duties attached to valid responsibilities. On the other hand, if teachers are able to follow less stressful and perhaps more perceptive approaches in pursuing the same objectives, conflict can be avoided. In analysing conflict, teachers must therefore,

consider the possibility that your personality or behaviour might have contributed to it.

Teachers should realize that they have to engage in penetrating introspection periodically, as there are really very few other ways of monitoring what they do. Few staff members dare to be absolutely honest and open with a principal, even about blatant blunders he or she has perpetrated. Most subordinates prefer either to keep their lips firmly sealed, even when asked for their opinions, or particularly when relationships between principal and staff are poor in any case – to discuss his or her latest errors of judgement among themselves. Meanwhile the principal simply plods along unchecked, labouring under the naive delusion that the job is being done perfectly while the whole school suffers the consequences. The ultimate victim is the child, because the situation eventually affects every part of the organization. Quality teaching and educational intervention simply cannot survive in such circumstances.

There are a considerable number of strategies available to principals for reducing conflict that already exists (Steers 1988). There are two possible approaches: changing behaviour or changing attitudes. If the behaviour of parties can be changed, open conflict can be reduced even though the parties still do not like each other. The conflict will simply be less visible because the groups are kept apart. Changing attitudes often leads to fundamental changes in the ways in which groups get along with each other. This can take quite some time because it is very difficult to change people's social perceptions. The following strategies can be employed:

- Physical separation.

This is the quickest and easiest way of resolving a conflict. Separation is

desirable when the conflicting parties do not need to work together. Although this approach does not lead to a change in attitudes, it gives you time to find a better solution.

- Rules and regulations.

Instituting additional rules, regulations and procedures can reduce conflict. This approach, also known as the bureaucratic method, serves to solve conflicts between groups from the management down. Physical separation does not change attitudes.

- Confrontation and negotiation.

The approach here is to bring the parties in dispute face to face in order to discuss their basic areas of disagreement. This is done in the hope that they will find ways of working their problem out by means of open discussion and negotiation.

- Identifying interdependent tasks and superordinate objectives.

When a school's survival is at stake, it is possible to set goals that require groups to work together. The threat of possible closure makes people cooperate in the pursuit of a common goal.

2.5 GUIDELINES FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Guidelines for minimising the destructive consequences of conflict according to Everard & Morris (1990) include the following:

- Maintain as much communication as possible with the party whose ideas, interest or attitudes seem to clash with yours;

- Do not put off dealing with the problem in the hope that it will go away - it may well just get worse. Remember this is the "smoke" phase of conflict – watch out for the fire!;
- Resist the temptation to talk about someone behind his or her back, rather discuss the matter with that person;
- If you detect signs of interdepartmental conflict, you can initiate projects that require individuals from different departments to work together;
- Try to avoid the win – lose approach in all its forms, and try to understand each party's version of a dispute;
- Beware of a reward structure in which teachers compete for the favour of the teacher leader, because flattery can take up a lot of time, which they could otherwise be using to get on with their work. "Ensure that you recognize results and not flattery" (Everard & Morris 1990); and
- A sense of humour, perspective and the belief that most people have good intentions are important in conflict resolution.

2.5.1 Gorton's aspects of the problem solving approach to conflict

Gorton (1987) also deals with the following aspects of the problem-solving approach to conflict.

2.5.1.1 Early identification

It is a fact, that giving too much attention to a minor conflict can make it seem more serious than it actually is, and that it might solve itself if no one took any notice of it. The opposite can also happen and this can have major implications. "By failing to identify and take appropriate action at an early stage of a potential or minor conflict, an administrator risks the very real possibility that the conflict may become worse" (Gorton 1987).

Maurer (1991) describes the initial stage of conflict as the smoke phase. Conflict usually begins with something that does not work properly. There is a

period in which performance is poor or even nonexistent. Perhaps school policy is not being applied consistently. When principals become aware of the problem, they have a choice namely:

- To acknowledge the inconsistency and try to deal with it; and
- To deny the evidence pointing to the problem and simply allow the problem to take its course and grow.

In the first case principals will try to solve the problem at an early stage. "In the latter case the problem will continue to develop until it erupts in the form of angry outbursts or in expressions of fear among the staff" (Maurer 1991).

One way of spotting the 'smoke' is to use the well-known management technique of Peters and Waterman, MBWA (management by wandering around). Principals who make time to be in the corridors, to talk to teachers in classrooms and in the staff room and to interact with parents are in a position to spot the smoke as soon as it appears. Such a principal will seldom experience the shock of a "full-fledged storm of conflict raging outside his or her office, because he or she has a full understanding of the pressures, the gossip and the mood of the schools' (Maurer 1991).

2.5.1.2 Diagnosis and the importance of trust

When a problem has been identified, its causes must be diagnosed. Conflict can arise out of irreconcilable goals, ideas, values, emotions or behaviour.

In diagnosing the factors behind any conflict involving yourself, you must resist the natural inclination to assume that you are right and the other party is wrong. Instead, proceed from the assumption that the expectations and views of others have merit and try to understand why the other party feels as it does.

An understanding of the root causes of conflict is also important when you try to resolve disputes between two or more other individuals or groups. In this sort of situation the teacher would act as a mediator.

Teachers often act as mediators between two quarrelling parties. According to Matlawe (1988) it is important for anyone acting as mediator to keep the following tips in mind:

- Remember that in most conflicts no primary party is completely right or honest;
- Give each party sufficient opportunity to present its side of the matter;
- Remember that in most cases facts are distorted and that facts must be distinguished from assumptions;
- Listen carefully because this is extremely important in the diagnosis of casual factors and will also enable the mediator to discover whether the parties are looking at different and separate realities; it may also be good for the parties' self-respect, to know that someone is at least listening to them;
- Do not take sides; one party must not be favoured over another; and
- Meet with each party separately at first if there is too much hostility between them, in order to persuade them to be positive and rational.

2.5.1.3 Seeking the facts

After you have satisfied yourself as to how the parties in dispute feel about each other and the matter under discussion, the facts of the situation have to be validated (Gorton 1987). It has been found that people in conflict tend to put their side of the matter in a better light. This is not necessarily deliberate, but emotions can distort perceptions and memory. You have to decide which statements by the parties are based on assumption and which on reality.

Parties might agree on the facts of the situation, but not on the interpretation of those facts. For example, a group of parents and a principal might eventually agree that it was the attitude of the governing body, and not any action by the principal, that prevented the introduction of a community involvement programme. They might, however, continue to differ on their interpretation of the problem. The parents might feel that the principal should play an important part in changing the attitude of the governing body towards community involvement, while the principal believes that this is not her responsibility. The goal of seeking the facts is to broaden areas of agreement and to narrow the areas of disagreement.

2.5.2 Conflict resolution in educational organizations

Teachers are often confronted with conflicts in their classes. The purpose is to resolve differences with respect for the dignity and worth of everybody involved. Purkey and Stanley (1991) suggest a very appropriate strategy to resolve personal and professional conflict situations in schools. To do this, the rule of five C's is employed. According to them the rule is to play the lowest C first as far as possible and to move to the higher C's only if necessary. The five C's are: concern, confer, consult, confront and combat. The first thought should always be: How can I resolve this situation at the lowest C level?

2.5.2.1 Concern

In any situation where there is potential conflict, the teacher who practices an invitation approach to education asks herself the following questions:

- Is this situation really a concern? Can it be safely overlooked?;
- Will this situation solve itself without intervention?;
- Is this situation a concern because of personal biases, prejudices or hang-ups?;

- Is it the proper time to be concerned with the situation?;
- Are there sufficient support, information and resources available to address the situation successfully?; and
- Will ignoring it bring stress or create greater concern?

Often situations can be successfully addressed at the lowest level by reconceptualising the concern. A silly answer by a pupil in response to a question might rather be an occasion for mutual laughter than for confrontation. Of course, there are times when a situation is of sufficient concern to require action. These are the times to proceed to the second C: Confer.

2.5.2.2 Confer

To confer means to initiate an informal conversation with the pupil or other person in private. Begin by signalling the desire for a positive interaction (a smile, using the person's name, eye contact, or a handshake). Then state in a non-threatening and respectful way what the concern is, why it is a concern, and what is proposed to resolve the concern. For example, "Mary, running in the hall is dangerous. You might injure someone running. Please walk rather than run." Or "John, coming late to class is distracting. It interrupts the class lesson. I will appreciate your promptness in coming to class." After the statement is made, follow it immediately by asking: "Will you do this for me?" It is important to ask for what is wanted because no one can read minds.

At the confronting level it is important to consider these concerns:

- Do both parties clearly understand what the concern is?;
- Do both parties know why the situation is a concern?;
- Is it clear what is wanted?;
- Is there room for compromise or joint reconceptualisation of the situation?;
and

- Is the concern important enough to move to a higher C, if necessary?

In most situations a one-on-one, non threatening informal conference will successfully eliminate the concern. When conferring does not work, the third C – consult is appropriate.

2.5.2.3 Consult

Consultations require a formal discussion with the parties involved. Because consultation usually involves talking about what has already been discussed, it requires firmness and directness. For example: "John, last week you said that you would come to class on time, yet this morning you were late. This is creating problems for you and for me." In consultation, the focus is on abiding by commitments that were made in the previous conference: "You told me that you would come to class on time and I expect you to keep your word."

Questions that should be considered at the consultation stage are:

- Is it clear to all parties what is expected? Are all cards on the table?;
- Are there ways to help the parties in abiding by previous decisions?; and
- Have the consequences of not resolving the situation been considered?

While a direct and deliberate discussion may not resolve the situation, it gives clear notice of its significance. If the situation persists, then it is time for the fourth C: confront.

2.5.2.4 Confront

Confronting is a no-nonsense attempt to work out a difficult situation that is of major concern. At this stage it is important again to spell out in careful detail the continuing situation. Describe what the situation is and why it is of major concern. Point out that this situation has been addressed previously and

repeatedly, and that progress has been insufficient. Now is the time to speak of unavoidable penalties. For example" "John, if you are late again, I will contact your parents." By spelling our logical consequences, everybody understands the rules of the game.

Questions to be considered include:

- Have sincere efforts been made to resolve the situation at each of the lower levels?;
- Is there documented evidence to show earlier efforts to resolve the situation?;
- Is there sufficient authority and power to follow through with stated penalties?; and
- Will confronting help to solve the situation?

When consequences involving penalties occur, and when the rule of five C's has been followed, all parties are likely to know that the consequences were fair and impartial – which leads to final C: combat.

2.5.2.5 Combat

The word combat, as used here, is defined as struggling against order or reduces or eliminates the concern, as to combat inflation, to combat racism and to combat misbehaviour. It is used as a verb rather than a noun as in the sense of active fighting. The goal is to combat the situation, not the person.

The use of the word combat stresses the seriousness of the situation. It also means, because the situation was not solved at lower levels, it was necessary to move to the highest level.

For obvious reasons, combat is to be avoided wherever possible. At the combat level, there are likely to be winners and losers. Moreover, combat requires a great deal of energy that might be better used in more productive

endeavours. Yet when all else fails, and the situation is of sufficient concern, this is the time to enter the arena. In preparing for combat, it is helpful to consider the following:

- Is there clear documentation that avenues other than combat were sought?;
- Even at this late date, is there a way to avoid combat?;
- Are sufficient support and resources available to win the contest?; and
- How can the winner demonstrate compassion for the loser?

At the successful conclusion of the contest, the teacher should end things up with as much fairness and sympathy as possible.

Respect is a basic ingredient of an inviting approach to teaching. Even when the most serious penalties must be levelled against the pupil, the feeling should be of sadness rather than vengeful joy. At the end of a great naval battle, when British sailors were crowded on the deck of their ship, cheering the final death struggle of the great German Battleship, Bismark, a British naval officer reminded his men: "Don't cheer, men. Those poor souls are dying." It is sad when teacher and pupils reach the combat stage, and penalties are to be administered.

By solving concerns at the lowest level, teachers who employ an inviting approach save energy, reduce conflict and avoid animosity. Again, any teacher can go from persuasion to coercion, all it takes is power. But no one is without power. The teacher who practices an inviting approach understands that everyone has power; no matter how small they are or what position they hold. Because power is shared, the inviting teacher always uses the lowest possible C to resolve conflict.

2.5.3 The principal as mediator of conflicts

Owens (1995) defines the principal as working with and through other people to achieve organizational goals. Maurer (1995) explained that a typical day for a principal can start with the secretary informing him or her that there are two angry parents waiting outside the office; group of community representatives presenting a list of demands they want a response to and are calling for the principal to resign; the teachers' union president cautioning that unless the principal clears the teacher's grievances the teachers are going on strike. This situation means that a principal cannot avoid dealing with conflicts.

2.5.3.1 Mediation of conflict

Mediation of conflict is the art of settling or reconciling differences. Foster (1996) said "... critical educational manager tries to liberate teachers and all stakeholders from the preconceptions that lock them into socially unproductive relationships." It means acting between disrupting parties to bring about a settlement of a compromise. Mediation may also be viewed as a friendly intervention in the disputes of others with their consent for the purpose of adjusting differences. Maurer (1991) explained that mediation is a process of determining a good settlement option for the participants involved. The mediator focuses on the question "What would I like to see happen?" and expects a clear outcome of the mediation. Mediating in conflict portrays the principal as the person at the intersection of conflicting expectations, forces and pressures of the people in the middle.

This image views the principal, for example, as being in a mediating position between the school governing bodies and teachers, between the public and the educational system or even between conflicting community groups. Similarly principals may find themselves placed between parents and teachers; between teachers and students, or even between different

segments of these groups like departments such as the Department of Educational Policy Studies and the Department of Chemistry at the University of Alberta or the Department of English and the Department of Mathematics in a secondary school. The political essence of this position is evident. It can involve searching for a compromise, attempting to reduce the conflict, participating in the bargaining process and building coalition to gain support for a particular decision.

Owens (1995) explained that when conflict arises, the most instinctive response of the parties involved is to adopt a strategy backed by determination to win. He said that confrontation, non-negotiable demands, and ultimatums have become the way of dealing with deep-seated differences where one party marshals its forces to compel the other party to do what it wants. The focal point of conflict management is knowing how to deal with the win-lose orientation.

School principals adopt a number of methods to handle conflicts. These methods may include the use of force by employing authority, penalties or sanctions and withdrawal by steering clear or retreating from all situations of conflict whenever possible.

2.5.3.2 Confrontation

Some approaches that denote mediation include confrontation, compromising or smoothing. Principals, for example, often mediate conflict through confrontation. The use of the open problem solving approach, encourages those involved in the conflict to work through the ideological and emotional components of the disagreement. This method attempts to achieve an objective exploratory examination and evaluation of differences so as to find a solution more oriented to long-term interests rather than temporary expediency.

2.5.3.3 Compromising

Principals also use the compromising method by yielding, twisting, turning and bending mediation in an attempt to find a middle course that splits the difference. The method searches for an expedient means of splitting the difference by an accommodation in which no one 'wins all' but no one 'loses all.'

2.5.3.4 Smoothing

Another method is smoothing. In this case principals attempt to promote 'harmonious' and 'accepting' relationships among personnel, which accentuates the positive aspects of a situation and smoothes over negative aspects.

Owens (1995) contended that organization conflict is now seen as inevitable, endemic and often legitimate because the individual and the group within the human social system are interdependent and constantly engaged in dynamic processes of defining and redefining the nature of the extent of their interdependence. Important to this also is that the dynamic of the social process environment in which the interdependence occurs is constantly changing. Barnard (1998) explained: "Inherent in the conception of free will in a changing environment are social patterns characterized by negotiating, stress and conflict." Moreover, conflict is expected, even in a well-led organization because the leaders marshal and organize resources in conflict with others. This means the leaders marshal resources such as people, money, time, facilities and materials to achieve new goals. Given the finite resources available in the educational organizations, there will invariably be competing ideas of what to do with them, how to use them, how to involve people, where to spend the money and how to schedule facilities

It is natural that, when the leader is present, the people in the organization must experience conflict as a normal part of the organization life. Loewen (1993) observed that about 10 percent of human activity goes into conflict. A principal cannot avoid dealing with conflict in school each day. However, it is important that conflicts are managed carefully and well. Hardly a day goes by that the principal is not either involved in a conflict or mediating one. Demands can come from superiors, various constituents from the community, parents, students and teaching staff. Maurer (1991) observed that whenever such conflicts occur, the principal is the one called upon first to help resolve the conflict. He noted that, although the principal can be disputant in the conflict, very often the principal is thrust upon in the role of a mediator. Parents, students, teachers and other stakeholders look to the principal to mediate in disputes.

On any day an administrator such as a principal may undertake numerous duties related to several stakeholder groups. With regard to teachers, for example, the principal may be assigning duties, reviewing the curriculum, reprimanding teachers for negligence of duty, extracurricular activities and personal problems. With regard to students the principal may deal with attendance, the cafeteria, disciplines, complaints, replacements and requests from the student council. Parents may have communication issues, like parent involvement in school or lack thereof, or parent council concerns.

District managers or circuit managers may query principals about the school's particular policy, which they have to defend. The community may charge particular teachers for high-headedness. Apart from these concerns, principals have their own daily school routines. These include the preparation of the school budget and making different negotiations for improving the school maintenance and sustenance to attend to. Principals find that most of the endless issues they face deal with conflicts that call for mediation. Principals may at the end of the day realize that the most common function performed has been that of mediation. Mintzberg (1973) explained that principals maintain such a workload because the work of a leader is

inherently open-ended and ambiguous. He stated that the principal must always keep on going he or she never sure when he or she has succeeded, never sure when his or her whole organization may come down around him because of some miscalculation. As a result, the principal is a person with perceptual preoccupation. He can never be free to forget his job. He never has the pleasure of knowing even temporarily that there is nothing else he can do. No matter what kind of managerial job he has, he always carries the nagging suspicion that he might be able to contribute just a little bit more (Mintzberg, 1973).

Mintzberg further explained that principals do a great deal of work and do it at an unrelated pace. Each day they attend a number of previously arranged meetings as well as a number of unplanned conferences and interactions. They deal with a substantial volume of mail and paper work and handle numerous phone calls. There are seldom any real breaks in their work.

Leithwood, Cousins and Smith (1990) studied the type of problems that principals encountered in Ontario. They came up with four problem categories: ... teachers (247 problems: School routines, (138 problems: student), (113 problems: and parent), (105 problems: were given to principals to respond to. Eleven elementary principals and ten secondary principals and vice-principals involved in the study were asked to review problems encountered over the previous two weeks using their planning calendar or appointment books as aids to memory. The findings revealed that for teacher problems 'conflict among teachers' was second only to "assignment of teaching duties." Among the student problems, "abuse" was highest. Among parent problems, "complaints" were second only to "communication." These findings show that principals are mostly involved in conflict mediation as a major duty in their administrative role.

2.6 EVALUATION OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Whatever the approach followed in attempting to resolve conflict, it is important for principals to remember that, in view of its difficult and intractable nature, conflict cannot always be entirely eliminated (Gorton 1987). The fact that principals and teachers might not have achieved the total resolution of a conflict episode does not mean that they have failed. In many cases conflict reduction is a worthy achievement and in particularly difficult circumstances, it is the only attainable goal. Principals and teachers can use the following questions to determine whether their attempts at conflict management have been successful:

- To what extent do the parties in dispute feel that the teacher acted fairly? Evidence?;
- To what extent has the original problem been reduced or solved? Evidence?;
- How much time, energy and frustration went into the attempts to resolve the conflict? Evidence?;
- To what extent do the parties now have a more positive attitude to one another? Evidence?; and
- To what extent have participants developed new skills that will help them avoid similar conflict in future or deal with it more effectively if it does occur? Evidence?

These questions are obviously difficult to answer. Principals and teachers should not try to do so without the help of the parties involved in the conflict. If they do ask the parties in dispute, not only will they be better equipped to judge the success of their conflict management, but they will also learn something that may improve future effectiveness.

2.7 SUMMARY

Conflict management has come a long way during the past twenty-five years. The belief that conflict was destructive made way for the belief that conflict is inevitable and should be managed effectively. In this chapter an attempt was made to discuss conflict in organizations under the following sub-headings: Sources of conflict in educational organizations; types of conflict in educational organizations; effects of conflict in educational organizations; functions of conflict in educational organizations; perceptions and conceptualisation of conflict; conflict management in educational organization and conflict resolution strategies in educational organizations.

The following chapter will present the problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools.

3. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to the bureaucratic theory, the existence of conflict in an organisation is evidence of organisation breakdown and that there has been failure on the part of management to plan adequately or to exercise sufficient power and control. On the other hand, the human relation theory views conflict in a negative sense and also as evidence of failure to develop appropriate norms in the organisation (Owen, 1995).

This chapter discusses problems of conflict management in schools. It presents problems experienced by the principals; problems experienced by teachers; problems experienced by learners and essential skills needed by the principals, teachers and learners to manage conflict.

Conflict occurs in every school. If handled effectively, conflict can create a good learning experience. If handled ineffectively, conflict can quickly escalate to physical and emotional violence.

Lack of conflict management in schools creates various problems that have an effect on the overall performance of the school. There are problems that are experienced by the principals, teachers and learners. If there is a lack of conflict management in a school, the following problems manifest themselves:

3.2 PROBLEMS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Principals experience various problems that are caused by conflicts. Conflicts among teachers are rife and it is up to the principal to use his conflict management styles to manage conflict before it affects the overall performance of the school.

3.2.1 Problems experienced by principals

Principals experience various types of conflicts and problems when it comes to the management of conflict in schools. The reason is, the school is composed of different individuals with different values, goals, expectations, ambitions, perceptions, attitudes, personalities and socio-economic backgrounds.

A school day may start with learners demanding to see the principal to find out why they were not involved in the decision that was taken by the principal with the parents who were present in a meeting. The decision to increase school fees was taken by the principal with parents who do not even constitute a quorum. Some parents who were not present in that meeting are not satisfied with the decisions that were taken on their behalf. These parents side with learners to confront the principal. The teachers were not represented in that meeting, so they do not want to involve themselves in this conflict, so are other members of the school management team. The parents who were present in that meeting accuse the parents who were absent saying that they are the ones who caused this state of affairs because they do not attend meetings regularly.

These are some of the problems experienced by principals when it comes to the management of conflict in their schools. A brief discussion of other problems experienced by principals follows.

3.2.1.1 Policies, rules, and regulations

Longenecker and Pringle (1994) mention that departmental policies are often taken in situations far removed from the classroom and without wider stakeholder input and participation that are often contentious in nature. The principal as the departmental representative at the school is expected to comply and implement these policies. This sparks off wide discontentment

and conflict with the principal in the centre. The current problems facing schools with rightsizing and redeployment of teachers deemed "surplus", the possibility of retrenchments, the national government's new developmental appraisal document and teacher-learner ratios exceeding the norm have led to a great deal of negativism and conflict. In most schools the departmental policies on these issues are often cited as the main causes of conflict. From numerous press reports detailing the incidence of conflict in schools across South Africa becomes evident that power struggles and contentious national and provincial departmental circulars are often the main causes of conflict in these schools.

According to Sebring (1998), in any institution where people meet or stay together in a formal or informal manner, there must be clearly defined policies, rules and regulations that govern the interaction of the individuals to one another. If these norms are neglected, there can be no mutual relationship of understanding one another's rights.

If policies, rules and regulations are not adhered to, there will be a lot of dissatisfaction in the meeting of the organisational objectives. Therefore every institution or individual is under an obligation to execute certain mannerisms of behaviour that are motivated by a feeling of acceptance that the behaviour conforms to socially recognised norms. If these norms are not observed, the end result is a social conflict. This conflict can later develop into violence that can even cost the loss of life (Sebring, 1998).

Sebring (1998) further argues that life is a precious gift that humanity has been endowed with by the Creator. It must be respected and reciprocated by our behaviour of endeavouring that conflict at all times is reduced to the barest minimum extent. This reduction of conflict to a minimum extent can be achieved by allowing no piling up of complaints. Human nature is tempted to adopt an attitude of negativism towards genuine complaints and dissatisfaction among its contacts because they seem too trivial. Neglecting

these trivialities will compound them into a conflict that could have been avoided, had the policies, rules and regulations of the organization been carried out to the fullest.

3.2.1.2 Lack of knowledge

According to the South African Government Gazette of 1996, the Educators Employment Act is a well-researched document designed to elucidate both the employee and the employer of precautionary measures which must be strictly observed in order to avoid conflict between the two parties.

If this Act is carefully observed, it maximises the learning experience of the learner towards easily understanding and following the principles of education that are intended to develop the scope of the learner in preparing him to fit in properly into society and become respected and responsible people in the community.

Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Educators Employment Act can have serious setbacks on the smooth running of the school. This anomaly will disadvantage all stakeholders. The learner will be the first victim to be disadvantaged, followed the parents, teachers and finally the education system. This ignorance will eventually affect the entire country concerned, both morally and financially (Educators Employment Act of 1996).

3.2.1.3 Lack of training

Zuelke & Marvin (1997) mention that lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies disadvantages the principal to:

- Prevent conflict from getting worse;
- Improve co-operation;
- Motivate staff morale;

- Build consensus;
- Build trust;
- Create a learning environment in schools;
- Stop people from being hurt or exploited;
- Stop resentments from building up;
- Address needs and concerns;
- Improve and strengthen relationships;
- Inhibit the potential for violence;
- Find creative solutions for problems; and
- Plan, organise, guide and control management tasks.

3.2.1.4 Scarcity of resources

Wiles (1996) states that a common source of conflict in many schools is the scarcity of resources such as physical space, lack of books, equipment, human resources, funding and services. The scarcity of resources in a number of state schools is further complicated by the larger intake of learners due to the new teacher-learner ratio namely, 35 to 1 in secondary schools and 40 to 1 in primary schools. When the principal refuses admission to new learners because of insufficient physical space, then a conflict situation arises between him and the parents of those refused admission. When more learners are admitted and the quota for admissions is exceeded, conflict arises because teachers are unable or unwilling to cope with larger class loads, shortage of resources such as text and library books, insufficient teachers and lack of funding.

3.2.1.5 Unprofessional behaviour

According to Johnson (1994) the unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers is the cause of conflict in schools. Unprofessional behaviour among some teachers may be attributed to lack of sufficient training or lack of knowledge about the Code of Professional Conduct.

The Code of Professional Conduct stipulates minimum standards of professional conduct of teachers. Johnson (1994) points out that conflicts usually arise if these stipulated standards are not adhered to. Conflicts that may arise in a school are a result of the violation of some of the following clearly stipulated standards:

- The teacher teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, sex, physical characteristics, age, ancestry or place of origin;
- The teacher is responsible for diagnosing educational needs, prescribing and implementing instructional programmes and evaluating progress of learners;
- The teacher in discharging his / her duties in relation to the learners shall be punctual, prompt and prepared, and shall recognise his / her responsibility with regard to the academic and personal development of the learner;
- The teacher shall act responsibly in the discharge of professional, organisational and administrative duties;
- The teacher does not undermine the confidence of other teachers;
- The teacher acts in a manner that maintains the honour and dignity of the profession;
- The teacher adheres to agreements, policies, rules and regulations that govern the education system and the smooth running of the school as an institution; and
- The teacher while on duty or acting in an official capacity, is under the influence of intoxicating liquor or stupefying drugs (Johnson, 1994).

3.2.1.6 Authority structure

Schools are organs of state and carry a certain degree of authority as clearly stipulated in the South African Schools Act. Steyn (1996) states that the authority structure refers to the institutional power vested in the school to act

as an agent of the state in fulfilling its mandate to provide relevant education to the community. The principal is the departmental representative and as such, has vested authority to carry out the mandate from the government.

Steyn (1996) further states that the principal is further empowered by the numerous policies and directives as well as provincial circulars that regulate teaching and learning. In discussing authority structure as a major cause of conflict, this section focuses on power struggles and departmental policies as serious challenges confronting school management teams.

3.2.1.7 Power struggles

According to Thomas and Bennis (1992), in the previous educational dispensation, the principal wielded a great deal of power and authority over the administration of the school. In the present educational situation, the principal has to share some of this power with the school governing bodies and other stakeholders for example, the unions. Conflict, through power struggles arises when school management decisions are often challenged and questioned by the governing bodies and or by the unions. Each grouping seeks to want to stamp its own brand of authority on the school. The situation becomes even more complicated when groups of teachers and or heads of departments form a power block. A school becomes a site of contestation and conflict when the unions, principal and management, governing bodies, teachers and sometimes learners, are all locked in a power struggle.

3.2.1.8 Role ambiguities

All stakeholders in a school need to have a very clearly defined understanding of their role. Ambiguities in this regard lead to dissatisfaction, frustration and conflict. Rue and Byars (1997) contend that when a group with perceived low status sets a standard for another group with a high status, conflict results. This may happen in a school, where, for example, the school

governing body may come into conflict with the principal and management staff when they attempt to set standards in professional matters, mistakenly regarding this as their role as well.

3.2.1.9 Various types of conflict

3.2.1.9.1 Intrapersonal conflict

Intrapersonal conflict occurs within the individual and may be described as incompatibility of the individual's own interests, goals and values. Mataboge (1990) states that this type of conflict indicates the presence of simultaneous, opposing, divergent ideas, feelings and activities, the characteristics of which are anxiety, depression and frustration.

3.2.1.9.2 Interpersonal conflict

Interpersonal conflict refers to a conflict involving two individuals. This may occur between any of the following sets of individuals namely, principal-staff, principal-learner, staff-learners, staff-staff, learner-learner and parents-staff. Each participant in the school is very unique with his/her own individuality, personality, religious identity, political affiliation and cultural identity. Often, a situation which starts off as a discussion, debate, dialogue and or meeting can suddenly flare into a conflict situation because of a clash of personality, lack of understanding of the issues involved, clash of cultures, race, bias, religious intolerance, difference in ethnic background, differences in values or some other hidden agenda. Johnson and Johnson (1994) state that personal skills, abilities and characteristics can have a tremendous influence on the quality and nature of interpersonal relations in a school. Aggression, tolerance and domination can affect the way in which a principal deals with potential conflict.

3.2.1.9.3 Intergroup conflict

A school comprises of many groups who hold similar or common views about their specific function and input in the school setting. Examples of these groups are the internal stakeholders comprising of staff, learners, union representatives, the state, governing bodies as well as the external stakeholders comprising the church, the teacher unions, commercial and industrial sectors, institutions of higher learning and the broader school community. Besides the above formal groups, Maurer (1996) identifies also informal groups or "cliques" where individuals within the school group themselves according to age, marital status or any common interest. The existence of these groups and their different interactions raises the level of possible conflict. According to Mosoge (1989) the hidden agenda and power play, as in the case of interpersonal conflict, may also feature strongly in intergroup conflict. In some instances, a particular group, due to its power base, may refuse to negotiate with another group thus causing a potentially tense situation to explode into one of intimidation, sit-ins, boycotts, violence and destruction of school property. Cronk (1997) endorses this view by stating that intergroup conflict occurs between individuals in the same organisation and is frequently seen as being caused by personality differences. The emotional involvement accompanying such conflict assumes even greater importance when it is realised that the principal must manage this conflict by authoritative command or force in order to protect lives and school property.

3.2.2 Problems experienced by the teachers

The school is a melting point of different individuals with different personalities, cultural differences, political and socio-economic backgrounds. Due to the unique nature of these individuals in a school, conflict is inevitable.

3.2.2.1 Organisational structure

An organisational structure refers to the way in which the school as an organisation is formally structured. Schools are very complex in nature and are structured in very unique and specific ways. At the head of the institution is the principal, followed by the deputy principal, thereafter the heads of departments and finally the teachers. The principal, deputy and heads of department form the senior management team of the school (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1997).

Conflict occurs when the different participants in the school setting do not understand or do not comply with their duties and role functions. A teacher for example, who is dependent on other teacher to hand in the scores of learners for their half-yearly exam report, also has to hand in scores of the subject he teaches to other teachers. Therefore there is a large group of teachers who are interdependent on one another. If one of them fails to co-operate or does not hand in his / her information timeously, then conflict arises.

3.2.2.2 Interdependence of activities

No individual person in the school setting can achieve his/her objectives without the assistance and co-operation of other members of staff (Rue and Byars, 1997). In a secondary school for example, the principal is assisted by the heads of departments, who in turn are assisted by staff members who depend on the co-operation and assistance of learners. Interdependence of activities in a school can lead to conflict when one party in the school hierarchy refuses to assist or co-operate with another party. Thus a head of department may, for example, refuse to order a specific book considered important by the teacher. This may lead to conflict between the head of department and the teacher concerned and may even involve other stakeholders and even the principal if he is seen to be biased or in favour of one party.

3.2.2.3 Differences in goals, methods and procedures

Whetton and Cameron (1994) are of the view that quite often the goals envisaged by teachers are incongruent with the goals of the school as embodied in the school mission statement. The principal, for example, may come into conflict with the teacher if he or she requires him or her to offer additional academic support programmes for learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds whereas the teacher has to coach the school football team for an important competition. Conflict sometimes arises between experienced teachers and new teachers over methodology. "New teachers", fresh from college or university may feel that they know the most up-to-date methods, whereas more experienced teachers may stick to the tried and tested way of educating learners. Constantly changing school rules, regulations and procedures often lead to uncertainty, doubts, confusion, tensions, frustrations and ultimately conflict.

3.2.2.4 Individual and group differences

Ianni (1995) mentions that the school is a very complex institution comprising a large number of people who interact with one another on a daily basis. A typical secondary school has an average of about between eight hundred to one thousand three hundred learners, about forty to sixty teachers and about five to seven non-academic staff. All of these come from different religious, ethnic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and have different personalities, values and expectations.

3.2.2.5 Personality skills and traits

The school is composed of different individuals with different personalities, backgrounds, age and educational levels. On a day-to-day basis these individuals bring into the school their tensions, anxieties and stresses. Due to these tensions they are prone to conflict at the slightest provocation (Masoge,

1989). Conflict in schools can be attributed to differences in personalities exhibited by different personality types. Cronk (1997) points out that some people enjoy debates and arguments while those with low esteem or authoritarian tendencies overreact to disagreements.

A school is comprised of introverts, extroverts, the reserved, the aggressive types, the impulsive types and so on. It may happen, for some or other reason that different personalities clash with each other, resulting in serious conflict in the school. These personal differences in a school are responsible for many of the interpersonal squabbles that characterise social interaction among teachers, learners and parents (Mosoge, 1989).

3.2.2.6 Differences in values and expectations.

Sathiparsad (1997) states that a person's value system influences his outlook on his behaviour and life. Conflict in a school situation may arise because different teachers place different values on different things. A teacher, for example, who places a very high value on his non-teaching period, may come into conflict with the principal who requires him or her to sacrifice this time carrying out some other duty. According to Ngongo (1993) a principal may find values-conflict difficult to resolve since individuals rarely change their values. Expectations form an integral part of the teaching learning and thus of the school situation. Morse (1996) divides expectations into formal and hidden expectations. Formal expectations are those that emanate from the appropriate education departments while hidden expectations are those held dear by parents, learners and teachers and are less explicit and frequently unexpressed. A principal, as well as the management staff, who are not perceptive to these expectations will in some way create conflict situations.

Managing people in a normal organisation is difficult enough but managing a group of professional intellectuals who possess different personality traits

and differences in values and expectations in a very unique institution such as the school, is a very complicated process (Holton, 1995).

3.2.2.7 Structural conflict

Structural conflict exists as a result of the organisational structure and is relatively independent of the individuals occupying the roles within the organisational structure (Rue and Byars, 1997). It is the position an individual occupies in the organisation, and the type of job he does, that results in conflict. Vertical conflicts arise between superiors and subordinates as a result of their different hierarchical positions. Subordinates, for example, heads of departments and teachers, may regard the principal as unqualified and inexperienced and his or her exercise of discipline and control as unacceptable and may either openly or subtly resist such control and discipline. The principal, on the other hand, may view this action as professional jealousy. Lateral conflicts occur between individuals of the same rank, for example, teacher and teacher. This may occur due to a variety of reasons, for instance, due to differing competencies of teachers, sharing the same subject in the same standard in the division. Structural conflicts may create a closed school climate in which no effective teaching takes place. The principal should thus perform his basic management tasks of planning, organising, leading and controlling effectively in order to minimise conflict (Mosoge, 1989)

3.2.2.8 Strategic conflict

Strategic conflict results from the promotion of self-interest on the part of the group or the individual and is often deliberately planned (Rue and Byars, 1997). It appears that most of the intergroup conflicts experienced in schools can be typified as strategic conflict. These conflicts have their roots in the political struggles that are being fought in the corridors of parliament and community forums and seem to have filtered into the school. Sergiovanni and

Starratt (1998) observe that strategic conflict seems to indicate political behaviour in which individuals act to enhance their own positions regardless of the costs of the organization or for others, the acquisition of power being the central aim.

3.2.2.9 Racism

According to Troyna and Carrington (1990) racism can be viewed as a body of ideas that rationalises and legitimates social practices that reinforce an unequal distribution of power between groups which are distinguished by selected physical and cultural characteristics.

Racism can originate from territorial claims and from a sense of ownership and control. People born and bred at a place tend to look upon it as their own, and may regard others as outsiders and potential threats to their identity and well-being (Troyna and Carrington, 1990). The arrival of blacks in London during 1950 and 1960 for instance, is alleged to have shattered the whites' illusion of ownership and control, it finally dawned on them that they did not own or control jobs or neighbourhoods. Blacks then represented the real structures of power in society (Troyna and Carrington 1990). This situation can be equated to the state of affairs here in South Africa, especially in secondary schools, where blacks continue to fill traditionally white schools (Garson, 1996). Some whites in these schools may experience a sense of loss of control and ownership.

The following actions can be viewed as racist (Willey, 1984) and may possibly be responsible for some of the violent acts in South African schools

- Physical assault against a person or a group because of colour or ethnicity;
- Derogatory name calling, insults and racist remarks;
- Racist graffiti or any other written insult

- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia;
- Bringing racist material such as leaflets, comics or magazines to school;
- Making threats against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity;
- Racist comments in the course of discussion in lessons; and
- Attempts to recruit other learners to racist organisations and groups.

3.2.2.10 Abrupt changes

Changes within schools are almost inevitable, due to the fact that they function as open systems, interacting with both the internal and external environment. Schools are forced to adapt to changing circumstances in order to meet the needs of their communities. Some changes are gradual whereas others are abrupt. Abrupt changes may upset the smooth running of the school if the teachers are not given enough time to adapt to changes (Van der Westhuizen, 1991). For changes to be easily accepted, Rogers and Schoemaker (1971; as quoted by Van der Westhuizen, 1991) maintain that changes should:

- Promise an improvement of present circumstances ;
- Not be too complex ;
- Fit in with the value system of those involved;
- Lead to more measurable results;
- Be relevant to the needs of the learners;
- Be capable of gradual implementation;
- Make it possible for results to be evaluated;
- Have measurable aims;
- Be simple to implement; and lastly
- The people involved should have positive attitudes.

3.2.3 Problems experienced by the learners

Learners in schools also experience some problems of conflict management. There are some barriers to effective communication in schools. The behaviour of some learners within a school may be related to and will be influenced by its climate.

3.2.3.1 Communication

Problems of communication appear to be basic to most conflict situations in the school. Gray and Starke (1997) mention the following barriers to effective communication:

- Human limitations, for example, a person may have been emotionally upset at the time of receiving information and may not have understood it properly;
- Incompleteness or distortion of information. Distortion by filtration of information as it moves from one person to another; the more people through which it goes, the more the distortion; and
- Semantic problems, for example rightsizing of schools may be interpreted as downsizing.

All these barriers to effective communication are present in schools and may lead to conflict. Often learners carry home incorrect information thereby causing conflict between parents and the school. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994) problems in a school develop because not all groups have the same information. People or groups who do not communicate are more likely to find themselves in conflict because of misunderstandings and distrust. It then follows that effective communication is a prerequisite to every aspect of human functioning including, the ability to resolve conflicts effectively (Morse, 1996).

3.2.3.2 Interorganisational conflict

Schofield (1998) contends that interschool conflict occurs when one school in a particular community or area is seen to be "elitist" by staff and learners of another school due to any or combination of the following factors:

- Admission policy;
- Excellent matriculation results; and
- Area of location.

Such conflicts may result in lack of contact and co-operation between schools to the detriment of the learners.

3.2.3.3 Ethnicity

According to Gillborn (1990), ethnicity emphasizes the sense of difference that can occur where members of a particular ethnic group interact with non-members. The word ethnic on the other hand, refers to a social group having a common national or cultural tradition of, for example, clothes and religion resembling those of a non-European exotic people (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990). This social group, which can be differentiated from the main population of a community by racial origin or cultural background, is referred to as an ethnic group (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990).

Situations of conflicting relationships between learners and teachers reported by Wright (1985; as quoted by Gillborn, 1990) could be evidence of conflicting racial interaction in schools. For example, the interaction between black learners and white teachers may take the form of enforcing discipline rather than encouragement and praise. An antagonistic atmosphere, which prevails in learning situations between the learners and teachers, may influence the teachers' professional judgement of the learners' ability to such

an extent that learners are for instance, inappropriately placed and unfairly evaluated. This can cause some of them to drop out.

Some white teachers may experience problems when they attempt to interpret the behaviour of black learners, not being able to differentiate between behavioural and academic evaluations. From his study of the West Midlands Schools for West Indian learners and subsequently Afro-Caribbean learners, Driver (1977; as quoted by Gillborn, 1990) maintains that some white teachers did not have the cultural competence to identify correctly the meanings that learners conveyed in their actions.

The confusion emanating from this incompetence led to the conviction among some teachers that West Indian learners were difficult and problematic. As a result, many learners were placed in non-academic streams, based on their behavioural rather than their academic characteristics. Similar incidents could be taking place in South African schools. Evident to this were the series of tests and interviews undertaken by learners from other racial groups before they can be admitted into traditional white schools. Furthermore, they may be placed a standard or two behind, because it is maintained that they are incompetent (Gillborn, 1990).

Some white teachers treat all learners of all races similarly. This would, according to them, help solve the problem of ethnic diversity. The problem though would be that the "same treatment" could be based on what is acceptable in their white culture, and any display of black ethnicity would be regarded as inappropriate. Some of these white teachers tended to look down upon anything that did not conform to their expectations and experience (Gillborn, 1990). It therefore, becomes evident that at times, ethnicity is devalued and can become a potential source of conflict (Gillborn, 1990).

The factors discussed in this section, namely racism and ethnicity, may impact on the way in which schools function.

3.2.3.4 Assessment and feedback

Teaching and assessment in schools can play a major role in increasing or reducing conflict. Good teaching encourages high quality student learning and discourages superficial approaches of learning, which emphasizes memorization and recall. Good teaching encourages deep approaches and leads learners to understand, link and apply the gained knowledge to real life situations. The following are important strategies of good teaching taken from Ramsden (1992) and Purkey and Novak (1996), the opposite of which could result in bad teaching and may result in conflicting situations:

- A desire to share your love and enthusiasm for the subject with learners;
- An ability to make the material taught stimulating and interesting;
- A facility for engaging with learners at their level of understanding;
- A commitment to making it absolutely clear what has to be understood, at what level, and why;
- Showing concern and respect for learners;
- An ability to improvise and adapt to new demands;
- Using teaching methods and academic tasks that require learners to learn actively, responsibly, independently and co-operatively;
- Using valid assessment methods;
- A focus on key concepts and learners' misunderstandings of them, rather than on purely covering ground;
- Giving the highest quality prompt feedback on learners' work; and lastly
- A desire to learn from learners and other sources about the effect of teaching and how it can be improved.

The strategies of good teaching mentioned above play an important sub-role to maintain stability within schools. A recognition and observance of these strategies by teachers can eliminate tension and conflict. Contrary to this, tension between learners and teachers result if both parties are ignored, the tension may be exaggerated to affect the smooth running of the school as a

whole. Tension may also develop when assessment and feedback strategies are not given proper attention.

Assessment is used for measuring student learning and for diagnosing specific misunderstandings, so as to promote effective learning. It involves that the teachers should learn from their learners' experiences and that they should change their aim as well as their learners' attitude to learning. Assessment also has a vital secondary function of motivating learners. The treatment of failure may motivate learners to go to school regularly and to take their schoolwork seriously.

According to Rowntree (1997) assessment is about getting to know our learners and the quality of their learning. Ramsden (1992); Margetson (1998) maintain that assessment methods which are not suitable, impose pressures on learners to such an extent that they have negative approaches to learning tasks. If not properly done, assessment can cause major problems.

Murray (1997) states the guidelines for assessment to be observed in schools by teachers as follows:

- Link assessment to learning: First focus on learning, second on encouraging effort and third on grading; assess during the experience of learning as well as on completion; set tasks that mimic realistic problems;
- Learn from your learners' mistakes. Assessment can be used to discover their misunderstanding in order to modify your teaching;
- Make use of a variety of assessment methods;
- Learners can participate in the assessment process by discussing appropriate methods and how they relate to the goals of the subject;
- Formulating assessment questions and negotiating criteria for success or failure, together with the teachers;
- Self and peer assessment activities;
- By being offered responsible choices among different methods; and

- Focus on validity before reliability: Avoid the temptation to test trifling aspects because they are easy to measure than important ones.

Feedback on assessed work should be communicated or handed to the learners within the shortest possible time, and it should:

- Contain detailed comments on the learners' work;
- Not be substituted by a general circular or model answers handed out to learners; and
- Avoid the presentation of a string of unrelated points with no structure.

The points discussed above make it clear that there is no substitute to constructive assessment and structured feedback, and that the poor handling of these two aspects can cause a lot of dissatisfaction among learners who may resort to violence to vent their anger and frustration.

3.2.3.5 School climate

Van der Westhuizen (1991) is of the opinion that school climate involves the internal activities, types of people in a school, work procedures, physical layout, form of communication, attitudes, dedication and loyalty of the colleagues to the school, as well as the exercise of authority. School climate is a fairly lasting quality of the internal environment of the school that is experienced by the members of the school. It influences the behaviour of the school and may be described in terms of the values of the school.

It can thus be said that the behaviour of members within a school may be related to and will be influenced by its climate. The manner and quality of the interaction between the individual and the school environment may also be directly proportionate to the school climate. Learners in South African schools are likely to behave in accordance with the climate that prevails within their schools. For example, if learners feel that the form of communication and the

attitude of the management frustrates them, they are likely to behave negatively. As the school climate changes, learners also change their opinions and behaviour.

3.2.3.6 Lack of empathy

Management and learners in schools may be insensitive to each other's needs, feelings and deficiencies. Management and teachers may fail to comprehend the position of the learners as much as the learners may fail to understand the huge task of successfully running a school facing the management (Kirtman & Minkoff, 1996).

The school management may also be ignorant of the financial status of the genuinely needy learners, who may not even meet the requirements for funding and may lack strategies of identifying such needy learners. Furthermore, by setting rigid admission policies, principals may be insensitive to the educational background of learners coming from poor communities, which adversely impact on their achievements. Learners may also lack the capacity to understand management's huge task of striking a balance between upholding a particular status for the school and satisfying as many learners as possible (Mamaila, 1997).

3.2.3.7 Political inclination

Conflict situations in schools may develop, not only because of poor management, but also because of their relatedness to party politics. Learners may therefore be in direct conflict with management when they rightfully, or wrongfully accuse it of not representing their interests (Watras, 1997). Conflict situations may occur even among learners of the same race who belong to different political groups.

3.2.4 Other problems of conflict management in schools

Moonsammy and Hassett (1997) are of the opinion that, managing conflict requires identification of the issues giving rise to conflict. However, even if conflicts are based on genuine differences, this does not mean that good communication is not important. In fact it is mainly through good communication that conflict is managed.

Some specific school issues that tend to lead to conflict according to Moonsammy and Hassett (1997) are:

- A lack of clear lines of authority setting out who is in a position to make what decision;
- When the school is not performing as it should be, for example, poor results, poor teaching;
- Disagreements about how to evaluate school performance including teaching, evaluation criteria and school management;
- Lack of accountability in terms of tasks and duties between the teachers and school management;
- Lack of consultation or information sharing between the teachers and the school management team;
- Lack of clarity about who is responsible for what;
- Staff discipline and the enforcement of the discipline, for example, late coming, absenteeism; and
- The existence of cliques, sub-groups (union affiliation) and / or a strong culture of individuality that hinders teamwork.

3.2.5 Conflict management and performance of the school

Stein and Kostelnik (1994) contend that, since people bring their individual attitudes, values, perceptions and goals to the institution, conflict is often

inevitable. Conflict itself is neither positive nor negative. When managed properly, it can be productive for the person engaged in the conflict and for the organisation. When conflict is not controlled it can:

- Divert energy;
- Destroy morale;
- Polarize individuals and groups;
- Deepen differences;
- Obstruct co-operative action;
- Produce irresponsible behaviour;
- Create suspicion and distrust; and
- Decrease productivity.

When conflict is controlled, it can:

- Open up an issue in a confronting manner;
- Develop clarification of an issue;
- Improve problem-solving;
- Increase involvement;
- Provide for growth;
- Strengthen a relationship when creatively resolved;
- Increase productivity; and
- Provide more spontaneity in communication.

Thus, when dealing with conflict during a problem-solving situation, to make conflict positive one must:

- Attempt to depersonalise the conflict and focus on the problem;
- Attempt to see the goals, opinions, attitudes and feelings of all parties as legitimate, acceptable and constructive; and

- Realize that conflict resolution can be constructive to the quality of human relationships if worked through in a supportive and trusting climate (Stein and Kostelnik, 1994).

3.3 ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

According to Thembela (1988) conflict management skills are needed because conflict is an everyday part of life. Conflict may be as simple as a misunderstanding between friends or as complex as violence in the home. Most conflicts can and should be handled as they arise, before they escalate into something more complex or violent. Unfortunately, many learners and teachers lack the skills necessary to effectively resolve conflicts.

Frey and Young (1998) contend that, schools take a variety of approaches to teaching learners conflict management skills. The most effective approach is when all learners, teachers and parents are provided an opportunity to learn and to practice conflict management skills and given the option of resolving disputes through mediation. Three approaches are described as follows:

3.3.1 Mediation approach

Baron (1994) states that, mediation programmes provide learners and teachers with an opportunity to resolve their disputes non-violently. A mediator creates a safe environment in which the disputing parties can effectively listen to each other, identify underlying problems, brainstorm various alternatives and decide the best way to handle their dispute. The cooperative atmosphere developed in mediations often helps disputing parties to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. A mediator does not have the power to impose a decision.

Schools establish mediation programmes to reduce detentions and suspensions; to encourage effective problem solving; to reduce teacher

involvement in minor learner conflicts and to improve school climate. Three basic types of mediation programmes that exist in schools are discussed hereunder:

3.3.1.1 Learner peer mediation programmes

Learner peer mediation programmes use trained learners to guide disputing learners through the mediation process. Typically, 10 - 20 learners per school are trained in mediation and are commonly referred to as mediators or conflict managers. Learner mediation programmes successfully resolve many different kinds of disputes involving jealousy, rumours, misunderstandings, bullying, fights, personal property and ending of friendships.

3.3.2.1 Teacher - parent mediation programmes

Teacher-parent mediation programmes use trained teachers to assist disputing teachers in resolving their problems. These programmes handle a variety of conflicts, including personality clashes, disciplinary actions disputed by parents, development of appropriate programmes for learners with special needs and truancy (Baron, 1994).

3.3.2.2 Learner - teacher mediation programmes

Learner-learner mediation programmes are usually an outgrowth of established teacher and learner mediation programmes. These mediations usually involve personality clashes, respect issues, behavioural issues, tardiness and other conflicts that diminish learner-teacher relationships.

3.3.2 Classroom approach

Bethel, Brennan, Lewis and Singer (1998) discuss the classroom approach as an attempt that gives all learners an opportunity to learn and practice

conflict management concepts and skills. This approach is used to increase personal problem solving skills, to improve teachers' classroom management skills and to improve school climate. There are basically three ways in which conflict management is used in the classroom and these are discussed below.

3.3.2.1 Conflict management is infused into existing curricula

The skills of conflict analysis, cooperation, brainstorming of options, identifying common interests and understanding opposing perspectives can be easily infused into all curricula. Teachers and educational consultants creatively infuse conflict resolution into subjects, such as mathematics, biology, health, English / literature, social studies and family life (home economics). Teachers report that the infusion of conflict resolution into traditional courses helps learners better understand the relationship between academics and the real world.

Some schools offer conflict management courses. These courses allow learners to receive intensive skills training and analyse issues, such as sources of conflict, escalation of conflict, power imbalances, negotiation styles and neutrality.

3.3.2.2 Conflict management is infused into teachers' classroom management styles

Many teachers strive to create a positive classroom environment in which learners can express their uniqueness and learn to the best of their abilities. Part of creating a positive classroom environment requires establishing an effective approach for resolving classroom conflicts.

Teachers who incorporate conflict management into their classroom management style believe that although teachers must at times use their

power to impose solutions, it is better in the long run if learners are empowered to resolve their own conflicts. They also feel strongly that the resolution of many classroom conflicts does not require the involvement of teachers. These teachers report that empowering learners to resolve their own disputes, results in learners taking responsibility for their actions and teachers having more time to teach.

3.3.3 Comprehensive approach

According to Maher (1996), experience has shown that the most effective way to get learners to use non-violent methods for resolving conflicts is to teach them conflict management concepts and skills; to provide opportunities for them to practice the new skills and to have teachers model effective use of conflict management skills. To achieve this goal, schools adopt a plan which implements both the Mediation and Classroom approaches and offer conflict management knowledge and skills to all learners, teachers and parents.

Another important part of the comprehensive approach is identification of other school programmes and community organisations that complement the school's conflict management efforts. Complementary programmes may include drug-free initiatives, multi-cultural education, peer listening, anger management and violence prevention. Community organisations that can enhance school conflict management efforts include police juvenile courts, recreation centres and adult volunteer mediation centres (Maher, 1996).

3.4 PRINCIPLES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES

For the principals to manage conflict effectively and efficiently, they need to know the nature of conflict and how behaviour can be modified. Smith (1997) discusses the five basic principles of school conflict management programmes as follows:

3.4.1 Principle 1: Conflict is natural

Conflict occurs in every school. If handled effectively, conflict can create a good learning experience. If handled ineffectively, conflict can quickly escalate to physical and emotional violence.

3.4.2 Principle 2: Behaviour can be changed

Learners and teachers can learn effective ways of handling conflict situations. Behaviour in conflict situations improves when people learn effective problem-solving concepts and skills; are given an opportunity to practice the new skills; are encouraged to use their new skills in real life situations; and are able to witness peers and people in authority modelling the new skills.

3.4.3 Principle 3: Learners also need to learn conflict management skills

Schools are a microcosm of society. The attitudes and behaviours of family members, community leaders and national figures follow learners and teachers into the school building. Unfortunately, many adults do not model effective conflict management behaviour for learners.

3.4.4 Principle 4: Conflict management as a component of school's comprehensive prevention programme

The problems facing schools today are complex and overcoming them requires a variety of approaches. The main goal of preventing programmes is to teach learners how to make appropriate decisions in their lives. Conflict management programmes teach basic prevention skills, such as ground rule setting, active listening, issue identification, brainstorming, and evaluation of options. These skills help learners to make better choices when confronted with disagreements, peer pressure, violence, alcohol and other drugs.

Prevention initiatives aim to provide learners with information and skills that will help them make better decisions. Mediation programmes and conflict management curricular materials take learners to a big step in the right direction.

3.4.5 Principle 5: Conflict management programmes provide learners with skills

Conflict management programmes are designed to provide learners and teachers with better skills in communication, problem solving, critical thinking, de-escalating conflict situations and achieving "win-win" agreements. The benefits of teaching these skills include increased citizen participation, better parenting skills, improved classroom management skills, better prepared young people entering the work force and prevention of violence (Smith,1997).

3.5 IMPLEMENTING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Thomson (1990) suggests ways of planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives as follows:

- Form a diverse planning committee to conduct an assessment of the school's needs to determine what types of conflict management initiatives are best suited to the school;
- Map out a plan on how conflict management will be institutionalised in schools;
- Educate learners, teachers, school governing bodies and parents about conflict management initiatives;
- Adopt mediation as an option for resolving all conflicts - learners, staff, teachers and parents - that occur at the school;

- Include both peer mediation and conflict management curriculum as part of a plan to provide all learners with better conflict resolution skills;
- Designate a conflict management coordinator for the school;
- Actively involve large numbers of learners, teachers and parents in the operation of peer mediation programmes;
- Develop in-school curricular materials and training expertise;
- Encourage the conflict management coordinator to contact and develop partnerships with youth organisation leaders, violence prevention specialists, alcohol and drug prevention specialists to explore ways in which conflict management concepts and skills can complement their activities; and
- Evaluate all conflict management activities to determine if they are meeting the stated goals and objectives (Commission's School Conflict Management Demonstration Project 1990-1993: Dealing with Conflicts In Ohio's Schools).

3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has briefly presented problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management in schools. The chapter emphasises that these problems have an impact on the management of conflict in schools. If these problems are not resolved at an early stage, they result in conflict.

The following chapter will present an overview of some conflict theories and models of conflict management with special reference to school conflict.

4. AN OVERVIEW OF SOME CONFLICT THEORIES AND MODELS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter briefly presents an overview of conflict theories and models of conflict management. A detailed review of theories and models of conflict related to the socio-economic and political context of education will be discussed. This chapter is a development of the previous one, which examined the problems, caused by the lack of conflict management in schools.

Researchers have advanced different theories to explain the origin of conflict. Swindle (1996), Rahim (1990), Benyon and Solomon (1997), Cronk (1997), Bloch (1997) and others have proposed a wide spectrum of theories to account for the rise of conflict. In this chapter it will be argued that conflict is a product of many factors.

4.2 THEORIES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

4.2.1 The human needs theory

The concept of "Needs" will be used in this section to refer to important requirements for survival and satisfaction.

Maslow (1970) argues that there exists in people a wide range of needs, which determine behaviour and motivation. In his hierarchy of needs theory, he postulates that people have physical needs such as a need for shelter and food. People, he also states, have needs for security, love, recognition, esteem and fulfilment.

The theory of needs as a driving force for human action has been advanced by other scholars, such as Adair (1995), Jones and Jones (1995) and Burton (1997). Jones and Jones (1995), said that failure to satisfy the needs mentioned above, will result in frustration, insecurity, withdrawal and a persistence to fulfil them even in socially unacceptable ways. They postulate that when children feel that their sense of belonging is threatened, they are likely to withdraw and seek attention through unproductive means. Jones and Jones, further, argue that a need like self-esteem is met out of the satisfaction of other needs, such as recognition, security, love and competence. When these needs are not realised, either in the family or in the school, children strive to acquire significance, competence and power by methods which adults disapprove of.

The view that human needs play a vital role in influencing behaviour has been emphasised by Druikers (1992). Druikers argues that there are subconscious goals that motivate misbehaviour. Such misbehaviour as attention seeking, power and revenge, is seen by Druikers as an indication of needs for belonging, security or warmth, which an individual finds problems in satisfying in ethically, approved ways.

The Human Needs Theory thus emphasises that conflict is a product of unsatisfied human needs. Burton sums this theory up succinctly, as follows: Conflict is not over objective differences of interest that involve scarcity. It is over fundamental values of security and identity.

Burton (1997) goes on to say that there are universal ontological needs that must be satisfied in the sense that individuals will be disruptive if they are frustrated in their pursuit.

The Human Needs Theory of conflict seems related to other theories such as Deprivation and Interaction Theories as will be shown later.

It seems clear that needs for belonging, identity, esteem and fulfilment characterise human beings. It is also obvious that failure to meet these can generate many problems and frustrations. What seems lacking in this theory is the point that the awareness, frustration and tolerance thresholds of individuals is a factor in determining the eruption or otherwise of conflict. Filley (1995) points out that the potential triggers of conflict generate conflict only when people perceive them and when they feel them.

However, it may also be pointed out that the socio-political and economic dispensation in South Africa does not provide adequately for the needs of the population under study. The frustration, discomfort and conflict theories, which have characterised education, give credence to the Human Needs Theory of conflict. This chapter now moves on to discuss other theories of conflict and, where applicable, relates these to the Human Needs Theory.

4.2.2 Deprivation - frustration theories

These theories propose that conflict occurs as a consequence of a number of deprivations. According to Benyon and Solomon (1997), social injustice, misdistribution of resources and power and inadequate institutions are some of these deprivations. The deprived group clamours for the resources which they do not have, but which the reference group possesses. The conflict ensues when those who have less access to the resource and who desire it, confront those who have it. Conversely, the haves will want to preserve the status quo, for it assures them control, security and peace. The have-nots will initiate change or call for change to be initiated, in the belief that it is through transformation or instability or turbulence that they can gain access to the required resources. It is the tension between wanting to preserve the status quo and law and order on the one hand and introducing change on the other, which may cause conflict to erupt. Such conflict can be expressed verbally or physically.

Swindle (1996) endorses the above argument. He maintains that with respect to any resources pool, there are individuals who have greater or lesser direct distribution prerogative over those resources. The people with limited access pool are interested in turbulence or in change, for it promise them access to the desired resources. He hypothesises that the haves will, in all likelihood, hold on to their position, so that they retain control over the contested resources.

The Deprivation Theory seems to have relevance to the schools under study in a number ways. The schools operate in conditions where a number of deprivations feature. Inadequate resources such as classrooms and lack of sufficiently qualified educators are some of the many deprivations that can render these schools susceptible to a number of problems, which are likely to lead to conflict.

Most of the learners in these schools are faceless, with a learner - educator ratio as high as 1:45, or sometimes higher. Chances for recognition of the strengths and potential of each learner are slim, as are opportunities for fulfilment and growth. This situation, in turn, encourages a high level of frustration and on its own or with other problems, can lead to conflict.

It is evident from the above that the Deprivation Theory relates to the Human Needs Theory. It appears that deprivation of whatever kind bars the people affected from satisfying their needs. Linked to the Deprivation Theory is the Interaction-Frustration Theory, which will be discussed in the next section.

4.2.3 The Interaction-frustration theory

The Interaction Theory of conflict argues that the seeds of conflict lie in the process of interaction between parties. Opposing values, perceptions, attitudes and behavioural dispositions of parties are some of the factors that can cause people to come into conflict. To clarify the Interaction Theory of

conflict further, reference is made to the views of Gordon (1994), Cronk (1997) and Pollard (1996) on this subject.

Cronk (1997) discusses at length educator power and control in learner / educator interaction. He proposes that educator / learner conflict is a result of the failure of educator and learner to relate to each other as persons. According to Cronk (1997), educator / learner relationships which are founded purely on the existence of formal power create conflict. The absence of an egalitarian system and lack of belief in the morality and trustworthiness of the other party also result in conflict. Conflict is also caused by failure to address classroom problems squarely and to discuss them openly. Bybee and Gee (1996) and Pollard (1996) are some of the researchers who have looked at the issue of control, in relation to education.

According to Pollard (1996), there is an inherent conflict of interests between educators and learners. Writing about what he calls "classroom interests-at-hand" of educators and learners, he argues that both these groups maintain a primary concern with the self, their personhood and sense of identity. This goal is undertaken in the midst of a threatening situation for both educators and learners. The former are faced with problems such as high enrolments, inadequate facilities and support systems, and the task of educating the learners. The latter face evaluation from their educators while they have simultaneously to contend with their own problems. Both educators and learners are confronted with a threat to their self-image as well as a demand to cope with the situation.

According to Pollard (1996), to maintain order in the educator-learner relationship two possibilities exist: an educator can either impose order using his or her power or she or he can negotiate it with the learners, so that a set of social understanding which define order are constructed. Coercion would be characteristic of educators who feel their interests are threatened and whose negotiation skills are lacking. Such force would tend to produce tension, anxiety and frustration in learners. They are likely to see it as the

imposition of educator power founded on injustice. They may thus resist it and come into conflict with the educator. In his study on educators' belief system and behaviour, Harvey (1995) points out that these are influential factors in learners' behaviour and learning. The results of his study showed that educators' resourcefulness correlated significantly and positively while educators' dictatorialness and punitiveness correlated significantly and negatively with the nature of learners' performance.

The issue of control in learner / educator relationships is confirmed by Bybee and Gee (1996). They see control as a factor in educator / learner conflict. Talking of the role of the school in learner violence, they state that there seems to be inadequate access to the decision-making process by learners. While these observations relate to the American education system, they seem to apply to secondary schools in North West as well. Lamentably this situation appears to result in a sense of powerlessness, isolation, anonymity, boredom and insignificance for learners within the schools. This tends to generate frustration, which is a climate for conflict. A study by Ranford (1998) presents a similar view. He found that isolation, powerlessness and dissatisfaction with those in authority were important factors contributing to participation in the Watts riots in the United States of America. In these riots, Black Americans were objecting to a perceived political exclusion and importance to bring about change (Tomlinson 1998). According to Bybee and Gee (1996) giving learners a role in decision - making and offering fair treatment can increase their commitment and decrease the offences against the staff and school.

De Flaminis (1996) argues that 75 % of the educators respond to learners with either authoritarian or coercive behaviours, followed by manipulation and persuasion. These practices by educators were shown to reduce self - esteem and to increase disruptive behaviour by learners. Bot (1994) and other researchers on the current disruption and conflict in schools, cite educator control as a factor in the current disruption and conflict in schools in South Africa.

Educators' excessive use of power tends to generate extra resistance from learners. In Bybee and Gee's (1996) opinion, it forces learners to overvalue their freedom, to become concerned about their rights, to counteract the educators' control or to resign themselves to the educators' authority. All these responses and behaviours precipitate conflict.

Gordon (1994) also makes pertinent observations regarding educator / learner interactions. He argues that the degree of educator effectiveness in establishing a particular kind of relationship with learners is crucial in obtaining their co-operation and in securing mutual rewards. He views the role of the educators as mainly that of being supportive, non-critical facilitators, with a total commitment to the rational ability of a learner to identify and solve his or her problems. In terms of this perspective, conflict would arise when educators impose their authority and values and disregard the learner's ability to negotiate and settle his or her problems. In a sense, Gordon (1994) concurs with Cron (1997) and Pollard (1996) above, on the negative effects of the use of educator power to force learners to conformity or educators' reluctance to connect with learners in working out class or learners' problems. Such a situation paves the way for conflicts.

The discussion on problems of control in educator / learner interaction indicates the level of frustration that this relationship can produce. The frustration can also be exacerbated by factors like lack of participation in decision-making and problem solving.

Added to these issues in interaction are problems that learners encounter in trying to cope with the curriculum. Mastering the curriculum seems to be an overwhelming task for a number of learners in schools. Both internal and external pass rates indicate difficulties learners experience in learning. Furthermore, because the very curriculum, both intra- and extra- curriculum is limited, it is doubtful that pupils learn what they are interested in and can do. According to Bot (1994), with reference to extra- mural activities for instance,

most schools have one soccer field and the common "sport" is a school choir, in which a very small percentage of learners participate.

Problems in interaction, coupled with a confining curriculum, put learners in a very precarious position regarding their threshold level for engaging in conflict. The dangers of this situation are also indicated by the Safe Schools Study in Bybee and Gee (1996). The authors suggest, on the basis of their research of these schools, that violence tended to be higher where learners felt educators were not teaching courses they wanted to learn.

The problems raised above also contribute to learners developing a low level of self-esteem and a lack of personal identity. In other words, work does not seem to present a source of fulfilment, nor does it reinforce a feeling of worth. It seems to present an alienating reality. Zimbardo (1999) aptly captures another possible problem arising out of this dilemma. According to him, when individuals are confronted with alienating factors that do not foster personal identity, they can undergo a process of de-individuation. This behaviour is emotional and impulsive and renders a person susceptible to conflict.

Arguing in a similar vein, Glasser (1999) maintains that the problem of misbehaviour of most learners results from failure of schools to fulfil their needs. He argues that learners want success, self-worth and they aspire to learning. However, the obstructions in the schools, such as being lectured to, being given unappealing classroom topics, having to learn by rote instead of experimenting or by discussion, are factors which precipitate misbehaviour and conflict.

4.2.4 The structural theory of conflict

The structural theory of conflict accepts the contention that conflict can be part of social interaction. Social interaction can either display co-operation or competition and tension.

In connection with the element of tension which may be present in social interaction, Mastenbroek (1997) points out that in a network of relationships in organisations, there is a tension balance between interdependency of members and a desire for autonomy. He observes that there is a conflict between consensus of ideas of a group and preferences for one's own autonomy and viewpoints between co-operation and competition for instance. In brief, the very existence of relationships and organisational structures holds a potential for conflict.

Various researchers such as Labovintz (1995) and Robbins (1993) have endorsed the view that organisational structures contain a potential for conflict. From literature on this topic, factors like communication, personal behaviour and the nature of organisations can be responsible for disharmony.

Regarding the nature of organisations as a factor in conflict, organisations expect to have people who share different individual goals to pursue similar organisational goals. They want those who are their members to live up to similar time orientations and management philosophies. Members are expected to integrate their efforts into a cohesive whole, directed towards organisational goals. The problem arises because of the difficulty in absolutely reconciling individual and organisational goals and philosophies.

Callahan and Fleenor (1998) suggest that a high level of bureaucracy, certain types of personalities, status and desire for personal gains contribute to conflict in an organisational structure. They state that a high level of bureaucracy may lead to frustration and a search for informal ways of completing tasks. The resultant role breaking may lead to conflict with those who enforce the chain of command.

With reference to personality as a factor in conflict, certain personalities are more prone to generating conflict than others. The variables in personalities, which determine this tendency are not quite clear. It is assumed that

perception and attitude may be some of this variable. Callahan and Fleenor (1998) argue that if the stakes of satisfaction in any situation are high, the issue will be important for parties in that situation. This will encourage assertive or aggressive behaviour in the parties and may induce conflict. Alternatively, interests of parties may be incompatible, rendering a situation of zero-sum game and fostering a perception that there can only be one winner.

In the next paragraph, attention is given to the role of communication in conflict. Research on the part played by communication in conflict often cites misunderstandings as a result of semantic difficulties, ambiguities in messages and language. Information channels are also seen to be capable of introducing bias or distortion in communication.

Another view on the role of communication in conflict is offered by transactional analysis, as set forward in the work of Harris and Berne (1991). Transactional analysis argues that people interact with each other from one of three ego states. These ego states are called parent, adult and child. According to Davis and Newstrom (1999), the parent ego state is protective, controlling, nurturing, critical and instructive. The adult ego state tends to be rational, factual and unemotional, while the child ego state is dependent, creative, spontaneous and rebellious.

According to Davis and Newstrom (1999) and Dressler (1995), transactions may be parallel, crossed or complementary. Complementary transactions occur when the ego state of one party, for example, the sender of the message, complements that of the other. On the other hand, statements made by one party may not connect or link with the appropriate ego state of the other party. This would result in a crossed transaction. When this happens, communication is blocked and conflict often follows.

While the discussion of the structural theory of conflict has focused on bureaucracy, divergent personalities and communication, as contributing to

conflict, many other structural variables may precipitate conflict. These variables can originate even in other structures that interact with a particular structure; for example, political structural problems affect the school structure and promote conflict.

4.2.5 The medical and friction theory of conflict

The medical model of conflict views conflict as a cancerous growth within an otherwise healthy society (Swindle, 1996). While the presence of conflict may be a symptom of problems to be attended to in an organisation or society, it does not necessarily mean that the organisation or society is sick. The medical view pre-supposes one way of solving conflict, namely removing it. It does not accept it as part of an organisation.

The friction model postulates that conflict is inevitable in social interaction (Milton, 1991; Swindle, 1996). The friction model further argues that conflict is part of a healthy, changing and growing society. This view maintains that communities are dynamic and act on their own volition. The dynamism of a society is, in other words, seen to hold potential for conflict.

4.2.6 The social identity theory

This theory postulates that individuals seek positive social identity and positive self-concepts based on their group memberships. It states that groups try to achieve positive distinctiveness for themselves in order to protect and maintain their self-esteem as group members (Stephenson, 1991).

According to this explanation, inter-group conflict does not require a clash of values or interests; it may be motivated by a concern for identity. The social identity theory, therefore, argues that in-group versus out-group identification

can cause competitive inter-group differentiation, even in the absence of conflict. Such differentiation can graduate into conflict.

It would seem that while identity fosters security, it might also cause an apparently insatiable need for domination. This seems problematic, particularly where identity, affiliation or even nationalism is based on unquestioned solidarity. It would seem that the underlying reason for conflict from the perspective of this theory centres on the need to ensure security. Group identity appears to offer such security, while the other group poses as a threat.

4.2.7 Riff-raff theories

Riff- raff theories see riots as being perpetuated by the most worthless and disreputable people, the riff-raff society. Benyon and Solomon (1997) maintain that individuals will wilfully cause riots because they want to loot or rob or because the behaviour is exciting or is the current, preferred activity in the crowd.

Riff-raff theories see inadequacies in human nature that propel men to violence and vandalism. It would seem that in cases where people behave in the manner described, socialisation has either been inadequate or people have not responded to it and pursued desired values. Alternatively, riff-raff theories could give credibility to instinctual theories of conflict, which state that man has retained the primitive instincts, which drive him to aggression. However, it must be noted that the qualification of riff-raff is a relative one. The culture of the group to which the people behaving in this deviant manner belong may approve of their behaviour, and all that may be at stake is the clash of values of the sub- and the dominant culture.

The Human Needs Theory is essentially the framework against which conflict may be assessed in schools. Structural, individual and group factors as well

as relationships in the school system may encourage or discourage the satisfaction of human needs.

4.3 MODELS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

According to Filley (1995), Gordon (1993) and Gorton (1990) the following approaches to conflict management exist: Win - Lose, Lose - Lose and Win - Win.

In Filley's opinion (1995), when one party sets out to win and defeat another, the Win - Lose model is in operation. Competition and dominance are popular styles here. In the Lose - Win model, a party may be accommodative and give the other scope to win. Davis and Newstrom (1999) also maintain that parties in a conflict may avoid it and may both find themselves worse off than before, regarding the particular conflict. This then would be the Lose - Lose method. Yet when parties focus on goals as well as ends and both aim at solving the problem or the conflict, the Win - Win model is in operation. In the next section a review is made of the characteristics of various models of conflict management.

4.3.1 Characteristics of Win - Lose and Lose - Lose models

It has been stated above that compromise, accommodation and competition tend to result in Win - Lose models of handling conflict, while avoidance is associated with the Lose - Lose approach.

Filley (1995) presents a few, very pertinent characteristics of Win - Lose and Lose - Lose models. He states that:

- There is a clear we - them distinction between the parties, rather than a we, versus-them-problem orientation;

- Energies are directed towards the other party in an atmosphere of total victory or total defeat;
- Each party sees the issue from its own point of view, rather than defining the problem in terms of mutual needs; and
- The parties are conflict orientated emphasising immediate disagreement, rather than the relationship.

Gordon (1994) supports Filley's contention; at least in as far as Win - Lose models are concerned. In talking about what he calls *Methods 1* and *2* of managing conflict by educators and learners, he identifies problems of win - lose methods.

According to Gordon (1994), educators who employ Method 1 to manage or resolve learner - learner, or learner - educator conflict, rely on power-based authority to coerce learners to conform. They punish or reward learners verbally. Learners react by engaging in coping mechanisms whereby they appear defeated. They may rebel, resist, defy, lie, sneak or gang against educators. Alternatively, the reverse may happen. Learners may solve their conflicts with others, educators included, by being set on winning. Educators may then react by becoming bitter towards learners, or submissive, or avoid learners. Learners may be using what Gordon calls Method 2, the reverse of Method 1. Both methods 1 and 2 suggest behaviours where the focus is purely on satisfying one's interest, to win a conflict.

Bisno (1998) suggests a series of behaviour, verbal and non-verbal, which are examples of Win - Lose and Lose - Lose methods. He refers to what he calls the covert means of managing conflict (Bisno, 1998) and cites strategies such as passive resistance, verbal or unexpressed negativism, non-compliance and stone-walling (Bisno, 1998). All these are applications of Win - Lose, or Lose - Lose models.

4.3.2 Characteristic of Win - Win Models

Contrary to Win - Lose or Lose - Lose models, Win - Win methods are I (We) and you, that is we - versus them problem. Both parties in a conflict attempt to stand together and resolve the conflict (Filley, 1995 and Gordon, 1994). In Win - Win models like consensus and integrative decision making, which are to be discussed shortly, parties in a conflict seek essential points of difference rather than determine who is wrong or right. Callahan and Fleenor (1998) maintain that through communication and a sharing of feelings, the problem is mutually defined. Similarities are emphasised and the participants consider a full range of alternatives towards solving the problem. The process of problem solving is to be discussed in the following section.

Burton (1997) concurs with the views stated above on the nature of Win - win models. He argues that problem solving implies exploration whereby, through an analytical approach, an option is discovered that satisfies the interests and needs of all parties who face the problem. Put differently, problem solving or a Win - Win model is a Human Needs Theory of managing conflict. This is so when one accepts the Human Needs Theory of conflict which argues that basic to all conflicts, are unmet needs like security, identity, fulfilment, recognition and love. When a Win - Win model is used, it is most likely that whatever need exists, will be met.

However, Burton adds that in problem solving, there is the guidance of an experienced third party, familiar with the problem solving process. He or she can be employed as a negotiator or, preferably, as a facilitator to enable parties in a conflict to resolve the problem. Duke and Meckel (1990) concur with this view and suggest a trained resource person in situations where conflict cannot be resolved at the classroom level between educator and learners. This resource person will be available to hear both sides of the issue and assist in negotiating a settlement. The role of the mediator in conflict resolution is reviewed in 4.7.2 below.

4.3.3 The integrative decision making process

Integrative decision-making is a process. It starts from the definition of the problem to the solution of the problem. It is similar to group problem solving and decision-making. Stoner and Wankels (1996) exposition of the concept also hold this view. According to Filley (1996) the process of integrative decision-making is as follows:

- **Step: 1 Review and adjustment of relational conditions:**

The validity of the role of this step in solving conflicts is implicitly acknowledged by Schumick (1992) when they talk of setting the stage for problem solving. This step is defined by Filley (1995) as identifying conditions antecedent to conflict, then adjusting them to promote co-operation and to avoid conflict.

- **Step: 2 Review and adjustment of perceptions and attitudes:**

This implies that parties in a conflict review their perceptions and attitudes, to try and adjust them. Where conflict is resolved through mediation, the mediator can facilitate review and adjustment of perception. Coupled with the review of perceptions and attitude is the review of facts. Gorton (1996) supports this view when he states that whatever "factual" information each party presents, particularly about the other, may only constitute facts for him / her. Hence validating information is essential.

The technique of validating perceptions is supported by Ray (1996). However, Gorton (1996) suggests that since parties to a conflict are likely to have a negative attitude, it is recommended that a mediator meets each party separately. This prevents parties from attacking each other. Separate meetings allow for time to help groups behave more rational and see each other positively.

- **Step: 3 Problem definitions**

The next step in integrative decision-making according to Filley (1995) is problem definition. Burton (1990) upholds the step of problem definition in conflict resolution. After the problem is defined, the search process for an alternative solution is made.

- **Step: 4 Search process**

According to Filley (1995) and Burton (1990), the emphasis in this exercise is a focus on goals and ends, as well as on mutual needs. In other words, conflict resolution through integrative decision making, makes it possible for parties to have a problem solved without sacrificing their objectives and needs.

Integrative decision-making is a collaborative process where a problem is converted into a joint problem-solving situation. Collaborative systematic problem solving and decision-making are used to arrive at solutions.

Before the review of integrative decision-making is concluded, a few assumptions underlying the process need to be highlighted. Collaborative conflict resolution is premised on a very high balance of efficient handling of task and maintenance needs. The methods within this model are pinned on the assumption that there will be adequate focus on information seeking, on gathering and clarifying relevant facts (Moore, 1998 and Filley, 1995).

Integrative decision-making is further founded on the assumption that the atmosphere between the parties will be warm, friendly and conducive to openness and responsiveness. The method assumes that the group will attempt to harmonise, reconcile differences and create an atmosphere where members can freely air their views and feelings.

Collaborative conflict handling suggests that symmetrical power relations between educators and learners will be encouraged. It assumes that in conflicts, between learner-educator and learner-school manager, there will be least resort to power to manage conflict.

To conclude on examples of Win - Win models, a review of consensus and confrontation in relation to integrative decision-making is made.

- **Step: 5 Consensus**

Consensus is either seen as a method of Win - Win models in its own right or as part of integrative decision making. There is an overlap between consensus and integrative decision-making.

The distinction by Filley (1995) between consensus and integrative decision-making is, however, helpful. Filley (1995) states that in consensus there is no polarised conflict among the parties involved. The method is used to solve judgmental problems of selecting from a variety of solution strategies. He sees integrative decision making, on the other hand, to be more useful when parties are polarised. The difference between the two is in degree rather than in kind. One more interesting distinction of consensus is offered by Schumick (1992). Here they state that, among other things, in consensus those who doubt or disagree with the decision are nevertheless prepared to give it a try for a given time, without sabotaging it. The rigour in consensus and integrative decision-making may not be equal, but both honestly consider needs and feelings of all parties.

Finally, there is confrontation. According to Stoner and Wankel (1996), in confrontation, the opposing parties state their respective views directly to each other. They examine the reasons for the conflict and seek methods of

resolving it. It is the view of this researcher that confrontation is part of integrative decision - making as described above.

4.4 PERSPECTIVES ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

This section briefly presents a divergence of historical perspectives on conflict management.

4.4.1 The classical theorists

The classical period theorists on management such as Taylor (1947) and the humanistic theorists such as Likert (1976) and Herzberg (1966), saw conflict as destructive to the life of an organisation and as disruptive to well ordered efforts towards conducting activities that led to goal attainment (Robbins, 1993; Owens, 1991).

Classical theorists believed in, among other things, conformity to scientific principles to ensure work efficiency and effectiveness. They proposed that conflict could be handled by tightening rules and exercising rigid control within an organisation (Tausky, 1998). A classical mode of managing conflict during this period was dominance or suppression (Hanson, 1999).

4.4.2 The humanistic theorists

Humanistic thinking on the other hand, viewed conflict as evidence of an inability to develop appropriate norms. It also regarded it as a symptom of a breakdown of healthy and normal interactions among groups and within the organisation.

The humanists such as Likert (1976) and Mayo (1933), in other words, shifted a focus of management. They objected to a management philosophy that exalted the interests of the organisation above those of the individual. They

argued for the importance of interpersonal relations and of the individuals in the organisation, a stand that was a departure from the machine model or the classical period.

According to Robbins (1993) during the Humanistic period it was maintained that conflict was a dysfunctional outcome resulting from poor communication and lack of openness and trust between people. Conflict was also viewed as an indication of a failure of managers to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of their people.

Tausky (1998) remarks that classical theory believed that the individual and the organisation's interests were in opposition. The Humanist theorists, on the contrary, believed that the individual and organisational objectives in the work setting could actually be reconciled. This observation explains the suppressive tendency of dealing with conflict by the machine model. It also accounts for the perception of the Humanistic thinking that conflict was an abnormality, a deviation from a normal state of co-operation (Callahan and Fleenor, 1998). Humanistic thinking also saw conflict as failure to balance organisational goals and worker needs.

In summing up the two philosophies, it can be stated that, whereas the classical theorists managed conflict by altering the technical system, Humanistic theorists dealt with it by a focus on, for example, developing happy and congenial relationships. Humanistic attached importance to individual participation in the organisation and on emphasising a supportive work environment.

Robbins (1996) argues that the view, which states that conflict can be purged or eliminated, is simplistic. His perception is shared by Milton (1991) and Swindle (1996) who contend that conflict is inherent in the life of any organisation. Robbins (1996) and Milton (1991) argue that conflict is neither functional nor dysfunctional; it is the type of conflict and the manner of handling it, which matters. Literature on conflict since the post-Humanistic

period, abounds with styles and approaches of managing and resolving conflict.

4.4.3 The interactionist theorists

One other view of conflict management that deserves mentioning is the interactionist one (Robbins, 1996). The interactionists accept conflict as inevitable. However, they go beyond this point by explicitly encouraging it on the grounds that too much harmony and peace in any organisation can lead to apathy and a lack of dynamism. This perception is backed by Milton (1991). This view of conflict is, firstly, an extreme departure from the ones discussed earlier and is, secondly, an encouragement to managers to maintain an on-going level of conflict, enough to keep the organisation viable, self-critical and responsive to the needs for change and innovation. The argument on stimulating conflict will be pursued in greater detail, when conflict management is further reviewed below.

4.5 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

If conflict can be construed as a process, so can conflict management. In the next section conflict management as a process is discussed.

4.5.1 Preventive conflict management

Bisno (1998) states that preventive conflict management is founded on the assumption that the outcomes of conflict may not be conducive to gaining the objectives of parties or of the organisation. De Villiers (1995) sees preventive conflict management as encompassing the whole spectrum of understanding the dynamics of the potential for conflict in people.

Literature on conflict management suggests a number of techniques to prevent conflict. The following are some of the techniques.

4.5.1.1 Collaborative goal setting

Divergent and opposing goals are one of the causes of conflict. Caldwell and Spinks (1998) motivate for collaboration in goal setting in an organisation. They argue that openness and interaction in the process of setting goals allows the expression and sharing of individual and group preferences. Collaboration is, therefore, seen as reducing the chance of misunderstanding - for all parties are presented with information on which preferences of colleagues are based. The argument is that this reduces the extent of making uninformed judgements by any of the parties.

Duke and Meckel (1990) while motivating for mechanisms of addressing disciplinary problems, make pertinent views about collaboration. They argue that learners, educators and parents should collaboratively decide on school and classroom rules. They should deliberate also on consequences of breaking these rules. Duke and Meckel (1990) see collaborative goal setting as significant in promoting commitment and harmony in other school related issues as well.

Caldwell and Spinks (1998) on discussing the role of a mission statement in a school, advocate a collaborative way of designing it, on the understanding that collaboration will promote commitment and reconcile different views. Bybee and Gee (1992) also see collaboration as significant in preventing conflict.

4.5.1.2 Appropriate specification of responsibility

Arnold and Feldman (1996) suggest clarity in the assigning and co-ordinating of work activities among people, as a way of preventing conflict. A clear specification of responsibility seems to be a development of the division of work principle on classical thinking referred to earlier. Its proponents argue for it on the grounds that it provides scope to reduce conflict related to

autonomy. In this direction, standard steps of planning, determining who will do what, when, how and why, are seen as helpful. Various authors on the administrative process of planning, organising, supervising and control concur with this view.

In line with specification of responsibility, Laferla (1998) mentions awareness of the role of colleagues and co-ordination as a means of reducing conflict. Laferla recommends neutralising inter-dependence of activity that is implementing a well-established system of communication whereby individuals and departments know how their activities relate to or affect others, and whereby they are provided with an opportunity to develop appreciation of problems which face their colleagues.

Specification of work and awareness of what colleagues do, seem vital. The emphasis given to job description in industry and tertiary institutions, as well as in other contexts, bears testimony to the role of this technique. Advertisements for posts in universities and companies in South Africa often place emphasis on job descriptions. It appears that unless there is division and specification of work, any work belongs to anybody and nobody. It would also seem that the absence of job description allows workers to define sought productivity randomly. Thus it may pave the way for a conflict of expectations. Clearly a job description and the resultant job specification are valuable only if it does not stifle worker creativity.

Further, it is essential to communicate a job description clearly, especially where the role incumbent did not participate in formulating it. Gorton (1990) recommends that a job description must be communicated regularly to all groups concerned. He also argues that it plays a major role in preventing conflict.

4.5.1.3 Early identification of latent conflicts

It has been argued in the preceding chapters that conflict is inherent in the life of organisations like schools. Developing sensitivity to the existence of conflict and using different mechanisms to detect it, have been suggested by Flippo (1990) as useful in preventing it. Flippo (1990) mentions creating a grievance procedure or suggestion box, establishing an open door policy and allowing free expression of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Bisno (1998) agrees with Flippo on letting people express their dissatisfaction. He refers to institutionalised dissension, a technique whereby organisational or group members are allowed latitude to express objection to a given situation or policy. By making dissension part of the norm in a school, researchers such as Flippo (1990) and Bisno (1998) maintain that some conflicts can be better handled before they become intense. Apparently this technique is seen to allow for catharsis, which has a calming effect on people. The technique paves the way for an appreciation of issues, which, if ignored, could lead to serious conflicts. This technique is related to the one discussed below.

4.5.1.4 Exposure of differences before they become serious conflicts

This skill involves presenting both sides and all sides to an argument and engaging in ways of legitimising the argument. Bisno (1998) as well as Duke and Meckel (1990) advocate this view. Duke and Meckel, when writing about school conflicts, motivate for negotiation of a solution between educators and learners in a conflict, before the conflict becomes too serious.

The question of handling differences before they become major conflicts has some validity. However, it is felt that the technique needs to be applied with discretion since some differences may be too minor to warrant attention.

4.5.1.5 Diffusion of conflict management skills

Faconti (1997) comments on an experiment to teach conflict management skills at Mt. Diablo in the United States of America. The purpose of the experiment was to teach learners skills of managing conflict collaboratively. Faconti advocates the idea of familiarising educators, learners and any other school constituents who are accessible with conflict handling skills. The status and worth given to interpersonal skills, including conflict-handling skills in the literature on personnel management, bears testimony to the validity of the view raised by Faconti.

4.5.1.6 Modification of the work environment

According to Gordon (1994) educators can prevent much unacceptable behaviour of learners with relative ease, simply by modifying the classroom. They need to confront the physical and psychological characteristics of the classroom, and not necessarily the learner. This view is held by Everston and Emmer (1992) and Duke and Mockel (1990). One view underlying this technique is that a drab, barren and uninspiring learning environment helps create situations where behaviour problems are more likely to occur. Such problems may lead to conflict.

Jones and Jones (1991) and Good and Brophy (1994) uphold the importance of modifying the work and social environment. They suggest the development of functional classroom norms that support academic achievement and desirable social behaviour. They also recommend establishing positive learner-learner and learner-educator relationships. Finally, using teaching methods that facilitate effective learning has been suggested as helpful in preventing conflicts in class.

4.5.1.7 Practising effective school management

This technique may contribute significantly to harmony in class. Duke and Meckel (1990), mention a number of steps that can be taken to effect harmony in class. Some steps include tactics such as establishing a positive climate for learning and development of high levels of engagement in academic tasks. Everston and Emmer (1992) suggest producing patterns of learning-orientated behaviour, setting norms in favour of tasks and co-operation and developing learner accountability in order to reduce conflict.

Calhorn (1997) makes special reference to personnel-management-related factors. Calhorn suggests better training in understanding behaviour, in integrating task requirements with individual growth and in affording greater responsibility to the individual. He also proposes impersonality in establishing task objectives and in reviewing rewards and punishment systems.

These views have been supported by other writers on personnel management, not only because they promise a potential for preventing conflict, but also because they relate to effective management. Herzberg (1960), for example, in his Two-Factor Theory on Motivation in (Hunsacher and Cork, 1996) argues that job challenge, recognition, achievement, opportunity for advancement and responsibility are motivators. Further, the theory of management by objectives, advanced in literature on organisational behaviour, emphasises among other things, objectivity in reward and punishment systems.

It would, therefore, seem that effective task and personnel management, among other things, reduces the chances for conflict.

4.5.2 Conflict management techniques

4.5.2.1 Identification and diagnosis of conflict

Identification of conflict has been named as one of the steps towards conflict management. According to sources such as Bohmers and Peterson (1992) and Burton (1997), the definition and identification of conflict is an essential step in the exercise of conflict management.

Brown (1994) and Feldberg (1995) support the view that diagnosis is a crucially important phase of conflict management. Brown suggests that a manager needs to identify a few factors before a conflict is dealt with. He or she needs to determine the nature of conflict. A manager must also decide what his /her role is in a conflict and must be aware of the nature of relations among conflicting parties. The issues raised by Brown suggest that there is a relationship between conflict diagnosis and conflict management.

In diagnosing a conflict situation, school managers or educators would need to be able to be objective. For them to be seen as objective, they must earn trust from disputants, otherwise the latter may not co-operate. Alternatively, the school manager or educator himself or herself also acts as a facilitator of trust, as he or she diagnoses the conflict. The significance of establishing a relationship of trust is pointed out by a number of researchers on conflict management. The section on negotiation below illustrates this point. Without this, it is difficult to see how parties in a conflict would be open to share their feelings and views.

4.5.2.2 Considerations governing conflict management and conflict handling styles

Thomas (1996) comments on considerations governing conflict resolution. He states that the resolution of conflict is influenced by the degree to which an

attempt is made to satisfy the other party's concerns and the degree to which effort is exercised to satisfy one's interests. These dimensions, namely co-operativeness and assertiveness, give rise to distinct conflict management behaviours such as competition, avoidance, accommodation, compromise and problem solving, Alkire (1998) seems to agree with Thomas on issues which underlie conflict management behaviours. He suggests that the desire to satisfy one's interests or the other party's interest influences the outcomes of conflict management.

Recent literature on conflict such as Burton's (1997) seems to concur with the observations of other writers. This section will discuss conflict handling behaviours.

The first behaviour to be discussed is competition or coercion. Coercing is an attempt to satisfy one's own concerns at the expense of the other party. Alkire (1998) states that this style emphasizes the accomplishment of one's position, goals or interests. The feelings of others as well as their interests are disregarded. The style is characterised by dominance and aggression. Filley (1995) associates such a style with the perception that conflict management is often seen in zero-sum terms. In other words the practice of this style reflects that in a conflict, there are winners and losers only.

Qualifying these behaviours, Spinks and Caldwell (1998) observe that competition is characterised by high assertiveness and low co-operativeness. Proponents of this style seek to satisfy their concerns at the expense of others if needs be.

The next behaviour is accommodation. This style seems to satisfy the concerns of the other party at one's expense. Therefore conflicts are managed through surrender or acquiescence.

Low assertiveness and high co-operativeness is the norm in accommodation behaviour. Accommodation is meant to appease.

One other style is avoiding conflict or withdrawing from it. Low assertiveness and low co-operativeness characterise avoidance. Arnold and Feldman (1996) aptly qualify this as a "no behaviour" one. This absence of behaviour neither meets one's concern nor the other party's.

The fourth strategy is compromise. It aims at meeting one's own interests and partially the other person's.

The last behaviour is collaboration. This is concerned with addressing the concerns of both parties to the conflict and with focusing on the problem. High assertiveness and high co-operativeness are the basis of collaboration.

Clearly each style of conflict management has its strengths and limitations as Hellviegel and Slomm (1999) and Arnold and Feldman (1996) indicate.

It will be useful to discuss when each style of managing conflict may be helpful. However, before that is attended to, attention will be given to variations of conflict management behaviours. Arnold and Feldman (1996) group the strategies of conflict management into conflict diffusion, conflict management and conflict confronting .

In conflict diffusion strategies, managers may choose smoothing over the conflict. They may point out to the group that differences are not major and may highlight similarities. Stoner and Wankel (1996) see smoothing as away of dominance, or a suppression of conflict. Alternatively, conflict can be defused by appealing to a superordinate goal. Here management diverts attention from the current conflict to the over-reaching aims both groups share. Smoothing, in the view of the researcher, is aligned to avoidance or suppression.

The other set of conflict management behaviours, which is called containment, does not seem to focus on the problem either. Compromise and

bargaining are examples of conflict containment strategies as Arnold and Feldman testify (1996).

Finally there is the conflict confrontation category. Filley (1995), Stoner and Wankel (1996) and Arnold and Feldman (1996) identify integrative problem solving and consensus as examples of conflict confrontation. Obviously, this classification of conflict management behaviours is more or less the same one, which Thomas (1996) identified, as discussed earlier. The main difference is in the grouping of styles rather than in the philosophical considerations governing them.

Attention is now given to the appropriateness of the different styles of conflict handling behaviours, to various situations. First, there is no best behaviour for all situations. Spinks and Caldwell (1998) hold this view. Nevertheless, certain behaviours are seen to be more appropriate than others to certain situations.

Callahan and Fleenor (1998) refer to a study conducted with a group of executives on their use of the five conflict management styles, with special attention to when they would use each of the strategies. Competitions were found to be appropriate when, for example, quick decisions were needed or when an unpopular decision had to be implemented. Williams (1995) agrees with Callahan and Fleenor that competition is used when there is an emergency or when the solution is pre-determined.

While these are advantages of competition, the researcher believes that competition may also strain relationships and lead to lack of support. This view is backed up by Cawood and Gibbon (1990). They state that this strategy may encourage the defeated to sabotage the success of the winners.

With regard to accommodation, the report of the executives referred to earlier stated that accommodation is useful when, for instance, one party wants to allow a better position to be heard. It also found out that accommodation

helps when issues are more important to the other party or when one wants to build social credits for later use (Callahan and Fleenor, 1998). Gordon (1993) agrees with this view. However, it is also noted that while yielding has important strengths, it also has potential limitations such as causing a lot of suppression of one's feelings, particularly if the one who yields is correct.

As far as avoidance is concerned, Callahan and Fleenor (1998) state that their study found it useful when, for example, an issue is trivial or when there is no chance of success in pursuing one's concerns. Yet avoidance does not seem to solve the conflict. This is confirmed by Gorton (1990) who states that avoidance techniques do not really resolve conflict, but rather circumvent it. However, Gorton concedes that avoidance techniques may be necessary in situations in which the other party clearly possesses authority, power or influence to force his or her will. It may also be necessary, Gorton continues, when negative consequences would result from a more active or aggressive approach.

Callahan and Fleenor (1998) see compromise as helpful if the nature of a settlement is beneficial to all parties, or when both parties are of equal power. Compromise also works when there is concern to arrive at expedient goals. Filley (1995) disagrees with the view that compromise leads to winning.

Finally, a look is taken at collaboration. Research from the study discussed by Callahan and Fleenor (1998), states that this strategy is useful when, for instance, an integrative solution is sought. Collaboration was also found appropriate where the concerns of both parties are too important to be compromised. It is remarkable that other terms used in literature as synonyms for collaboration, are integrative decision-making or problem solving (Filley, 1995).

Williams (1995) maintains that a collaborative style occurs only when the participants genuinely try to reach a solution to a difficult problem. This view is shared by others such as Gordon (1993). According to Alkire (1992)

collaboration also seems possible when there is readiness for growth and change. However, it may not be applicable when an immediate solution is needed, because the process of getting to a joint agreement is long. This point was discussed in detail - when characteristics of Win - Win models were reviewed.

4.5.3 Processes used in conflict management and resolution

In the next section a brief discussion of negotiation and bargaining, mediation and arbitration will be presented. This will be related to the conflict management models referred to above.

4.5.3.1 Negotiation and bargaining

Negotiation has been defined in many ways. Moore (1998) states that it is a problem-solving process where two or more parties voluntarily discuss differences and attempt to reach a joint decision on their common concerns. This definition is held and clarified by Mastenbroek (1997).

Mastenbroek (1997) sees negotiation as possible when individuals' interests are opposed and when there is also a high degree of dependence on an agreement that has advantages for all parties. This view of negotiation is confirmed by Lowe and Pollard (1999).

A comparison between negotiation and bargaining will further clarify negotiation. Nieuwmeyer (1998) offers a few definitions of negotiation and also contrasts it with bargaining. She maintains that negotiation is cooperative and bargaining is competitive. Moore (1998), however, offers another definition of bargaining. He sees bargaining as having two facets: interest based bargaining and positional bargaining.

Interest based bargaining is, according to Moore (1998), a strategy that focuses on satisfying as many interests or needs as possible for all negotiators. Positional bargaining, which is competitive and sees the other negotiator as an opponent, its goal is to win and defeat the opposition.

It can be concluded, therefore, that negotiation can be synonymous with bargaining, only if the latter is viewed as a co-operative enterprise. It is also clear that negotiation is more comprehensive than bargaining. Negotiation is discussed further below to determine its nature as a process.

Negotiation as a conflict-handling tool involves dialogue. The role of dialogue in negotiations and conflict management is acknowledged by Walton (1997). Freire (1992) and Alschuler (1990) argue that dialogue involves mental respect and trust in working out the rules that govern relationships.

Dialogue, according to Alschuler (1990) and Freire (1992) makes it possible for negotiators to realise that they both have legitimate needs. This realisation tends to soften tones of voice and increase respect for the other person. It also supports the search for mentally satisfying positions. The role of dialogue in conflict resolution is further endorsed by Kreidler (1994). Kreidler emphasises communication skills such as observing, being aware of perception and what affects it, listening carefully, clarifying perceptions and understanding communication blocks. It is apparent that dialogue is the means to get negotiators together. It keeps them in the same world of communication and ensures that the process of negotiation is maintained and is fruitful.

Further, negotiation demands exhaustive preparation in addition to dialogue. This view is held by many writers such as Moore (1998) and Nierenberg (1998). Nierenberg argues that negotiation calls for thorough preparation such as knowing the rules and being familiar with the negotiation technique. Both Moore and Nierenberg suggest a series of steps in preparation for negotiation. Some of these steps are: evaluating and selecting a strategy to

solve the problem, contacting the other party to state the desire to negotiate, working out the venues and times and designing a negotiation plan.

Fisher and Brown (1997) further state that part of the elements of a working relationship in negotiation is trustworthiness, without being wholly trusting. They also list rationality, understanding, communication and acceptance as important in negotiations. This view is held by Moore (1998). Moore comments that building trust and co-operation means focusing on dealing with relationship needs and promoting a climate for negotiation. It also means developing strategies to cope with strong feelings and emotions and to check perceptions.

The steps in the negotiation process reflect similarities with integrative decision-making and consensus. This view is held by English (1995) when he says: "The management of conflict means establishing the conditions by which conflict can lead to mutual explorations and new levels of consensus in problem solving."

4.5.3.2 Mediation and arbitration

Another pair of tools used in conflict handling is mediation and arbitration. Arbitration and mediation involve third parties in managing conflict. Nieuwmeyer (1998) defines mediation as a process through which disagreements are reached with the aid of a neutral third party. The third party should have no decision-making powers and no interest in either of the two parties. He/she is a communication and problem solving catalyst. The final assessment rests with the conflicting parties. Kimbrough and Nunnery (1993) assert that mediation and arbitration are two of the three intervention processes by third parties, the third process being what they call fact-finding.

Mediation, according to Kimbrough and Nunnery (1993), is the first step a third party takes to help the disputing parties reach a settlement. If it fails,

they argue, fact finding follows. In some instances, arbitration is resorted to. Arbitration is seen as the last process in the sequence of application of the three processes.

In Kimbrough and Nunnery's view, fact-finding and arbitration are alike. In both cases a third party who is mutually chosen conducts hearings, takes testimony and renders a decision on the issue. On the other hand, mediators do not take decisions about how the conflict is resolved. They merely facilitate the conflict resolution process.

4.6 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

In the remainder of this chapter, a few techniques of managing current conflicts will be identified and reviewed.

4.6.1 Expanding resources

The technique of expanding resources is one way of dealing with conflict. Milton (1991) also recommends this technique as one of the means of handling structural conflicts. Spinks and Caldwell (1998) argue that resources will often be scarce and competition for scarce resources is virtually inevitable. They recommend careful budgeting to minimise conflict over limited resources. However, in the opinion of the researcher expanding resources has restricted value where resources are seen to be unavailable or not adequate.

4.6.2 Altering the human and structural variables

Callahan and Fleenor (1998) and Robbins (1994) suggest altering the human and the structural variables as conflict handling techniques, where applicable.

Callahan and Fleenor (1998) see altering the human variable as a means of influencing human attitudes. Altering the human variable is a technique, which is used to help people expand knowledge and understanding of issues in their situation. This understanding paves the way for co-operation.

Altering the structural variable has been suggested by authors such as Milton (1991), Schumick (1992), as a consideration in conflict emanating from structural factors. Callahan and Fleenor (1998) also recommend the technique of effecting structural changes to manage conflict.

Improving communication channels and promoting organisations as communities are examples of alternating structural factors Kreidler (1994) and Ngcongco (1991).

Thus far a series of conflict handling techniques for current conflict has been reviewed. Without exhausting all, the section now looks at ways of dealing with potential conflict.

4.6.3 Stimulating conflict as a conflict management strategy

The models and techniques of conflict management discussed above, refer particularly to conflict that has erupted or is out in the open. However, some conflicts may be hidden. They may not surface. These may need to be exposed in order to be resolved.

Bisno (1998) and Robbins (1994) argue for stimulating conflict as a model of managing conflict that has not surfaced. Bisno (1998) goes on to explain that generating conflict is an appropriate approach when non-conflictual means are ineffective in promoting professional or social goals intended, or when the influence of power to conduct conflict is available or when it is estimated that the costs of not engaging in conflict would be high. Stoner and Wankel (1996) as well as Milton (1991) endorse the view that there is sometimes a

need to induce conflict. Milton (1991) maintains that constructive conflict is necessary for new challenge, for stimulation of problems and solutions, for successful adaptation to change and survival.

It does seem that a measure of conflict is essential and it behoves management to encourage the necessary amount of conflict (Stoner and Wankel, 1996). Below are some of the techniques for stimulating conflict.

4.6.4 Generating conflict management capabilities

Enabling others to realise their power in confronting conflict and effecting change is essential. Freire (1992), Alschuler (1990), and Bisno (1998) support this view.

Alschuler (1990) argues that one way in which people can position themselves to deal with conflict is to develop what he calls consciousness of oppression. This enables them to move from "*magical transforming*" and "*naive-reforming*" stages of wanting change to a critical transforming stage.

In the magical transforming stage, according to Alschuler, difficulties are seen as inevitable and unchangeable facts of existence. The analysis of facts is magical; the causes of these facts are seen to be beyond explanation. It would seem that conflict, from the magical transforming perspective, is managed by accommodation, resignation and the like.

In the naive transforming phase, problems are seen to lie in individuals who deviate from the idealised rules, roles, standards and expectations. People either blame others or themselves for problems experienced.

In the critical transforming stage, people in a conflict exercise their skills in critically identifying the rules and roles in the system. The system may be the classroom, school or political one. Whatever it is, it creates unequal power.

A diagnosis and analysis of the situation is made to determine the rules and roles that generate conflict.

The above exposition made by Alschuler (1990) is held by Freire (1992). Freire (1992) maintains that human beings emerge from the world, objectify it and in so doing can understand it. From there the involved parties transform the undesired reality with their labour. The human mind has the capacity to perpetuate problems or transform undesired realities. The thrust of this argument seems to revolve around placing significance to dialogue and, particularly, problem solving as a model of dealing with conflict.

Bisno (1998) also mentions three other techniques of stimulating conflict. These are:

- Developing confidence in conflict management;
- Exposing a false consensus; and
- Providing opportunity for the articulation of significant difference.

Developing confidence in conflict management and providing opportunities for handling significant differences were shown to be useful in dealing with existing conflicts as well.

Stimulating conflict may prove to be a very sensitive and demanding exercise. Gordon (1996) cautions that there is likely to be an error in calculating outcomes. He maintains that school managers must consider all of the possible ramifications before initiating conflict. He also mentions the demands of this exercise such as extreme calmness and rationality.

4.6.5 Managing conflict aftermath

Milton (1991) acknowledges the conflict aftermath stage. He maintains that it is the consequence of the conflict resolution method used. De Villiers (1995) also posits that when conflict has been resolved, there is a need to de-

emotionalise the situation and re-establish relationships. This prevents the emotional residue from increasing or from creating further potential for conflict.

This chapter will end with an overview of conflict management methods by scholars who have researched specifically on conflict in schools.

4.7 AN OVERVIEW OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

Researchers on conflict in schools have suggested various methods of managing conflict. Some of these methods are useful in dealing with conflict in setting besides schools. Transactional analysis is one example of these methods (Harris, 1999).

Raths, Harmin, Merrill and Simon (1996), Harris (1999) and Gordon (1994) believe in an underlying cause of misbehaviour and of conflict. They recommend that appealing to the learner's reasoning can solve conflicts with learners. They advise that a learner who is involved in conflict must be helped to clarify his or her values. According to Raths (1996) and Gordon (1994) an educator's role in assisting learners to manage conflicts is to affirm the learner, to acknowledge him or her as a capable person. The educator is essentially a facilitator in a learner's efforts to solve conflict.

Druikers (1998) and Glasser (1995) like Gordon (1994) and Raths (1996) believe in an underlying cause for conflict. However, they do not agree that appealing to the learner to choose the right value is sufficient to help in managing conflict. These researchers maintain that, in managing conflict with learners, educators must take more command. While these authors agree with Gordon (1994) and Raths (1996) that learners must take responsibility for their actions to resolve their problems, they add that educators must clarify, delineate and enforce boundaries. Educators can delineate and

enforce boundaries by, for example, determining learners' " faulty goals " and working out a clear plan to assist learners solve the problems, which generate conflicts (Druikers, 1998). Examples of faulty goals, which learners may pursue, are power, control or revenge.

Canter and Canter (1996), Madsen and Madsen (1994), Dobson (1994) and Engelman (1999) maintain that in solving differences with learners, it is essential for educators to manipulate external stimuli to cause learners to behave as desired by the school.

Unlike Gordon (1994) and Raths (1996) these researchers do not believe solely in the inherent rationality of the learner to manage discipline problems and conflicts.

The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management in partnership with the Ohio Department of Education (2000) has conducted several intensive studies on the management of conflict in schools. The discussions that follow report on the number of projects that have been conducted by the Ohio Commission.

The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management, together with the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Board of Education, and other educational organizations, work to provide Ohio schools with constructive, non-violent methods for resolving disputes.

Below is a brief discussion on school conflict management and examples of activities that can be used in the classroom to teach students conflict management skills.

4.7.1 Conflict management overview

Defining what constitutes a conflict management programme is difficult. The term conflict management has become an umbrella that is used to cover a

variety of approaches and programmes. For example, conflict management programmes can teach life skills, "win-win" negotiation strategies, mediation skills and violence prevention strategies. They are implemented in schools to help learners, educators, administrators and parents resolve conflicts effectively (Ohio Commission, 2000).

Generally, the term conflict management refers to programmes that teach individuals concepts and skills for preventing, managing and peacefully resolving conflicts. Traditionally, learner peer mediation programmes have been the most popular form of conflict management. However, educators are increasingly recognizing the importance of implementing programmes that use conflict management skills to handle classroom misbehaviour and to enhance the teaching of core academics. Learner peer mediation programmes also give rise to mediation programmes designed to resolve conflict among learners, educators, support-staff and parents.

4.7.2 Importance of a comprehensive programme

A comprehensive programme cannot be implemented 'overnight,' but it can be implemented easily in phases. The first phase, which may include a peer mediation programme or a few educators piloting conflict management in their classroom, usually begins in the school. As more and more learners, educators and parents experience the benefits of teaching conflict management, the programme can expand into all classrooms and into the community.

Although different schools and communities may establish different goals and objectives for their conflict management programmes, there are several characteristics of successful programmes. Essential elements include educational assessment, planning and evaluation. Goals and objectives that are developed and supported by everyone, that is, learners, administrators,

educators, parents and community members provide direction and establish a climate that supports the programme (Ohio Commission, 2000).

Schools provide a readily accessible opportunity to teach young people effective, non-violent conflict resolution skills. Learners also need consistent modelling of effective conflict resolution skills by adults outside the school. Staff development programmes, parent education programmes, civic organization presentations, and Church-sponsored programmes can provide opportunities to teach adults effective conflict resolution skills.

4.7.3 Benefits of school conflict management programmes

Many benefits are achieved as a result of conflict management programmes. Schools cited the following benefits.

- Teaching time is increased by reducing time spent on managing classroom conflicts;
- Knowledge of non-violent options to resolve conflicts is greatly increased;
- Ability to control one's behaviour in conflict situations is increased interpersonal communication skills are enhanced;
- Ability to identify common interests and achieve "win-win" solutions is improved;
- Suspensions are reduced;
- School climate is improved;
- Knowledgeable about and regularly use "win/win" approaches in attempting to resolve conflicts; and
- A comprehensive programme offers members of the school and local Communities the opportunity to learn, practice and model effective conflict management skills (Ohio Commission, 2000).

A comprehensive approach increases the chances that conflict resolution skills will be taught to learners and youth in homes, community centres, juvenile courts and juvenile correction centres by family members, friends of

the family, trained peers, leaders of community youth activities, probation officers or social workers.

Learners, educators and parents all realize these benefits. The extent to which these benefits achieve depends on a variety of factors. For example, while the effort of one educator using conflict management can achieve some benefits, it does not come close to achieving the maximum benefit for the greatest number of people (Ohio Commission, 2000).

- The best way to achieve optimal results is to design and implement a comprehensive approach to conflict management; and
- Funding school conflict management programmes

Funding is often the subject of questions asked by people who are interested in implementing school conflict management programmes. A single, accurate response to funding concerns is not possible. Existing school conflict management programmes are funded in a variety of ways, depending on the available resources of the school, community and state and federal agencies. Various funding mechanisms include the following:

- Existing school budgets community foundations community civic groups and parent groups;
- Local businesses;
- State and federal programmes;
- Curricular materials;
- Staff, parents, learners and community training;
- Programme co-ordinator; and
- Time to attend regional or state-funded conferences (Ohio Commission, 2000).

4.7.4 Recommendations for starting school conflict management programmes

Although starting conflict management initiatives is not an easy task, sustaining them has proven to be even more difficult. Building and maintaining an effective conflict management programme is similar to building a sturdy house - a strong foundation is essential.

A wealth of information was gathered during the Commission's three-year (1990-1993) assessment of 20 diverse school conflict resolution programmes. Information was provided to the Commission by educators, learners, principals, superintendents, parents, school board members, independent evaluators and conflict management trainers from Ohio and across the country (Ohio Commission, 2000).

The following recommendations represent the most comprehensive and innovative approach for establishing and maintaining school conflict management initiatives. School conflict management programmes that were established prior to these recommendations are now adopting the recommendations to strengthen their programmes.

When initiatives are implemented in accordance with these recommendations, the result is conflict management programmes that really work. Experience shows that a great difference exists between the impact of conflict management programmes, which are simply "there", and those that are truly successful. Many school managers in the U.S.A. and in the U.K. have been intensively trained in conflict management styles, techniques and resolution strategies and have successfully managed to control conflicts to the minimum level at their school settings (Ohio Commission, 2000).

4.7.5 Recommendations:

- Form a diverse planning committee to conduct an assessment of the school's needs and to determine what types of conflict management are best suited to the schools;
- Map out a plan for how conflict management will be institutionalised in all schools within a district;
- Include both peer mediation and conflict management curriculum as part of the plan to provide all learners with better conflict resolution skills;
- Designate a conflict management coordinator for the school district and for each school;
- Adopt mediation as an option for resolving all conflicts that occur at the school;
- Educate learners, educators, guidance counsellors, administrators, school board members and parents about conflict management initiatives;
- Actively involve large numbers of learners, educators, guidance counsellors, administrators and parents in the operation of peer mediation programmes;
- Develop in-school curricular materials and training expertise;
- Evaluate the conflict management activities to determine if they are meeting the stage goals and objectives; and
- Develop partnerships with parents and leaders of organizations to explore ways in which conflict management concepts and skill can be infused into their activities (Ohio Commission, 2000).

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented an overview of conflict theories and models of conflict management. This was essential to understand and appreciate the complexity of the origin and nature of conflict. The Human Needs Theory forms the basis for explaining conflict. It emphasises that conflict is a product of unsatisfied human needs. Various perspectives on conflict management presented a divergence of historical perspectives on conflict management. Management of existing conflict; some of the processes used in conflict management and conflict resolution strategies and techniques of managing conflicts were discussed. The next chapter will be on research methodology.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five outlines the research methodology of this study. It explains the rationale behind the methodology employed, how the research was conducted, and what steps were taken to ensure the validity of the study. The theoretical framework is provided in chapter two, three and four, and the purpose of the study as stated in chapter one was the guiding force in this investigation.

The empirical investigation was conducted to determine the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school.

5.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS A RESEARCH TOOL

Tools employed in the collection of data in surveys are the questionnaire and individual interview (Borg and Gall, 1989:418). The method of data collection is to some extent guided by the purpose of the study (Dixon, 1989; Legotto, 1994). As stated in chapter one, the purpose of this study was to explore the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school. This was done by gathering the views and perceptions of the principals and teachers on the causes of conflict in schools.

In the empirical investigation of this study, the questionnaire was employed as a tool for collecting the data. The most important aspect of this type of data collection is that the questionnaire and interviews are the only means of communication between the respondents and the researcher.

5.2.1 Advantages of questionnaires

The questionnaire was employed because of the following advantages (Dixon, 1989:19; Legotlo, 1994:162-163):

- **Low unit cost:** travelling and subsistence costs are minimal;
- **Homogeneous stimuli:** since questionnaires are identical, the stimuli provided are identical;
- **Geographical coverage:** respondents from all parts of the country could be reached;
- **Anonymity of respondents:** respondents' names are not given. In this study even the names of the schools or the circuit offices were not divulged, because doubts about anonymity could influence the validity of the responses;
- **Speed:** information from thousands of respondents could be obtained within a month; and
- **Ease of processing:** the questionnaire could be carefully structured and precoded, and very little use is made of open-ended questions.

5.2.2 Disadvantages of questionnaires

Disadvantages of questionnaires cannot be overlooked. Like all other strategies for data collection the questionnaire has some disadvantages listed below (Legotlo, 1994):

- **Representativeness:** the high non-response rate is quite common;
- **Impersonal:** impersonality may cause frustrations to some respondents;
- **Negative attitudes to the questionnaire:** questionnaires are commonly used today and some respondents could have negative attitude towards them; and
- **Availability of addresses of the sample population poses some problems.**

Despite these limitations the mail questionnaire is still commonly used in the collection of data. With great care taken in the construction of the questionnaire and its administration, more favourable responses could be attained (Dixon, 1989).

5.2.3 Questionnaire construction

The measuring instrument has the greatest influence on the reliability of the collected data; hence great care was taken in the construction of the questionnaire. A well-designed questionnaire boosts the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable levels of tolerance (Schnetler, 1989:44).

The questionnaire is commonly used as a tool for data collection (Wiersma, 1985:146; Kamil et al., 1985:48; Schnetler, 1989:44; Legotto, 1994; Teu, 2002). However, there are some criticisms against the use of the questionnaire, like for example:

- Excessive non-response rates;
- Poorly-constructed items;
- Questionnaires deal with trivial information; and
- Data from different questions are difficult to synthesize.

Schnetler (1989:44) argues that the major criticism against the use of questionnaires is the poor design rather than the questionnaire per se. To overcome the difficulty of poorly constructed questionnaires, items should deal with meaningful research problems, questionnaires are to be structured carefully and administered effectively to qualified respondents (Van Dalen, 1979:156).

According to Borg and Gall (1989:430-431) some of the rules for constructing a questionnaire are as follows:

- Clarity – items should mean the same to all respondents;
- Short items are preferable;
- Negative items should be avoided;
- Double-barrelled items which require the subject to respond to two separate ideas with a single answer should be avoided; and
- Biased questions are to be avoided.

5.2.3.1 Development of the questionnaire items

The aim of the questionnaire was to gather information about the background and the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management in schools as well as how conflict affects the overall performance of the school. This instrument has been used successfully to determine the needs to develop a conflict management model that will be used by the school managers as a guide to resolve problems that cause conflicting situations in school settings.

The following three important strategies were employed in the development of the questionnaire:

- Firstly, issues raised in the literature on the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management in schools and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school in chapter two, three and four were examined;
- Secondly, in January 2003 extensive interviews were conducted with school managers of secondary schools in the North-West Province on the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school; and
- Thirdly, tools employed in the gathering of data in similar studies like Kirsten (1996), Kok (1992), Mataboge (1990), Mosoge (1989),

Ngcongco (1993), Mazibuko (1999) and Mlambo (1995) were examined.

The instrument was constructed in a similar pattern to the study conducted by Everard and Morris (1990) in England and Wales. The Everard and Morris study used open-ended questions and the Likert scale responses on how lack of viable conflict management strategies affects the overall performance of the school. Similar studies (Ngcongco,1993; Kirsten, 1996; Mosoge, 1989; Mataboge, 1990; Mlambo, 1995) also used the Likert scale responses and open-ended questions.

To gather more information on the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, the researcher chose to use a structured format of questions to elicit experiences on problems experienced by the principals and teachers, as well as essential skills that they viewed as important in the management of conflict in schools. Teachers were also asked to express their views on the nature and scope of conflict management in their school settings.

5.2.3.2 Format and content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into the following seven sections (Appendix A) according to their focus:

Section A (questions 1-7). The purpose of these questions was to gather biographical and demographical data about each respondent. Such information is essential to understand the background information of the respondents such as the profile of each respondent, and from which category of school they are from as compared to others.

Section B (questions 8.1-8.12). The purpose of these questions was to determine the nature and scope of conflict in schools. Respondents were requested to indicate their response on a two-point scale which most

accurately reflects their experience with an (X) in the space provided (1=YES; 2= NO).

Section C (questions 9.1-9.12) 12 items were developed from the literature review, and for each item the respondents were asked to indicate, on a four-point scale, the extent of the problem. (NAP = Not a problem, MP = Minor problem, AP = A problem and SP = Serious problem).

Section D (questions 10.1-10.12). The respondents were asked to indicate on a four-point scale with an (X) in the response category which most closely reflects their experience on how lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools affects the overall performance of the school (SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree and SA = Strongly agree)

Section E (questions 11.1-11.12). The respondents had to indicate on a four-point scale with an (X) in the response category which most accurately reflects their experience on how often the identified items are causes of conflict in schools. (A = Always, O = Often, S = Seldom and N = Never)

Section F (questions 12.1-12.16) The respondents were requested to rate the importance of each essential skill needed by the principal to manage conflict (1= Unimportant required skill, 2= Important required skill, 3= Extremely important required skill)

Section G (questions 14.1-14.5) The respondents were requested to respond to structured questions and to make their comments on any other essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict efficiently and effectively in schools and on any other problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools. A space was provided for the respondents to state whether there is a need to develop a conflict management model that can be used by the principals as a guide to manage conflicts in schools.

5.2.4 Pre-testing the questionnaire

A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary investigation designed to acquaint the researcher with flaws and problems that need attention before the major study is conducted (Treece and Treece, 1986:382; Legotlo,1994)). It offers the researcher an opportunity to pre-test the instrument. The major purpose of the pilot trial is to detect the problems that must be solved before the major study. Most of the flaws of the measuring instrument are detected during the pilot study (Schnetler, 1989:92; Legotlo,1994).

In order to determine any ambiguity, flaws and problems, the questionnaire was pre-tested using a sample of (n=10) principals. The 10 principals were asked to complete the questionnaire and to indicate whether some questions seemed ambiguous to them and also to comment on other points that should be considered to improve the instrument (Borg and Gall, 1989:435).

The pre-test results were checked, and the suggestions made by the respondents were taken into considerations to improve the questionnaire. Five of the principals in the pre-test mentioned that they were not aware of the fact that conflict does not suddenly appear, it passes through a series of progressive stages as tension builds up. Lack of conflict management strategies in schools does affect the overall performance of the school, if it drags an immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict is not resolved in an amicable way.

5.2.5 Final questionnaire

The final questionnaire was administered to 50 principals, 50 deputy principals, 150 head of departments and 250 teachers from the 12 districts of education in the North West Province.

5.2.6 Covering letter

The covering letter is a tool employed to introduce the questionnaire to the respondents with the main purpose of getting them to respond to the questionnaire. It gives the respondents direction in the completion of the questionnaire and it guarantees anonymity (Wiersma,1985:152; Treece and Treece, 1986:294; Borg and Gall, 1989:436; Legotlo,1994).

A simple and straightforward information that explained the purpose of the study accompanied the questionnaire to the respondents. The respondents were also reassured that all the information they provided would remain confidential (Wiersma, 1985:152).

5.3 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Permission for access to schools was first secured from the twelve district managers of education in the North West Province. The list of all secondary schools in each district was obtained from the respective district managers. From the information provided, especially on the geographical location of the selected schools, the researcher was able to deliver the questionnaires. The district education officers helped in identifying the geographical location of some schools. With the help of the district offices contact persons in each district were selected from members of the district office staff.

The researcher also requested the principals to help with the distribution of the questionnaires to the selected respondents. In each school, the questionnaires were completed by: 1 principal; 1 deputy principal; 3 heads of departments and 5 teachers. The arrangements for the collection of the completed questionnaires were made with some of the principals of the selected secondary schools in the North West Province.

5.4 FOLLOW-UPS

Non-response is a major disadvantage of the questionnaire. The respondents may simply decide not to respond to the questionnaire. Follow-ups are important in maximising response level. Follow-ups were made personally with principals of selected schools. The researcher repeatedly went to some schools to find out whether the respondents had completed the questionnaires. In some cases, the researcher had to re-issue questionnaires because the previous ones had been lost, misplaced or forgotten at home by the respondents. These follow-ups were costly and demanded a lot of perseverance. Follow-ups are also important in maximising response rate (Legotlo, 1996).

5.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The survey population was drawn from twelve educational districts of the North West Province. From a list of all the secondary schools in the North West Province ($N = 365$) a random sampling ($n=50$) was done. Five (5) secondary schools in each of the twelve educational districts of the North West Province were randomly selected to participate in this study.

In each of the fifty (50) randomly selected secondary schools in the North West Province: 1 principal; 1 deputy principal, 3 heads of departments and 5 teachers were requested to complete the questionnaires. Thus the sample of ($n=500$) was composed of ten (10) respondents from each of the fifty (50) randomly selected secondary schools in the twelve educational districts of the North West Province.

Table 5.1 DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE POPULATION

	SAMPLE POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
Principals	50	10
Deputy principals	50	10
Head of departments	150	30
Teachers	250	50
TOTAL	500	100

5.6 RESPONSE

Questionnaires were delivered to the 50 randomly selected secondary schools in the North West Province to be completed by 10 respondents from each school.

Table 5.2 shows the response rate

Table 5.2 RESPONSE RATE

		RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
Principals	50	46	92
Deputy principals	50	42	84
Head of departments	150	144	96
Teachers	250	188	75
TOTAL	500	420	

It is clear from the Table 5.2 that of the total sample population (N=500), (n=420) (84 %) usable questionnaires were returned. This good response rate indicates the importance of follow-ups and the fact that questionnaires were delivered and collected by the researcher.

5.6.1 Problems of conflict management in rank order

Table 5.3 below shows the response of the empirical investigation conducted on the problems of conflict management in ranking order.

TABLE 5.3 PROBLEMS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN RANK ORDER

RANK NO	ITEM	F	%
1	9.1 Problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the education department	390	93
2	9.11 Differences in values and expectations	382	91
3	9.6 Power struggles	378	90
4	9.5 Unprofessional behaviour of certain Educators	362	86
5	9.4 Scarcity of resources	350	83
6	9.2 Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act	346	82
7	9.10 Clash of personality skills and traits	342	81
8	9.7 Role ambiguities	338	80
9	9.9 Differences in goals, methods and procedures	326	78
10	9.12 Abrupt changes	315	75
11	9.8 Interdependence of activities	310	74
12	9.3 Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies	302	72

5.6.2 Effects of lack of viable conflict management in ranking order

Table 5.4 shows the response of the empirical investigation conducted on the effects of lack of viable conflict management in ranking order.

TABLE 5.4 EFFECTS OF LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN RANKING ORDER

Rank No		f	%
1	10.7 Conflict destroys morale	410	98
2	10.10 Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour	405	96
3	10.11 Conflict decreases expected production	400	95
4	10.2 An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags on for too long	384	91
5	10.12 Conflict causes lack of communication	372	89
6	10.3 Conflict impedes teaching and learning	368	88
7	10.9 Conflict obstructs co-operative actions	360	86
8	10.6 Conflict diverts energy	352	84
9	10.4 Conflict causes continuous damage to job Satisfaction	346	82
10	10.7 Conflict deepens differences	338	80
11	10.5 Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of school days	318	76
12	10.1 Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive to teaching and learning	280	67

5.6.3 CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN RANKING ORDER

Table 5.5 shows the response of the empirical investigation conducted on the causes of conflict in ranking order

TABLE 5.5 CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN RANKING ORDER

RANK NO	ITEM	f	%
1	11.3 Insulting remarks	410	98
2	11.2 Misunderstandings	400	95
3	11.6 Scandal mongering	384	91
4	11.11 Interference in school affairs by parents	380	90
5	11.7 Evaluation of educators	372	89
6	11.1 Poor communication	368	88
7	11.8 Professional jealousy by colleagues	360	86
8	11.9 Political differences	354	84
9	11.4 Disrespect for another's views	350	83
10	11.10 Incompetence of certain educators	345	82
11	11.5 Racist remarks	340	81
12	11.12 Interference in school affairs by community based organizations	300	71

5.6.4 ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN RANKING ORDER

Table 5.6 shows the response of the empirical investigation conducted on the essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict in ranking order.

**TABLE 5.6 ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY PRINCIPALS
TO MANAGE CONFLICT IN RANKING ORDER**

RANK NO	ITEM	F	%
1	Reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response	408	97
2	Defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities	386	92
3	Investigating all possible forms of resource- sharing	362	86
4	Analysing antecedent conditions that may result in conflict	358	85
5	Diagnosing possible causes of conflict in the school	350	83
6	Possessing an art of settling or reconciling differences	336	80
7	Knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools	330	79
8	Preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school	326	78
9	To be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflict that may emerge in the school	320	76
10	Capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs	312	74
11	Ability to maintain the school climate conducive for the culture of learning and teaching	308	73

5.7 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

5.7.1 Descriptive data

A computer-aided statistical analysis was employed. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)-programme was used to compute the results of the study. The first step in the analysis of data was to compute descriptive data for each respondent in the study. These include statistics like frequency distribution, percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and chi-square.

5.7.2 Quantitative data

To determine the statistical significance between the groups, means were computed. A test of statistical significance was done to determine whether the null hypothesis can be rejected or not (Borg and Gall, 1989:350). Standard deviation was also computerised so as to detect the relationships of the two groups of respondents namely, the principals and teachers.

5.8 SUMMARY

The questionnaire was employed as the main instrument in the collection of data because of its advantages (cf.5.2.1). With the assistance of the University of North West statistical consultant, both descriptive and quantitative analysis were employed. The computation of frequencies (f), percentages, means, standard deviation (SD) and chi-square, were employed to accept or reject a hypothesis that there are problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools and unresolved conflicts do affect the overall academic performance of the school.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the results of the empirical investigation conducted to determine the problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management in schools and how lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school. The quantitative and qualitative data collected through the investigation are summarised and discussed.

6.2 REVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

Of the total subjects (500) 432 (86.4%) respondents returned the questionnaires. Twelve (2.4%) of the questionnaires were returned uncompleted and 68 (13.6%) of the questionnaires were not returned. Only 420 (84%) questionnaires were usable (cf.5.6).

6.3 BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

Table 6.1 was drawn to gain a picture of the biographical and demographical characteristics of the respondents. Such information helps us to know who our respondents are.

6.3.1 Age groups of the respondents

From the Table 6.1 it is noted that 12 (3%) of the respondents were between 31-35 years, 24 (6%) between 36-40, 52 (12%) between 41-45, 102 (24%) between 46-50, and 230 (55%) above 51. Five experienced principals whose ages were above 51 years, confirmed during an interview that they have used their expertise several times to resolve conflicts that pertained to scandal mongering, unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers and teachers who refused to be evaluated.

TABLE 6.1 DESCRIPTION OF BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA OF THE RESPONDENTS

			f	%
1. AGE GROUPS OF THE RESPONDENTS				
1.1	Below	30	0	0
1.2	31	35	12	3
1.3	36	40	24	6
1.4	41	45	52	12
1.5	46	50	102	24
1.6	Above	51	230	55
TOTAL			420	100
2. GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS				
			f	%
2.1	Males		298	71
2.2	Females		122	29
TOTAL			420	100
3. SCHOOL LOCATION OF THE RESPONDENTS				
			f	%
3.1	Urban		269	64
3.2	Rural		151	36
TOTAL			420	100
4. SCHOOL ENROLMENT				
			f	%
4.1	Below	100	0	0
4.2	101	150	0	0
4.3	151	550	59	14
4.4	551	850	109	26
4.5	851	1000	118	28
4.6	Above	1000	134	32
TOTAL			420	100
5. POSITIONS HELD BY RESPONDENTS IN SCHOOLS				
			f	%
5.1	Teachers		146	35
5.2	Head of departments		92	22
5.3	Deputy principals		86	20
5.4	Principals		96	23
TOTAL			420	100
6. EXPERIENCE OF THE RESPONDENTS				
			f	%
6.1	Less than 1 year		10	2
6.2	1	3 years	28	7
6.3	4	5 years	142	34
6.4	Above 5 years		240	57
TOTAL			420	100
7. HIGHEST QUALIFICATIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS				
			f	%
7.1	UED		22	5
7.2	BA ED		220	52
7.3	B ED		120	29
7.4	M ED		25	6
7.5	D ED		6	2
7.6	Others (specify)		27	6
TOTAL			420	100

6.3.2 Gender of the respondents

Of the total respondents 298 (71%) were males and only 122 (29%) females. These data support the problem of female under-representation in key managerial positions as highlighted by Greyvenstein (1989) in her study on the development of women for management position in education. In this study, it was also revealed that the majority of the cases pertaining to conflicts involved female teachers. A number of female teachers in one school confirmed that it was a common thing among themselves to be involved in conflicts such as scandal mongering.

6.3.3 School locations of the respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their schools are located in an urban or rural area. Table 6.1 shows that 269 (64%) of the respondents taught in urban schools, while 151 (36%) in rural schools. The influence of an informal settlement next to schools has a negative effect on the smooth running of the school. Schools that are built next to an informal settlement experience the problem of discipline. From observation in the field some of the learners from the informal settlement would be seen going home during school hours and teachers could not control them. Clashes resulted in some occasions when teachers tried to maintain discipline.

6.3.4 School enrolments of the respondents

Subjects were asked to indicate the learner enrolment in their schools. Table 6.1 shows that of the total respondents, 59 (14%) schools had an enrolment of 151-550, 109 (26%) schools had an enrolment of 551-850, 118 (28%) schools had an enrolment of 851-1000 and 134 (32%) schools an enrolment of above 1000. Overcrowding does cause conflict in schools. The uncontrollable large intake of learners to a school has a causal factor on conflict. In one of the schools where the enrolment was above one thousand five hundred (1500), the teachers could not give individual attention to each learner, compared to a school where the enrolment was between 101-150. Conflicts resulted because

learners felt that they were not attended to and their work was seldom controlled and evaluated by their subject teachers.

6.3.5 Positions held in schools by the respondents

Table 6.1 shows that of the total respondents, 146 (35%) were teachers, 92 (22%) heads of departments, 86 (20%) deputy principals and 96 (23%) principals. Data was gathered from all the components that were involved in the management of conflicts in schools. It was important to collect data from these respondents since they have different perceptions or views on the management of conflict in schools. Several respondents confirmed during the interviews that conflicts are rife among teachers because of hunger for positions. A young principal was appointed to one school and the school management team was not in favour of his appointment because, he was younger and more qualified. The school management team even went to an extent of mobilising other teachers to be against him, spreading false information to other members of staff that his appointment was not procedural and legitimate. The department of education had to transfer him to another school for the sake of peace.

6.3.6 Number of years in positions

The respondents were also asked to state their experience in the positions they were holding. Table 6.1 shows that 10 (2%) of the respondents had less than one year teaching experience, 28 (7%) 1-3 years, 142 (34%) 4-5 years and 240 (57%) more than 5 years. This empirical finding is important because the number of years the respondents have in teaching system can be of great value in the implementation of conflict management in schools. They have the experience and understanding of how lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school. Their contributions are of great value in understanding the causes of conflict in schools. In one school, three teachers who were recently appointed clashed with their departmental head because they were of the idea that their methods of teaching are modern and their methodology must be adopted by the entire teaching staff and do away

with the old method of textbook. This attempt to persuade veteran teachers who have been producing good results while using the textbook method, resulted in a serious division among the teachers of the same school.

6.3.7 Highest academic qualifications of the respondents

The subjects were also asked to state their highest academic qualifications. Table 6.1 shows that 22 (5%) of the respondents had UED. Most of the respondents, 220 (52%) held BA Ed degree. Hundred and twenty (29%) held B Ed, 25 (6%) held M Ed and 6 (2%) held D Ed and the remaining 27 (6%) held Senior Secondary Teachers Diploma (SSTD). The highest academic qualifications of the respondents could have a positive influence on the implementation of CMP in schools, because some have done course work on conflict management theory and have an idea of the modern skills and techniques of conflict management. Academic qualifications do cause conflicts especially if they are coupled with jealousy. This was confirmed by one of the respondents in this study. He revealed that it is not an easy task to accept to be led by a highly qualified young principal, since he was just about to retire from the teaching field. He has never been promoted to any managerial position for years during his active teaching career.

6.4 PROBLEMS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

The purpose of the study was to determine empirically the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools and how lack of viable conflict management strategies affect the overall performance of the school if it is not cordially and constructively handled. This section gives a brief summary of the problems caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools as revealed by the empirical investigation conducted. In order to gain a picture of the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, principals, heads of departments, deputy principals and teachers were asked to indicate their views on the intensity of each problem on a four-point scale.

Problems identified from the literature review were categorised into the following:

- Problems arising from not complying with some of the policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department (cf. 3.2.1);
- Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act (cf. 3.2.2);
- Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies (cf. 3.2.3);
- Scarcity of resources (cf. 3.2.4);
- Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers (cf. 3.2.5);
- Role ambiguities (cf. 3.2.9);
- Interdependence of activities (cf. 3.3.2);
- Differences in goals, methods and procedures (cf. 3.3.3);
- Clash of personality skills and traits (cf. 3.3.5);
- Differences in values and expectations (cf. 3.3.6); and
- Abrupt changes (cf. 3.3.10).

Table 6.2 provides a picture of the intensity of the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, a brief summary of the empirical findings based on this table is given.

Item 9.1 Policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department

Table 6.2 shows that 320 (76%) of the respondents felt that some policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department are serious problems that cause conflicts in schools and only 50 (12%) of the respondents felt that policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department are a problem.

TABLE 6.2: PROBLEMS CAUSED BY LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN SCHOOLS

ITEM NO	ITEM	NAP		MP		AP		SP	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
9.1	Problems arising from not complying with some of policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department	20	5	30	7	50	12	320	76
9.2	Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act	4	1	22	5	42	10	352	84
9.3	Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies	10	3	18	4	56	13	336	80
9.4	Scarcity of resources	20	4	36	9	62	15	302	72
9.5	Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers	14	3	42	10	66	16	298	71
9.6	Power struggles	14	3	24	6	58	14	324	77
9.7	Role ambiguities	12	3	32	8	64	15	312	74
9.8	Interdependence of activities	8	2	18	4	48	11	346	83
9.9	Differences in goals, methods and procedures	18	4	39	9	53	13	310	74
9.10	Clash of personality skills and traits	4	1	25	6	68	16	323	77
9.11	Differences in values and expectations	4	1	20	5	54	13	342	81
9.12	Abrupt changes	4	1	8	2	52	12	356	85

KEYS: NAP = Not a problem

MP = Minor problem

AP = A problem

SP = Serious problem

In one secondary school in this study, the principal confirmed that his deputy principal was charged with misconduct, because he unfairly discriminated against other teachers on the basis of race, political opinion, ethnic and social origin.

Item 9.2 Lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act

Table 6.2 shows that the majority of the respondents 352 (84%) felt that ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act is a serious problem that causes conflict in schools and only 42 (10%) viewed it as a problem. Conflicts in schools are caused by lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act. This act clearly states the conditions of employment that should be observed and carried out by the employer, in this case, the Department of Education and the employee, in this case, the teacher. This act aims at minimizing conflicts, it states the code of behaviour expected from both the employer and the employee. Procedures that should be followed in a case of grievances or disputes are clearly outlined.

Three teachers in one school, unjustifiably prejudiced the administration, discipline and the efficiency of the Department of Education and, to make matters worse, they were absent from work for a number of days without valid reason or permission.

Item 9.3 Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies

According to Table 6.2, 336 (80%) of the respondents were of the view that lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies is a serious problem that causes conflicts in schools and 56 (13%) viewed it as a problem. Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies exacerbates conflicts in schools. One principal blew a minor conflict out of proportion. She did not know which procedure to follow or which conflict management style to employ to settle a minor conflict in her school where two teachers participated in an unprocedural unprotected industrial action.

Item 9.4 Scarcity of resources

Table 6.2 shows that 302 (72%) of the respondents strongly agreed that scarcity of resources is a serious problem that causes conflicts in schools and 62 (15%) were of the opinion that it is a problem. Scarcity of resources results in conflicts, if the principal does not come up with a plan of action on how to share the limited available resources in his or her school. Scarcity of resources in one school was caused by the lack of enough human resources so the work was shared without any incentives, books were available on first come first serve basis. This was a recipe for conflict. Similar studies highlighted problems of inadequate resource in developing countries (Legotlo, 1994).

Item 9.5 Unprofessional behaviours

Table 6.2 shows that 298 (71%) of the respondents strongly agreed that unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers is a serious problem that causes conflicts in schools, while 66 (16%) viewed it as a problem. Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers was experienced in one school. The school could not achieve its vision and mission because the teachers of this particular school behaved unprofessionally. Science teachers, who could not finish the syllabus on time, helped the grade twelve candidates to answer questions during the examination.

Item 9.6 Power struggles

According to Table 6.2, 324 (77%) of the respondents were of the opinion that power struggle is a serious problem that causes conflicts in schools and 58 (14%) agreed that it is a problem. A certain school could not function smoothly because the teachers of that particular school were constantly involved in cold war among themselves. Tooth for tooth and eye for eye was the order of the day. Struggles for power and hunger resulted in conflicts. This made the attainment of envisaged goals highly impossible.

Item 9.7 Role ambiguities

Table 6.2 shows that most of the respondents 312 (74%) strongly agreed that role ambiguities are a serious problem that causes conflicts in schools, while 64 (15%) viewed it as a problem. Not clearly stipulating or demarcating roles results in ambiguities. The principal of one secondary school confirmed that not knowing exactly who is supposed to do what and when, once caused a confusion and dissatisfaction that resulted in a serious conflict because the work was finally not done. The principal admitted that he did not clarify and delegate responsibilities for each teacher. He was supposed to have distributed the work equitably so as to avoid any role ambiguities. His staff members accused him of favouritism. His failure to allocate work equitably to the teachers resulted in the matter being reported and dealt with at the circuit office of education.

Item 9.8 Interdependence of activities

From Table 6.2 it was noted that 346 (83%) of the respondents were of the opinion that interdependence of activities is a serious problem that results in conflicts in schools and 48 (11%) agreed that it is a problem. In one of the secondary schools in this study, it became evident that sharing of responsibilities need to be well planned so as to avoid a situation where one teacher has got to do the work of another teacher, because the other teacher has not completed his or her part of the syllabus due to laziness. The teacher concerned had to complete it before he or she could start with his or her part of the work. This is common in schools where teachers share subjects.

Item 9.9 Differences in goals, methods and procedures

Table 6.2 shows that 310 (74%) of the respondents indicated that differences in goals, methods and procedures are serious problems that cause conflicts in schools, while only 53 (13%) were of the view that it is a problem. In one school it was found that differences in goals, methodology and procedures does result in conflict. Teachers who taught the same subject in the same

grade did not have the same idea of how to approach a certain topic. This ended in one approaching the topic in his or her way. The finding here is that the objectives of the plan were not achieved because each teacher did it in his or her own manner. The difference in approach, values and expectations resulted in a conflicting situation.

Item 9.10 Clash of personality skills and traits

From Table 6.2 it can be noted that clash of personality skills and traits was viewed by 323 (77%) of the respondents as a serious problem that always results in conflicts in schools and only 68 (16%) viewed it as a problem. Human beings differ in ideologies and philosophy as a result there will always be some disagreements in thoughts caused by personal make up, personal experience and personal background that will collide with other individual's make up.

From the empirical investigation conducted, one principal made it clear that clash of personality skills and traits is caused by the fact that each and every individual is unique and has got his or her manner of doing things that has worked for him or her in the past. This makes it difficult for him or her to adopt and adapt to other peoples' manners or thoughts of doing things, this usually results in conflict. This type of behaviour has caused the principal to be at loggerheads with teachers that practice it when it comes to meeting the deadlines of submission of work at the circuit office.

Item 9.11 Differences in values and expectations

Table 6.2 shows that, the majority of the respondents 342 (81%) indicated that differences in values and expectations are serious problems that cause conflicts in schools, while 54 (13%) viewed differences in values and expectations as a problem. From an interview that was conducted with one of the respondents, one head of department stated that some teachers in her school do not attach the same sentiments and values to the same common task. Some would like to see the task succeeding because they have initiated

it, while some would like to see the task being a total failure because they are not part and parcel to it. This type of behaviour usually manifests itself during music competition times. The problem that sparks conflicts in schools is being not on the same wavelength of teachers of the same school.

Item 9.12 Abrupt changes

Table 6.2 depicts that abrupt unwelcome changes were noted by 356 (85%) of the respondents as a serious problem that causes conflicts in schools and 52 (12%) viewed it as a problem that ends in conflicts in schools. Abrupt changes that have not been negotiated but enforced will always not be acceptable by the teachers. Changes should be gradually introduced so as to cope with its demands. One teacher voiced out his dissatisfaction by stating that his principal does not always involve them when changes are introduced into the school. As teachers they would have loved to be involved in all the decision making-process, so as to own the process especially if the changes are abrupt and need the full participation of all the stakeholders. The respondent even stated why the right sizing of teachers by the Department of Education became a failure. There were many flaws that arose because right sizing was not a consultative, democratically and envisaged process. It was just abruptly introduced to teachers as a matter of urgency.

In summary, the above factors are some of the problems that have been confirmed by the respondents as being the result of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools. The principals are required to effectively and efficiently manage all forms of conflicts that emerge in their schools. Lack of conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies render it highly impossible for the principal to manage or control conflicts that emerge in his or her school. The majority of the respondents overwhelmingly indicated that it is an extremely important required skill for the principal to possess the art of managing conflicts successfully and cordially so as to curb these problems from affecting the overall performance of the school.

6.5 LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AFFECT THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL

This section gives a brief summary of how lack of viable conflict management strategies affect the overall performance of the school as revealed by the empirical investigation. In order to gain a picture of how lack of viable conflict management strategies affect the overall performance of the school, respondents were requested to indicate their response categories that most closely reflect their point of view.

Table 6.3 provides a picture and a brief summary of the empirical findings based on how lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school. Factors identified from the literature review were categorised into the following:

Item 10.1 Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive for the culture of teaching and learning

Table 6.3 shows that 326 (78%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 66 (16%) agreed that serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive for the culture of teaching and learning. A school climate that is characterised by being not conducive for the culture of learning and teaching constantly encounters various types of conflicts. Political intolerance among the learners as well as maladministration of finances may result in conflicts that render the school ungovernable.

From observation in the field, the researcher came across a situation where some learners of a certain school were not in class while other learners were taught in class. Such behaviour of learners was a clear indication that there was no discipline in this school. The majority of these learners were not in their proper school uniform. A group of learners confirmed that such behaviour was the order of the day and there was nothing wrong with it. Some teachers confirmed by confessing that they have tried their best to maintain discipline but they have failed. One week later the school was involved in a strike where

the learners demanded that the principal be removed because he had failed dismally to manage the conflict that had been there between the learners and the teachers of the school. They wanted to know what had happened to the money that they had collected to raise funds the previous year to buy soccer outfit.

TABLE 6.3: LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AFFECTS THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL

ITEM NO	ITEM	SD		D		A		SA	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
10.1	Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive for teaching and learning	6	1	22	5	66	16	326	78
10.2	An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags	7	1	12	3	58	14	343	82
10.3	Conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction	8	2	38	9	62	15	312	74
10.4	Conflict impedes teaching and learning	14	3	42	10	58	14	306	73
10.5	Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of school days	5	1	45	11	48	11	322	77
10.6	Conflict diverts energy	10	2	39	9	53	13	318	76
10.7	Conflict destroys morale	8	2	32	8	57	15	313	75
10.8	Conflict deepens differences	23	5	32	8	58	14	307	73
10.9	Conflict obstructs co-operative action	4	1	8	2	52	12	356	85
10.10	Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour	4	1	29	7	72	17	315	75
10.11	Conflict decreases expected production	8	2	42	10	56	13	314	75
10.12	Conflict causes lack of communication	6	1	38	9	78	19	298	71

KEYS: SD = STRONGLY DISAGREE

D = DISAGREE

A = AGREE

SA = STRONGLY AGREE

Item 10.2 An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags over a period of time

According to Table 6.3 a majority of the respondents 343 (82%) strongly agreed, while 58 (14%) agreed that an immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags over a period of time. In three schools, the principals confirmed that since the syllabi was not completed on time, catch-up programmes were organized and there was no time remaining to thoroughly prepare the learners for the final examination. This had a negative impact as it affected the academic performance of the learners at the end of the year.

Item 10.3 Conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction

Table 6.3 shows that the majority of the respondents 312 (74%) strongly agreed and 62 (15%) agreed that conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction. No teacher can enjoy teaching in a school that has lots of conflicts, as a result many highly qualified and dedicated teachers have exited the system because of the problems that are caused by unending conflicts among the teachers in schools. In one school, respondents confirmed that three teachers left the school because of the continuous conflicts that were damaging their job satisfaction. These three teachers who finally left the school were continuously reminded by other teachers of that school about their place of birth and the problems that they had caused by denying children of the soil an opportunity to be employed.

Item 10.4 Conflict impedes teaching and learning

According to Table 6.3, 306 (73%) respondents strongly agreed while 58 (14%) agreed that conflict impedes teaching and learning. Conflict affects the main aim of education endeavour because more attention would have to be dedicated to solve the problems that are caused by the conflict. In one school, effective teaching and learning did not take place for three weeks. There were

serious conflicts that demanded the entire involvement of the staff members, learners and parents. Valuable time was lost during the heat of the conflict. The learners and parents demanded the immediate resignation of the principal because it was alleged that he had misappropriated school funds.

Item 10.5 Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number days

Table 6.3 indicates that most of the respondents 322 (77%) strongly agreed and 48 (11%) agreed that conflict could result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of school days. For example, one secondary was closed for four weeks while conflict was being resolved. The learners declared a vote of no confidence in some of the teachers. They demanded the Department of Education to replace these teachers with immediate effect. The normal functioning of the school was disturbed, while other teachers tried to restore the culture of learning and teaching in the school.

Item 10.6 Conflict diverts energy

From Table 6.3 it is noted that 318 (76%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 53 (13%) agreed that conflict diverts energy. The principal of one secondary confirmed that energy and valuable time that could have been used to impart knowledge to the learners was misdirected to solve existing conflict. Valuable time and energy was directed to restore the culture of learning and teaching. The learners of this particular school demanded for a refund of the money that they had paid for an educational tour that did not take place towards the end of the previous year

Item 10.7 Conflict destroys morale

According to Table 6.3, 313 (75%) of the respondents strongly agreed, while 67 (15%) agreed that conflict destroys morale. For example, in three schools the principals confirmed that during the heat of a conflict the intention and the

spirit of the teachers to teach was lowered because there were other important issues to be attended to, such as finding amicable solutions to gangstarism, use of drugs and carrying of dangerous weapons by learners. This happened when one of the learners shot his own class register teacher in class.

Item 10.8 Conflict deepens differences

Table 6.3 shows that 307 (73%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 58 (14%) agreed that conflict deepen differences among colleagues. Seven departmental heads from several schools confirmed that conflict widens and worsens the gap among teachers. There was once a time where effective teaching could not take place because some of the teachers from that school did not see eye to eye, they did not function as a team. This cold war became clear at the end of the year when learners suffered the consequences of a conflict that had been dragging on for the whole year.

Item 10.9 Conflict obstructs co-operative action

Table 6.3 shows that 356 (85%) of the respondents strongly agreed, while 52 (12%) agreed that conflict obstructs co-operative action among the teachers in the school. Four principals of secondary schools in this study confirmed that, smooth harmonious working relationships among colleagues came to a halt. Lack of harmonious working relationships among teachers made it very difficult for principals to perform their duties well. The progress of the learners was indirectly hampered because no learning took place. The chain of education was broken when there was no continuous, healthy co-operation and harmony among the teachers and learners. To establish the working relationship that had been there for years was the main responsibility of the principal.

Item 10.10 Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour

According to Table 6.3, 315 (75%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 72 (17%) agreed that conflict produces irresponsible behaviour. In one school five teachers took an advantage of the existing conflict by behaving strangely. One respondent confirmed that these five teachers did things that they had never done before. For example, they went to classes under the influence of liquor. They were charged for contravening the conditions of employment as laid down in the Employment of Educators Act. They even came to school late and absented themselves from school for a number of days while the conflict was still being investigated.

Item 10.11 Conflict decreases expected production

According to Table 6.3, the majority of respondents 314 (75%) strongly agreed and 56 (13%) agreed that conflict decreases expected production. In one secondary school, the respondent confirmed that the overall performance of the school became tremendously affected. The focus of the teachers was on resolving minor unending disputes rather than on teaching. The vision and the mission of the school were distracted by the ongoing conflicts that took most of the time to be resolved. The learners could not perform well at the end of the year because of the conflict that had been dragging during that year.

Item 10.12 Conflict causes communication break down among colleagues

According to Table 6.3, the majority of the respondents 298 (71%) strongly agreed, while 78 (19%) agreed that conflict causes communication break down among colleagues. One respondent in the study confirmed that the spirit of sharing constructive ideas among colleagues became badly pretentious, this resulted in a communication break down. Communication break down was a clear indication that conflict had reached its maximum level, some of the teachers in that school did not see eye to eye and others did not even talk

to one another in a professional manner. This was an unhealthy state of affairs caused by lack of conflict management in a school.

In summary, lack of conflict viable management affected the overall academic performance of the learners. Conflict is inevitable; therefore principals had to be well prepared and well equipped to manage all forms and types of conflicts that emerged in their schools. Principals had a great responsibility of managing conflict to such an extent that it did not escalate to a point where it ruined the aims of education. The majority of the respondents indicated that it was extremely important for the principals to possess conflict management skills, styles, techniques and conflict resolution strategies if they want to curb the effects of conflict in their schools.

6.6 CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS

This section gives a brief summary of the causes of conflict in schools. The respondents were requested to indicate how often the following factors are causes of conflict in their schools.

Table 6.4 provides a picture and a brief summary of the findings based on the causes of conflicts in schools.

TABLE 6.4: CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS

ITEM NO	ITEM	A		O		S		N	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
11.1	Poor communication	58	14	356	85	4	1	2	0
11.2	Misunderstandings	52	12	343	82	22	5	3	1
11.3	Insulting remarks	46	11	322	77	32	8	20	4
11.4	Racist remarks	56	13	348	83	14	3	2	1
11.5	Disrespect of another's views	54	13	308	73	46	11	12	3
11.6	Scandal mongering	62	15	336	80	18	4	4	1
11.7	Evaluation of teachers	64	15	348	83	6	1	2	1
11.8	Political differences	56	13	320	76	38	9	6	2
11.9	Professional jealousy by colleagues	62	15	328	78	28	7	4	0
11.10	Incompetence of certain teachers	60	14	314	75	44	10	2	1
11.11	Interference in school affairs by parents	58	14	318	76	36	8	8	2
11.12	Interference in school affairs by community based organizations	54	13	324	77	38	9	4	1

KEYS: A = ALWAYS

O = OFTEN

S = SELDOM

N = NEVER

Item 11.1 Poor communication

Table 6.4 shows that 356 (85%) of the respondents were of the opinion that poor communication always causes conflict and 58 (14%) indicated that poor communication does often cause conflict in schools. Communication is a two-way method of sharing ideas. One respondent from one of the secondary schools confirmed that ideas are supposed to be shared among colleagues for the sake of running the school smoothly. Debates and dialogues on matters of importance pertaining to the management of the school should be encouraged and promoted among the stakeholders. In this school, communication became poor. Poor communication was an indication that there was something going wrong among the colleagues. Lack of communication among colleagues was the source of conflict in this school.

Item 11.2 Misunderstandings

Table 6.4, shows that the majority of the respondents 343 (82%) indicated that misunderstandings always cause conflict and 52 (12%) indicated that misunderstandings do often cause conflicts in schools. Few teachers from several schools confirmed that, getting a wrong idea or impression about their principal most of the time, resulted in conflicts. These teachers had a wrong idea about their principal. They had an impression that he was demanding a lot from them, he did not regard them as human beings. In actual fact, the principal was carrying out the instructions of the Department of Education. He had to meet the deadline on which the work was supposed to be submitted to the circuit office. When the principal was implementing departmental policies and adhering to the regulations of the Education Department, these teachers thought that the principal was causing misunderstandings, some teachers even demanded to see circulars to that effect. If the principal did not clarify such misunderstandings to these teachers at an early stage, they could have caused serious conflicts.

Item 11.3 Insulting remarks

According to Table 6.4, 322 (77%) of the respondents indicated that insulting remarks always cause conflict and 46 (11%) indicated that insulting remarks do often cause conflicts in schools. One expatriate teacher confirmed that she felt offended and despised by her colleagues when nasty or spiteful words were directed to her. She felt embarrassed, humiliated and looked-down upon by her own colleagues when derogatory statements were passed at her. Insulting, racist remarks resulted in her resignation. She was, thereafter employed at a multi-racial school.

Item 11.4 Racist remarks

Most of the respondents 348 (83%), according to Table 6.4 indicated that racist remarks always cause conflict and 56 (13%) indicated that racist remarks do often cause conflict in schools. One teacher from a secondary school confirmed that he was constantly reminded by his colleagues about his place of birth, nationality, ethnicity, historical background and his political party blunders in a derogatory manner. Racist remarks destroyed his spirit of team work.

Item 11.5 Disrespect of another's views

According to Table 6.4, it was noted that 308 (73%) of the respondents indicated that disrespect of another's views always cause conflict and 54 (13%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. One respondent in the study made it clear that he could not do his utmost best in the development of staff members, because his views were constantly disrespected and disregarded by his colleagues. It was even worse when he was not given a chance to put his dissatisfaction across the staff members. He felt rejected by his own colleagues when it came to matters of importance. His morale and self-esteem was lowered and this resulted in conflict with whoever came across his way.

Item 11.6 Scandal mongering

According to Table 6.4, 336 (80%) of the respondents indicated that scandal mongering always causes conflict and 62 (15%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. Four female teachers in one school categorically stated that gossiping about other teacher's faults and wrong doings causes serious conflicts. No teacher would like that his or her shameful or disgraceful behaviour be discussed in public for the sake of fun or recreational purposes. Scandal mongering has caused several conflicts in their school.

Item 11.7 Evaluation of teachers

Table 6.4, shows that 348 (83%) of the respondents indicated that evaluation of teachers always causes conflict, while 64 (15%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. Three secondary principals explained that the evaluation of teachers has created serious conflicts, especially if the process of evaluation had a hidden agenda, or if the whole process of evaluation was not carried out in good faith. They further argued that failure to involve the teachers from the beginning of the planning stage of the evaluation process, has caused serious conflicts. The motives, goals and procedures to be followed during the evaluation process should be made clear to the teachers from the beginning. Deviating from the agreed upon norms, standards and procedures of the evaluation process has caused serious conflicts between the Department of Education and the teachers.

Item 11.8 Political differences

According to Table 6.4, 320 (76%) of the respondents indicated that political differences always cause conflict and only 56 (13%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. One learner from a famous secondary school in Huhudi that is in Vryburg district in the North West Province, clearly stated that political differences caused by political intolerance among learners of the same school have caused serious conflicts. Racist and insulting remarks about his political affiliation, historical and social background have caused

serious conflicts. The school had to be closed for some weeks while the conflict was sorted out by the head office of the Department of Education in the North West Province.

Item 11.9 Professional jealousy by colleagues

Table 6.4, shows that 326 (78%) of the respondents indicated that professional jealousy by colleagues always causes conflict, while 62 (15%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. One respondent who had just obtained her masters degree in physical science, made it clear in this study that some of her colleagues did not appreciate her professional advancement because she was a threat to them. She was soon promoted to higher responsibilities. Her colleagues found it unacceptable, embarrassing and humiliating to report to her since she had just been appointed to a senior position. Her colleagues had never been appointed to any managerial position since she knew them. To make matters worse she was younger than they were.

Item 11.10 Incompetence of certain teachers

According to Table 6.4, the majority of the respondents 314 (75%) indicated that incompetence of certain teachers always causes conflict and 60 (14%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. One principal of a secondary school stated that an incompetent teacher from her school did not like to be constantly evaluated and controlled. She perceived that as a faultfinding mission. The authentic aim of constant evaluation was to offer her assistance where she needed to improve. This resulted in serious conflict when the incompetent teacher was advised by her immediate seniors to approach a certain task in a professional manner.

Item 11.11 Interference in school affairs by parents

Table 6.4 illustrates that 318 (76%) of the respondents indicated that interference in school affairs by parents causes conflict, while 58 (14%) indicated that it often does cause conflict in schools. The study revealed that in one school, parents interfered in school affairs in an unprofessional manner and their interference blew a minor problem out of proportion. These parents demanded that things be done the way they deem it fit, not according to the rules, policies and procedures of the Education Department. They demanded that their sons and daughters of the soil be given the first preference for appointments in vacant posts, regardless of the requirements for the posts. This was caused by the fact that they collected funds from the community to build the school. This was a clear case of forced nepotism.

Item 11.12 Interference in school affairs by community based organizations

According to Table 6.4, 324 (77%) respondents indicated that interference in school affairs by community-based organizations always causes conflict and 54 (13%) indicated that it often causes conflict in schools. In one school, it was reported that two opposing community based organizations demanded to use the school hall to canvass for elections on the same day and at the same time regardless of the fact that there were no prior arrangements made for the reservation of the school hall. The principal compromised to one of those organization's demand, because he was a member of that political party. He allowed his party to stage that event. The other organization whose demand was turned down mobilized, disturbed and disrupted the proceedings of that particular event.

In summary, the majority of the respondents confirmed that conflict is a product of many factors that go wrong in the school. This has also been revealed in the review of the literature conducted on the causes of conflict in schools. Evaluation of teachers and incompetence of certain teachers have emerged as one of the important causes of conflict in most schools.

Misunderstandings, insulting remarks and racist remarks were ranked high under the causes of conflict in schools.

6.7 ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND STRATEGIES NEEDED BY PRINCIPALS TO MANAGE CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS

The implementation of conflict management model (CMM) is guided by essential skills that principals need in order to be effective in their roles, as illustrated (cf.3.10). Essential skills identified by literature show that principals need a set of specialised training activities. The skills needed by principals as identified in chapter two, three and four include:

- An intuition to anticipate problems, factors and conditions within the school that may lead to conflict;
- Appropriate application of conflict management styles and resolution strategies to manage conflict in a school; and
- Effective and efficient usage of conflict managerial skills and techniques to the satisfaction of both parties involved in a serious conflict.

This section gives a brief summary of skills identified by the respondents. The respondents were asked to rate the importance of each essential skill needed by principals to manage conflict on the following three-point scale:

1= Unimportant required skill

2= Important required skill

3= Extremely important required skill

Table 6.5, on the next page outlines the essential skills needed by principals to effectively and efficiently manage conflict in their school settings.

TABLE 6.5: ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY PRINCIPALS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT

ITEM NO	ITEM	1		2		3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
12.1	Reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response	8	2	32	8	380	90
12.2	Defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities	12	3	48	11	360	86
12.3	Investigating all possible forms of resource sharing	6	2	52	12	362	86
12.4	Analysing antecedent conditions that may result in conflict	8	2	74	18	338	80
12.5	Diagnosing possible causes of conflict in the school	4	1	58	14	358	85
12.6	Possessing an art of settling or reconciling differences	2	1	76	18	342	81
12.7	Knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools	8	2	102	24	310	74
12.8	Preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school	4	1	98	23	318	76
12.9	To be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflicts that may emerge in the school	4	1	100	24	316	75
12.10	Capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs	2	1	98	23	320	76
12.11	Ability to maintain the school climate conducive for the culture of learning and teaching	2	1	102	24	316	75
12.12	An ability to make a need analysis on matters that affect the principals daily	4	1	98	23	318	76
12.13	Professional development of principals in conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies	4	1	58	14	358	85
12.14	Planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives	2	1	56	13	362	86
12.15	Applying conflict management problem-solving approach	4	1	68	16	348	83
12.16	Intensive in-service training courses in conflict management	2	0	42	10	376	90

KEYS: 1 = UNIMPORTANT REQUIRED SKILL

2 = IMPORTANT REQUIRED SKILL

3 = EXTREMELY IMPORTANT REQUIRED SKILL

Item 12.1 Reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response

According to Table 6.5, 380 (90%) of the respondents indicated that reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response is an extremely important required skill, and 32 (8%) viewed it as an important required skill by the principals. One principal of a secondary school was of the view that reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response should be the objective of the principal when resolving a serious conflict among the parties involved. The resolution taken must satisfy the parties involved in the conflict so that this conflict is amicably resolved. For a conflict to be finally resolved, both parties involved must be willing to give and take reasonable settlement package. This would not be practical or achievable if the principal does not possess the ability and skills to reach a compromise solution that entails give and take response among the conflicting parties.

Item 12.2 Defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities

Table 6.5 shows that a majority of the respondents 360 (86%) indicated that defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities is an extremely important required skill, while 48 (11%) perceived it as an important required skill by the principals. One deputy principal of a secondary school explained that defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities helped her principal to curb an incident that might have caused conflict in her school. Her principal defined and clarified job descriptions and job allocations by so doing he prevented unnecessary conflict that could have been caused by activities that were ambiguous. At the beginning of the year the principal clearly defined the responsibilities of each teacher, so as to avoid confusion that might crop up as a result of the duplication of work by colleagues.

Item 12.3 Investigating all possible forms of resource sharing

According to Table 6.5, the majority of the respondents 362 (86%) viewed investigating all possible forms of resource sharing as an extremely important required skill, while 52 (12%) were of the opinion that it is an important required skill for the principals to manage conflict. One school principal mentioned that investigating all possible forms of financial resource sharing alleviated the problem of scarce resources. When the allocation of workload was planned, he took into consideration his available limited human and physical resources. He distributed the work equitably and a plan of action was agreed upon pertaining to how the available financial resources will be shared and alternated for the benefit of the school.

Item 12.4 Analysing antecedent conditions that may result in conflict

Table 6.5 shows that a majority of 338 (80%) respondents indicated that analysing antecedent conditions that may result in conflict is an extremely important required skill, and 74 (18%) viewed it as an important required skill by the principals. One principal of a secondary school highlighted the importance of analysing antecedent conditions that might result in conflict as one of the essential skills that principals must possess. The respondent confirmed that conflict does not just mushroom, it takes some time before it can be perceived. The principal must have an intuition on factors that cause conflict and he or she must act professionally and without any waste of time to nip the buds of the latent conflict. The principal can only succeed in this endeavour if he or she has been equipped with the skills and strategies of conflict management.

Item 12.5 Diagnosing possible causes of conflict

Table 6.5 shows that 358 (85%) of the respondents viewed diagnosing possible causes of conflict as an important required skill, while 58 (14%) perceived it as an extremely important required skill by the principals. A respondent confirmed that diagnosing possible causes of conflict is an

essential skill needed by the principals. Causes of conflict must be traced or observed at its early stage of development, this is the time at which the principal must act on it. The principal needs the full participation and involvement of the parties concerned in a conflict when he or she diagnoses the causes of conflict. His or her conflict-approach attitude must be professional, strategic and he or she must appropriately apply conflict management skills so as not to blow the whole issue at hand out of proportion.

Item 12.6 Possessing an art of settling or reconciling differences

According to Table 6.5, 342 (81%) of the respondents indicated that possessing an art of settling or reconciling differences is an extremely important required skill, and 76 (18%) viewed it as an important required skill by the principals. From the empirical investigation conducted, several principals of secondary schools confirmed that possessing an art of settling or reconciling differences among conflicting parties is an extremely important required skill for the principals. Without this skill, it was highly impossible for them to resolve conflicts that emerged daily in their schools. They also confirmed, as revealed in the literature review, that conflict cannot be avoided and therefore it needs a certain skill or capability to be successfully managed. Conflict is always present in any organization, so it must be constructively dealt with in such a manner that it does not hamper or spill over the culture of learning and teaching.

Item 12.7 Knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools

Most of the respondents 310 (74%), according to Table 6.5 were of the opinion that being knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools is an extremely important required skill, while 102 (24%) were of the opinion that it is an important required skill by the principals for the management of conflict in schools. One head of department confirmed that being knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools puts

the principal in a better position to manage conflict effectively. Since the principal is accountable for anything that takes place in the school, he or she must have a vast insight about conditions and factors that may trigger conflict. He or she must be strategically prepared to combat any form of conflict that may arise in his or her school.

Item 12.8 Preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school

According to Table 6.5, it is noted that 318 (76%) of the respondents mentioned that preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school is an extremely important required skill that the principals should possess for the smooth running of the school, while 98 (23%) of the respondents were of the opinion that it is an important required skill. Several principals in this study stated that preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school is one of the principal's responsibilities. Since conflict is inevitable, principals must manage it in such a manner that it does not reach a point where it affects the overall performance of the school. They also confirmed that conflicts that have not been successfully resolved to the maximum satisfaction of the parties involved have the tendency of cropping once again later in another form and can tremendously have a negative impact on the smooth running of the school. Conflict destroys the morale, values and the importance of learning among the learners and teaching among the teachers. To avoid such a scenario, the principals have to be up to date with their conflict management skills and conflict resolution strategies.

Item 12.9 To be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflicts that may emerge in the school

Table 6.5 shows that 316 (75%) of the respondents indicated that to be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflicts that may emerge in the school is an extremely important required skill, and 100 (24%) perceived it as an important required skill by the principals. Five veteran principals of secondary schools made it clear that the principal is expected to

perform his or her managerial duties to the best of his or her ability. He or she must do the correct thing well at the correct time. This skill must also be applied in the management of conflict. Conflict must be professionally handled and managed. Conflict must also be given the attention that it deserves, failure to do so can render the school ungovernable. The principals must not allow conflict to pile or accumulate up to the point where it becomes detrimental to the values and aspirations of the teachers per se.

Item 12.10 Capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs

According to Table 6.5, 320 (76%) of the respondents were of the opinion that capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs is an extremely important required skill, while 98 (23%) viewed it as an important required skill by the principals. From the empirical investigation conducted in this study, a number of departmental heads alluded to the fact that no human being can do his or her utmost best, if his or her needs are not satisfied or catered for by the principal. The principal has to see to it that he puts himself in his teachers' shoes to try and find the stumbling blocks that are experienced by his colleagues. The teachers' needs must be attended to or referred to other professional for assistance. In one case mentioned during interviews, the principal failed to understand the difficulties that his colleague was going through. His failure exacerbated the problem and caused a conflict that could have been avoided by satisfying the teacher's needs.

Item 12.11 Ability to maintain the school climate conducive for the culture of learning and teaching

Table 6.5 shows that the majority of the respondents 316 (75%) viewed an ability to maintain the school climate conducive for the culture of learning and teaching as an extremely important required skill, and 102 (24%) were of the idea that it is an important required skill by the principals. The government that generates its income from the taxpayers maintains the school and therefore the principal has the responsibility of maintaining the school climate conducive to the culture of learning and teaching. In one secondary school, the principal

confirmed why he failed to maintain the culture of learning and teaching, he confessed that he lacked the essential conflict management skills and strategies that are needed to manage conflict efficiently and effectively in schools.

Item 12.12 An ability to make a needs analysis on matters that affect the principal daily

Table 6.5 shows that a majority of 318 (76%) respondents indicated that an ability to make a needs analysis on matters that affect the principals daily is an extremely important required skill that principals should possess, while 98 (23%) were of the opinion that it is an important required skill for the management of conflict in schools. Many, if not all principals confirmed that principals exist in a world of conflicts that surround them daily in their work place. They are supposed to make needs analysis on matters that affect them daily. Since principals spend most of their time dealing and resolving conflicts. This means that conflict management should be ranked among the top activities in the list of needs analysis that require special attention. Prioritising activities according to their level of importance indicates where greater attention must be paid. A plan of action would have to be agreed upon by all the stakeholders, it has to be drawn up and carried out to address the nature of the needs identified. Needs that have been identified must be given the urgent attention that they deserve while they are still manageable and achievable. Needs must be analysed immediately when they are observed and no time must be wasted to act upon them with the aim of eradicating the causes of conflict before they become symptoms.

Item 12.13 Professional development of principals in conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies.

Table 6.5 shows that 358 (85%) of the respondents were of the opinion that professional development of principals in conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies is an extremely important required skill,

while 58 (14%) perceived it as an important required skill for the principals to manage conflict in schools. Most of the principals that were interviewed stated it categorically clear that principals must be professionally developed so as to be up to date with the latest modern trends of conflict management. Education is dynamic, so principals must be well informed and equipped with skills that are essential for their day-to-day running of the schools. The Department of Education should regularly conduct workshops and seminars for the principals to resuscitate their conflict management skills and conflict resolution strategies.

Item 12.14 Planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives

From Table 6.5 it can be noted that 362 (86%) of the respondents mentioned that planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives is an extremely important required skill, and 56 (13%) were of the idea that it is an important required skill for the principals to execute their duties well. The majority of secondary school principals confirmed that principals must involve other stakeholders in the management of conflict in their schools. These initiatives must be planned with the intention of sharing conflict management skills with teachers, parents and learners. By so doing, the principal will empower as well as equip them with essential skills of conflict management that they need in their day-to-day running of their own private lives. These initiatives in conflict management can bring down the level of conflicts in schools as well as in the homes of the stakeholders. For the principal to find out whether these initiatives are still on the correct track, he or she must constantly evaluate the planning and the implementation process of the conflict management initiatives.

Item 12.15 Applying conflict management problem solving approach

According to Table 6.5, 348 (83%) of the respondents indicated that applying conflict management problem-solving approach is an extremely important required skill, while 68 (16%) viewed it as an important required skill by the

principals to manage conflict effectively and efficiently in their schools. One principal explained how the principal should apply the correct conflict management problem-solving approach at the correct time. The principal must know exactly how to go about or which steps to follow when resolving conflicts that are of serious nature. His or her approach should be a professional one, guided by the methodology of conflict management and resolution strategies. The principal must guard against exacerbating a minor conflict by not following the correct conflict management procedures, techniques and conflict resolution strategies.

Item 12.16 Intensive in-service training courses in conflict management

According to Table 6.5 most of the respondents 376 (90%) viewed intensive in-service training courses in conflict management as an extremely important required skill that should be organised by the Department of Education from time to time for the principals, and 42 (10%) perceived it as an important required skill meaning that not possessing this skill would make it highly impossible for the principals to manage conflicts in their schools lucratively. From the empirical investigation conducted, the majority of the principals spoke with one voice that intensive in-service training courses in conflict management can assist them to alleviate the problems that they experience when it comes to the procedures that should be followed when resolving serious conflicts. The majority of principals confirmed what has been revealed by the literature review that principals spend most of their time dealing with or resolving various types of conflicts caused by teachers, parents and learners. Most of these problems emanate from not complying with the rules, policies and some regulations of the Education Department. It is therefore of paramount importance that the Education Department organizes workshops, seminars and conferences on the modern trends of conflict management and resolution strategies for the principals. For the principals to manage conflicts effectively and efficiently, they must be prepared to undergo intensive in-service training courses in conflict management and resolution strategies.

In summary, from the empirical investigation conducted, most of the respondents revealed that the above-discussed essential skills are extremely needed by the principals to manage conflicts. The majority of these skills are very important, without them, the principal cannot succeed to run the school smoothly and efficiently.

Lack of training in conflict management skills and resolution strategies experienced by the majority of the principals, should be the priority of the Department of Education. The Department of Education need to equip the principals with conflict management skills, styles and resolution strategies, because the principals spend about twenty percent of their time dealing with and resolving conflicts that may affect the overall performance of the school if they are not resolved at an early stage of development.

6.8 RESPONDENTS' VIEWS ON HOW LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AFFECT THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL

This section discusses the five open-ended questions (item 14.1 – 14.5). The main aim of these items was to gather additional information from the respondents' perspectives about:

- Essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict;
- Other problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools;
- A need to develop a conflict management model for principals;
- How lack of viable conflict management strategies affects the overall performance of the school; and
- How conflict can be managed effectively in schools.

In item 14.1 respondents were requested to state whether there are any other essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict effectively and efficiently in schools.

The majority of the respondents stated the following:

- Since principals spend most of their time dealing with or resolving conflicts, they should be thoroughly equipped with conflict management skills, conflict management styles, conflict management techniques and conflict resolution strategies;
- An effective principal should be able to spot mistakes and even the most insignificant signs of disharmony in staff relations in good time, locate the origin, the causes, how they could have been avoided and who was mainly responsible;
- The principal should have the ability to handle potential conflict and eventually achieve an acceptable compromise;
- Effective problem solving requires that the principal should have the ability to observe acutely, analyse, anticipate, plan carefully and actively involve colleagues who are able to assist with ideas, suggestions and information;
- The principal should plan appropriate action, organise, initiate, communicate and especially co-ordinate efforts to solve the problem after he has diagnosed it; and
- The principal's most important consideration should be to serve the real interests of the entire school community to the best of his or her ability by creating a school climate that is conducive to the culture of learning and teaching.

The importance of these findings confirms that there is a lot that should be done by the Department of Education in as far as conducting workshops, seminars and conferences in conflict management for the principals.

Respondents were also asked to respond to whether there are any other problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

In item 14.2 the following were the responses of the majority of respondents:

- Fundamental differences with regard to priorities, activities and policy matters of the school;
- Individual's expectations and the demands of the school;
- Differences of opinion concerning approach to the work;
- Factions within the community that seek to use the school to achieve its specific aims, for example, religious, social and political ideals;
- Principals who handle serious conflicts in a tactless and summary manner;
- Disputes arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department;
- Abrupt changes that never involved all the stakeholders in its draft and implementation process; and
- Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers.

Lack of viable conflict management strategies has been identified by the majority of the principals as the stumbling block when it comes to the management functions of planning, organising, guiding and controlling the parties involved in a conflict. Some principals sometimes make serious blunders when solving conflicts because they are not well equipped with the techniques, skills and conflict resolution strategies.

With regard to item 14.3, the respondents were requested to motivate whether there is a need to develop a conflict management model that can be used by the principals as a guide to manage conflicts that emerge in schools.

The respondents' motivations were the following:

- There exist a need than before to develop a conflict management model that can be used as a guide by principals to trace the antecedent conditions of conflict up to a phase where conflict is resolved in an amicably manner;

- The conflict management model should clearly state the plan of actions to be carried out by the principal when resolving conflicts that emerge in school settings;
- Various phases of conflict management should be clearly mentioned so as to help the principal to trace at which level the conflict has manifested itself;
- The conflict management model should be easy to follow and understood by the principal;
- The conflict management model should assist the principal to decide what to do if all the avenues of conflict resolution techniques have not yielded the desired outcomes;
- The conflict management model should be used as a tool by the principal to gain an insight into the micro-politics of the school and to plan strategies, techniques and procedures to be followed when resolving a particular type of conflict; and
- The conflict management model should also show indicators that assist the principal to plan appropriate action and co-ordinate efforts to solve the problem.

The majority of the respondents overwhelmingly motivated that there exist a need than ever to develop a conflict management model that can be used as a guide by principals to understand the nature and origin of the conflict that is being diagnosed.

In item 14.4, the respondents were requested to comment on how lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school

The respondents' comments were:

- The organisational climate of the institution and the effectiveness of the whole organisation becomes damaged;
- Continuous damage to job satisfaction and productivity decreases;

- Constructive objectives of the school are totally lost from sight in the heat of conflict;
- Valuable time is wasted when conflict drags over a period of time;
- The morale of the staff is lowered and hampered;
- Dropping of team spirit and commitment on the part of teachers and learners;
- Poor performance on the part of the learners because they have missed a number of classes during the heat of the conflict and the resolution thereof; and
- Ill discipline from the part of certain teachers as well as from certain learners.

The majority of the respondents confirmed that lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school because unmanaged conflict destroys team spirit, dedication, confidence and trust among the staff members and learners.

With regard to item 14.5, the respondents were requested to mention how conflict can be managed effectively in schools.

The respondents mentioned that:

- Destructive sources of conflict should be nipped in the bud before they reach unmanageable proportions;
- Latent antecedent conditions of conflict should be traced in time because they have the habit of snowballing out of proportion;
- The principal should strive to get the conflicting parties to the point where they admit the validity of their viewpoints so that they can discuss the problems frankly and objectively;
- Parties involved in a conflict should be prepared to give and take so that a problem can be resolved effectively, efficiently, equitably and permanently before irretrievable damage is done to the harmonious staff relationships;

- The principal should not allow a situation whereby conflict becomes a smouldering grievance which causes continuous damage to job satisfaction and productivity;
- Application of stringent conflict management skills, conflict management ethics, conflict management styles, conflict management techniques and conflict resolution strategies by the principal to the benefit of all his staff members and to the smooth running of the school;
- The principal should have the capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs as soon as they arise; and
- For the principal to manage conflict effectively and efficiently he or she must avoid favouritism at all costs.

These statements indicate that, for the principal to manage conflict effectively and efficiently, he should possess the competence of tracing the origin of the conflict and understand how conflict has developed in phases. The principal should be able to identify the problem at its early stage of development and resolve it immediately before it grows too big and become a difficulty with which the school cannot contend.

6.9 MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF EACH ITEM OF THE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Table 6.6 shows the mean score ratings of each of the problems caused by lack of conflict management in schools in ranking order. A brief summary of the information provided in Table 6.10 is also discussed below.

A high mean score means that the intensity of the problem is high. That is, the higher the mean score (4.0 maximum mean score) the higher the intensity of the problem. The items with the mean score of 3.5 and above are discussed. Items with a mean score of above 3.5 are seen as posing serious problems in the management of conflict in schools.

These findings support what is suggested by the literature consulted in chapter three. The literature consulted in chapter three (cf. 3.2) revealed that lack of conflict management in schools could be ascribed to the fact that the Department of Education does not give conflict management in schools the attention that it deserves. In the Department of Education there is no structure that is solely responsible to see to it that the principals are equipped with the skills and techniques of conflict management. Principals are not constantly trained on the latest trends of conflict management procedures, yet they spend most of their time dealing with or resolving serious conflicts that emerge from time to time in schools. These problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management have the tendency of affecting the overall performance of the school in many ways.

**TABLE 6.6 THE MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF EACH OF THE PROBLEMS
CAUSED BY LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
STRATEGIES IN SCHOOLS IN RANKING ORDER**

ITEM NO	ITEM	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER
9.1	Problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the education department	3.93	1
9.11	Differences in values and expectations	3.82	2
9.6	Power struggles	3.76	3
9.5	Unprofessional behaviour of certain educators	3.68	4
9.4	Scarcity of resources	3.56	5
9.2	Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act	3.48	6
9.10	Clash of personality skills and traits	3.37	7
9.7	Role ambiguities	3.28	8
9.9	Differences in goals, methods and procedures	3.18	9
9.12	Abrupt changes	3.12	10
9.8	Interdependence of activities	2.98	11
9.3	Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies	2.86	12

Item 9.1: Problems arising from not complying with some of the policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department (3.93)

Table 6.6 indicates that, from the empirical investigation conducted, the majority of the principals were of the view that if all teachers were complying with the rules and regulations of the Education Department as laid down in the policies; the level of conflicts in schools could be minimized (cf.3.2.1). Failure to comply with some of the policies of the Education Department by the teachers makes matters difficult for the principal to manage the school effectively. This suggests that principals need to set aside time to revisit the policies with the teachers, so as to refresh them with the contents of each policy that governs the school as an institution.

Item 9.11: Differences in values and expectations (3.82)

According to Table 6.6, conflicts in schools usually arise because different teachers place different values on different things (cf.3.3.6). A teacher who places a very high value on his non-teaching period may come into conflict with the principal who requires that he should sacrifice his time to carry out some other duties.

Item 9.6: Power struggles (3.76)

Table 6.6 shows that some schools that are characterised as having teachers who are constantly hungry for positions or power, experience conflicts that are caused by power struggles (cf.3.2.7). Struggling for power using the correct channels of power acquisition does not usually cause conflict, but it is the acquiring of power in an undemocratic and illegitimate manner that causes conflict among the other stakeholders. There is no harmonious working relationship in schools that experience a lot of power struggles among colleagues. Power struggles among colleagues shift the focus of teaching to other trivial issues. Struggles for power that are not amicably resolved at an early stage, tend to have a negative impact on the smooth running of the school and on the overall academic performance of the learners. No effective

learning and teaching can take place in a school where power struggles are the order of the day.

Item 9.5: Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers (3.68)

According to Table 6.6 teachers who do not uphold the ethics of teaching as a profession contribute a lot to conflict. The code of professional conduct (cf.3.2.5) stipulates minimum standards of professional conduct of teachers. Conflicts arise if these stipulated standards are not adhered to. Conflicts arise in schools as a result of the violation of some of the stipulated standards, such as the one that states that the teacher should act in a manner that maintains the honour and dignity of the teaching profession. The teacher should adhere to agreements, policies, rules and regulations that govern the education system for the smooth running of the school as an institution.

Item 9.4: Scarcity of resources (3.56)

Table 6.6 shows that a common source of conflict in many schools as it has been revealed by the empirical investigation conducted, is the scarcity of resources (cf.3.2.4) for example, physical resources, learner support material and human resources funding and services. When more learners are admitted and the quota for admissions is exceeded, conflict arises because teachers are unwilling or are unable to cope with large class loads, shortage of learner support material and manpower.

In summary, some of the problems are caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools. The inability of some of the principals to handle or curb conflicts amicably at an early stage of development has resulted in serious consequences that led to the closure of schools for a number of days.

6.10 MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF EFFECTS OF LACK OF VIABLE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Table 6.7 shows the mean score ratings of items on the effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools in ranking order. A brief summary of the items with the mean score of 3.5 and above will be discussed.

These findings support what is suggested by the literature consulted in chapter three. The literature consulted in chapter three (cf.3.6) revealed that lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools does affect the overall performance of the school. The culture of learning and teaching sometimes comes to a halt for a number of days. Conflict has a negative impact on the smooth running of the school. Progress in teaching and learning activities is hampered while conflict continuously damages job satisfaction of the teachers and the principals. Conflict deepens differences and obstructs co-operative action among colleagues.

Item 10.6: Conflict diverts energy (mean 3.94)

Energy that could have been channelled to impart knowledge to the learners is misdirected to address serious conflicts that need immediate attention of the teachers. The energy that is used in a series of discussions or meetings that may even last for a number of days could have been used profitably to educate the learners who may be not part of the deliberations.

Item 10.7: Conflict destroys morale (mean 3.86)

The eagerness and the willingness of the teachers to teach is hampered or lowered when there is serious conflict prevailing in a school. The mood to teach is disturbed by the presence of the ongoing conflicts in schools.

TABLE 6.7 THE MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF EACH OF THE EFFECTS OF LACK OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS IN RANKING ORDER

ITEM NO	ITEM	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER
10.6	Conflict diverts energy	3.94	1
10.7	Conflict destroys morale	3.86	2
10.11	Conflict decreases expected production	3.75	3
10.12	Conflict causes lack of communication	3.69	4
10.2	An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags on for too long	3.58	5
10.1	Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive for teaching and learning	3.46	6
10.3	Conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction	3.38	7
10.8	Conflict deepens differences	3.29	8
10.9	Conflict obstructs co-operative action	3.20	9
10.10	Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour	3.02	10
10.4	Conflict impedes the culture of teaching and learning	2.95	11
10.5	Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of school days	2.84	12

Item 10.11: Conflict decreases expected production (mean 3.75)

Results that could have been achieved if the school was running smoothly throughout the year are not attained because there were lots of conflicts taking place among the teachers during the course of the year.

Item 10.12: Conflict causes lack of communication (mean 3.69)

Teachers who do not see eye to eye, who do not talk to one another in an open, friendly, constructive manner or who do not share ideas about the subject matter, pose a serious threat among themselves, especially if they teach the same subject. This usually results in communication break down.

Item 10.2: An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags over a period of time (mean 3.58)

Time that could have been utilised profitably to prepare learners for the examinations is wasted when conflicts drag on for too long. Extra classes would have to be organized so as to catch up with the time lost during the heed to conflict.

6.11 MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS

Table 6.8 shows the mean score ratings of each of the causes of conflicts in schools in ranking order. A brief summary of the information provided in Table 6.10 follows:

These findings support what is suggested by the literature consulted in chapter three, which revealed that there are factors in the school that need strategic management to be exercised effectively and efficiently. Should these factors be tackled in an unprofessional manner, they result in conflicts.

TABLE 6.8 THE MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF EACH OF THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS IN RANKING ORDER

ITEM NO	ITEM	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER
11.7	Evaluation of educators	3.96	1
11.10	Incompetence of certain educators	3.84	2
11.1	Poor communication	3.78	3
11.2	Misunderstandings	3.72	4
11.5	Racist remarks	3.54	5
11.3	Insulting remarks	3.52	6
11.8	Political differences	3.48	7
11.9	Professional jealousy by colleagues	3.32	8
11.4	Disrespect of another's views	3.28	9
11.6	Scandal mongering	3.24	10
11.11	Interference in school affairs by parents	3.20	11
11.12	Interference in school affairs by community based organizations	3.18	12

Item 11.7: Evaluation of teachers (mean 3.96)

Evaluation of teachers has caused lots of conflicts between the teachers and the officials of the Department of Education in the past. This was because of the fact that evaluation was not done in good faith and it had ulterior motives. It was not developmental in nature but judgemental. On the basis of its nature, it did not serve the intentions that it was intended for. So many teachers rejected the whole idea of evaluation. The evaluation of teachers causes conflicts if it is not done in good faith or if it is not developmental but judgemental. The right-sizing and the re-deployment of teachers caused conflicts when it was implemented because it was not strategically managed.

Item 11.10: Incompetence of certain teachers (mean 3.84)

Incompetent teachers are always a cause of conflict in many schools. They lack skills and strategies to do their work in a professional manner. Their incompetence causes some of them to be stubborn and aggressive and this causes serious conflicts between them and the management of the school. Most of the time their work is not completed or done on time and sometimes it is not done according to the expectations of the department of education. Schedules submitted do not meet deadlines and sometimes they are full of mistakes that could have been avoided had the teacher concerned consulted his colleagues who could have helped him to rectify the mistakes while there was still time.

Item 11.1: Poor communication (mean 3.78)

Poor communication is a symptom of unhealthy working relationships among colleagues. Poor communication does cause conflicts in the sense that ideas are not shared in a constructive manner among colleagues. Colleagues are not open to one another as they are supposed to be. New constructive innovations are not forthcoming because colleagues are not in a mood of projecting their views for the sake of the smooth running of the school. Poor

communication hinders the main aim of communication, that of being a two-way method of sharing ideas in a constructive and friendly manner.

Item 11.2: Misunderstandings (mean 3.72)

Misunderstandings cause conflicts because sometimes teachers carry out instructions as they suit them but not as they are supposed to be done according to the rules, policies and regulations of the department of education. This clash of ideas between the teachers and the management of the school causes conflicts. Getting a wrong idea or impression about somebody results in conflict. Teachers may have a wrong idea about their principal when he executes the policies, rules and regulations of the department of education.

Item 11.4: Racist remarks (mean 3.54)

Racist remarks have an element of down grading, frustration, humiliation and embarrassment. No teacher or even a learner can tolerate that his self-esteem be lowered by being constantly reminded about his political, social, historical and economic status. Racist remarks cause serious conflicts among teachers as well as learners. Racist remarks destroy the spirit of team building and culminate in conflicts.

Item 11.3: Insulting remarks (mean 3.52)

Insulting remarks hurt, an individual feels offended or despised by his colleagues if nasty or spiteful words are directed at him. An individual may feel embarrassed, humiliated and looked-down upon by his own colleagues if insulting words are directed at him. It becomes even worse if his immediate seniors pass derogatory statements about him.

6.12 MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY PRINCIPALS TO MANAGE CONFLICT

Table 6.9 shows the mean score ratings of essential skills needed by principals to manage conflicts in schools in ranking order. A brief summary of the information provided in Table 6.9 is discussed below.

These findings support what is suggested by the literature consulted in chapter three. The literature consulted in chapter three (cf. 3.10) revealed that since the principal is held responsible for the smooth running of the school, he cannot perform his managerial responsibilities well if he lacks the essential skills needed to manage conflict in an efficient and effective manner.

The principal has to be professionally equipped with strategies on how to prevent conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school. He must possess the capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs. He must be knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflicts in schools. He must also have the ability to maintain the school climate conducive to the culture of learning and teaching. Lastly, he must be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflicts that may emerge in the school. Under no circumstances should the principal practise favouritism and nepotism because it will cause division among staff members.

TABLE 6.9 THE MEAN SCORE RATINGS OF EACH OF THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY PRINCIPALS TO MANAGE CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS IN RANKING ORDER

ITEM NO	ITEM	MEAN SCORE	RANK ORDER
12.15	Applying conflict management problem-solving approach	3.92	1
12.16	Intensive in service training courses in conflict management	3.84	2
12.14	Planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives	3.72	3
12.13	Professional development of school managers in conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies	3.63	4
12.2	Defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities	3.52	5
12.1	Reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response	3.44	6
12.3	Investigating all possible forms of resource sharing	3.32	7
12.4	Analysing antecedent conditions that may result in conflict	3.23	8
12.5	Diagnosing possible causes of conflict in the school	3.14	9
12.6	Possessing an art of setting or reconciling differences	3.12	10
12.7	Knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools	2.92	11
12.8	Preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school	2.81	12
12.9	To be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflicts that may emerge in the school	2.74	13
12.10	Capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs	2.62	14
12.11	Ability to maintain the school climate conducive for the culture of learning and teaching	2.54	15
12.12	An ability to make a need analysis on matters that affect the school managers daily	2.52	16

Item 12.15: Applying conflict management problem solving approach (mean 3.92)

Applying conflict management problem-solving approach is an extremely important required skill for the principals to manage conflicts effectively and efficiently. Principals should apply the correct conflict management problem-solving approach at the correct time and in the correct method. He or she must know exactly how to go about resolving conflicts that are of serious nature. His or her approach to conflict resolutions should be a professional one, guided by the principles of conflict management and resolution strategies. Many conflicts are blown out of proportion by the mere fact that some principals do not have the capabilities and the expertise of tackling serious conflicts to the satisfaction of the parties concerned.

Item 12.16: Intensive in-service training courses in conflict management (mean 3.84)

Intensive in-service training in conflict management is also an extremely important required skill for the principals, without it, it will be highly impossible for the principal to manage conflicts in his school. Intensive in-service training in conflict management helps principals to solve problems that they experience when it comes to the procedures that they should follow when resolving serious conflicts. Since principals spend most of their time dealing with or resolving conflicts that are caused by teachers, parents and learners, it is imperative that they are intensively and professionally equipped with the skills and techniques of conflict management in schools.

Item 12.14: Planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives (mean 3.72)

Planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives is an extremely important required skill for the principals to execute their duties well. Principals must involve other stakeholders in the management of conflict in schools. It cannot be a one man's show therefore a committee

would have to be constituted that deals with the planning and implementing of school conflict management initiatives. These initiatives must be planned with the intention of sharing conflict management skills with teachers, parents and learners. The principal should empower as well as equip teachers with essential skills of conflict management that they need in their day-to-day running of their school activities. These initiatives in conflict management help to bring down the level of conflicts among staff members, parents and learners in schools.

Item 12.13: Professional development of principals in management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies (mean 3.63)

Principals need to be kept up to date with the latest modern trends of conflict management techniques and models. It is advisable that principals should have a clear understanding of labour relations acts, so as to follow the correct procedures of labour disputes when resolving conflicts in schools. Workshops and seminars on conflict management strategies and resolution procedures would have to be organized by the department of education so as to keep principals abreast with the conventional methods of conflict management in schools.

Item 12.2: Defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities (mean 3.52)

Well-defined and clarified job descriptions prevent duplication of work and unnecessary conflicts. Conflicts are prevented because each teacher knows exactly what his role is and what is expected from him. Roles that are ambiguously clarified by the principal alone end up not being performed at all, due to non-involvement of the teachers thus cause confusion among the teachers. When the year plan of the school is drawn up, it should be inclusive, it should clearly define activities that should be carried out by every teacher. A consensus should be reached on when the activity should be completed and evaluated.

6.13 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This section discusses the concept of chi-square goodness-of-fit test. The chi-square is a statistical analysis that aims at unveiling the existence of differences in responses provided by the respondents. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) will be used to investigate whether responses are biased on the basis of some selected demographic factors. To investigate the extent to which some responses are related, Correlation Analysis (CA) will also be conducted in this section.

It was assumed that there are no significant differences between the views of the principals and the views of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

6.13.1 The nature and scope of conflict in schools

A summary of the goodness-of-fit test results is reported in Table 6.10. The results reveal that responses to questions related to the nature and scope of conflicts are unequally distributed because the probable-value, 0.001, of the chi-square goodness-of-fit statistics is greater than the practical level of 5% or 0.05. This means that, respondents differ in response to these questions.

TABLE 6.10: Goodness-of-Fit Test - The nature and scope of conflict in schools

Variable	Question	Statistic	Prob-value
QBQ1	Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs	667.300	0.001
QBQ2	Conflict Product of Unsatisfied Needs	225.867	0.001
QBQ3	Conflict Work Environ Inevitable	249.943	0.001
QBQ4	Autocratic Principal Source	285.038	0.001
QBQ5	School Succeed Managing Conflicts	123.771	0.001
QBQ6	Existing Conflict Evidence Org Breakdown	153.610	0.001
QBQ7	Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems	211.438	0.001
QBQ8	Lack of Training in Managing Conflict	249.943	0.001
QBQ9	Existing Formal Procedures are Practiced	99.086	0.001
QBQ10	School Conflict Man Program Success	148.810	0.001
QBQ11	Teachers are Adequately Equipped	275.238	0.001
QBQ12	Conflict is Disruptive of School Routine	109.038	0.001

6.13.2 Problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools

The goodness-of-fit chi-square test statistics are reported in Table 6.11. The probable-values of 0.001, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance suggests that responses to the questions relating to problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools are unequally distributed. It can therefore be concluded that, respondents differ in response to these questions.

TABLE 6.11: Goodness-of-Fit Test - Problems caused by the lack of viable conflict management in schools

Variable	Question	Statistic	Prob-value
Q9Q1	Problems Arising from Non-Compliance	1014.457	0.001
Q9Q2	Ignorance About Teachers Act	465.443	0.001
Q9Q3	Lack of Training	77.143	0.001
Q9Q4	Scarcity of Resources	228.810	0.001
Q9Q5	Unprofessional behaviour of Teachers	184.010	0.001
Q9Q6	Power struggles	265.610	0.001
Q9Q7	Role Ambiguities	158.486	0.001
Q9Q8	Inter-Dependence of Activities	95.238	0.001
Q9Q9	Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs	128.152	0.001
Q9Q10	Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits	165.943	0.001
Q9Q11	Differences in Values and Expectations	281.752	0.001
Q9Q12	Abrupt changes	107.010	0.001

6.13.3 Lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school

Table 6.12 contains the goodness-of-fit chi-square test results. Just like the previous results, the probable-values of these statistics, 0.001, is less than the 0.05 level. This suggests that responses to the questions asked on this sub-topic differ.

TABLE 6.12: Goodness-of-Fit Test - Lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school

Variable	Question	Statistic	Prob-value
Q10Q1	Serious conflict results not conducive	45.343	0.001
Q10Q2	Amount of valuable wasted	288.343	0.001
Q10Q3	Conflict causes continuous damage	178.752	0.001
Q10Q4	Conflict impedes teaching and learning	237.752	0.001
Q10Q5	Conflict results in discontinuation	113.152	0.001
Q10Q6	Conflict diverts energy	194.752	0.001
Q10Q7	Conflict destroys morale	380.952	0.001
Q10Q8	Conflict deepens differences	160.952	0.001
Q10Q9	Conflict obstructs cooperative action	205.800	0.001
Q10Q10	Conflict prod irresponsible behaviour	362.143	0.001
Q10Q11	Conflict decreases expect production	340.200	0.001
Q10Q12	Conflict causes lack of communication	253.038	0.001

6.13.4 Causes of conflict

As shown in Table 6.13, the probable-values of the goodness-of-fit chi-square statistics, which is 0.001, is less than the 0.05 level. Same conclusion as the previous one can be drawn that is responses provided in relation to this topic also differ.

TABLE 6.13: Goodness-of-Fit Test – Causes of conflict

Variable	Question	Statistic	Prob-value
Q11Q1	Poor communication	560.671	0.001
Q11Q2	Misunderstandings	340.200	0.001
Q11Q3	Insulting remarks	380.952	0.001
Q11Q4	Racist remarks	160.952	0.001
Q11Q5	Disrespect of another's views	189.343	0.001
Q11Q6	Scandal mongering	285.038	0.001
Q11Q7	Evaluation of teachers	256.152	0.001
Q11Q8	Political differences	189.343	0.001
Q11Q9	Professional jealousy by colleagues	217.152	0.001
Q11Q10	Incompetence of certain teachers	173.571	0.001
Q11Q11	Interference by parents	281.752	0.001
Q11Q12	Interference by community-based orgs	312.171	0.001

6.13.5 Essential skills needed by principals in managing conflict

A summary of the goodness-of-fit chi-square tests results is reported in Table 6.14. The probable-value of the chi-square tests of 0.001, which is less than the practical level of 0.05, thus suggests that responses given here also differ.

TABLE 6.14: Goodness-of-Fit Test - Essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict

Variable	Question	Statistic	Prob-value
Q12Q1	Reaching a compromise solution	369.610	0.001
Q12Q2	Defining clearly activities	308.571	0.001
Q12Q3	Investigating resource sharing	220.038	0.001
Q12Q4	Analyzing antecedent conditions	208.610	0.001
Q12Q5	Diagnosing possible causes of conflict	186.667	0.001
Q12Q6	Possessing an act of setting/reconciling	148.810	0.001
Q12Q7	Knowledge about nature and scope conflict	134.867	0.001
Q12Q8	Preventing conflict from affecting	125.952	0.001
Q12Q9	To be effective and efficient	115.238	0.001
Q12Q10	Capab to deal unsatisfied human needs	354.186	0.001
Q12Q11	Ability maintain school climate conducive	91.467	0.001
Q12Q12	Ability to make a need analysis	77.143	0.001
Q12Q13	Professl dev of principals	68.810	0.001
Q12Q14	Plan/implement conflict man initiatives	49.371	0.001
Q12Q15	Apply conflict man problem-solving	37.800	0.001
Q12Q16	Intensive in-service training courses	21.943	0.001

6.14 INVESTIGATING THE EXISTENCE OF BIAS IN RESPONSES

In social studies, responses are usually thought to be influenced by some demographic factors. In this section, our aim is to examine the influence of some demographic factors on the responses provided by participants, using the chi-square test. The selected factors include gender, age and respondents' position.

6.14.1 The nature and scope of conflict in schools

Table 6.15 reports the chi-square test results of responses to the selected questions. The results indicate that responses to the selected questions are not influenced by gender, age and respondents' present position, because the probable-values of chi-square test statistics (0.396, 0.821, 0.923, 0.658, 0.321, 0.240, 0.491, 0.589, 0.400, 0.542, 0.095) are all greater than the practical level of 0.05 level.

TABLE 6.15: Chi-Square Tests - The nature and scope of conflict in schools

Test	Statistic	Prob-value
Q8Q1(Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs) by Q1(Age)	4.074	0.396
Q8Q3(Conflict Work Environ Inevitable) by Q1(Age)	1.530	0.821
Q8Q7(Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems) by Q1(Age)	0.910	0.923
Q8Q1(Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs) by Q2(Gender)	0.196	0.658
Q8Q3(Conflict Work Environ Inevitable) by Q2(Gender)	0.984	0.321
Q8Q7(Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems) by Q2(Gender)	1.383	0.240
Q8Q1(Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs) by Q5(Position in School)	2.415	0.491
Q8Q3(Conflict Work Environ Inevitable) by Q5(Position in School)	1.919	0.589
Q8Q7(Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems) by Q5(Position in School)	2.946	0.400

6.14.2 Problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools

Table 6.16 displays the chi-square test results of the responses to the selected question relating to the problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools. The fact that the probable-values of the chi-square statistics (0.430, 0.662, 0.998, 0.650, 0.244, 0.384, 0.851, 0.514, 0.774) are greater than the 0.05 level is indicative of the fact that responses these selected questions are not influenced by gender, age and respondents' present position.

TABLE 6.16: Chi-Square Tests - Problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

Test	Statistic	Prob-value
Q9Q1(Problems Arising from Non-Compliance) by Q1(Age)	12.193	0.430
Q9Q9(Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs) by Q1(Age)	2.403	0.662
Q9Q10(Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits) by Q1(Age)	0.123	0.998
Q9Q1(Problems Arising from Non-Compliance) by Q2(Gender)	1.643	0.650
Q9Q9(Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs) by Q2(Gender)	1.357	0.244
Q9Q10(Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits) by Q2(Gender)	0.758	0.384
Q9Q1(Problems Arising from Non-Compliance) by Q5(Position in School)	4.804	0.851
Q9Q9(Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs) by Q5(Position in School)	2.291	0.514
Q9Q10(Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits) by Q5(Position in School)	1.113	0.774

6.14.3 Lack of conflict management affects overall performance

A summary of the chi-square test results is exhibited in Table 6.17. The results suggest that responses to the claim 'serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive to teaching and learning is greatly influenced by the respondent's present position (i.e. probable-value of 0.036 is less than the 0.05 level). Responses to the remaining questions do not seem to be influenced by the selected demographic factors (i.e. probable-values of 0.908, 0.269, 0.112, 0.229, 0.555, 0.802, 0.845, 0.970 are all greater than the 0.05 level).

TABLE 6.17: Chi-Square Tests - Lack of viable conflict management strategies affects the overall performance of the school

Test	Statistic	Prob-value
Q10Q1(Serious conflict results not conducive) by Q1(Age)	1.011	0.908
Q10Q2(Amount of valuable wasted) by Q1(Age)	5.180	0.269
Q10Q4(Conflict impedes teaching and learning) by Q1(Age)	7.492	0.112
Q10Q1(Serious conflict results not conducive) by Q2(Gender)	1.444	0.229
Q10Q2(Amount of valuable time wasted) by Q2(Gender)	0.349	0.555
Q10Q4(Conflict impedes teaching and learning) by Q2(Gender)	0.063	0.802
Q10Q1(Serious conflict results not conducive) by Q5(Position in School)	8.556	0.036
Q10Q2(Amount of valuable time wasted) by Q5(Position in School)	0.820	0.845
Q10Q4(Conflict impedes teaching and learning) by Q5(Position in School)	0.243	0.970

6.14.4 Causes of conflict

Table 6.18 is a summary display of the chi-square test results of the selected questions in relation to causes of conflict in schools. From these results, it can be concluded that responses to the claim 'interference in school affairs by parents' is also influenced to a greater extent by 'respondent's present position (i.e. probable-value of 0.04 is less than the 0.05 level). Gender, age

and respondent's present position do not seem to influence responses to the other questions (probable-values of 0.319, 0.535, 0.809, 0.224, 0.132, 0.148, 0.536, 0.606 are all greater than the 0.05 level).

TABLE 6.18: Chi-Square Tests – Causes of conflict

Test	Statistic	Prob-value
Q11Q1(Poor communication) by Q1(Age)	9.282	0.319
Q11Q8(Political differences) by Q1(Age)	3.136	0.535
Q11Q11(Interference by parents) by Q1(Age)	1.601	0.809
Q11Q1(Poor communication) by Q2(Gender)	2.990	0.224
Q11Q8(Political differences) by Q2(Gender)	2.271	0.132
Q11Q11(Interference by parents) by Q2(Gender)	2.094	0.148
Q11Q1(Poor communication) by Q5(Position in School)	5.059	0.536
Q11Q8(Political differences) by Q5(Position in School)	1.844	0.606
Q11Q11(Interference by parents) by Q5(Position in School)	13.484	0.004

6.14.5 Essential skills needed by principals in managing conflict

Table 6.19 is a summary of the chi-square test results of the selected questions in relation to essential skills needed by principals in managing conflict

TABLE 6.19: Chi-Square Tests – Essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict

Test	Statistic	Prob-value
Q12Q1(Reaching a compromise solution) by Q1(Age)	2.319	0.677
Q12Q4(Analyzing antecedent conditions) by Q1(Age)	7.510	0.111
Q12Q8(Preventing conflict from affecting) by Q1(Age)	5.988	0.200
Q12Q1(Reaching a compromise solution) by Q2(Gender)	0.545	0.460
Q12Q4(Analyzing antecedent conditions) by Q2(Gender)	0.122	0.727
Q12Q8(Preventing conflict from affecting) by Q2(Gender)	0.044	0.833
Q12Q1(Reaching a compromise solution) by Q5(Position in School)	2.769	0.429
Q12Q4(Analyzing antecedent conditions) by Q5(Position in School)	5.797	0.122
Q12Q8(Preventing conflict from affecting) by Q5(Position in School)	2.080	0.566

The results seem to suggest that responses to the selected questions are not values of 0.677, 0.111, 0.200, 0.460, 0.727, 0.833, 0.429, 0.122, 0.566 are all greater than the 0.05 practical level of 0.05).

6.15 INVESTIGATING THE RESPONDENTS' DIFFERENCES VIEWS

This section goes further to investigate whether respondents differ in responses to some selected questions on the basis of gender, age and respondent's present position. The applicable tools are the t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test.

6.15.1 The nature and scope of conflict in schools

Table 6.20A presents a summary of the t-test and ANOVA test results of the responses to the selected questions. The results suggest that respondents do not differ significantly on the basis of age (since the probable values of the F statistics, 0.3986, 0.8235, 0.9243, are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance). Similarly, on the basis of respondents' present position, the results suggest they do not seem to differ significantly in expressing their views in relation to the nature and scope of conflicts in schools (i.e. probable-values of the F statistics, 0.4933, 0.5918, 0.4023 are all greater than the 0.05 level).

TABLE 6.20A: ANOVA Tests – The nature and scope of conflict in schools

Dependent Variable	Source	F Value	Prob-value
Q8Q1 Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs	Q1 Age	1.02	0.3986
Q8Q3 Conflict Work Environ Inevitable	Q1 Age	0.38	0.8235
Q8Q7 Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems	Q1 Age	0.23	0.9243
Q8Q1 Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs	Q5 Present Position	0.80	0.4933
Q8Q3 Conflict Work Environ Inevitable	Q5 Present Position	0.64	0.5918
Q8Q7 Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems	Q5 Present Position	0.98	0.4023

TABLE 6.20B: t-Tests – The nature and scope of conflict in schools

Variable	Q2 Gender	Variances	T	Prob-value
Q8Q1 Conflict Different Perceptions Beliefs	Male	Unequal	0.4559	0.6489
	Female	Equal	0.4414	0.6592
Q8Q3 Conflict Work Environ Inevitable	Male	Unequal	-0.9413	0.3477
	Female	Equal	-0.9906	0.3225
Q8Q7 Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems	Male	Unequal	1.2434	0.2149
	Female	Equal	1.1751	0.2406

The t-test results also suggest that on the basis of gender, respondents do not seem to differ significantly in views in relation to the nature and scope of conflict in schools (since the t-statistics, 0.4414, -0.9906, 1.1751 are all less than the critical value of 1.96, when equal variances are assumed, in each case).

6.15.2 Problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools

Table 6.21A is a summary of the t-test and ANOVA test results of responses to the selected questions relating to the problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools.

TABLE 6.21A: ANOVA Tests – Problems caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

Dependent Variable	Source	F Value	Prob-value
Q9Q1 Problems Arising from Non-Compliance	Q1 Age	0.91	0.4556
Q9Q9 Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs	Q1 Age	0.60	0.6650
Q9Q10 Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits	Q1 Age	0.03	0.9982
Q9Q1 Problems Arising from Non-Compliance	Q5 Present Position	0.28	0.8399
Q9Q9 Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs	Q5 Present Position	0.76	0.5168
Q9Q10 Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits	Q5 Present Position	0.37	0.7759

TABLE 6.21B: t-Tests – Problems caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

Variable	Q2 Gender	Variances	T	Prob-value
Q9Q1 Problems Arising from Non-Compliance	Male	Unequal	0.4598	0.6462
	Female	Equal	0.4829	0.6294
Q9Q9 Differences in Goals, Methods, & Procs	Male	Unequal	-1.2070	0.2286
	Female	Equal	-1.1641	0.2450
Q9Q10 Clash of Personality, Skills, & Traits	Male	Unequal	0.8429	0.4002
	Female	Equal	0.8692	0.3852

The fact that the probable-values of the F statistics, 0.4556, 0.6650, 0.9982, 0.8399, 0.5168, 0.7759, are all greater than the 0.05 level means that respondents do not differ significantly on the basis of age and present position. The t-test results also tend to suggest that, on the basis of gender, respondents do not seem to differ significantly in views related to the problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools (since the t-statistics, 0.4829, -1.1641, 0.8692 are all less than the critical value of 1.96, when equal variances are assumed, in each case).

6.15.3 Lack of conflict management affects overall performance of the school

The ANOVA and t tests results reported in Table 6.22A suggest that, with the exception of the claim that serious conflicts results in a school climate that is not conducive to teaching and learning where respondents seemed to differ significantly in view on the basis of respondents' present position (i.e. probable-value of the F statistic, 0.0356, is less than the 0.05 level), respondents generally do not differ significantly on the basis of age and present position (since the probable values of the F statistics, 0.9093, 0.2710, 0.1123, 0.8461, 0.9707, are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance).

TABLE 6.22A: ANOVA Tests – Lack of viable conflict management affects the overall performance of the school

Dependent Variable	Source	F Value	Prob-value
Q10Q1 Serious conflict results not conducive	Q1 Age	0.25	0.9093
Q10Q2 Amount of valuable wasted	Q1 Age	1.30	0.2710
Q10Q4 Conflict impedes teaching and learning	Q1 Age	1.88	0.1123
Q10Q1 Serious conflict results not conducive	Q5 Present Position	2.88	0.0356
Q10Q2 Amount of valuable wasted	Q5 Present Position	0.27	0.8461
Q10Q4 Conflict impedes teaching and learning	Q5 Present Position	0.08	0.9707

TABLE 6.22B t-Tests – Lack of viable conflict management affects the overall the overall performance of the school

Variable	Q2 Gender	Variances	T	Prob- value
Q10Q1 Serious conflict results not conducive	Male	Unequal	-1.2247	0.2219
	Female	Equal	-1.2010	0.2304
Q10Q2 Amount of valuable wasted	Male	Unequal	-0.6138	0.5399
	Female	Equal	-0.5898	0.5557
Q10Q4 Conflict impedes teaching and learning	Male	Unequal	0.2472	0.8050
	Female	Equal	0.2506	0.8023

Also, from the t-test results based on gender, respondents do not seem to differ significantly in views that lack of conflict management in schools affects the overall performance of the school (i.e. the t-statistics, -1.2247, -1.2010, -0.6138, -0.5898, 0.2472, 0.2506 are all less than the critical value of 1.96, when equal variances are assumed in each case).

6.15.4 Causes of conflict

As indicated in the ANOVA test results displayed in Table 6.23A on the next page, respondents tend to differ significantly in view as to whether 'interference of parents in school affairs' is a cause of conflict in schools (probable-value of the F statistic, 0.0035 is less than the 0.05 level). With regards to the remaining claims, the results tend to suggest that, on the basis of 'age' and 'respondents present position', respondents seemed not differ significantly in views (because the probable values of the F statistics, 0.1005, 0.5384, 0.8108, 0.7676, 0.6079, are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance).

TABLE 6.23A: ANOVA Tests – Causes of conflict

Dependent Variable	Source	F Value	Prob-value
Q11Q1 Poor communication	Q1 Age	1.96	0.1005
Q11Q8 Political differences	Q1 Age	0.78	0.5384
Q11Q11 Interference by parents	Q1 Age	0.40	0.8108
Q11Q1 Poor communication	Q5 Present Position	0.38	0.7676
Q11Q8 Political differences	Q5 Present Position	0.61	0.6079
Q11Q11 Interference by parents	Q5 Present Position	4.60	0.0035

TABLE 6.23B: t-Tests – Causes of conflict

Variable	Q2 Gender	Variances	T	Prob-value
Q11Q1 Poor communication	Male	Unequal	-1.8024	0.0727
	Female	Equal	-1.7299	0.0844
Q11Q8 Political differences	Male	Unequal	-1.6114	0.1083
	Female	Equal	-1.5073	0.1325
Q11Q11 Interference by parents	Male	Unequal	1.3306	0.1849
	Female	Equal	1.4472	0.1486

The t-test results reveal that, on the basis of gender, respondents slightly differ in view that poor communication could be a cause of conflict in school (since the absolute values of t-statistics, -1.8024, -1.7299, do not differ much from the critical value of 1.96, when equal variances are assumed in each case). Respondents do not seem to differ significantly on the views that political differences and interference by parents in school affairs could be potential causes of conflict in schools (absolute values of the t-statistics, -1.6114, -1.5073, 1.3306, 1.4472, are less than the critical value of 1.96).

6.15.5 Essential skills needed by principals in managing conflict

The ANOVA and t-tests results reported in Table 6.24A and Table 6.24B suggest that respondents generally do not differ significantly, on the basis of age and present position, in views related to the essential skills needed by school managing conflicts in schools (i.e. the probable values of the F and t statistics are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance).

TABLE 6.24A: ANOVA Tests – Essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict

Dependent Variable	Source	F Value	Prob-value
Q12Q1 Reaching a compromise solution	Q1 Age	0.58	0.6803
Q12Q4 Analyzing antecedent conditions	Q1 Age	1.89	0.1114
Q12Q8 Preventing conflict from affecting	Q1 Age	1.50	0.2012
Q12Q1 Reaching a compromise solution	Q5 Present Position	0.92	0.4310
Q12Q4 Analyzing antecedent conditions	Q5 Present Position	1.94	0.1223
Q12Q8 Preventing conflict from affecting	Q5 Present Position	0.67	0.5686

TABLE 6.24B: t-Tests – Essential skills needed by principals to manage conflict

Variable	Q2 Gender	Variances	T	Prob-value
Q12Q1 Reaching a compromise solution	Male	Unequal	0.6788	0.4981
	Female	Equal	0.7372	0.4614
Q12Q4 Analyzing antecedent conditions	Male	Unequal	-0.3542	0.7235
	Female	Equal	-0.3490	0.7273
Q12Q8 Preventing conflict from affecting	Male	Unequal	-0.2111	0.8330
	Female	Equal	-0.2100	0.8337

6.16 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

This section conducts correlation analyses of responses to find out whether these responses are related. Table 6.25 presents a summary of results indicating significant relations between pairs of responses. Pairs of responses are deemed related if the probable-value of the correlation coefficient is less than the practical level of 0.05. The analysis reveals an association between the responses:

TABLE 6.25: Correlation analysis

Correlated Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Prob value
Q8Q3 and Q8Q4	-0.11165	0.0221
Q8Q5 and Q8Q6	0.09927	0.0420
Q8Q7 and Q8Q8	-0.10559	0.0305
Q8Q9 and Q8Q10	0.12009	0.0138
Q8Q11 and Q8Q12	0.10953	0.0248
Q9Q2 and Q9Q3	-0.13325	0.0062
Q9Q5 and Q9Q6	-0.15233	0.0017
Q9Q6 and Q9Q7	-0.12527	0.7876
Q9Q7 and Q9Q8	-0.20882	0.0001
Q10Q1 and Q10Q2	-0.18165	0.0002
Q10Q2 and Q10Q3	-0.09555	0.0504
Q10Q5 and Q10Q6	-0.15385	0.0016
Q10Q9 and Q10Q12	0.16815	0.0005
Q11Q1 and Q11Q2	-0.10231	0.0361
Q11Q2 and Q11Q4	0.16692	0.0006
Q11Q3 and Q11Q5	0.09935	0.0418
Q11Q4 and Q11Q5	-0.14961	0.0021
Q11Q4 and Q11Q6	0.14873	0.0022
Q11Q5 and Q11Q6	-0.11514	0.0183
Q11Q7 and Q11Q11	0.10201	0.0366
Q11Q8 and Q11Q9	-0.14226	0.0035
Q11Q8 and Q11Q10	0.11205	0.0216
Q11Q9 and Q11Q10	-0.13482	0.0057
Q12Q1 and Q12Q4	0.23568	0.0001
Q12Q6 and Q12Q7	-0.13546	0.0054
Q12Q6 and Q12Q8	0.22343	0.0001
Q12Q13 and Q12Q15	0.11181	0.0218

- 'Conflict Work Environ Inevitable'/ 'Autocratic Principal Source'
- 'School Succeed Managing Conflicts'/ 'Existing Conflict Evidence Org Breakdown'
- 'Lack Conflict Man Creates Problems'/ 'Lack of Training in Managing Conflict'
- 'Existing Formal Procedures are Practiced' / 'School Conflict Man Program Success'
- 'Teachers are Adequately Equipped'/ 'Conflict is Disruptive of School Routine'
- 'Ignorance About Teachers Act'/ 'Lack of Training'
- 'Unprofessional behaviour of Teachers'/ 'Power struggles'
- 'Power struggles'/ 'Role Ambiguities'
- 'Role Ambiguities'/ 'Inter-Dependence of Activities'
- 'Serious conflict results not conducive'/ 'Amount of valuable wasted'
- 'Amount of valuable wasted'/ 'Conflict causes continuous damage'
- 'Conflict results in discontinuation'/ 'Conflict diverts energy'
- 'Conflict obstructs cooperative action'/ 'Conflict causes lack of communication'
- 'Poor communication'/ 'Misunderstandings'
- 'Misunderstandings'/ 'Racist remarks'
- 'Insulting remarks'/ 'Disrespect of another's views'
- 'Racist remarks'/ 'Disrespect of another's views'
- 'Racist remarks'/ 'Scandal mongering'
- 'Disrespect of another's views'/ 'Scandal mongering'
- 'Evaluation of teachers'/ 'Interference by parents'
- 'Political differences'/ 'Professional jealousy by colleagues'
- 'Political differences'/ 'Incompetence of certain teachers'
- 'Professional jealousy by colleagues'/ 'Incompetence of certain teachers'
- 'Reaching a compromise solution'/ 'Analyzing antecedent conditions'
- 'Possessing an act of settling/reconciling'/ 'Knowledge about nature and scope conflict'
- 'Possessing an act of settling/reconciling'/ 'Preventing conflict from affecting'
- 'Professional development of principals'/ 'Apply conflict man problem-solving'

6.17 INTERPRETATION OF DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES BETWEEN THE VIEWS OF THE PRINCIPALS AND THOSE OF THE TEACHERS

To depict the differences in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme was used to analyse data. To determine whether the groups differ significantly among themselves in various aspects of conflict management in schools, the standard deviation (SD) was used.

Standard deviation (SD) is an inferential technique that is used to determine whether two or more groups of variables are significantly different from each other (Borg and Gall, 1989). The Chi-square test was used to determine the level of statistically significant difference among various factors. Pearson's correlation coefficient was also done to detect the relationships of the two groups of respondents.

The chi-square (χ^2) test.

The chi-square test was used to determine the level of statistical significance between sample means (Borg & Gall, 1989). In this study, the chi-square test was computed to determine the level of statistical significance between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

The effect size

In this study, the effect size is the quantitative way of describing how the views of principals differ from those of the teachers on the causes of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools (Borg & Gall, 1989). The

effect size gives the picture of the practical significant difference between the two groups.

In order to compare the views of the principals and those of the teachers, the effect size was computed by subtracting the mean score of the teachers from the principals' mean and dividing it by the principals' standard deviation.

The formula used in computing the effect size (Treece & Treece, 1986; Cohen, 1988; Legotto, 1994).

$$d = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{SD}$$

Where:

X_1 = is the mean for principals

X_2 = is the mean for teachers

SD = is the standard deviation for the principal

d = is the effect size

The following guidelines were used in the interpretation of the value of the effect size (Cohen, 1988; Legotto, 1994).

d = 0.15 (Small effect)

d = 0.35 (Medium effect)

d = 0.60 (Large effect)

It was assumed that there is no significant difference between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

The chi-square (X^2) test and the standard deviation were computed to gain a picture of the differences in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management in schools.

6.17.1 Problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

This section displays the statistically significant difference in response between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

Table 6.26: The differences in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

ITEM NO	PRINCIPALS MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)	CHI-SQUARE	ITEM NO	TEACHERS MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)	CHI-SQUARE
9.1	Problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the education department	0.83	3.56	9.3	Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies	0.61	3.37
9.2	Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act	0.76	3.48	9.4	Scarcity of resources	0.67	3.36
9.5	Unprofessional behaviour of certain educators	0.68	3.47	9.6	Power struggles	0.75	3.35
9.9	Differences in goals, methods and procedures	0.57	3.43	9.7	Role ambiguities	0.81	3.33
9.10	Clash of personality traits	0.62	3.41	9.8	Interdependence of activities	0.66	3.29
9.11	Differences in values and expectations	0.60	3.39	9.12	Abrupt changes	0.84	3.27

The items in which there is a statistically significant difference are listed below:

Item 9.1: Problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the education department ($x^2 = 3.56$ SD = 0.83)

Item 9.2: Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Teachers Act ($x^2 = 3.48$ SD = 0.76)

Item 9.3: Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies ($x^2 = 3.37$ SD = 0.61)

Item 9.4: Scarcity of resources ($x^2 = 3.36$ SD = 0.67)

Item 9.5: Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers ($x^2 = 3.47$ SD = 0.68)

Item 9.6: Power struggles ($x^2 = 3.35$ SD = 0.75)

Item 9.7: Role ambiguities ($x^2 = 3.33$ SD = 0.81)

Item 9.8: Interdependence of activities ($x^2 = 3.29$ SD = 0.66)

Item 9.9: Differences in goals, methods and procedures ($x^2 = 3.43$ SD = 0.57)

Item 9.10: Clash of personality traits ($x^2 = 3.41$ SD = 0.62)

Item 9.11: Differences in values and expectations ($x^2 = 3.39$ SD = 0.60)

Item 9.12: Abrupt changes ($x^2 = 3.27$ SD = 0.84).

It is evident from Table 6.26 that there are differences in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

In summary, from the empirical investigation conducted on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, an interesting finding emerged. The school management teams attributed the causes of conflict in schools to unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers and problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department by the teachers. On the other hand, most of the teachers are of the view that problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management in schools, emanate from the fact that some of the principals lack training in conflict management skills and conflict management resolution strategies.

The majority of the principals were of the opinion that lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies disadvantaged them from preventing conflict getting worse; to find creative solutions for problems and to plan, organise, guide and control management tasks (cf.3.2.3). As revealed by literature consulted in chapter three, lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools affects the overall academic performance of the learners as well as the smooth running of the school.

6.17.2 Effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

Table 6.27 gives a comparison of the responses of the two groups. In examining the computed samples of chi-square test, it is clear that there is a statistically significant difference in the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools.

Table 6.27 The differences in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools

ITEM NO	PRINCIPALS MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)	CHI-SQUARE	ITEM NO	TEACHERS MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION	CHI-SQUARE
10.2	An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags on for too long	0.68	3.46	10.1	Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive to teaching and learning	0.74	3.19
10.4	Conflict impedes the culture of teaching and learning	0.66	3.40	10.3	Conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction	0.82	3.18
10.8	Conflict deepens differences	0.56	3.36	10.5	Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of school days	0.80	3.12
10.10	Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour	0.81	3.32	10.6	Conflict diverts energy	0.78	3.10
10.11	Conflict decreases expected production	0.75	3.24	10.7	Conflict destroys morale	0.76	3.08
10.12	Conflict causes lack of communication among colleagues	0.57	3.20	10.9	Conflict obstructs co-operative action	0.84	2.86

In the following items there is a statistically significant difference in responses between the two groups.

Item 10.1: Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive to teaching and learning ($\chi^2 = 3.19$ SD = 0.74)

Item 10.2: An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags on for too long ($x^2 = 3.46$ SD = 0.68)

Item 10.3: Conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction ($x^2 = 3.18$ SD = 0.82)

Item 10.4: Conflict impedes the culture of teaching and learning ($x^2 = 3.40$ SD = 0.66)

Item 10.5: Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of school days ($x^2 = 3.12$ SD = 0.80)

Item 10.6: Conflict diverts energy ($x^2 = 3.10$ SD = 0.78)

Item 10.7: Conflict destroys morale ($x^2 = 3.08$ SD = 0.76)

Item 10.8: Conflict deepens differences ($x^2 = 3.36$ SD = 0.56)

Item 10.9: Conflict obstructs co-operative action ($x^2 = 2.86$ SD = 0.84)

Item 10.10: Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour ($x^2 = 3.32$ SD = 0.81)

Item 10.11: Conflict decreases expected production ($x^2 = 3.24$ SD = 0.75)

Item 10.12: Conflict causes lack of communication among colleagues ($x^2 = 3.20$ SD = 0.57).

In summary, there is a difference in response between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools as illustrated by Table 6.27.

Since principals are held responsible for anything that goes wrong in the school and for the smooth running of the school, they are more concerned about implementing the policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department successfully. The teachers on the other hand, tend to put the

blame on the principals that they are making their teaching difficult and impossible. The teachers may even suggest to the principal to ignore or disregard some of the demands made by the Department of Education. This sometimes results in clash of goals, values and expectations between the principals and the teachers.

6.17.3 Causes of conflicts in schools

The chi-square test and the standard deviation were computed to gain a picture of the difference in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the causes of conflicts in schools.

Table 6.28 displays the statistically significant difference in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the causes of conflicts in schools.

Table 6.28 The differences in responses between the views of the principals and those of the teachers on the causes of conflicts in schools

ITEM NO	PRINCIPALS MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)	CHI-SQUARE	ITEM NO	TEACHERS MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)	CHI-SQUARE
11.2	Misunderstandings	0.68	3.52	11.1	Poor communication	0.69	3.23
11.5	Disrespect of another's views	0.64	3.46	11.3	Insulting remarks	0.82	3.17
11.7	Evaluation of educators	0.58	3.42	11.4	Racist remarks	0.79	3.15
11.9	Professional jealousy by colleagues	0.62	3.40	11.6	Scandal mongering	0.68	3.02
11.10	Incompetence of certain educators	0.58	3.39	11.8	Political differences	0.80	2.80
11.12	Interference in school affairs by community based organizations	0.66	3.26	11.11	Interference in school affairs by parents	0.82	2.72

The items in which there is a statistically significant difference are listed below:

Item 11.1: Poor communication ($x^2 = 3.23$ SD = 0.69)

Item 11.2: Misunderstandings ($x^2 = 3.52$ SD = 3.52)

Item 11.3: Insulting remarks ($x^2 = 3.17$ SD = 0.82)

Item 11.4: Racist remarks ($x^2 = 3.15$ SD = 0.79)

Item 11.5: Disrespect of another's views ($x^2 = 3.46$ SD = 0.64)

Item 11.6: Scandal mongering ($x^2 = 3.02$ SD = 0.68)

Item 11.7: Evaluation of teachers ($x^2 = 3.42$ SD = 0.58)

Item 11.8: Political differences ($x^2 = 2.80$ SD = 0.80)

Item 11.9: Professional jealousy by colleagues ($x^2 = 3.40$ SD = 0.62)

Item 11.10: Incompetence of certain teachers ($x^2 = 3.39$ SD = 0.58)

Item 11.11: Interference in school affairs by parents ($x^2 = 2.72$ SD = 0.82)

Item 11.12: Interference in school affairs by community based organizations ($x^2 = 3.26$ SD = 0.66).

In summary, most of the principals are of the view that conflicts emanate when they perform their managerial obligations and the teachers perceive it as a burden on their shoulders. Teachers need to be evaluated by their seniors and this usually results in misunderstandings that lead to conflicts between the principals and the teachers. Some teachers have a wrong

conception that there is no need for them to be class visited because they are more qualified than their seniors. This concept of being more qualified than their seniors causes conflicts.

Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers and incompetence of certain teachers are the major causes of conflicts in some schools. These are some of the aspects that cause serious conflicts in schools when teachers are evaluated. Some teachers view evaluation as being judgemental rather than developmental, because most of the time it was not done in good faith.

Such differences illustrate the need for change of mind set and a change of attitude by the teachers towards their profession and accept the values of developmental appraisal system (DAS).

6.18 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the findings of the empirical investigation conducted to determine the perceptions of principals and teachers on the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools, causes of conflicts in schools, essential skills needed by principals to manage conflicts that emerge in schools and how lack of viable conflict management strategies affects the overall performance of the school.

Major findings of this investigation revealed that conflicts in schools are caused mainly by:

- problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the Education Department;
- unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers;
- scarcity of resources;
- clash of personality traits; and
- abrupt changes.

Effects of lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools were also revealed in this investigation as follows:

- Conflict that drags over a period of time impede the culture of learning and teaching;
- Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour;
- Conflict decreases expected production;
- Conflict destroys morale;
- Conflict destroys team spirit; and
- Conflict diverts energy that could have been used to achieve the anticipated vision and mission of the school.

Problems identified by Everard and Morris (1990) and Robbins (1995) in the U.K help us to understand problems in developed countries. For example, the problems caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools as experienced by principals in the U.K. and U.S.A. as revealed in chapter three (cf.3.2.1). However, it is noted that principals in developing countries are also concerned about the problems that are caused by lack of viable conflict management strategies, how lack of conflict management affects the overall performance of the school and essential skills needed by principals to manage conflicts effectively and efficiently.

The more prominent problems for respondents in this study are problems that emanate from not complying with the policies and regulations of the department of education, lack of training in conflict management procedures and resolution strategies, scarcity of human and physical resources, unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers and undemocratic abrupt changes. However, principals are expected to undergo intensive training on conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies, since they spend most of their time dealing with or resolving various types of conflicts that emerge daily in their work environment.

From the analysis of data presented in this chapter, the following problems need more attention in the development of (CMM) Conflict Management Model (cf.3.3.10).

- How to prevent undemocratic abrupt changes;
- How to address the scarcity of human and physical resources;
- How to deal with teachers whose behaviour is unprofessional;
- How to evaluate teachers to the satisfaction of both parties;
- How to deal with differences in goals, methods and procedures;
- Clash of personality skills and traits;
- Differences in values and expectations;
- Interdependence of activities;
- Role ambiguities;
- Ignorance about basic conditions of employment;
- Training in conflict management styles, skills, techniques and resolution strategies; and
- Maintenance of long-term school climate that is conducive to the culture of learning and teaching.

There are essential skills that are needed by principals to manage conflicts that emerge in schools. According to this study the most important significant skills approach that should be employed in designing (cf.6.7) Conflict Management Model (CMM) are:

- An intuition to anticipate problems, factors and conditions within the school that lead to conflict;
- Appropriate application of conflict management styles and resolution strategies to the satisfaction of parties involved in a serious conflict; and
- Effective and efficient usage of conflict management skills and techniques to manage conflict to the minimum level in schools.

7. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR PRINCIPALS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the frames for developing a conflict management model (CMM) for principals; the rationale behind the development of the conflict management model (CMM) for principals; goals and objectives of conflict management model (CMM) are also discussed. How (CMM) can be developed and implemented in schools is the main focus of this study. Conflict management model (CMM) can be used as a guide by the principals when they resolve conflict situations in their school settings.

Little attention is being paid to developing comprehensive conflict management models for principals, more especially in developing countries like South Africa. Similarly, little is being written about how the principals should go about when resolving conflicting situations in their schools.

From the theoretical framework provided in chapter two, three and four and the empirical investigation conducted in chapter five and six that form the basic rationale for developing a conflict management model for principals, a comprehensive conflict management model is developed in this chapter. As stated in chapter one (cf. 1.3), the main purpose of this study is to develop a conflict management model for principals.

Important issues in conflict management are initially given some attention in order to lay down the point of departure for the development of conflict management model for principals. More attention is focused on the development of conflict management model for principals and the implementation of the proposed model is also discussed in details in this section.

7.2 FRAMES FOR DEVELOPING A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL (CMM) FOR PRINCIPALS

The development of the conflict management model is guided by assumptions about models as attempts to represent the reality. The conflict management model deals with conflict management strategies that could be used by the principals when resolving conflicts in schools. Since this chapter aims to develop a conflict management model, attention is given to explain what a model is.

Mouton and Marais, (1988:138) in Legotlo, (1994:257) say that the term model is one of the most ambiguous in the vocabulary of the social science. Model and theory are frequently used as synonyms. A conflict management model for principals is based on models from industries, on interviews with the principals as well as observations conducted.

Models as the basis of analogies play a role in scientific research – that is, in the creation of a theory. Theory provides the practitioner with the conceptual tool to analyse the problem and develop an alternative solution to the problem (Legotlo,1994). The conflict management model represents the nature of conflict, illustrating the relationship between major elements of conflict management in a simplified form. In the proposed conflict management model, the role played by the principals and the teachers is given full attention.

The model also suggests new areas of research because certain relationships, like the relationship between providers of the conflict management programme and the agencies that help to provide the theoretical frame of management skills, are highlighted. In this study the relationship between the Department of Education as the provider of the conflict management programme and the principal as an agency that helps to provide the theoretical tools, is revealed.

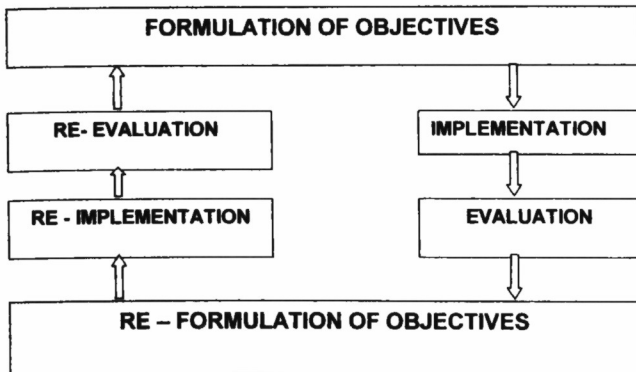
Mouton and Marais (1988:141) provide the following characteristics of a model:

- Models identify central problems or questions concerning a phenomenon that ought to be investigated;
- Models limit, isolate, simplify and systematize the domain that is investigated;
- Models provide new language games or a universe of discourse within which the phenomenon may be discussed; and
- Models provide explanations, sketches and the means for making predictions.

Therefore, a model provides questions, pointers and directions for inquiry, which, if pursued lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Legotto,1994). The conflict management model, therefore, provides an explanatory sketch of the conflict management process.

Figure 7.1 shows the planning process of the conflict management model.

FIGURE 7.1: PLANNING PROCESS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL



The proposed Conflict Management Model (CMM) includes a number of components and a number of role players and conflict management activities.

7.3 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL (CMM) FOR PRINCIPALS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

An overall picture of the proposed CMM is provided in Figure 7.3. Because of the complex nature of the Conflict Management Model (CMM), a holistic view of the model is provided. The major components of (CMM) will also be discussed in this section. Initially, the mission and objectives of the model are outlined.

Conflict management model is a set of skills, such as negotiation and mediation that assist individuals and groups in better understanding and dealing with conflict as it arises in all aspects of their lives. The conflict management model is designed to address the conflict management needs of principals, to address problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management and resolution strategies and how conflict affects the overall performance of the school.

In developing the conflict management model, due attention is paid to the needs of the target group, namely principals. In simple terms, needs could be viewed as the gap between what is present and what is required (Legotlo, 1994). Various strategies were employed in determining the needs of principals when resolving conflict in their schools, as highlighted in chapters two, three, four, five and six.

In order to determine the conflict management needs of principals, an in-depth literature study was conducted in chapter two, three and four on the problems facing principals and conflict resolution strategies that they need when resolving conflict situations in their schools. Furthermore, chapter five and six provided an empirical investigation of the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management strategies. These problems facing

principals and resolution strategies needed by principals when resolving conflict in schools, to some extent, reveal the conflict management needs of principals.

7.3.1 Rationale for (CMM) for principals

At present, there is no conflict management model (CMM) that is used as a guide by the principals when resolving conflicts in their schools.

Negotiation, like all aspects of interpersonal relations in organisations, is bound to create occasional conflicts or disagreements between people on substantive or emotional issues. Substantive conflicts involve disagreements over such things as goals, the allocation of resources, distribution of rewards, policies and procedures and job assignments. Emotional conflicts result from feelings of anger, distrust, dislike, fear and resentment, as well as from personality clashes. Both forms of conflict can be destructive and cause problems in the workplace. But when managed well, they can be helpful in promoting high performance, creativity and innovation.

A poor principal manages conflict in one of the following ways: He swallows it and develops ulcers, or he spits it out and digests his colleagues with a barrage of threats and bureaucratic clichés, or he avails himself of cloak-and-dagger strategies – whereby his integrity and credibility as a leader are sometimes permanently destroyed by his own senseless behaviour.

7.3.2 Goals and objectives of the (CMM)

The Conflict Management Model (CMM) aims at assisting principals, when resolving conflicts in their schools by tracing the antecedents of conflicts up to the phase of resolution strategies. The Conflict Management Model (CMM) is to be used as a guide by the principals when resolving conflicts.

When any one or more of the antecedent conditions is present, an informed principal expects conflicts to occur. The resulting conflicts can either be

resolved in the sense that the sources are corrected or suppressed where the sources remain but the conflict behaviours are controlled. Suppressed conflicts tend to fester and recur at a later time. They can also contribute to other conflicts over the same or related issues. True conflict resolution eliminates the underlying causes of conflict and reduces the potential for similar conflicts in the future.

The establishment of needs forms the basis for the formulation of the conflict management model objectives. The identified needs are converted into objectives.

For the principal the main objectives of conflict management model are:

- Reducing time spent on managing conflicts increases teaching time;
- Knowledge of conflict management and resolution strategies is greatly increased;
- Ability to control one's behaviour in conflict situations is increased;
- Interpersonal communication skills are enhanced;
- Ability to identify common interests and achieve "win-win" solutions is improved;
- School climate is improved;
- Ability to deal constructively with conflict and other strong emotions is increased;
- Ability to analyse and understand how lack of conflict management affects the overall performance of the school is clarified;
- Ability to analyse and understand how conflicts escalate and de-escalate is increased;
- Ability to respect different perspectives is increased;
- Ability to understand the nature and scope of conflict in schools;
- Ability to know the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management in schools;
- Knowledgeable about the causes of conflict in schools; and

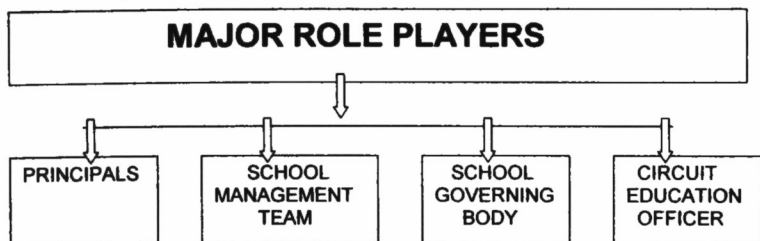
- The ability to manage conflict is undoubtedly one of the most important skills a principal needs to possess.

Without a well-structured conflict management model, these identified objectives cannot be actualised. The conflict management model clearly specifies how these objectives can be achieved for example, who is going to do what and when?

7.4 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE (CMM) IN SCHOOLS

In order to ensure that the stated objectives of the CMM are actualised, both the management structures of the CMM at micro-levels should be well co-ordinated as well as the operational structure as outlined by Figure 7.2.

FIGURE 7.2: THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CMM: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



7.4.1 The major role players of the CMM at micro-level

The major role players at micro-level as displayed in Figure 7.2 should understand their roles and be more committed to the actualisation of the CMM.

7.4.1.1 Principals

The most important role of the principal is to manage conflict in schools efficiently and effectively. The principal should be well equipped with conflict management skills and conflict resolution strategy. The principal spends most of his or her time dealing with conflicts in schools, so there is a great need that he or she should have an intensive training in conflict management and resolution strategies. Should conflict rise to the point where it affects the overall performance of the school, the blame may be put on him or her because he or she has failed to use conflict management skills, conflict resolution strategies and conflict management techniques.

7.4.1.2 School management team

The school management team should also receive training in conflict management strategy, since they are also involved in any conflict that may arise in a school. The school management team should assist the principal in any conflict management initiatives that take place in the school. The school cannot be run smoothly without the efforts and participation of the SMT in the management of conflict. It is the responsibility of the SMT to run the school in an atmosphere that is conducive to the culture of learning and teaching. Conflict in a school must be managed effectively and efficiently, failure to do so, may affect the overall performance of the school.

7.4.1.3 School governing body

The members of the school governing body should be trained in conflict management techniques since most of the crucial conflicting cases are referred to them for final recommendations.

7.4.1.4 Circuit education officer

The circuit education officer as the representative of the Department of Education has to ensure that the CMP reaches its desired goals and objectives.

The circuit education officer takes the full responsibility of guiding the principal on conflict management skills and conflict resolution strategies. The circuit education officer helps the principal by equipping him with necessary skills and techniques to manage conflicts that might emerge in a school environment.

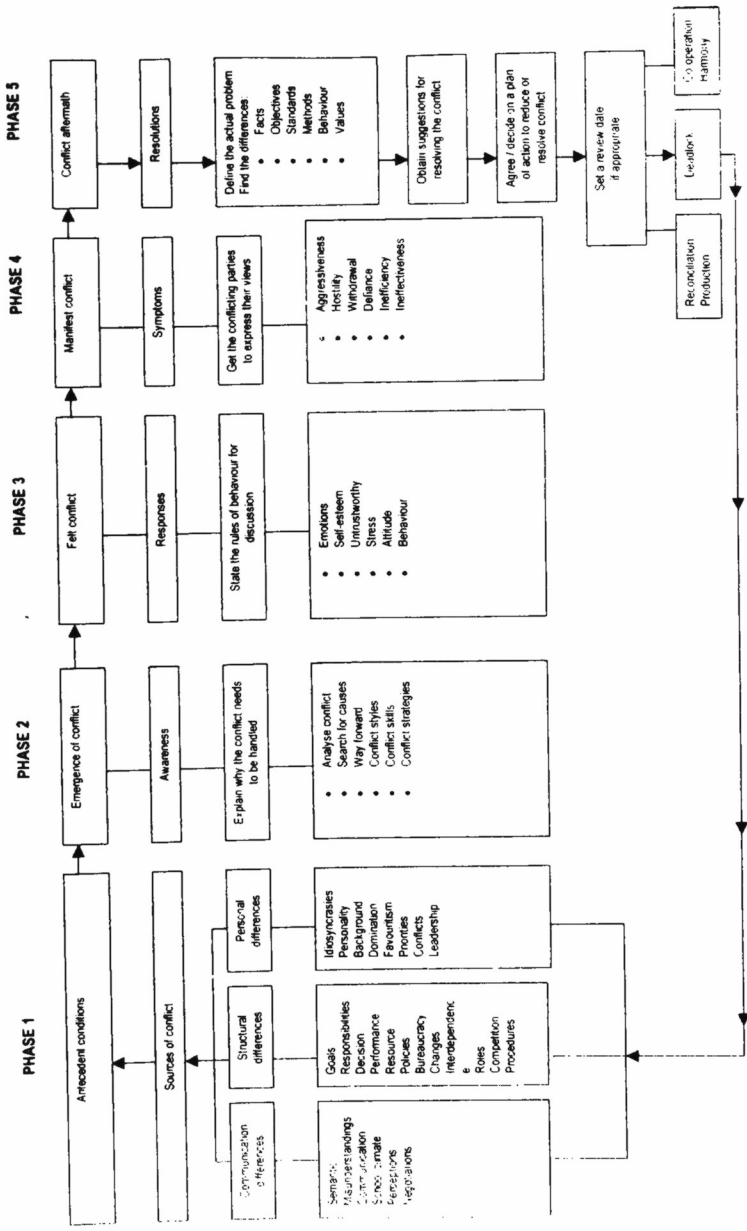
All the major role players in the conflict management model for principals should know their roles and make every effort to carry out those roles as effectively as possible. The circuit officer as the major role player at grass root level, should ensure that there is harmony and mutual respect and better understanding among all the role players.

7.5 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL (CMM) FOR PRINCIPALS

The conflict management model proposed consists of five phases as displayed in Figure 7.3 on the next page. Each phase has activities focused on the management of conflict by the principals and developing conflict management strategies. These phases are outlined with the help of sketches.

From the empirical investigation conducted, the majority of the respondents were principals of secondary schools, they confirmed that they do need help in conflict management and resolution strategies. Hence the proposed conflict management model focuses more on the steps of conflict management strategies needed by principals to manage conflict efficiently and effectively.

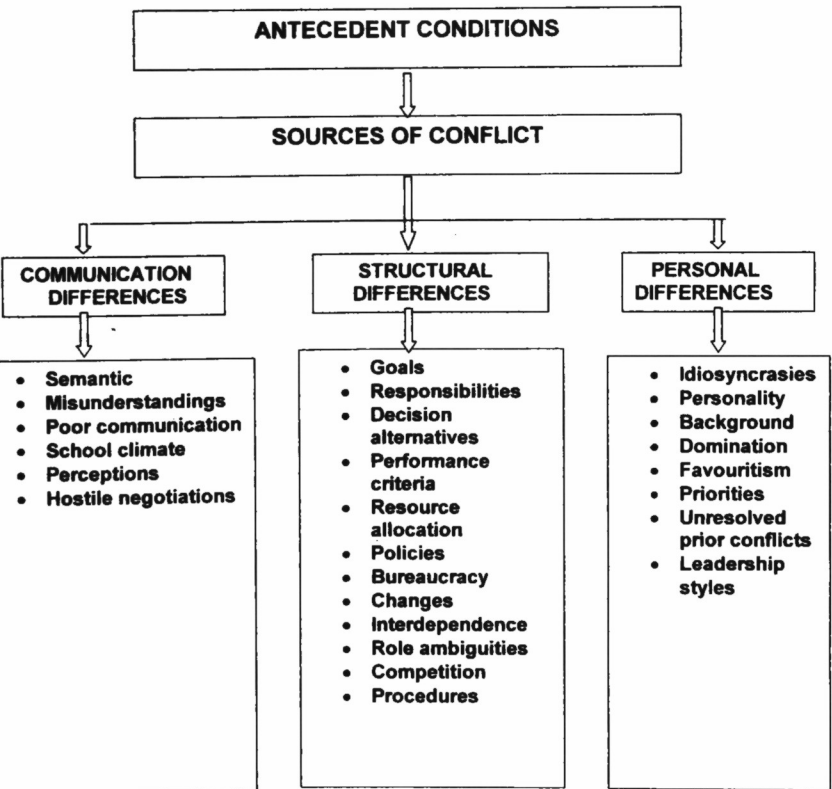
FIGURE 7.3: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE



7.5.1 Phase 1: Antecedent conditions

Figure 7.4 outlines antecedent conditions that are there in schools.

FIGURE 7.4: ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS



The sources of conflict in a school can be divided into the three main following categories:

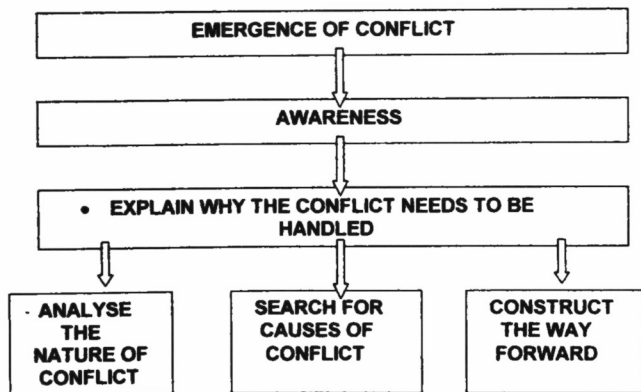
- Communication differences;
- Structural differences; and
- Personal differences.

In the first phase of Conflict Management Model, no outright conflict exists, but the potential for conflict to arise is present because of several factors in the organization. At this stage, conflict is latent. All organizational conflict arises because vertical and horizontal differentiation lead to the establishment of different organizational subunits with different goals and often different perceptions of how best to realise those goals.

7.5.2 Phase 2: Emergence of conflict

Figure 7.5 clarifies the first step of procedures that the principals should follow when they become aware of the emergence of conflict in their schools.

FIGURE 7.5: EMERGENCE OF CONFLICT



At this stage, the cause of the conflict is recognised by one or both of the parties. Conflict starts to emerge. The principal should explain to the parties involved in a conflict why it needs to be handled. He or she does this by:

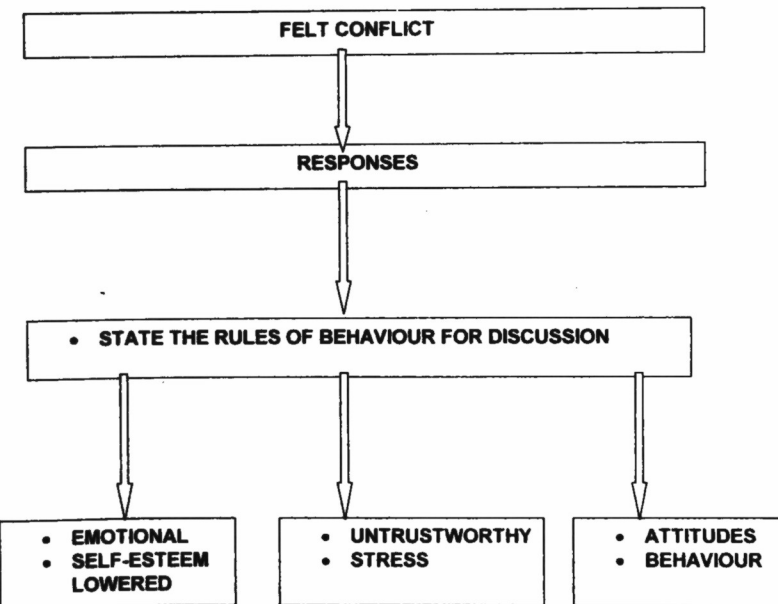
- Analysing the nature of conflict;
- Searching for its causes; and
- Constructing the way forward.

It is at this stage where the conflict can affect the overall performance of the school, if it is not constructively handled.

7.5.3 Phase 3: Felt conflict

Figure 7.6 elucidates techniques on how the principals should respond towards the conflict that has emerged.

FIGURE 7.6: FELT CONFLICT



Tension is beginning to build between the parties that are in conflict, although no real struggle has started. The following are indicators that tension is building up:

- Emotional behaviour emerges;
- Self-esteem is lowered;
- Untrustworthiness starts to develop;

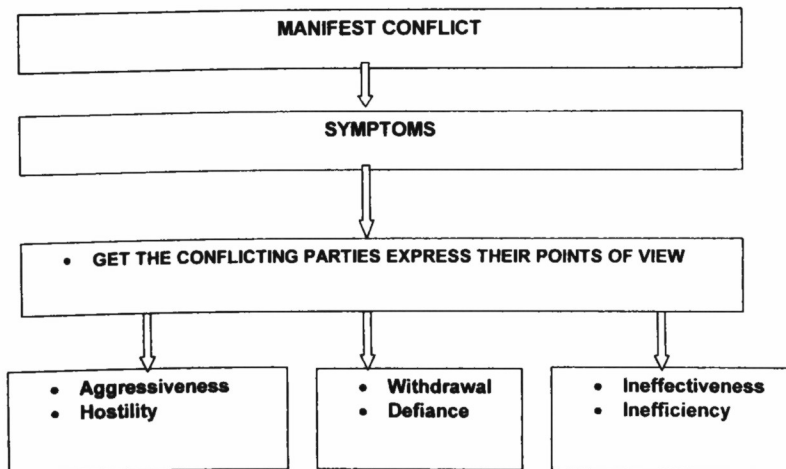
- Stress manifests itself;
- Attitudes change; and
- Behaviour changes.

The principal should at this stage state the rules of behaviour for the discussion. He or she has also to explain the direction that should be followed by both conflicting parties in order to reach the solution of the problem.

7.5.4 Phase 4: Manifest conflict

Figure 7.7 depicts the symptoms of conflict that have clearly manifested themselves. The principal applies his or her conflict management resolution strategies, conflict management skills, styles of conflict management and follows the correct procedure of conflict management.

FIGURE 7.7: MANIFEST CONFLICT



During this phase of manifest conflict, the struggle is under way and the behaviour of the parties makes the existence of the conflict apparent to others who are not directly involved. The symptoms of conflict that manifest themselves are:

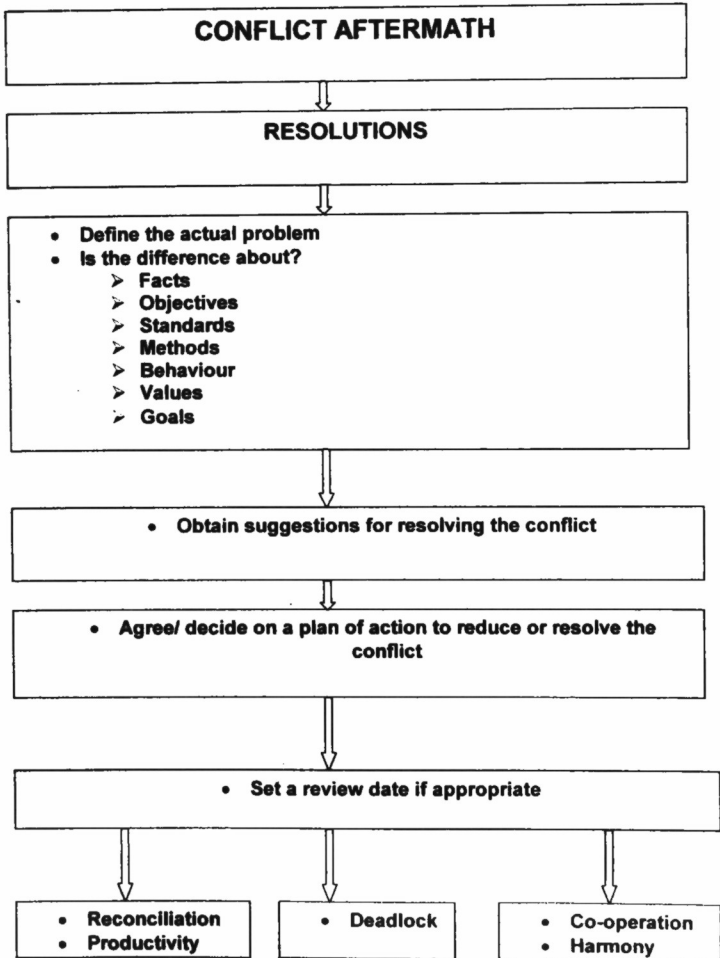
- Aggression;
- Hostility;
- Withdrawal;
- Defiance;
- Ineffectiveness; and
- Inefficiency.

The principal gets the conflicting parties to express their points of view.

7.5.5 Phase 5: Conflict aftermath

Figure 7.8 prescribes activities to be carried out by the principals during the conflict resolution phase of conflict management.

FIGURE 7.8: CONFLICT AFTERMATH



The conflict resolution phase constitutes a workable and straightforward application of the problem-solving approach. During this phase of conflict aftermath, the principal resolves the conflict by performing the following:

Step 1: Define the problem

- The principal formulates the problem in clear language;
- The principal defines the actual problem; and
- The principal finds out whether the difference between conflicting parties is about facts, objectives, standards, methods, behaviour, goals, perceptions or values.

Step 2: Look for solutions or alternatives

- The principal generates a number of solutions without expressing judgement; and
- The principal should obtain suggestions for resolving the conflict.

Step 3: Choose a suitable solution

- The conflicting parties decide which solution would be best for both of them; and
- They should agree or decide on a plan of action to be followed when resolving the conflict.

Step 4: Implement the decision

- The decision taken should be implemented;
- This is done to put the agreement into practise; and
- A date should be set to review the progress made.

Step 5: Evaluate the implementation

- The principal should find out whether the agreed upon plan of action has produced the desired results.

The principal and the conflicting parties have ended the conflict either by resolution or suppression. This establishes new conditions that will lead to more effective cooperation, reconciliation, productivity and harmony. If there has been a deadlock, the whole process starts again from the beginning until the final conflict has been solved to the satisfaction of the parties concerned.

7.6 SUMMARY

The CMM has been outlined to facilitate an understanding of a conflict management model for principals. The main purpose of the model is to help principals to manage conflict effectively and efficiently in schools by providing guidelines. Ideas on how the model could be managed were also provided.

The development and implementation of conflict management model for principals has a number of interrelated structures as illustrated in this chapter (cf.7.5). The conflict management model clearly spells out what the principal should do when resolving conflict in his or her school.

Specific implications of the model are:

- The model focuses on the development of conflict management strategies;
- Principals will benefit from the model through workshops and seminars;
- Principals will start to look critically at what they are doing as compared to what they should be doing in managing conflicts in schools;

- The profitability of investing in this model cannot be doubted, as it will eventually improve the managerial capabilities of principals and to manage conflict effectively and efficiently so as to avoid the problems that are caused by the lack of viable conflict management in schools;
- Lack of viable conflict management strategies in schools does affect the overall performance of the school; and
- This model was designed as a guide to be used by principals when resolving conflicts in their schools.

8. SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

A brief summary of this study is presented in this chapter. Furthermore, a reflection on the major findings of the study is provided, as well as recommendations for the improvement of conflict management in schools. The need for professional development of principals and areas for further research are also revealed by the study.

8.2 SUMMARY

In chapter one the rationale for the study and a statement of the problem are outlined. More than ever before, concern is expressed about how lack of conflict management affects the overall performance of the school. In an attempt to improve the efficiency of the school system, attention needs to be focused on the professional development of principals, because principals are key to success in schools.

Chapter two outlined the nature and scope of conflict management in schools. From the literature consulted, it came out clearly that lack of conflict management affects the overall performance of the school.

The professional development of principals in conflict management styles, techniques and conflict resolution strategies is the most powerful tool to be employed to prevent conflict not to have a negative impact on the overall performance of the school. From this perspective, it could be understood that conflict management is the cornerstone for the smooth running of the school. Many principals are not adequately equipped with skills on how to manage all forms of conflicts in schools. Lack of intensive training in conflict management techniques, styles and resolution strategies exacerbates the manifestation of conflict in schools.

From the literature studies, it emerged that there are major role players in the management of conflict. Some of the role players, like the circuit office and the school governing bodies, are supposed to be on stage immediately a conflict emerges. The major role player is the principal. His main task is to ensure that conflict does not escalate to a point where it cannot be managed and that it does not destroy the morale of his staff members; he does this by making sure that the school climate is conducive to the culture of learning and teaching. The principal must have the ability to sense for the antecedent conditions of conflict in his school.

In chapter three, from the literature consulted, it emerged that principals experience a variety of problems. They experience problems from the teachers, learners and the parents of the learners.

Furthermore, they need specific skills such as conflict management skills, conflict management techniques, conflict management styles and conflict management resolution strategies in order to be more effective in carrying out their roles. Principals exist in a world of problems that always has the potential to result in serious conflicts (cf.1.2). Their abilities to solve problems and manage conflict are important measures of their school leadership (cf.1.2). Principals spend approximately twenty percent of their time dealing with conflict situations (cf.1.2).

Chapter four provided an overview of conflict management programmes in some countries. It is clear from the literature consulted that conflict management is not given the attention that it deserves, and very few well-structured conflict management models have been developed. The need for well-structured conflict management programme is highlighted in the study. Some states in the U.S.A. like Ohio have developed guidelines and structures that are responsible for the management of conflict in schools, for example, the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management.

In chapter five and six, an empirical investigation was conducted to determine the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management and how lack of conflict management affects the overall performance of the school.

From the empirical investigation, it emerged that principals in developing countries have problems in dealing with serious kinds of conflicts. This is caused by the lack of intensive training in conflict management resolution strategies and the fact that they do not get the necessary support from the Department of Education. However, because principals are expected by the system to address such problems, it came out clear that principals need support and intensive training in the management of conflict in their schools so as to curb the effects of lack of conflict management on the overall performance of the school.

Furthermore, the empirical investigation revealed that problems facing principals in developed countries might not be same for principals in the developing countries. It is clear that principals may not experience similar problems like their counterparts in developed countries such as the U.S.A. and the U.K. For example, the problem of lack of intensive training in conflict management resolution strategies experienced by principals in developing countries, is not a problem at all for principals in the U.S.A. and the U.K. In developed countries serious attention is paid to any obstacles that can have a negative impact in the professional development of its citizens, while in developing countries not much attention is given to aspects that are of important value to the professional development of principals.

The study also revealed that principals need conflict management resolution strategies and conflict management guidelines that they will carry out when dealing with serious conflicts that can have a negative impact On the overall performance of their schools.

Lastly in chapter seven, a conflict management model for principals was developed, guided by the findings from the literature studies and the results of the empirical investigation conducted in chapters five and six. The small

number in quantity of structured comprehensive models for conflict management for principals was marked in the review of the literature in chapter four. The conflict management needs revealed in the review of the literature formed the basis for the development of conflict management programme (CMP) for principals.

Because of the complexity of conflict management and its far-reaching implications, a comprehensive and complex Conflict Management Programme was developed (cf.7.3-7.4). The CMP operates at different levels from macro to micro level. The management structure of the proposed CMP highlights the needs for collaboration, commitment and mutual respect and understanding among all parties involved (cf.7.4). Circuit office conflict management implementation team and sub-programmes like developing the conflict management programme policy, implementing conflict management programme and monitoring its implementation in schools were highlighted. The conflict management programme has five important phases that focus on helping the principal to manage conflict and to be effective in the performance of his role (cf.7.4).

From this study, there are important findings in each section that are important to the professional development of the principal in conflict management matters.

8.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

8.3.1 Findings on Aim 1

With regard to Aim 1, namely to determine from the literature the nature and scope of conflict management (cf.1.3), the following findings were made:

- Conflict is a universal phenomenon wherever people, with their diverse, unique nature, work for the same organization (cf.2.1);

- Conflict occurs because people have different perceptions, beliefs, expectations and goals (cf.2.2.1).
- Conflict in a work environment is inevitable, whenever people must work together there will be degrees of conflict because people will not always be in perfect agreement on all issues, goals, values and perceptions and this leads to conflict (cf.1.1); and
- Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies disadvantages the principals to:
 - Prevent conflict from getting worse;
 - Improve co-operation;
 - Motivate staff morale;
 - Build consensus;
 - Build trust;
 - Create a learning environment in schools;
 - Stop people from being hurt or exploited;
 - Stop resentments from building up;
 - Address needs and concerns;
 - Improve and strengthen relationships;
 - Inhibit the potential for violence;
 - Find creative solutions for problems; and
 - Plan, organise, guide and control management tasks.

8.3.2 Findings on Aim 2

With regard to Aim 2, namely to determine from the literature the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management in schools, the following findings were made. Conflict:

- destroys morale;
- it decreases expected production;
- it has destructive influence on schools;
- it disrupts daily school routine;

- it affects the overall performance of the school;
- it is detrimental to a culture of learning and teaching;
- it obstructs co-operative action;
- it diverts energy;
- it causes continuous damage to job satisfaction;
- it deepens differences;
- it creates suspicion or distrust;
- it causes tension among colleagues;
- it produces hostility and antagonism;
- it polarizes individuals and groups;
- it impedes attention to conflict management initiatives; and
- it causes lack of communication among colleagues.

8.3.3 Findings on Aim 3

With regard to Aim 3, namely to examine the current conflict management models for schools, the following findings emerged:

- Little has been documented on conflict management models for principals in South Africa;
- Principals find it very difficult to manage conflict in an effective and efficient approach since they do not have sufficient proper guidance on conflict management and resolution strategies;
- Sources of conflict such as communication differences, structural difference and personal difference are not well understood by some principals as antecedent conditions of conflict in schools;
- That conflict develops in stages was a major interesting finding for some principals and teachers;
- Conflict management models for principals are informative, because each phase and its sub-structure are intensively explained;
- Conflict management models are an analytical approach whereby an option is discovered that satisfies the interests and needs of all parties who face the problem;

- Conflict management models start from the definition of the problem stage to the solution stage of the problem;
- A win-win model is a human needs theory of conflict which argues that basic to all conflicts are unmet needs like security, identity, fulfilment, recognition and love;
- The literature revealed that comprehensive planning model for implementing and managing conflicts in schools should encompass the mega, micro and macro needs of all the stakeholders in a school;
- Well – structured models assures activities to be initiated and completed within a reasonable duration because they are easy to follow, simple and straight forward to implement; and
- The following are kinds of problems that were experienced by principals when putting mechanisms in place to manage and implement conflict management initiatives in schools:
 - Lack of departmental involvement to initiate structures that are responsible for the implementation of conflict management initiatives in schools;
 - Lack of human and physical resources in schools;
 - Low teachers morale in any structures that handle conflicts in schools;
 - Lack of parental involvement in structures that deal with conflicts in schools; and
 - Resisting changes.

8.3.4 Findings on Aim 4

Regarding Aim 4, namely to determine empirically the problems that are caused by the lack of conflict management, the following findings surfaced:

- Lack of conflict management in schools does affect the overall performance of the school negatively;

- Lack of intensive training in the management of conflict styles, techniques and conflict management resolution strategies exacerbate the manifestation of conflicts in schools;
- Incompetence of certain teachers;
- Poor communication skills;
- Organizational climate that is not conducive to the culture of learning and teaching;
- Conflict management in schools is not given the attention that it deserves, most of the time it is neglected and not practised by the principals;
- Not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the Department of Education;
- Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers;
- Scarcity of physical and human resources;
- Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act;
- Role ambiguities;
- Unsatisfied human needs;
- Interdependence of activities;
- Racist remarks;
- An autocratic principal can be the source of a great deal of conflict;
- Teachers are not adequately equipped to manage conflict and disruption effectively;
- Abrupt changes;
- Clash of personality skills and traits;
- Differences in values and expectations;
- Misunderstandings;
- Evaluation of teachers by external structures; and
- An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags on over a period of time.

8.3.5 Findings on Aim 5

With regard to Aim 5, namely to develop a conflict management model for principals in the North West Province, the following findings were made:

- The development and implementation of the conflict management programme should take into account the complex nature of a comprehensive conflict management programme (cf.7.4);
- There are a number of stakeholders, and interwoven structures involved in a comprehensive conflict management programme that call for policy-makers in the department of education to formulate guidelines to ensure harmony and mutual understanding among all bodies involved (cf.7.4);
- A comprehensive conflict management programme should have well-defined goals and objectives and sound management structures to ensure that its goals and objectives are actualised for the benefit of both the state and the principals (cf.7.4). Both human and physical resources should be earmarked for the training of principals in conflict management;
- A conflict management programme should be evaluated to ensure that it keeps abreast of all new developments and the needs of the principals and the school system (cf.7.4 and 7.5); and
- The implementation of the proposed conflict management programme (CMP) calls for unflinching commitment and collaboration of all participants. Mutual trust, respect and understanding are vital to the success of the Conflict Management Programme (CMP) (cf.7.4).

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Department of Education should pay more attention to the professional development of principals in conflict management skills, styles, techniques and resolution strategies.

MOTIVATION

It is the responsibility of the Department of Education to conduct a need analysis of principals on matters that affect the principals daily. Since principals spend approximately twenty percent of their time dealing with conflicts in schools, it goes without saying that the Department of Education should organise workshops and seminars to offer intensive training on the professional development of principals in conflict management skills, styles, techniques and conflict management resolution strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Planning and implementing successful school conflict management initiatives. Principals should map out a plan on how conflict management will be institutionalised in schools.

MOTIVATION

The principals should form a diverse planning committee to conduct an assessment of the school's needs to determine what types of conflict management initiatives are best suited to the school. He or she should also designate a conflict management co-ordinator for the school that will explore ways in which conflict management concepts and skills can complement their

activities. The principal should evaluate all conflict management activities to determine if they meet the stated goals and objectives.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Conflict management in schools should be given the attention that it deserves. Learners, teachers, school governing bodies and parents should be educated about conflict management initiatives.

MOTIVATION

Schools should take a variety of approaches to teach learners, teachers, governing bodies and parents conflict management skills. The most effective approach is when all the stakeholders are provided an opportunity to learn and practice conflict management skills and are given the option of resolving disputes through mediation. The skills of conflict analysis, co-operation, brainstorming of options, identifying common interests and understanding opposing perspectives can also be infused into all curricula.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Equitable distribution of scarce resources can decrease the level of conflict in schools. When learners are admitted the quota for admissions should not be exceeded, because this may result in teachers being unable or unwilling to cope with large class loads, shortage of resources such as textbooks and library books, insufficient teachers and lack of funding.

MOTIVATION

The technique of expanding resources is one way of dealing with conflict. Since resources are scarce and competition for scarce resources is virtually inevitable, the principal should carefully budget for the intake of learners taking into consideration the teacher-learner ratio, stock of books available,

equipment, human resources funding and physical resources to minimise conflict over limited resources.

RECOMMENDATION 5

School climate should be made conducive to the culture of learning and teaching. School climate involves the internal activities, types of people in a school, work procedures, physical layout, forms of communication, attitudes, dedication and loyalty of the colleagues to the school as well as those who exercise authority.

MOTIVATION

School climate should be a fairly lasting quality of the internal environment of the school which is experienced by the members of the school. It should positively influence the behaviour of the school and must be described in terms of its values and the aspirations.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The principals should carry out conflict management effectively and efficiently. Conflict management programmes provide principals and teachers with better skills in communication, problem solving, critical thinking, de-escalating conflict situations and achieve "win-win" agreements. The benefits of these skills equip the principals to carry out the management of conflict effectively and efficiently. Conflict that is not managed constructively affects the overall performance of the school negatively.

MOTIVATION

The principal should treat conflict as a problem that needs to be managed rather than be solved and emphasize the collaborative essence of the school members. Such management can lead to productive outcomes and enhance the health of the school. The principal should not put off dealing with the

problem in the hope that it will go away, it may well just get worse. This is the "smoke" phase of conflict – he or she must watch out for the fire.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Teachers should adhere to the code of professional conduct of teachers. The code of professional conduct stipulates minimum standards of professional conduct for teachers.

MOTIVATION

Conflicts may be managed effectively if the stipulated standards are adhered to. Some of these stipulated standards requires the teacher to teach in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice such as race, religious beliefs, colour, sex, physical characteristics, age, ancestry or place of origin. Teachers should adhere to agreements, policies, rules and regulations that govern the education system and the smooth running of the school as an institution.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Teachers should comply with the policies, rules and regulations of the Department of Education. In any institution where people meet or work in a formal or informal manner, there must be clearly defined expectations, policies, rules and regulations that govern the interaction of the individuals to one another. The aim thereof is to avoid conflict as far as it could be done.

MOTIVATION

Every institution or individual is under an obligation to execute certain mannerisms of behaviour that are motivated by a feeling of acceptance that the behaviour conforms to socially recognised norms. Conflict can be managed effectively, if the members of the organisation carry out in honesty

and to the fullest the expectations, rules, policies and regulations of the organisation.

RECOMMENDATION 9

All the employees of the Department of Education should be knowledgeable about the contents of the Educators Employment Act. The Educators Employment Act is a well-researched document designed to elucidate both the employer and the employee of precaution measures that must be strictly observed in order to avoid unnecessary conflict between the two parties.

MOTIVATION

This Act should be carefully observed because it minimises the levels of conflict that may emerge between the employer and the employee. The employer and the employee should abide by this Act if conflict is to be avoided at all costs.

RECOMMENDATION 10

Principals should establish effective principals' forums that will be supported whole-heartedly by the circuit managers.

MOTIVATION

In these principals' forums expertise, procedures and techniques on how to manage conflict should be thoroughly discussed and experience shared on how other principals should go about in handling and managing serious conflicts that have the tendency of emerging now and again in their school settings.

8.5 CONCLUSION

There is no school or an institution that can achieve its vision and mission statement, if conflict is not managed effectively and efficiently. Lack of intensive training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies disadvantages the principals to plan, organise, guide and control management tasks.

Very little attention has been paid by the Department of Education to equip the principals with conflict management skills, techniques, styles and conflict management resolution strategies, as a result many principals make serious blunders when they attempt to prevent conflict from getting worse. Ignorance or lack of knowledge about conflict management skills has serious setbacks on the smooth running of the school. Lack of viable conflict management skills affects the entire education system both morally and financially.

Effective conflict management for principals is a profitable investment in the quality of education.

In conclusion, while this research has revealed the nature and scope of conflict in schools, it has also revealed the need to implement the newly proposed conflict management model. Without such actions, the principals will always be faced with problems and difficulties of not knowing what to do or how to manage conflict efficiently and effectively. The quality of education that is envisaged will never be achieved if conflict management is not given the attention that it deserves in schools.

From the empirical research conducted, it has also emerged that principals are not intensively equipped with conflict management styles, techniques, skills and conflict management resolution strategies to manage all forms of conflicts that arise in their school settings. Lack of these important conflict managerial skills on the part of the principals do contribute negatively to the overall performance of the schools.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

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**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR SECONDARY
SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

In this study conflict management refers to intervention strategies designed to reduce excessive conflict, which is an overt behaviour that is purposely designed to inhibit the attainment of goals by another person or group.

**THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS CONFIDENTIAL. HONEST AND FRANK
ANSWERS WILL BE APPRECIATED.**

1. THE AIMS OF THIS INVESTIGATION

- The main aim of this research is to determine empirically the problems caused by the lack of conflict management in schools; and
- How conflict affects the overall performance of the school, if it is not cordially and constructively handled?

2. PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT

Your co-operation in completing this questionnaire is very important. Be totally honest in your reply and do not consult other people. Your contribution will help the researcher to evaluate the validity of conflict management in schools.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses will be used for research purposes only. You may be rest assured that the questionnaires and the information obtained will be dealt with responsibly and in the strictest confidence.

YOUR NAME OR THE NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL SHOULD NOT APPEAR ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE. IT WILL THEREFORE BE IMPOSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY ANY PERSON OR SCHOOL.

4. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- Please read all questions and statements carefully.
- Kindly respond honestly to all the questions and statements.
- In the response categories indicate only that which most accurately reflects your experience/point of view.
- Please use the dotted lines where you are asked to fill in something.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND CO-OPERATION.

SECTION A**BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Kindly answer the following questions by crossing (X) on the appropriate block

1. Your age category

1.1	Below 30	
1.2	31 - 35	
1.3	36 - 40	
1.4	41 - 45	
1.5	46 - 50	
1.6	51 and above	

2. Gender

2.1	Male	
2.2	Female	

3. School location

3.1	Urban	
3.2	Rural	

4. School enrolment

4.1	Below 100	
4.2	101 - 150	
4.3	151 - 550	
4.4	551 - 850	
4.5	851 - 1000	
4.6	Over 1000	

5. Your position in the school

5.1	Teacher	
5.2	Head of department	
5.3	Deputy principal	
5.4	Principal	

6. How long have you been in that position?

6.1	Less than a year	
6.2	1 - 3	
6.3	4 - 5	
6.4	Over 5 years	

7. Highest Academic Qualification

7.1	UED	
7.2	BA Degree	
7.3	BA ED	
7.4	Honours Degree	
7.5	B ED	
7.6	M ED	
7.7	D ED	
7.8	Others (Specify)	

SECTION B

Indicate your response with an (X) in the space provided. Indicate **ONLY ONE** in each case.

8. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF CONFLICT IN SCHOOLS.

		YES	NO
8.1	Conflict occurs because people have different perceptions, beliefs and goals	1	2
8.2	Conflict is a product of unsatisfied human needs	1	2
8.3	Conflict in a work environment is inevitable	1	2
8.4	An autocratic principal can be the source of conflict	1	2
8.5	Principals do succeed in managing conflict effectively and efficiently without external assistance	1	2
8.6	The existence of conflict in an organization is evidence of organizational breakdown	1	2
8.7	Lack of conflict management in schools creates problems that have an effect on the overall performance of the school.	1	2
8.8	Lack of training in the management of conflict and resolution strategies exacerbates the manifestation of conflict in schools	1	2
8.9	Existing formal procedures (if any) for the management of conflict in schools are practised to the fullest	1	2
8.10	A school conflict management programme will only be successful if it is supported by the school manager	1	2
8.11	Teachers are adequately equipped to manage any form of conflict effectively	1	2
8.12	Conflict is disruptive of daily school routine	1	2

SECTION C

Please indicate how serious a problem each of the following has been for you as a principal/educator by making a cross (X) in the appropriate category.

Keys: NAP = Not a problem
 MP = Minor problem
 AP = A problem
 SP = Serious problem

9. PROBLEMS CAUSED BY THE LACK OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOL

		NAP	MP	AP	SP
9.1	Problems arising from not complying with the policies, rules and regulations of the education department	1	2	3	4
9.2	Ignorance or lack of knowledge about the Employment of Educators Act	1	2	3	4
9.3	Lack of training in conflict management styles and resolution strategies	1	2	3	4
9.4	Scarcity of resources	1	2	3	4
9.5	Unprofessional behaviour of certain teachers	1	2	3	4
9.6	Power struggles	1	2	3	4
9.7	Role ambiguities	1	2	3	4
9.8	Interdependence of activities	1	2	3	4
9.9	Differences in goals, methods and procedures	1	2	3	4
9.10	Clash of personality skills and traits	1	2	3	4
9.11	Differences in values and expectations	1	2	3	4
9.12	Abrupt changes	1	2	3	4

SECTION D

In the case of each of the following statements indicate with an (X) the response category which most closely reflects your experience/point of view. Indicate **ONLY ONE** in each case.

Keys: SD = Strongly disagree

D = Disagree

A = Agree

SA = Strongly agree

**10. LACK OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS AFFECTS
THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL**

		SD	D	A	SA
10.1	Serious conflicts result in a school climate that is not conducive to teaching and learning	1	2	3	4
10.2	An immense amount of valuable time is wasted when conflict drags over a period of time	1	2	3	4
10.3	Conflict causes continuous damage to job satisfaction	1	2	3	4
10.4	Conflict impedes teaching and learning	1	2	3	4
10.5	Conflict may result in the discontinuation of the normal functioning of a school for a number of days	1	2	3	4
10.6	Conflict diverts energy	1	2	3	4
10.7	Conflict destroys morale	1	2	3	4
10.8	Conflict deepens differences	1	2	3	4
10.9	Conflict obstructs co-operative action	1	2	3	4
10.10	Conflict produces irresponsible behaviour	1	2	3	4
10.11	Conflict decreases expected production	1	2	3	4
10.12	Conflict causes communication breakdown	1	2	3	4

SECTION E

Indicate with an (X) in the response category how often the following are, in your opinion, the **causes of conflict** in your school.

Keys: A = Always

O = Often

S = Seldom

N = Never

11. CAUSES OF CONFLICT

		A	O	S	N
11.1	Poor communication	1	2	3	4
11.2	Misunderstandings	1	2	3	4
11.3	Insulting remarks	1	2	3	4
11.4	Racist remarks	1	2	3	4
11.5	Disrespect of another's views	1	2	3	4
11.6	Scandal mongering	1	2	3	4
11.7	Evaluation of teachers	1	2	3	4
11.8	Political differences	1	2	3	4
11.9	Professional jealousy by colleagues	1	2	3	4
11.10	Incompetence of certain teachers	1	2	3	4
11.11	Interference in school affairs by parents	1	2	3	4
11.12	Interference in school affairs by community-based organizations	1	2	3	4

SECTION F

Please rate the importance of each essential skill needed by school principals to manage conflict

Keys: 1= Unimportant required skill (not possessing this skill has no impact on the school principal to manage conflict efficiently and effectively).

2= Important required skill.

3= Extremely important required skill (not possessing this skill would make it highly impossible for the principal to manage conflict efficiently and effectively).

12. ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT

		1	2	3
12.1	Reaching a compromise solution that entails give and take response	1	2	3
12.2	Defining clearly activities that may result in role ambiguities	1	2	3
12.3	Investigating all possible forms of resource sharing	1	2	3
12.4	Analysing antecedent conditions that may result in conflict	1	2	3
12.5	Diagnosing possible causes of conflict in the school	1	2	3
12.6	Possessing an art of settling or reconciling differences	1	2	3
12.7	Knowledgeable about the nature and scope of conflict in schools	1	2	3
12.8	Preventing conflict from affecting the overall performance of the school	1	2	3
12.9	To be effective and efficient in the management of all forms of conflicts that may emerge in the school	1	2	3
12.10	Capability to deal with unsatisfied human needs	1	2	3
12.11	Ability to maintain the school climate conducive to the	1	2	3

14.2 Are there, in your opinion, any other problems that are caused by lack of conflict management strategies in schools?

YES	NO

Comments.....

14.3 Is there a need to develop a conflict management model that can be used by the school principals as a guide to manage conflicts in schools?

YES	NO

Comments.....

14.4 In your opinion, how does lack of conflict management strategies affect the overall performance of the school?

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14.5 From your point of view, how can conflict be managed effectively in schools?

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**UNIVERSITY
OF NORTH-WEST**



PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

**TO: DISTRICT MANAGERS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
SITE MANAGERS
EDUCATORS**

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH PROJECT: FIELD WORK

The Department of Educational Planning and Administration hereby request you to grant our ACE, B Ed (Hons) and M Ed postgraduate student(s) permission to conduct research in school(s)/ college(s) under your jurisdiction.

TOPIC. **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR PRINCIPALS IN THE
NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

.....
.....
.....
M.G. van Dou
Student Name.....

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely

.....
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NORTH WEST PROVINCE

APPENDIX C

Enquiries: HRM

Telephone: 018 – 387 4113

Date: 14 JANUARY 2003

To: All principals of selected secondary schools in the North West Province.

Sir / Madam

This serves to inform you that the bearer from the University of North West's Department of Educational Planning and Administration has requested and received permission from the above-mentioned office to access your school to conduct research.

The bearer is a Ph. D student conducting research on: Conflict management in schools.

Please give him the necessary co-operation.

Thank you in anticipation.


DR A. M. KARODIA
SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL FOR EDUCATION

Re a dira mo dikolong Ons werk in ons etate We are working in our schools Re a sebetša dikolong
Siyaseberz' ezikhweni He tirhe esikhweni Re a shuma zwikhweni Siya sebetša etikweni
 Siyaseberz' ezikhweni Siya beranga ezikhweni

APPENDIX D

**University of North-West
Department of Planning and
Administration**

Private Bag X2046 MMABATHO 2735
Republic of South Africa
Telephone: (018) 3892111
Fax No: (018) 3825775

Date: 2003-01-14

**TO: PRINCIPALS
HEAD OF DEPARTMENTS
TEACHERS**

RESEARCH PROJECT: FIELDWORK

Your school has been randomly selected to participate in the research conducted on: Conflict Management in schools.

Please, distribute the ten (10) questionnaires to the following respondents and request them to complete them to the best of their abilities and experience.

1 Principal
1 Deputy principal
3 Head of departments
5 Teachers

You are also humbly requested to collect the ten (10) completed questionnaires from the respondents and the questionnaires will be collected from your school on or before the 14th March 2003.

Your co-operation in this matter will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely

M.G. van Dou
M.G. van Dou