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CAUSES, EFFECTS AND MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT AMONG EDUCATORS IN THE MAFIKENG DISTRICT

BY

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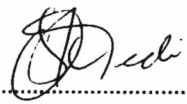
DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation for the degree of Master of Administration at the North-West University hereby submitted, 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

The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes, effects and management of conflict among school based educators. The dissertation acknowledge the existence of conflict in every human interaction. Conflict in organizations should be managed systematically. An appropriate approach in conflict management should aim at enhancing the benefits of conflict.

The study aimed at determining whether site-managers possess the essential skill of managing healthy conflict while defusing unhealthy conflict. The institution of effective management of conflict techniques and guidelines is essential in a number of practical ways for preventing, managing and resolving workplace conflict, because the long term effects of unresolved conflict may impact negatively on an organization.

The subjects of the study were 44 educators and one circuit manager based at the Area Project Office. Questionnaires and interviews were used to evaluate the perceptions in areas such as:- Conflict in the workplace, causes and effects of conflict and conflict management.

The Research findings revealed that there is a lack of a conflict management system in schools. The absence of a conflict management system result in an array of problems related to conflict. Other findings include:- the management style of site-managers contributing to conflict management, lack of communication between stakeholders in the schooling system and a deficiency in Conflict management skills.

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CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict can be viewed as an integral part of any organization. The cultural diversity in South Africa in particular, may hamper communication and this may result in conflict among members of different cultural groups within an organization. People tend to be afraid to deal with conflict because it is viewed as undesirable and negative. The traditional view of conflict according to Mullins (1999:817) is that conflict is perceived as disruptive and unnatural and represents a form of deviant behaviour which should be controlled and changed. Ott (1989:165) asserts that

> Organisations are seen as complex systems of individuals and coalitions, each having its own interests, beliefs, values, preferences, perspectives and perceptions. These coalitions compete with each other continuously for scarce organizational resources. Conflict is inevitable.

Bendix (1996:251) maintains that conflict is not necessarily dysfunctional. If managed properly it can benefit an organization in terms of growth and innovation. Hall (1982:135) is of the opinion that conflict is not inherently good or bad for the participants or the organization but can be viewed as a major shaper of the state of an organization.

Hatch (1997:304) states that conflict can benefit an organization largely because of the input of divergent opinions. He further states that conflict is psychologically healthy because it allows for the venting of frustrations, and sociologically healthy because it encourages opposition to the status quo and initiates conditions for social change.

The above implies that conflict is not always negative. It can be healthy when effectively managed and can lead to growth and innovation and new ways of thinking.

In the light of the above it is evident that conflict management is an essential skill of management.

According to Ehlers (2003:28) conflict prevention and conflict management systems enable parties to prevent and deal with conflict that may threaten the harmony in the organization. Therefore conflict management structures need to be in place before or during the formation of a labour relationship.

This dissertation attempts to examine the sources of conflict, types of conflict, conflict management strategies and the stages of conflict within the ever changing world of work.

1.1 DEFINITIONS OF THE MAIN CONCEPTS

The main concepts to be defined are as follows:-
Conflict, Power and Leadership

1.1.1 Conflict

Bezuidenhout, Garbers and Potgieter (1998:346) maintain that conflict exist in a relationship when different parties are of the opinion that their aspirations cannot be achieved or when they perceive a divergence in their values, needs or interests and purposefully employ power in an effort to defeat, neutralize or eliminate each other to protect or further their own interests in the interaction.

The above definition is purposely broad and covers common themes which underlie most definitions of conflict. These are:-

- Opposition
- Interaction and
- Power

According to Brand, Lotter, Mischke and Steadman (2002:4) the following are key elements of conflict:

- Conflict arises in a relationship
- Conflict relies on the perspectives of the parties
- In order to develop from latent to manifest conflict, power is added to the equation.

This definition is appropriate for this research because it recognizes the importance of power in the handling of conflict. A thorough scrutiny will follow on how site-manager's style of management affects conflict at school level.

1.1.2 Power

Robbins (2003:365) states that power is a natural process in any group or organization. He provides the following definition

Power refers to a capacity that "A" has to influence the behaviour of "B", so that "B" acts in accordance with "A"'s wishes.

It is implied in this definition that one may have power but not use it. It is a capacity or potential which might be used differently by individuals.

1.1.3 Leadership

According to Robbins (2003:314) leadership is the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals. The source of this influence may be formal, such as that provided by the possession of managerial rank in an organization. He further argues that not all leaders are managers, nor, for that matter, are all managers' leaders.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study proposes to survey the causes, effects and techniques of conflict management among educators in Mmabatho schools.

School based educators exhibit a variety of perceptions with regard to conflict management in schools. Their different perceptions result in the following sub-problems.

a. Site – managers ignore official structures and procedures in the handling of conflict.

b. Site – managers lack consistency in the handling of conflict.

c. Ineffective conflict management leads to the declining morale of educators

d. Transformation processes within the education sector contributes to the escalation of conflict in schools.

e. Educators cannot keep up with the influx of new legislation related to transformation.

f. Infrequent communication between the Area Project Office and schools escalates conflict.

1.3 DESCRIPTIVE HYPOTHESES

The following are the hypotheses of this dissertation. As defined by Keppel (1989:9), hypotheses are proposed answers to the questions you hope to resolve conclusively by means of your research project. These suppositions are the theoretical base of research. The validity of these statements must be tested. The test takes a form of a literature survey and different data collection and analysis mechanisms.

Management styles of site - managers contribute to the escalation of conflict in schools.
Lack of effective conflict management systems escalate conflict.
Lack of communication between site-managers, educators and parents contribute to conflict in schools.
Site-managers, educators and the SGB's are not well equipped with conflict management skills.
Lack of effective conflict management contributes to the declining of morale of educators.

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of this dissertation are as follows:-

To investigate how the management style of site-managers contribute to conflict
To investigate the effectiveness of conflict management techniques in schools.
To find out how the lack of communication contribute to conflict in schools.
To investigate the site-managers knowledge and skills in conflict management.

To find out about the causes and effects of conflict.

1.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is important in the following respects:

a. To encourage participation in conflict resolution processes and structures.
b. To encourage effective communication at all levels in the education sector.
c. To contribute a body of knowledge to the academics involved in the Labour Relation discipline.
d. To contribute towards the development of education in the North West Province and nationally.
e. To contribute towards harmony in schools.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.6.1 The Organisation

This dissertation intends to examine conflict management at school level, therefore the school will be the relevant organization. The post 1994 period ushered in a transformation process in the education system, and schools are no longer racially divided. Today educators of different backgrounds, beliefs, groups, races and cultures can be employed in the same school. The existence of this cultural diversity in South African Schools is a potential for conflict among educators as well as learners.

1.6.2 The Population

The population of interest are the educators in the Mafikeng District. Part of the population also deemed fit is the head office staff. This will include:-

- The district manager and
- Three (3) circuit managers
- The staff at Letsatsing High School

The Population will be as follows:

EDUCATORS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Afrikaans	1	2	3
Biology	4	3	7
Computer Literacy	2	-	2
English	3	4	7
Geography	2	4	6
Guidance	-	1	1
Maths	4	2	6
Physical Science	3	4	7
Setswana	-	5	5
Total			44

Table 1: Letsatsing High School Staff

1.6.3 The sampling Technique

Sampling is the process by which the study subjects are chosen from a large population. The method of sampling determines whether or not the study sample represents the entire population from which it was drawn. (Seaman, 1987:233)

Purpose sampling will be used in this study. According to Leedy and Ormond (2001: 206), in purposive sampling, people or other units are chosen for a particular purpose. The Mmabatho region has 7 high schools. Letsatsing High school is selected in this study due to its diverse

background and the high number of staff members as compared to other high schools in the region.

1.7 DATA GATHERING METHODS

This dissertation is quantitative in nature. According to Leedy and Ormond (2001:94) a quantitative research is used to answer questions about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena, and will usually end with confirmation or disconfirmation of the hypotheses that were tested.

Leedy (1989:89) corroborates the above assertion and mentions that the above research method entails simple observational situation and that this situation could be observed physically or theoretically with the aid of questionnaires and interviews.

Data gathering here will be by means of questionnaires and interviews.

1.7.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires involve the closed or open-ended questions. According to De Vos (1998:161) a combination of open-ended and closed questions is advisable as it will not limit the sphere of gathering data. In this study open –ended questions will be limited.

1.7.2 Interviews

This dissertation will use the personal and structured interviews schedule. Miller (1983:118) points out that the interview represents a personal contact between an interviewer and a respondent. Questions will be open-ended in nature and based on the aims and hypotheses of the study.

This dissertation will also consider the advantages and disadvantages of the above interview schedule. Miller (1989:119) mentions the following advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages

The personal interview usually yields a high percentage of returns, as most people are willing to co-operate.

The interviewer can collect supplementary personal characteristics and environment that is valuable in interpreting results and evaluating the representatives of the person surveyed.

Disadvantages

High costs
Takes more time

A combination of scales indices will be employed in the design of questionnaires. The Lickert scale and open ended questions requiring elaborate free responses will be used.

1.8 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

This dissertation is quantitative in nature. There will be a use of descriptive statistics. Leedy and Ormond (2001:251) define descriptive statistics as describing a body of data. A correlational study will also be used to examine the extent to which differences in one or more other characteristics or variables are related to differences in one or more characteristics or variables. Leedy and Ormond (2001:180) maintain that a correlation exist, if when one variable

increases, another variable either increases or decreases in a predictable manner.

The chi-square will also be used to determine how closely observed frequencies or probabilities match expected frequencies or probabilities. Leedy and Ormond (2001:274) state that a chi-square can be computed for nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio data. The chi-square test will be employed to test association and significance of association. The results will be presented in tables, charts and graphs, depending on the outcome of the study.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations are related to the generalisability of results to populations other than the one under study. Seaman (1987:134) concurs when he states that limitations establish the parameters of the research. Therefore, it will not be appropriate for this study to generalize the findings. This study will be confined at school – level in the Mafikeng district.

1.10 CONCLUSION

The hypotheses of this study are based on personal and general circumstances around the issue of conflict management at school – level. The following chapter will serve as a theoretical base of this study. Literature will be reviewed which will support or negate the hypotheses. Literature will be surveyed and examined under different headings and sub-headings derived from the hypotheses and aims of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves to explore literature and use it as a theoretical base for this study. It is envisaged that literature will, according to Grinnell (1984:434):

- demonstrate that the author of the proposal has mastered the available and relevant literature.
- demonstrate the similarities between the proposed study and past research findings of similar studies.
- support and interact with the conceptual framework by introducing and conceptually defining the key variables that are the subject of the study.

The conceptual framework here is intended to relate to the variables evident in the problem, the sub-problems, the hypotheses, and other related variables. The variables to be surveyed are the school management system and the conflict management system used in schools.

2.1 CONFLICT IN ORGANISATIONS

In all organisations, including schools there will be instances when ideas or actions, or needs, or goals will not match those of other members. School managers must be prepared to deal with conflict, not necessarily from the point of view of elimination, but rather to derive the greatest possible benefits therefrom. Therefore school managers must possess the skill to handle healthy conflict. Conflict management includes conflict anticipation and detection.

Organisations need to be proactive rather than reactive with regard to conflict management.

2.2 DEFINITIONS OF THE MAIN CONCEPTS

2.2.1 Conflict

De Beer, Rossouw, Mollman, LeRoux and Labuschagne (1998:220) define the concept of conflict by providing three schools of thought regarding conflict.

2.2.2 The Traditional School

This school of thought maintains that conflict is destructive and should therefore be eliminated and it can only be resolved by managerial action.

2.2.3 Behavioural School

Here conflict is viewed as inevitable and present in all organizations. In complex organizations the danger of conflict is greater.

2.2.4 Interactive School

This school of thought also accepts that conflict is inevitable in organizations and encourages conflict to a certain point. A distinction is drawn between constructive and destructive conflict. The latter been harmful to an organization. Constructive conflict entails:

- The avoidance of group pressure
- The promotion of cooperation
- Loyalty to the organization
- The encouragement of new ideas and personal opinion

Destructive conflict encompasses: -

- Non-encouragement of cooperation
- Different groups work for their own benefit
- Creation of tension

Definitions of conflict tend to be associated with negative features and situations which give rise to inefficiency, ineffectiveness or dysfunctional consequences.

The traditional view of conflict is that conflict is disruptive and unnatural and represents a form of deviation behaviour, which should be controlled and changed. Mullins (1999:817) argues that extreme cases of conflict can have tragic consequences for individuals and adverse effects on organizational performance.

The more current view of conflict, believes that conflict is a positive force and necessary for effective performance. This view encourages a minimum level of conflict within the organization in order to encourage self – criticism, change and innovation.

2.2.5 Leadership

Robbins (2003:313) states that leadership is about coping with change and establishing direction by developing a vision of the future, then align people by communicating this vision and inspiring them to overcome hurdles. Leadership is therefore the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals. Hall (1982:159) concurs when he states that leadership is the ability, based on the personal qualities of a leader, to elicit the followers' voluntary compliance in a broad range of matters.

The concept of leadership is deemed fit for this study because leadership seems to be an easy solution to whatever problems an organization may encounter.

2.2.6 Industrial Relations

Roots and Marchington in Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:31) define labour relations as being a level of relationships between management and employees, which enables the company to achieve its objectives – optimizing profitability – and, at the same time, enables the employees and unions to get a fair crack at the whip.

According to Anstey in Tustin and Geldenhys (2003:31) industrial relations is the process through which employers and employees interact, and through which they regulate conflict in the workplace.

The above definitions of industrial relations clearly state that labour relations entail human interaction and that this interaction is continually changing.

2.3 TYPES OF CONFLICT

2.3.1 Intra-personal conflict

According to Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:111) people are not always aware of the conflict that they experience within themselves. This type of conflict can develop form within the individual to other people Ehlers (2003:22) terms this type of conflict intra – individual conflict.

2.3.2 Union – management conflict

Nel (1999:149) states that some degree of conflict is inherent in every union – management relationship. This conflict emanates from differences in their goals and value systems, as well as differences in the methods used to reach these goals. For example a site-steward may disagree with a site- manager on issues affecting union members. Bezuidenhout, Garbers and Potgieter (1998:349) mention the following as sources of conflict between labour and management:

- The status of the group's representatives
- The apparent political nature of the union
- The relationship that existed in the past between them.
- The perceived legitimacy of each side in the view of the other.
- The personality factors of key leaders.
- The emphasis placed on the conflictive or cooperative nature of problems.

2.3.3 Inter-organizational conflict

This type of conflict cuts across organizations, Jones and George (2003:551) point out that inter-organizational conflict arises when managers in one organization feel that another organization is not behaving ethically and is threatening the well being of certain stakeholder

groups. Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:115) cite mergers and competition to expand markets as – causes of inter-organization conflict.

2.3.4 Frictional and strategic conflict

Individuals consciously generate this type of conflict in order to manipulate the allocation of resources, status, authority and power. It results from interaction between individuals in specific positions within an organization, and is viewed as dysfunctional to the organization. (Nel, 1999:149) and Ehlers (2003:24) defines strategic conflict as a type of conflict, which is created deliberately and used to, strengthened a person's position in a group and to increase his collective bargaining power or power of persuasion.

2.3.5 Inter-group conflict

Conflict that occurs between groups or teams within an organization are referred to as inter-group conflict. Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:1116) list the following as behaviour of groups that are in conflict:-

- A clear distinction is made between 'them' and 'us'
- Groups experience distortions of perception and form negative stereotypes.
- Groups overestimate their strength and underestimate the strength of the other group
- Interaction with the other group decreases and hostility increases.

2.3.6 Interpersonal conflict

Interpersonal conflict occurs between two or more people. This type of conflict is a result of differences between people, such as between colleagues and between a site-manager and an educator. Tustin and

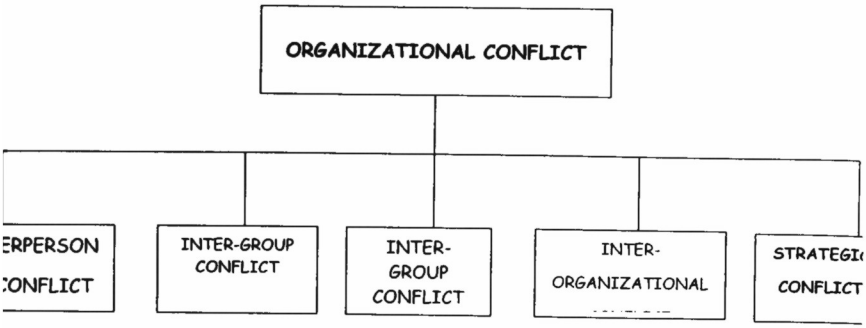
Geldenhys (2000:117) maintain that this type of conflict is indicated by the following behaviours.

- Grievances
- Poor job performance
- Transgression of the disciplinary code
- Negative attitudes

Jones and George (2003:550) state that interpersonal conflict is conflict between individual members of an organization, occurring because of differences in their goals or values.

Luthans as cited in Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:115) argue that conflict levels are not mutually exclusive. Conflict that starts on an intra-personal level may develop to other levels and even result in conflict between organizations. In managing conflict it is therefore important to distinguish between the levels of conflict to ensure effective resolution of conflict in an organization.

The following diagram is a summary of the stages of conflict as explained by Jones and George (2003:550) and Ehlers (2003:24).



Adopted from Jones and George (2003:550)

FIGURE 1. TYPES OF CONFLICT

2.4 OTHER TYPES OF CONFLICT

2.4.1 Work-family conflict

Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2000:453) define work-family conflict as a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect.

Greenhouse and Bentell as cited in Erasmus et al (2000: 453) identify three types of work-family conflict.

2.4.2 Time-Based conflict

Conflict here occurs when time that is devoted to one role cannot be devoted to anther. Inflexible work schedules, excessive overtime and work involvement can be related to work-family conflict.

2.4.3 Strain based conflict

Here conflict occurs when performance in one role is adversely affected by the stress that is experienced in another such as a crisis in the family resulting in fatigue which may lead to poor work performance at work.

2.4.4 Behaviour-based conflict

Behaviour-based conflict occurs when certain patterns of role behaviour are in conflict when expectations of behaviour in other roles.
The following factors contribute to work-family conflict.

- Number of hours worked.
- Lack of control over decision to work overtime.
- An inflexible work schedule.
- Irregular starting time.
- Psychologically demanding work.

Schreuder, et al (2000:454) as cited in Erasmus et al (2000:454) provide the following solutions to minimize work-family conflict.

- Organizational,sensitivity for home life.
- Flexible benefits to assist employees with family needs such as child care.
- Work-at-home programmes.
- Alternative career paths.

2.5 THE CONFLICT PROCESS

According to Gleason (1997:3) conflict can vary substantially in features such as the scope, intensity, and number of participants, the objectives being sought, and ultimate outcomes. Gmelch and Carrol as cited in Gleason (1997:3) identify the following as sources of conflict:

- Job frustration
- Levels of bureaucratic hierarchy.
- Rules and regulations influencing job structure.
- The degree of departmental specialization.
- The demographic and psychosocial similarities and differences among staff and the degree of staff stability.

The above sources of conflict may generate conflict between employees and management independent of whatever interpersonal conflicts may be occurring between employees.

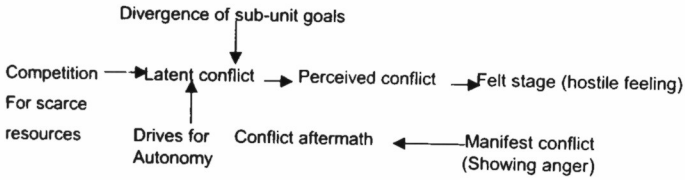
Bergman and Volkema as cited in Gleason (1997:3) maintain that conflict between subordinates and supervisors include goal conflict, rejection of employee input, unfair performance evaluations, downgrading a coworker, unrealistic workloads, and misuse of power. It is further argued that a subordinate who is in conflict with a supervisor is more likely to talk with the supervisor about the conflict but conflict with a coworker is more likely to be handled by avoidance. The author does not substantiate why conflict between employees is not addressed through other approaches such as accommodation, compromise, and collaboration.

De Beer, et al (2003:218) describes the conflict pattern as comprising four stages, which are: -

- Reason
- Management of conflict
- Result
- Solution of conflict

Hodge and Anthony (19991:541) maintain that the conflict process is comprised of five stages:

- Latent conflict
- Perceived conflict
- Felt conflict
- Manifest conflict and
- Conflict aftermath



Pondy's stages of conflict model. Adopted from Hodge and Authony (1991:542)

FIGURE 2: STAGES OF CONFLICT

Robbins (2003:398) also mentions the five stages of conflict as:-

- Potential opposition or incompatibility
- Cognition and personalization
- Intentions
- Behaviour
- Outcomes

The conflict models provided by Hodge and Anthony (1991:54) and Robbins (2003:398) are similar in their explanation of the conflict process, however Robbins (2003:398) condenses these stages into three general categories which is communication, structure and personal variables.

The theoretical explanation of conflict in this study will use the model of industrial conflict developed by Pondy in Hodge and Anthony (1991:542).

2.5.1 Latent stage

This stage consists of those conditions that can breed conflict such as competition for scarce resources and divergence of submit goals.

2.5.2 Perceived conflict

Here one or more parties become aware of the potential for conflict. Robbins (2003:401) states that because conflict is perceived do not mean it is personalized. Nel (1999:149) and Ehles (2003:24) state that perceived conflict refers to the potential for conflict that the observer perceives to exist, this conflict can develop if the relationship causing the conflict continues.

2.5.3 Felt Stage

At this stage individuals become emotionally involved and experience anxiety, tension, frustration or hostility.

2.5.4 Manifest Stage

According to Robbins (2003:403) conflict becomes visible at this stage, behaviors displayed here will include, statements, actions, and reactions made by parties in conflicts.

2.5.5 Conflict Aftermath

This stage deals with the handling of conflict. The outcome of the resolution could be positive or negative for the organization. If the

outcome is positive this will result in an improvement in the groups performance or if its negative it can hinder group performanceunder

Hodge and Anthony (1991:542) maintain that at this stage, conflict can be resolved or it can be the basis of the recycling of the episode to a further stage of latent conflict. The implication here is that the conflict episode should be viewed as a continous cycle. Nel (1996:153) concurs with the above view when he states that, if the conflict is merely suppressed but not resolved, the latent conditions of conflict may be aggravated and later explode into more serious forms until they are rectified or until the relationship dissolves.

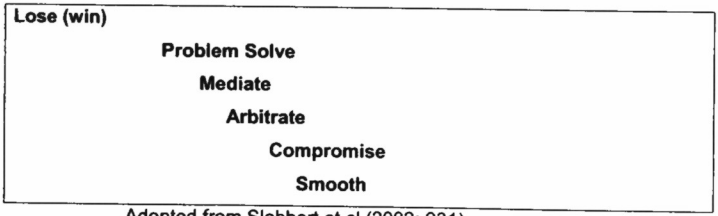
2.5.6 Conflict Recuperation

According to Nel (1996:153) this final stage in the conflict process refers to the build –up of positive interaction and relations between the conflicting parties after the conflict episode.

2.6 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODELS

2.6.1 Flippo's Method of Conflict Resolution

Flippo's theory of conflict resolution approaches reconciliation in seven ways as illustrated by **Fig 3 below:**



Adopted from Slabbert et al (2002; 231)

FIGURE 3: FLIPPO'S CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL

The seven ways of approaching reconciliation in conflict situation can be explained as follows:-

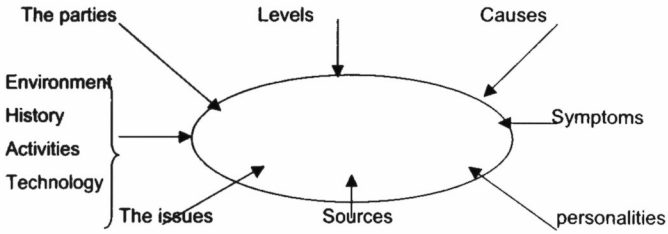
- Win/lose: one party forces the other to give in withdrawal: retirement from the argument.
- Smoothing: playing down of the differences
- Compromise: looking for solutions
- Mediation/arbitration: the involvement of a third party
- Problem solving: honest and open confrontation

Flippo's model of conflict management tends to focus only on methods or ways that can be implemented to handle conflict and ignore the sources of conflict. Short term and long-term consequences of conflict are also omitted in this model.

The starting point of effective conflict management according to Pettinger (2002:560) lies in the adoption of a strategic approach to conflict management based on the following framework:-

- Recognition of the symptoms of conflict
- Recognition of the level and nature of conflict
- Investigating the root causes of conflict
- Investigating the range of possible outcomes
- Establishing desired outcomes.

Nel (1999:146) is of the view that in the management of conflict, the entire process will largely be determined by the personality dynamics of the participants, environmental constraints, as well as the organizational climate. The following diagram depicts the nature of organizational conflict.



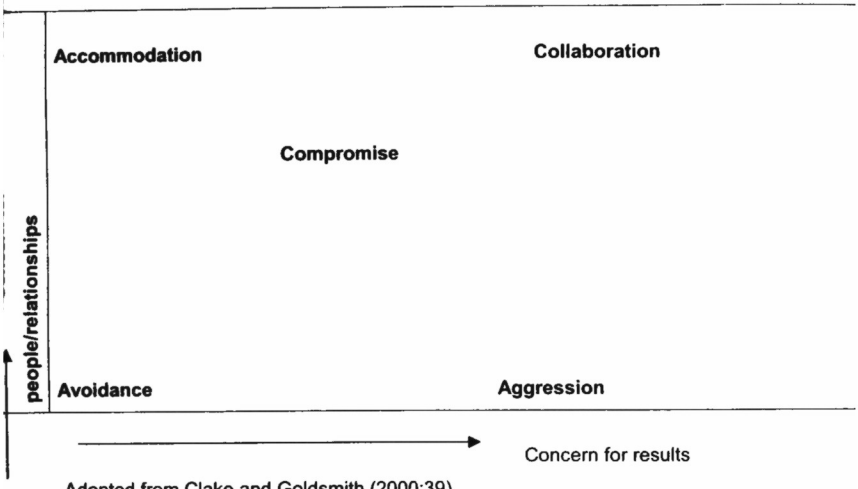
Adopted from Pettinger (200:545)

FIGURE 4 ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

2.6.2 Thomas – Kilmann's Conflict Mode Instrument

a. Competitive

This style entails self-assertiveness and is predominantly power oriented and could be used in vital decisions such as disciplinary action. This approach usually results in a win-lose situation and does not consider the inputs or interests of other parties.



Adopted from Clake and Goldsmith (2000:39)

FIGURE 5 THOMAS – KILMANN'S CONFLICT MODE

This approach is highly cooperative and satisfies the interests of the other party. This approach can be used to build up social creditworthiness for future actions and to allow subordinates to develop. Cloke and Goldsmith (2000:41) also state that the accommodation approach is used to preserve harmony or avoid disruption.

b. Evasive/Avoidance

Here the conflict is not handled immediately as the problem is diplomatically postponed. The approach is more appropriate when the potential damage during the handling of the conflict will be greater than the immediate benefits associated with it. In essence the approach takes into cognizance the long-term outcomes of the conflict process. The approach is also useful when it becomes necessary

to calm persons and lower the level of tension or the problem at hand seems to be symptomatic of another deeper-seated aspect.

c. Compromise

This style attempts to find common ground and is characterized by elements of all the above stated approaches. The use of this approach is advisable on issues such as the achievement of temporary solutions for complex matters. Cloke and Goldsmith (2000:14) also state that this approach is used when efforts either competition or collaboration have failed and back up is needed.

d. Problem solving

The problem solving approach attempt to find a solution, which will best suit the interests of parties, concerned. It can be used to find an integrated solution for a matter when the interests of the parties concerned are too important for a compromise and to accommodate the interests of others and effect commitment to the execution of the solution (Slabbert et al, 2002:233).

According to Cloke and Goldsmith (2000:41) reasons for collaborating or using teamwork to resolve the conflict could be:-

- The need for a long-range solution
- The empowerment of participants
- The need for creative solutions
- The need to model cooperative solutions for others.

All these strategies should be used in appropriate circumstances. The easiest strategies to use in conflict are avoidance, accommodation, compromise and aggression. A continued use of the abovementioned strategies will result in the following:-

- Avoidance – inability to participate constructively
- Accommodation – frightened of conflict
- Aggression – hostility
- Compromise – dissatisfaction and no real transformation.

The Thomas Kilmann's conflict mode argues that the collaboration approach is the most effective way of ending the conflict completely, and starting on a path to transformation because it is deeper and is more lasting and encourages learning (Cloke and Goldsmith, 2000:43). Landau and Landau (2001:38) concur and provide the following reasons:

- Solutions reached through collaboration tend to be reasonable because all inputs are considered.
- Relationships are enhanced
- Solutions are implemented because it is in the interests of all parties to do so.
- Collaboration involves deeper discussions and more problem solving.
- Collaborative solutions are implemented more quickly and last longer.
- Participants expend their energies on problem solving rather than blaming.
- Collaborative solutions are future oriented and focus on solving the problem and preserve goodwill at the same time.

The reasons provided above imply that collaboration may achieve more efficient results than other approaches in the Thomas – Kilmann's conflict mode. The assertion that the collaborative solution is the most effective way in conflict management warrants a detailed examination of the collaborative conflict resolution, which will follow later in this study.

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It is therefore appropriate to examine the disadvantage of other approaches of the Thomas Kilmann's conflict mode as explained by Landau and Landau (2001: 34-37).

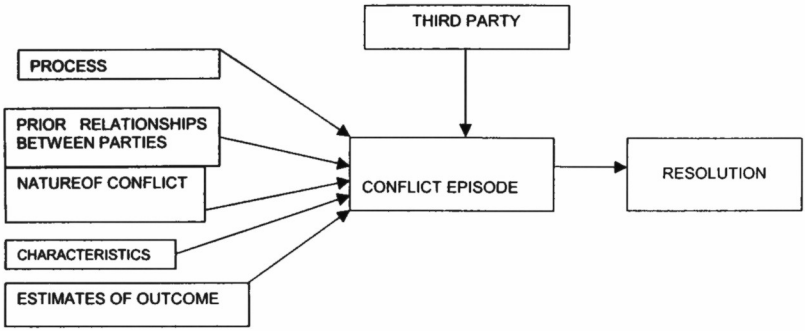
APPROACH	DISADVANTAGE
1. Avoiding	1. Unresolved conflict
2. Competing	2. Damage to long term relationships
3. Accommodating	3. Risk of losing respect of colleagues when giving up important substantive objectives.
4. Compromising	4. Often sacrifices important needs.

TABLE 2: DISADVANTAGE OF THE THOMAS KILMANN'S CONFLICT

The competing approach in conflict management subscribes to the traditional view of conflict resolution because managers wield their authority to make decisions without considering the interests of their subordinates. This approach is essentially power – based and therefore aligns itself with the view that conflict in an organization can best be handled by management and ignores the interests and inputs of other parties.

Pondy's Conflict Model

This model in Fig 6 attempts to explain and describe why conflict occurs by synthesizing material concerning the levels and bases of conflict. Parties in this model attempt to find a common solution to the problem through a collaborative process. The model is also known as the bargaining model (Hodge and Anthony, 1991: 546).



Adopted from Hodge and Anthony (1991:546)

FIGURE 6: BARGAINING MODEL

According to Hodge and Anthony (1991:546) a bargaining solution to conflict can also leave the seeds of future conflict if one of the parties perceives that a loss has occurred.

2.7. CAUSES OF CONFLICT

2.7.1 Limited Resources

Previously disadvantaged schools struggle with limited resources. When resources are limited, the potential for conflict increases. For example, a Mathematics departmental head may have more educators in his department and a Life Skills departmental head may have only a few educators. This scenario can be encouraged by the departments' policy, which aims to encourage learners to take Maths as a school subject. This scenario might lead to conflict.

2.7.2 Environmental change

Mullins (1999:818) cites government interaction, new technology or changing values as major areas of conflict. For example, the department of education introduced the concept of Senior Teachers in an effort to reward those teachers who have been in the service for longer periods without receiving any promotion. The concept caused conflict because it was not clearly defined and educators were not consulted on this issue.

2.7.3 Differences in perception

Mullins (1999:818) and De Beer et al (1998:221) maintain that people tend to view things in different ways because they have their own unique personalities, views and opinions. Therefore people may attach different meanings to the same thing. This means employees' views can differ, leading to conflict.

2.7.4 Violation of territory

Mullins (1999:818) argues that employees tend to become attached to their own 'territory' within work situations, for an example, an educator who has taught Math for the past 10 years may dislike the idea of a 'stranger' taking over the teaching of that learning area and this may cause conflict.

2.7.5 Communication

In South Africa communication is hindered by various factors such as language, culture and race.

According to Robbins (2003:283) poor communication is probably the most cited source of interpersonal conflict, because employees spend nearly 70 percent of their working hours communicating –

writing, reading, speaking, listening. Good communication is therefore essential for any organization's effectiveness. Robbins (2003:398) mentions the following barriers to communication and potential antecedent conditions for conflict.

- Word connotations
- Jargon
- Insufficient exchange of information

Tustin and Geldenhys (2003:110) state that communication barriers distort messages and lead to conflict. The barriers mentioned here are

- Physical separation
- Language differences

Robbins (2003:399) further argues that the potential for conflict increases when either too little or too much communication takes place. His line of reasoning is that an increase in communication is functional, up to a point, whereupon it is possible to over communicate, with a resultant increase in the potential for conflict. Salamon in Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:108) argues that the significance of communication both as a cause of conflict and as the means to solve it is overrated. He further argues that the source of labour conflict lies primarily in differences of objectives and interests and that communication between different levels of an organization only provides a means to identify differences, to develop a better understanding, and to seek accommodation within a mutually acceptable solution. Bendix (1996:324) corroborates the above assertion by stating that communication is the oil, which lubricates the organizational machinery, but if parts of the machine

are defective, no amount of lubrication will ensure that it functions properly.

Bendix (1996:439) also states that conflict escalates if communication is closed and infrequent, and de-escalates in a climate of open and regular communication. Ehlers (2003:25) disagrees and states that the inconsistency of communication does not cause conflict but rather the different interpretations thereof.

2.7.6 Uncertainty about responsibilities

De Beer et al (2003:221) states that unclear job descriptions contribute to conflict because the job – holders will not know precisely what activities they are responsible for. Bendix as cited in Slabbert, Erasmus and Nel (1999: 227) and Gleason (1997: 3) support this argument when they state that vagueness about responsibility and roles causes organizational conflict.

2.7.7 Management style

Mullins (1999:821) points out that a more participative and supportive style of leadership and managerial behaviour is likely to assist in conflict management. Bendix (1996: 439) concurs when he states that democratic management minimizes conflict and autocratic leadership, high task orientation and a high degree of mobilization escalates conflict.

Kemp (1992:13) points out that democracy in the workplace implies democratic style of management on the part of the leaders. He further argues that struggle for greater democracy still exists in institutions and this struggle is reflected in the conflict and strikes, which are prevalent in organizations.

According to Kemp (1992:14) the prevalence of autocratic management styles is caused by the fact that managers are results – orientated. This leads to a tendency to 'push' subordinates to achieve quick results by using autocratic power. According to this argument, autocratic and authoritarian style creates conflict in the modern organization. Kemp (1992:16) lists the outcomes of a democratic leadership as follows:

- Greater group cohesion
- More mutual support
- Greater risk taking
- More participation
- Less disruption
- Lower dropout rate

2.8 HUMAN RELATIONS AS A CAUSE OF CONFLICT

2.8.1 Personal Differences

2.8.1.1 Personalities

People with the following characteristics according to Tustin and Geldenhys have a high potential for conflict.

- Low self - esteem
- Abrasiveness
- Authoritative
- Dogmatic

2.8.1.2 Skills and abilities

Skills and abilities are an asset to an organization, but these can also be a cause for conflict as competent workers may find it difficult to work alongside unskilled workers who lack experience.

2.8.1.3 Needs

Holton (1995:7) points out that conflict over needs is more intangible and therefore more difficult to resolve. This type of conflict includes the needs for power, for belonging, for achievement and for self – esteem.

2.9 BLOCKED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

According to Nel (1997:148) blocked communication channels is caused by the following:-

- If employees do not have the opportunity to air their grievances.
- No feedback on grievances
- If information is withheld
- Biased and distorted information

2.10 ROLE INCOMPATIBILITY

This type of conflict can be divided into two types.

2.10.1 Intra- personal role conflict

This is conflict within a single role. This normally occurs when an employee receives conflicting messages from the role senders about how to perform a role. During negotiations for example,

management might expect a labour relations manager to align with it, while the trade union might expect the manager to be objective.

2.10.2 Inter-role conflict

This type of conflict takes place when a person experiences conflict among the multiple roles in his or her life such as conflict between work and home life.

2.10.3 Person – role conflict

This occurs when an employee is expected to perform a role that clashes with his or her personal values such as when a muslim educator is required to coach a school soccer team on a Friday at noon.

2.10.4 Intra-personal conflict

Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:111) mention that employees are not always aware of the conflict that they experience within themselves and this conflict may lead to conflict between fellow employees. A source of intrapersonal conflict, according to Tustin and Geldenhys (2000:111) is frustration, which can trigger the following defence mechanisms:

- Fixation
- Displacement
- Negativism
- Withdrawal

2.10.5 Strategy

A growth strategy for an organization leads to increase in size and differentiation within an organization such as an increase in internal complexity and changes in the existing power structure. Downsizing contributes to conflict by creating the perception of diminishing resources, which encourages competition over what remains to be shared. Therefore strategies that effect organizational size, contribute to conditions for conflict (Hatch, 1997:314).

2.10.6 Work interdependence and pooled interdependence

This type of conflict occurs when two or more parties must depend on one another to complete their tasks. According to Spoelstra and Pienaar (1999:189) the potential for conflict in such situations is high.

Spoelstra and Pienaar (1999:189) further state that pooled interdependence requires no interaction between groups because each group, in effect, function separately, but the pooled performance of all the groups determines how successful the organization will be. For example:

Educators at Letsatsing High School teach different learning areas and each educator might only be concerned to excel and obtain good results in his or her learning area but the overall results of the school will determine how good the school is. Similarly educators in the Mafikeng district may have no ineraction with their peers in other schools but the overall performance of the schools in the region determines how successful the education department is in the particular region.

Conflict potential in pooled interdependence is relatively low as compared to work interdependence.

2.10.7 Reward structures

Reward structures also contribute to conflict in the workplace. Spoelstra and Pienaar (199:190) maintain that conflict is more likely to occur when the reward system is related to individual group performance rather than to combined group performance. They argue that when rewards are aimed at individual groups, performance is viewed as an independent variable even while the performance is, in reality interdependent. For example:

School site – managers cannot be rewarded for obtaining good matric results and ignoring the efforts of ordinary educators. The reward system would be unfair because the performance in this case is interdependent.

Bendix (1996:323) supports the above argument and maintains that reward structures should be flexible to allow for the necessary mobility, otherwise dissatisfaction and conflicts may arise. Bendix further mentions that the payment process should be free from unnecessary disruptions such as mistakes, delays and erroneous deductions.

It should be noted that within the educator sector, the payment process of educators is characterized with unnecessary disruptions and unexplained delays.

2.10.8 Recruitment

The Human Resource section of an organization initiates the labour relationship when the prospective employee is recruited. Bendix (1996:322) maintains that the personnel department must be skilled and competent to match incumbents with people as well as jobs, the likelihood of conflict will only arise if the personnel section fails to fulfill its task.

2.10.9 Environmental stress

The South African education system has been profoundly affected by change after 1994. The radical restructuring of the education system into a single, non-racial system has brought about fundamental changes in terms of policy aimed at ensuring the realization of the constitutional principles of democracy, equity and equality in the education sector.

The transformation process is characterized by downsizing, rightsizing and competitive pressure. Therefore the external environment within which the education system operates also contributes to conflict within the entire schooling system. Hatch (1997:313) maintain that change within an organization may lead to uncertainty, and individuals within an organization will develop capacities for coping with change. Therefore this uncertainity in the environment of an organization may lead to conflict.

2.10.10 Power, feelings and emotions

Power influence how conflict is managed. The use of power determines the type of conflict that occurs.

In conflict situations people let their feelings and emotions become a major influence over how they deal with conflict. Conflict often occurs

because people ignore their own or others' feelings and emotions (http://www.ctic.purdue.edn)

2.11 PSYCHOLOGICAL CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Spoelstra and Pienaar (1999:191) mention the following psychological causes of conflict which may hinder harmony in the work place:-

- An unconscious need to harm or injure
- Social learning
- Prejudice
- Interracial aggression
- Gender differences
- Status differences and
- Differences in social evaluation

2.12 EFFECTS OF CONFLICT

Conflict in organizations can have both positive and negative results. Bezuidenhout et al (1998:347) maintain that if conflict is utilized correctly, it could fulfill the following positive functions:-

- Group binding and group-preservation
- Eliminate hostility
- Remove dissidents and re-establish group unity
- Minimize divergence from core values
- Provide the rationale for negotiation.

Hodge and Anthony (1991:530) argue that conflict can stir creativity and emotion and the tension that result from conflict can stimulate invention. The authors list the following as beneficial effects of conflict in organizations:-

- Conflict serves as a mechanism for fine-tuning the organization' goal hierarchy
- Clarify proper power and authority relationships.

Mullins (1999:818) also supports the views of the above authors when he lists the following positive outcomes of conflict:-

- People are forced to search for new ideas
- Long standing problems are brought to the surface
- Clarification of individual views
- A chance of people to test their capacities.

Kirkpatrick and Lewis (1995:244) are of the opinion that conflict signals a need for supervisory attention and intervention, and encourage parties to monitor behaviour more closely than it would under normal circumstances.

Slabbert, Erasmus and Nel (2002:246) indicate benefits that well-managed conflict can contribute to organizations as follows:-

2.12.1 Problem awareness

Discussing frustrations helps employees and managers to identify poor quality, excessive costs, injustices and other barriers to effectiveness.

2.12.2 Organizational change

Conflict creates incentives to challenge and change outdated procedures, assignments and structures.

2.12.3 Morale and personal development

Employees release tension through dismissing their problems. Managers and employees learn how their different styles affect one another and acquire the sills to adapt accordingly.

2.12.4 Psychological maturity

People take perspectives of others, integrate them and become less egocentric. They feel confident and empowered to deal directly with difficulties.

2.13 OTHER BENEFITS OF CONFLICT

- Discussing conflicting views can lead to better solutions
- Conflict raises awareness of what is important to individuals
- Managing conflict appropriately helps build self-esteem
- Conflict encourage people to grow
- Conflicts create opportunity. (http:/www.cios.org/encyclopedia.htm).

2.13.1 Destructive Conflict

Ehlers (2003:24) states that the behavioural options that were chosen to deal with conflict will be directly related to the outcome of the conflict between parties, destructive conflict can therefore result in the following:-

- Aggressive outburst
- Unresolved and ongoing tension
- Breach in relationship and adversarial positions
- Undefined resolution.

According to Mullins (1999:818) negative outcomes of conflict are destructive and create a climate of mistrust and suspicion, develop

resistance rather than teamwork, encourage individuals and groups to concentrate on their own narrow interests.

Pettinger (1997:551) cites the most serious negative effects of conflict as:-

- Declining organizational performance
- Declining morale as evidenced by rising rates of labour turnover, sickness and absence.

Pettinger (2002:552) expands his list of the negative outcomes of conflict and states that people take sides and gang up when problems are identified, people develop disregard and disrespect for those in other parts of the organization and the occurrence of non-productive meetings between persons from different departments, divisions and functions become common.

Deutsch in Anstey (2004:10) concurs with the above authors when he mentions that destructive conflicts inhibits a group's capacity to achieve its goals and productive conflict promotes interplay relations in terms of communication, trust, sensitivity and understanding. According to Anstey (2004:10), the above perception implies that, it is not the conflict per se that is regarded as functional or dysfunctional, but how it is handled.

At close scrutiny the negative outcomes of conflict seem to outweigh the positive outcomes of conflict. It therefore becomes imperative that management be equipped with effective skills in the management of conflict.

2.13.2 Conflict Culture

An organisation's culture will determine how an organization deals with conflict. One determining factor of conflict management according to Nel (1999:146) is organizational climate. Slabbert et al (2002:246) also support this view when they state that every aspect of conflict and the handling thereof is influenced by the organization culture. They distinguish between two organizations in terms of conflict handling:-

2.13.3 Conflict Negative Organizations

These organizations belong to the traditional school of conflict. Conflict is viewed as negative, destructive and is to be avoided at all costs. Common characteristics in these organizations are:-

- Self-directed teams not encouraged.
- Strict adherence to "what the rules say" or policies.
- Emphasis on impersonal relationship with the hope that the potential for confict will be diminished.
- Management is expected to take decisions and solve all problems.

2.13.4 Conflict Positive Organizations

These organizations embrace the modern view of conflict and here conflict is acknowledged as an integral part of organizational life. Common characteristics are:-

- Genuine, open relations are encouraged and this results in the expression of feelings, hunches and frustrations.
- Fosters participative leadership, which enables the group to discuss problems and conflict openly and constructively.

- Team meetings are used to address conflicts.

2.13.5 Conflict Management

According to Jones and George (2003:553) conflict resolution means that the conflict is settled by compromise or by collaboration between the parties in conflict. Tustin and Geldenhys differ with this view, when they argue that conflict "resolution" implies that conflict is resolved permanently, they prefer to use the concept conflict "handling" or "management", because this concept does not imply that conflict will necessarily be resolved. The concept acknowledges the dynamic employee – employer relationship in which conflict is always present. Robbins (2003:404) concurs when he maintains that in organizations where conflict is too low, it needs to be increased by applying appropriate conflict management techniques.

This study will therefore reject the view of conflict resolution as proposed by Jones and George (2003:553) and adopt the modern view of conflict which encourages organizations to maintain an ongoing minimum level of conflict which can keep an organization viable, self-critical and assertive (Robbins, 2003:396).

2.13.6 Collaborative Conflict Resolution

Masters and Albright (2002: 78) and Landau and Landau (2001:38) and Gordon (2003:39) concurs that collaboration is the most effective approach to conflict handling because the approach takes into account the real problem, it explores options, it meets interests, and builds relationships. The approach is also outcome and relationship focused. Slabbert et al (2002:245) disagrees and maintains that it is a myth that some approaches of conflict handling are more desirable than others and

state that there is an opportune time and situation for each of these approaches to be tested.

Masters and Albright (2002:791) maintain that the collaboration approach can be used when:-

- Relationships are important and interdependent
- Mutual interests exist
- The nature of work is integrated
- Cultural, professional and occupational differences exist
- The potential for escalated conflict is high.

Landau and Landau (2001:41) mention that relationships and results are both important in an organization because organizations exist to produce results through the combined efforts of their members and problems need to be addressed in ways that promote competition of ideas while encouraging cooperation among members.

Landau and Landau (2001:41) advocate three stages for handling organizational conflict through the collaborative approach.

Stage1: Determine causes

This stage involves determining whether or not interpersonal issues are significant contributors to the conflict because very often-interpersonal issues are disguised as substantive issues.

Stage2: Deal with Interpersonal Issues

It is very unlikely for people who are involved in interpersonal conflict to be prepared to share their important needs and concerns and to listen respectfully to the needs and concerns of others as well as to work together to reach a win-win solution. If an interpersonal issue is identified in stage 1, the issue should be

addressed first. Substantive issues would then be addressed once sufficient trust has been restored.

Stage3: Resolve Substantive Issues.

Substantive issues can only be resolved if no significant interpersonal conflicts are in place. Parties would then be able to follow a problem solving process and arrive at solutions that accommodate their needs and ideas.

Masters and Albright (2002:80) propose a nine-step guide in the collaborative approach. The authors emphasize that the guide is flexible and dynamic and users should feel free to move forward or backward with the goal of achieving effective conflict management.

Step2: Confront the situation

This step takes into consideration the sensitivity that should be applied in the approach. Give all parties involved in the conflict an opportunity to explain the situation and the problem should not be presented in a threatening or accusatory manner.

Step3: Sit back and listen

This stage involves listening actively so as to be able to understand the feelings and emotions and the thinking process behind the issue at hand.

Step 4: Capture the situation

At this stage core issues are identified, facts and needs are analyzed. Open mindedness should be applied so as to allow a change of perception of the situation if contravening data are presented.

Step 5: Invite Exploration

Possible options and solutions are discussed during this stage. Parties should be allowed an opportunity to explore options to address the raised issues without imposing solutions on them.

Step 6: Assess and Analyze

Options and solutions explored must be assessed. Consideration should also be given to check if solutions and options explored are mutually agreeable. Costs and benefits should also be considered.

Step 7: Propose Possibilities

A focus on possible solutions is necessary during this step. Reactions to suggestions are also tested.

Step 8: Reach Outcome

Consensus is reached after possibilities have been proposed. If uncertainty still prevails, a proposition should be made to revisit the matter to assess progress in a timely manner.

Step 9: Build Relationship

The final stage of collaborative conflict resolution is important because the outcomes of a conflict episode include not only decisions reached by the conflict parties, but also the effects of the episode upon relationships between the parties and upon the rest of the organization (Thomas, 1976: 176).

Slabbert et al (2002:249) state that conflict can leave scars in organizations and therefore organizations need to be rehabilitated after a conflict episode.

Masters and Albright (2002: 84) also state that, after reaching an agreement, time should be spent on relationship building. Future discussions and continued participation should be encouraged in the organization.

2.14 CONFLICT CONTAINMENT STRATEGIES

Conflict containment strategies acknowledge the existence of conflict in organizations as natural and distinguish between functional conflict and dysfunctional conflict. According to Gleason (1997:7) the modern view of conflict views conflict as a means of identifying problems that can interfere with the achievement of the goals and needs of both the individual and the organization. The goal of this approach is to find the optimal level of conflict that permits both the individual and organizational goals to be achieved.

2.14.1 Using representatives

Representatives are often used to contain conflict. Representatives are used because it is assumed that they know the problems and can articulate the group's points of view accurately and forcefully (Gordon, 2003:32).

The use of representatives in conflict handling has certain limitations. These include"-

- Representatives are not free to engage in compromise
- Representatives may face suspicion or rejection from members when they compromise
- Representatives often opt for deadlocks

2.14.2 Interaction between the groups

Gordon (2003:33) maintains that structuring the interaction between the groups can be effective in conflict handling as well as limiting issues that are discussed

and the manner in which they are discussed. The author provides other effective strategies that can facilitate conflict management as follows: -

- Decreased interaction between the groups in the early stages of conflict management
- Decreasing the formality of the presentation of issues.
- A focus on current issues and goals rather than the recitation of historic events and precedents
- The use of third-party mediators

2.14.3 Bargaining

Bargaining refers to the process of exchanging concessions until a compromise solution is reached. Nel (2002:139) distinguishes between distributive bargaining and integrative bargaining. The former is based on the adversarial relationship between labour and management where the goals are in direct conflict and this process results in a win-lose situation. Integrative bargain refers to a joint problem solving approach and integrates the aims of the opposing parties and results in a win-win situation.

Gordon (2003:34) asserts that although bargaining can lead to the resolution of a conflict, there is no much openness on the opposing parties and no much effort to solve the underlying problems. Nel (2002:139) maintains that integrative bargaining can benefit opposing parties and result in a win-win situation if the following guidelines are adhered to:-

- Parties should recognize and identify the problem
- Open exchange of information should be encouraged
- A search for alternatives should be encouraged and the consequences of each alternative should be evaluated before a final course is taken.
- A climate of trust and support should exist.
- Meetings should take place as frequently as possible.

2.15 THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Creativity in conflict resolution according to Landau et al (2001:68) refers to when disputants were not aware of similar solutions to comparable conflicts and also takes into account the nature of the problems and the capabilities of the problem solvers. The author further argues that parties in conflict see situations in win-lose terms and enter the conflict resolution process with a firm position that represents his or her preferred resolution.

Collaboration opens the door to win-win solutions by creating new options, often different from either position and sometimes different from any solution the parties might be able to imagine at the beginning of the process. Therefore, a win-win situation is reached because these new options do no belong to either party (Landau et al, 2001:69).

2.16. GUIDELINES FOR CREATIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

2.16.1 Reframe conflict as a problem

Landau and Landau (2001:79) states that an interest-based process redefines the conflict between the parties as a problem to be solved jointly and the process redirect people's energies from attacking each other to working on the same side and attacking the problem.

2.16.2 Trust

Landau et al (2001:81) supports Nel (2002:139) in his assertion that a climate of trust and support is necessary in the bargaining process. When they mention that people cooperate easily once they feel heard and understood and has overcome their personal animosities.

2.16.3 Interests v/s Positions

Interests are more conducive to creative thinking than positions are. Interests most often do not represent solutions but do represent the important needs that must be met through whatever solution is reached. Therefore if the parties focus on their interests while suspending their positions, they can brainstorm many creative options that meet their underlying needs and select the best solution (Landau et al, 2001:82).

2.16.4 Suspend Judgements

The suspension of judgement encourages the free-flow generation of options because criticizing or commenting on options interferes with brainstorming. Judgement and comments should follow only after brainstorming is finished.

2.17 BEHAVIOURAL MODELS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Ehlers (2002:30) mentions the following guidelines as useful in the reduction of conflict and in improving interaction in the workplace.

2.17.1 Dealing with complaints

The meeting with the complainant should be held in a quiet environment with no interruptions. The complainant should be listened to without interruption when presenting his/her side of the story. The complainant should be asked to make proposals on how to deal with the complaint. Additional information could be offered on ways to resolve the complaint and a joint decision should be taken on the solution. Finally, an agreement on a implementation plan and follow-up discussion date should be reached.

2.17.2 Issuing an effective instruction

Plan the instruction

- Purpose
- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- How
- Standard

An appropriate medium should be chosen followed by the instruction to the person. The understanding of the instruction can be tested by asking question and more information can be provided for clarity if necessary.

2.17.3 Dealing with conflict between people

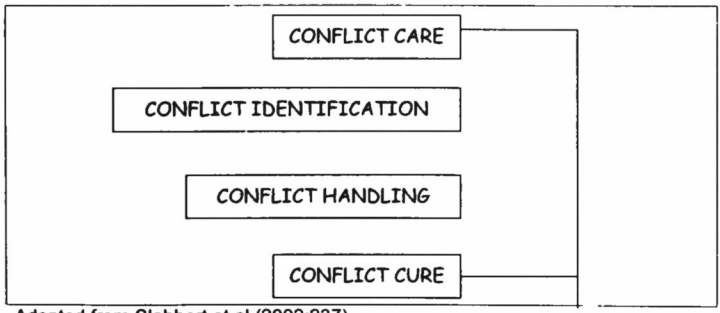
Parties involved in the conflict should be invited to a private meeting. The parties involved in conflict should be ensured that the aim of the meeting is to determine the nature of the conflict and to assist them to resolve the conflict with impartiality. Calm behaviour and objectivity should be emphasized throughout the meeting. Both parties should be listened to attentively with no interruptions. Issues in which the parties agree should be identified. The proposals of parties should be discussed and when necessary additional ways could be offered to resolve the conflict. The solution should be decided jointly. An agreement on the implementation plan an follow-up discussion date should be reached.

According to Masters and Albright (2002: 72) effective conflict management does not mean reaching an agreement. Effective conflict management consists of several related goals:

- Preventing escalation
- Solving the real problem
- De-personalizing the disagreement
- Inventing solutions
- Building relationships
- Achieving workplace goals

Slabbert et al (2002:237) also agrees with Pettinger (2002:560) when he states that conflict management should be incorporated in strategic management and management practice because the management of conflict is more than merely the handling of a situational problem and demands a more holistic approach.

Figure 8 provides a summary of the requirements of a holistic approach in conflict management.



Adopted from Slabbert et al (2002:237)

FIGURE 7: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

2.17.4 Conflict Care

The first stage in the model is a positive proactive management activity. This stage involves structuring the management of conflict by preparing and equipping the organization and the members.

2.17.5 Identification of Conflict

The objective of this stage is to identify, understand and remedy or rectify factors that contribute to conflict in the workplace.

Poor time keeping, absenteeism and labour turnover are cited as significant indicators for the monitoring of organizational climate. The argument presented here is that employees who absent themselves and have no respect for time want to distance themselves from work and these indicators should be interpreted as warning signals that some form of dissatisfaction is prevalent within the workplace and might have a negative influence for the entire organization.

Slabbert et al (2002: 243) also mentions other sub-processes of the conflict management process that need to be identified and rectified. These are:-

- Production attacks e.g. go-slow
- Information distortion e.g. rumours
- Deterioration of work relations e.g. assaults

2.17.6 Conflict Cure

Conflict incidents result in substantial scars within the organization. Therefore conflict affects the optimal functioning of an organization.

It becomes imperative therefore that an organization be rehabilitated from a situation of conflict. According to Slabbert et al (2002:249) conflict cure should

not be viewed as a guarantee against the recurrence of conflict within an organization. Conflict cure should be viewed as a mechanism that can assist organizations to develop methods and systems for anticipation and structuring, and assist organizations to remain critically attuned concerning labour relations in general.

2.18 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

According to Lipsky, Seeber and Fincher (2003: 155) a conflict management system should include:

- The scope of disputes
- Options available to employees to resolve their conflicts
- Procedural rules governing the use of these options.

A conflict management system offers the following advantages for the employee and the employer:-

- Constructive resolution of conflicts without destroying careers, relationships and reputations
- A swift resolution of conflicts
- Ensures confidentiality
- Fair resolution of conflicts with the help of trained mediators and independent neutral third parties, if needed.

2.19 DETERMINATION OF WORKPLACE ISSUES IN THE DESIGN OF A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Lipsky et al (2003: 156) maintain that the first step in designing a workplace system is to determine the scope of issues to be resolved within the system. Employee issues include work assignments, compensation, peer or supervisory conflicts, promotions, training, policies and terminations.

Lipsky et al (2003:160) also emphasize the inclusion of stakeholders in the designing process of a conflict management system. The stakeholders are all the distinct groups with interests in the design and effectiveness of the system who are also direct players in the application of the system. Stakeholders could be:-

- Current employees
- First-line supervisors
- Managers
- Individuals serving in the in-house legal and human resource functions
- Senior leadership
- Retirees
- Members of the board of directors

2.20 COMMON FEATURES OF A CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2.20.1The "Open door" philosophy

An "Open door" policy implies that the site-manager believes in open dialogue and encourages employees to come into his or her office and talk through differences or questions that may arise.

The "open-door" policy may have some barriers such as, the high risk of retaliation, the lack of training of supervisors to solve employee problems, and the busy schedule of supervisors. Fargo, as cited in Lipsky et al (2003:169) differs with this view and maintains that talking to the supervisor is the first step in the dispute resolution process. He further mentions that any work-related problem should be brought to the attention of the spervisor because the supervisor is in the best position to handle the problem (Lipsky et al, 2003:169).

2.20.2 Hot lines

A hot line is a telephone service available to employees to voice issues with management. Hot lines allow anonymous callers. The assumption is that employees have legitimate issues that they will not raise directly with their supervisor due to fear of retaliation or because the issue may involve or implicate the supervisor.

There are two types of hot lines. A staffed hot line during the workday with a professional who is trained on collecting information and asking questions. The unstaffed hot line record all calls as messages.

2.20.3 Resolution facilitators

According to Lipsky et al (2003:175) the core function of resolution facilitators is to assist those in conflict in selecting the most appropriate dispute resolution mechanism in light of their interests, important facts, the alternative procedures available and the key solutions the parties seek. The facilitators should represent a range of employees and should be trained in the resolution of disputes.

Advantages of this feature are:-

- No full-time incremental staff is required
- Facilitators are credible because they come fro the ranks of the employees.

Disadvantages:-

- Employee issues can become complex and it may become difficult for facilitators to handle the complexity of issues because facilitators are not full time dispute resolution experts.
- Regular turnover requires frequent training of new facilitators.

2.20.4 Managerial mediation

In this approach, the supervisor uses his or her authority to convene disputing employees and explore mutually acceptable solutions. If o resolution is achieved, the parties proceed with the workplace system.

Internal or external providers are usually used to train managers for this task. The training can focus on areas such as:

- Listening skills
- Exploring underlying issues
- Evaluating which employee conflicts are appropriate for managerial mediation (Lipsky et al, 2003: 174).

2.20.5 Trained employee advisers

Lipsky et al (2003:179) mentions that disputants have a right to an adviser during the dispute resolution process, because advisers are viewed as helpful in achieving settlement. The advisor is usually a fellow employee and his or her role will be to:-

- Provide advice
- Process coaching
- Assist with case preparation

2.21 STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CONFLICT

Strategies for managing conflict will vary according to the nature and sources of conflict. Mullins (1999:821) outlines strategies for managing conflict as follows:

Clarification of goals and objectives

Continual refinement and the clarification of goals and objectives, role definitions and performance standards curb misunderstandings and conflict.

Resource Distribution

This can be achieved by the use of imagination and initiative to assist in avoiding conflict situations. An example is delaying staff appointments in one area to provide more resources for another area.

Non-monetary Rewards

Increased delegation or empowerment, flexible work hours and unofficial perks are examples o non-monetary rewards that can limit conflict in the workplace.

Leadership and Management

A more participative and supportive style of leadership and managerial behaviour assists in conflict management such as showing an attitude of respect and trust.

Organizational Processes

Conflict situations may be reduced if attention is paid to the nature of the authority structure, work organization patterns of communication and sharing of information, democratic functioning of the organization, unnecessary adherence to bureaucratic procedures and official rules and regulations.

2.22. COMMUNICATION AS A TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Luthans, as cited in Bendix (1996:325) defines communication as the flow of material information perceptions and understanding between individuals and between different groups.

Robbins and Decenzo (2004:360) state that communication differences are disagreements arising from semantic difficulties, misunderstandings, and noise in the communication channel. Pettinge (2002:92) states that communication feed the quality of all human relations in organizations and good communication underline good relations and enhance the general quality of working life, motivation and morale. Ehlers (2003:25) maintains that communication can be hampered by factors such as culture and race.

In the light of the above, it is therefore necessary to consider the barriers to effective communication. The communication process and forms of communication will be omitted in this study because the focus is on how effective communication can reduce or assist in the conflict management process.

BARRIER	DESCRIPTION
FILTERING	Deliberate manipulation of information
SELECTIVE PERCEPTION	Receiving information on the basis of one's motivation, experience, background and personal characteristics
INFORMATION OVERLOAD	Information exceeding processing capacity
EMOTIONS	How the receiver feels when a message is received.
LANGUAGE	Different meanings of worlds
GENDER	How males and females react to communication
NATIONAL CULTURE	Communication differences arising from different languages individuals use to communicate and the national culture of which they are a part.

Adopted from Robbins and Decenzo (2004: 342)

TABLE 3: BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Kemp (1992:52) mentions the following as barriers of communication and provides methods of overcoming the barriers:-

- Not listening properly
- Failing to seek clarity
- Refusing to see the other person's point of view
- Becoming over-emotional

Direct Communication

Direct communication should be used whenever it is possible and feasible because the sender and the receiver are placed in a close relationship. Reactions are easily judged and reinforcements and adjustments can be made on the spot.

Using Different Forms of Communication

Verbal communication may be backed up by a written statement. The method of communication should take cognizance of the receiver and the situation at hand.

Regulating the flow of information

When a great deal of information is to be supplied, it must be broken down into different parts to prevent overloading the receiver.

Watch non-verbal cues.

It is important to watch actions and to make sur e that they align and reinforce he words.

2.23. DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT AS A TOOL FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Bendix (1996:439) and Mullins (1999:82) agree that democratic management minimizes conflict and autocratic leadership, high task orientation escalates conflict. Kemp (1992:71) also concurs when he states that too many controls, restrictions and close supervision of employees' results in a workforce that is shackled. However, the author does not downplay the importance of supervision as an important management activity to ensure that work is properly done, the focus is on the manner in which the control is effected as this could have important consequences for employee involvement. To ensure employee involvement, Mullins (1999:821) points out that a more participative and supportive style of leadership and managerial behaviour is necessary.

Kemp (1992: 75) suggests the following remedies:-

Removal of unnecessary controls

To ensure control, managers need to share control and involve employees in decision-making and problem-solving so that employees can feel ownership of their work lives.

Employees also need to be empowered. According to Kemp (1992:76) employee empowerment benefits the employee and the organization in various ways such as:-

- Employees become motivated
- Employees gain control of their destinies
- Employee participation is improved within the organization
- Empowered employees become assertive and show initiative
- Assertiveness facilitates communication and contributes to a mature and stable workforce

2.24. CONCLUSION

This chapter was the theoretical base of this study. Formulating the conceptual framework was done by consulting relevant literature. Literature review was guided by the research hypothesis, the objectives and the aims. The aforementioned gave rise to different variables of this research. In surveying literature, different theories, concepts and definitions were quoted and used in different contexts.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the causes, effects and types of conflict prevalent in organizations. The literature revealed that conflict sources are primarily from organizational variables and individual differences.

The study also emphasized the importance of managing labour relations in a proactive manner and managing for labour peace through collaborative relationships. Parties in a labour relationship should strive to create maximum levels of labour peace through the introduction and maintenance of effective structures and processes for conflict management. Labour peace is seen as an prerequisite for the attainment of organizational goals. However, the modern approach to conflict management view conflict as an essential ingredient in a labour relationship as it can benefit the organization in terms of creativity and innovation. The emphasis on the modern view of conflict therefore, is on the regulation of conflict in the organization rather than the total eradication of conflict.

Literature also revealed that conflict can be handled in different styles or approaches, hence the importance to identify the cause and type of conflict. Different approaches of handling conflict can be used under different circumstances.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Leedy (2001:100) maintains that data and methodology are inextricably interdependent, and that to extract meaning from the data, we employ what is commonly called research methodology. In his earlier writings, Leedy (1989:88) asserts that methodolody is" an operational framework within which the facts are placed so that their meaning may be seen more clearly."

Research methodologies are clustered into four ways of data processing that is, literacy or critical data, normative survey or descriptive survey data, analytical survey or statistical data, and experimental data. The abovementioned data requires different approaches or methodologies. The above suggests that this study follows the descriptive survey method. Leedy (1989:88) describes a descriptive survey as follows:-

> the descriptive survey method is ... derived from simple observational situations, whether these are actually physically observed or observed through benefit of questionnaires or poll techniques (1980:89).

Goddard (2001:08) holds that a descriptive or case study research is the one in which a specific situation is studied to see if it gives rise to any general theories..... or whether general theories could be borne out by specific situations.

Having chosen the above method, this chapter will outline the description of the organization of study, the research population (and how this will be dealt with), data gathering techniques, and statistical methods.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1 Organization

The Organization at which this research is undertaken is Letsatsing High School.Permission to conduct this study at the mentioned institution has been sought and obtained accordingly.

The school is situated in the Mafikeng district, North-West Province. A principal assisted by two Deputy Principals manages the school. The school's employees consist of young and middle aged men and women of predominantly African origin. Two educators are of Indian origin and one Phillipine. The school has a support staff comprised of 10 members. The number of learners' enrollment to date is 1103.

All educators are governed by the Employment of Educators Act, South African Schools Act and the South African Labour Relations Act of 1995. Educators at Letsatsing High School belong to predominantly two unions, South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the National Professional Teachers Association of South Africa (NAPTOSA).

3.1.2 Population

Goddard (2001:34) defines a population as any group that is the subject of research interest. The target population of this study consists of all educators employed at Letsatsing High School. The population consists of educators, heads of departments, two deputy principals, and a principal. It further consists of males and females of different ages, and different educational qualifications. The total population in this study will be 44.
Data collecting methods of this research will be administered purposely on the mentioned population.The above is so because the researcher views

the population as having one common variable of interaction within the workplace, with the likelihood of conflict.

3.1.3 Sampling

No sampling will be done in this study because the whole population will be surveyed

The following table represents the educators to be used in this research:

REPRESENTATION OF RESEARCH POPULATION

Key: Head of department = HOD

SUBJECTS	RANK	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
AFRIKAANS	1 = HOD	1	2	3
BIOLOGY	1 = HOD	4	3	7
COMPUTER LITERACY	-	2	-	2
ENGLISH	1 = HOD	3	4	7
GEOGRAPHY	1 = HOD	2	4	6
GUIDANCE	-	-	1	1
MATHS	1 = HOD	4	2	6
PHYSICAL SCIENCE	1 = HOD	3	4	7
SETSWANA	1 = HOD	-	5	5
TOTAL	7	19	25	44

Table 3.1 Letsatsing High School Staff

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

3.2.1 The Questionnaire

Birley (1999:40) states that data collection is not just a process of collection, it is also a process of creation, of using information in unique ways related to the purposes of the study.

Uys and Basson (1980:96) mention the following as the characteristics of ideal data – collecting situation:

- The investigation should be conducted in an environment familiar to the respondent.
- The nature of the investigation and of the respondent will influence the decision whether the respondent should remain anonymous or be identified.
- Planning for unforeseen situations.

The type of questionnaires used in this investigation is of self-administered type. Both open and forced choice questions will be used. It is assumed that those questions will yield good results because according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 108), the questionnaire is a definite non-personal method of gathering data. De Vos (1998: 161) concurs when he states that a combination of open-ended and forced choice questions is advisable, as it will not limit the sphere of gathering data.

In this investigation, the questionnaire is designed to guarantee total anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents. The questionnaire has a covering note on the first page to this effect.

The questionnaires of this research will be delivered and collected personally at Letsatsing High School. The total number of questionnaires distributed will be forty-four. These will be distributed to educators of different job categories, both malesand females of different ages. The following table (3.2) represents the questionnaire's question categories.

QUESTIONS/CATEGORIES	
1	Biographic Data: i. Gender ii. Age iii. Marital status iv. Experience in teaching v. Educational qualifications
2	Conflict in the workplace
3	Causes and effects of conflict
4	Workplace conflict management
5	Communication

Table 3.2 Questionnaire questions and categories.

A copy of the questionnaire is attached as addendum A.

Grinnel (1988: 268) regard interviews as a good data gathering instruments when he mentions that in an interview, the researcher becomes present – personally. This enables the researcher to ensure that every aspect is answered, and that issues can be interpreted or reworded without deviating from the meaning.

3.2.2 Interviews

Interviews are categorized according to the role taken by the interviewer and respondent. Uys and Basson (1980:57) distinguish between non-directive or unstructured interviews and structured interviews. In structured interviews use is made of questions, which have been formulated in advance. In the unstructured interview, the initiative is almost completely in the hands of the subject. The interviewer merely suggests to the respondent the topic on which information is required and does not use a list of structured questions. Respondents are free to discuss their topic without pressure from the interviewer (De Vos, 1998:163)

In this study, interviews will be conducted with the school principal, two deputy principals and one circuit manager. All in all four interviews will be conducted. The following table (3.3) represents the interview question categories.

Table 3.3 Questions and respondents

NO.	QUESTIONS	RESPONDENTS
1.	**CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE**	
	a. Do you have a grievance and disciplinary procedure in place?	1.Principal 2.Deputy Principal
	b. Is there trust between management and educators?	3. Circuit Manager
	c. Resolution of conflict in the workplace	
2.		
	CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CONFLICT	
	a. What are the major causes of conflict?	
	b. What are the effects of conflict?	
3.		
	COMMUNICATION	
	a. Is communication frequent between the school and the Area Project Office?	
	b. Do you think communication is central in issues related to conflict?	
	c. Do you have a formalized structure that encourages communication at school level/circuit level?	
	d. Do you participate effectively in forums that encourage communication?	

3.3 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

This research is quantitative in nature. Descriptive statistics will be used. Leedy and Ormond (2001: 251) define descriptive statistics as describing a body of data. Correlation analysis will be used to examine the extent to which differences

in one or more other characteristics or variables are related to differences in one or more characteristics or variables.

The results will be presented in tables, charts and graphs, depending on the outcome of the study. The following table (3.4) represents the characteristics of the population.

Table 3.4 Characteristics of the Population

Abbreviations: M = Male
F = Female
Yrs = Years
M = Matric
No = Number

JOB CATEGORY	EDUCATORS POST LEVEL 1		EDUCATORS POST LEVEL 2		SENIOR MANAGEMENT		ALL EDUCATORS	
GENDER	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
No of employees	10	18	2	2	2	1	14	21
Age: 27-30	5	4	-	-	-	-	5	4
31-35	7	5	1	-	-	-	8	5
35-49	6	6	1	1	1	1	8	8
50-54	-	2	-	1	1	-	1	3
59 >	-	1	-	-				1
Yrs of Experience								
1-5 yrs	10	6	-	-	-	-	10	6
6-10 yrs	7	4	2	1	1	-	10	5
11>	1	8	-	1	1	1	2	10
Qualifications								
M	2	-					2	-
M + 3	10	2					10	2
M + 4	5	9	1	1	-	-	6	10
M + 5	1	7	1	1	2	1	4	9
TOTAL	18	18	2	2	2	1	22	21
							43	

A computer aided statistical analysis will be employed in this study. The computation of the results will be conducted through the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) programme. The respondents' descriptive data will be computed in this study. Statistical analysis that will be used are frequencies and percentages.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research methodology suitable for the investigation. Techniques used have been chosen based on the relevance of the problem and research questions.

The following chapter will present raw data collected, analyze the data and interpret it.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4. INTRODUCTION

The main aims of this chapter are to present, analyse and interpret the data collected. Presentation and analysis of data will be in line with the research hypotheses, objectives, and the questionnaire. Data in this research was obtained by means of a questionnaire distributed among educators of Letsatsing High School (LHS) and interviews. There will be a presentation and analysis of questionnaire data from Section A to Section B. The above will be followed by the presentation and interpretation of the interview data, and a report on the hypotheses and aims of the study.

4.1 Raw Data and Analysis

Presentation of raw data has been compiled by using the SPSS (Version 11 of 2001) computer programme. The SPSS programme highlighted the following: The statistical package related to the biographic data – consisting of different (influencing) variables, and other data categories. The following is raw data as is.

The following table (4.1.1) present the biographical data of this research obtained by questionnaires. A total of 44 questionnaires were distributed and returned by all respondents. Data presentation will be followed by its analysis.

Table 4.1.1 BIOGRAPHIC DATA

1. AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
22-27	2	4.5
28-37	20	45.5
38+	22	50.0
TOTAL	44	100.0
2. GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
MALE	18	40.9
FEMALE	26	59.1
TOTAL	44	100.0
3. MARITAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SINGLE	22	50.0
MARRIED	18	40.9
DIVORCED	1	2.3
OTHER	3	6.8
TOTAL	44	100.0
4. YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
1-5	10	22.7
6-10	9	20.5
11 AND ABOVE	25	56.8
TOTAL	44	100.0
5. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
DIPLOMA	10	22.7
DEGREE	17	38.6
HONOURS AND ABOVE	16	36.4
OTHER	1	2.3
TOTAL	44	100.0

4.1.1 Age

Educators between 38 years old and above total 50 percent. This is the highest percentage as compared to the lowest, i.e. two percent for educators who are between 22-27 years old. Educators who belong to the age group between 28-37 total 45.5 percent.

4.1.2 Gender

A total number of 44 educators completed the issued questionnaires. The males who participated are 18 and the females are 26. More females (59.1%) participated in the study.

4.1.3 Marital Status

At Letsatsing High School 50 percent of the educators are single. Divorced educators comprise only 2.3 percent of the population. Only 41 percent of the respondents are married. This biographic factor may indicate a level of maturity and responsibility which can add to the reliability of data provided.

4.1.4 Years of Experience in Teaching

The most experienced educators in the school are equals to 56.8 percent with 11 years of teaching experience and above. This high percentage suggests educators maturity, responsibility and experience pertaining to work procedures and inter-personal relations. It can therefore be expected that conflict at Letsatsing High School will be within 'manageable' limits.

4.1.5 Educational Qualifications

At Letsatsing High School 36.4 percent of educators hold post graduate degrees. All educators are qualified. No educator is appointed with a matric certificate or without proper qualifications. Only one educator indicated 'other' qualifications.

4.2 CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE

The following table (4.2) presents data reflecting the frequencies and percentages relating to the occurrence of conflict in the workplace.

Table 4.2.1 Conflict in the Workplace

1. YOU HAVE A WRITTEN GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EDUCATION LABOUR RELATIONS COUNCIL		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	7	15.9
	DAG	10	22.7
	NS	9	20.5
	AG	9	20.5
	SAG	6	13.6
	TOTAL	41	93.2
MISSING	SYSTEM	3	6.8
TOTAL		44	100.0

2. TRUST IS HIGH BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATORS		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	17	38.6
	DAG	16	36.4
	NS	5	11.4
	AG	1	2.3
	SAG	4	9.1
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0

3. MANAGEMENT FAIR IN RESOLVING CONFLICT SITUATIONS.	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SDAG	14	31.8
DAG	8	18.2
NS	14	31.8
AG	5	11.4
SAG	3	6.8
TOTAL	44	100.0

Table : 4.2.1 continued...

4. MANAGEMENT IS UNBIASED IN RESOLVING CONFLICT SITUATIONS		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	11	25.0
	DAG	7	15.9
	NS	13	29.5
	AG	3	6.8
	SAG	9	20.5
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0

5. MANAGEMENT IS CONSISTENT IN RESOLVING CONFLICT SITUATIONS		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	13	29.5
	DAG	15	34.1
	NS	9	20.5
	AG	3	6.8
	SAG	2	4.5
	TOTAL	42	95.5
MISSING	SYSTEM	2	4.5
TOTAL		44	100.0

6. IN RESOLVING CONFLICTS MANAGEMENT FOCUS ON THE PERSON		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	3	6.8
	DAG	13	29.5
	NS	13	29.5
	AG	4	9.1
	SAG	2	4.5
	TOTAL	35	79.5
MISSING	SYSTEM	9	20.5
TOTAL		44	100.0

7. YOU HAVE A SAY IN HOW YOU DO YOUR JOB	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SDAG	4	9.1
DAG	14	31.8
NS	2	4.5
AG	15	34.1
SAG	9	20.5
TOTAL	44	100.0

Table 4.2.1 continued...

8. TRANSFORMATION PROCESS WITHIN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ESCALATION OF CONFLICT		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	3	6.8
	DAG	7	15.9
	NS	11	25.0
	AG	4	9.1
	SAG	16	36.4
	TOTAL	41	93.2
MISSING	SYSTEM	3	6.8
TOTAL		44	100.0

According to data collected, 15.9 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed that a disciplinary and grievance procedure in accordance with the Education Labour Relations Council is in place. Another 22.7 of the respondents also dispute the existence of such a tool at Letsatsing High School. Only 6.8 percent of the respondents agree that a disciplinary procedure is in place. Based on the data collected (15.9) who strongly disagree and (22.7) who disagree, it can be concluded that the school under study lack proper mechanisms in terms of grievance and disciplinary procedure.

A total of 17 respondents out of 44 indicated that there is a lack of trust between educators and management. Educators who also disagree that the relationship between educators and management is not based on trust total 16. Only one educator is not sure on the level of trust between management and educators.

It can be concluded that at Letsatsing High School the relationship between educators and management is not sound due to the lack of trust. Trust in a employer-employee relationship is an essential ingredient, and when this ingredient is absent, tensions and conflicts way arise due to the suspicion that is prevalent in the relationship. Nel (2002:130) asserts that people cooperate easily once they feel heard and understood and have overcome their personal animosities.

Respondents strongly disagreed, as indicated by 31.8%, that management is unbiased in resolving conflict situations. Only 3 respondents out of 44 strongly agree that management is fair in conflict resolution.

The above response is further supported by 25% of the respondents who strongly disagree that management is unbiased in resolving conflict situations.

Thirty percent of respondents also mention that management is consistent in resolving conflict situations at Letsatsing High School. The consistency referred to here refers to biasness and unfairness as indicated by respondents.

A total of 3 respondents strongly disagree that management does not focus on the person in resolving conflict, but on the issue at hand. Only 2 respondents agreed that management focuses on the person rather than the problem.

This finding contradicts earlier responses because, as Gleason (1997:103) observed depersonalisation in conflict situations deescalates conflict. Earlier responses, such as the biasness of management contradicts the former response.

Fifteen respondents agreed that they have a say in how they do their jobs. Only four strongly disagreed that they have a say in how they do their job. This suggests that the conflict that might be prevalent at Letsatsing High School is not work related.

Respondents indicated by 36.4 percent that the transformation process within the education department contributes to the escalation of conflict at school level among educators. Three respondents strongly disagreed with this assertion.
In the light of the above, there is a need to revisit how the transformation process is communicated from above, down to the educators at school level.

4.3 CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CONFLICT

This part of the questionnaire was used to examine the causes and effect of conflict in the workplace.

The following table presents data related to the causes and effects of conflict.

Table 4.3.1 Causes and effects of Conflict

1. INFREQUENT COMMUNICATION		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	3	6.8
	DAG	2	4.5
	NS	2	4.5
	AG	9	20.5
	SAG	26	59.1
	TOTAL	42	95.5
MISSING	SYSTEM	2	4.5
TOTAL		44	100.0

2. SCARCITY OF RESOURCES		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	4	9.1
	DAG	8	18.2
	NS	7	15.9
	AG	12	27.3
	SAG	12	27.3
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0

3. LACK OF SHARED VALUES		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	3	6.8
	DAG	2	4.5
	NS	8	18.2
	AG	13	29.5
	SAG	15	34.1
	TOTAL	41	93.2
MISSING	SYSTEM	3	6.8
TOTAL		44	100.0

Table 4.1.3 continued....

4. INEQUALITY OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	2	4.5
	DAG	4	9.1
	NS	3	6.8
	AG	14	31.8
	SAG	19	43.2
	TOTAL	42	95.5
MISSING	SYSTEM	2	4.5
TOTAL		44	100.0

5. PROMOTION PROSPECTS		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	5	11.4
	DAG	2	4.5
	NS	4	9.1
	AG	8	18.2
	SAG	23	52.3
	TOTAL	42	95.5
MISSING	SYSTEM	2	4.5
TOTAL		44	100.0

6. LACK OF COMMITMENT		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	5	11.4
	DAG	2	4.5
	NS	6	13.6
	AG	12	27.3
	SAG	17	38.6
	TOTAL	42	95.5
MISSING	SYSTEM	2	4.5
TOTAL		44	100.0

4.3.1 Infrequent Communication

Fifty nine percent responses endorse that infrequent communication is one of the causes of conflict. As Robbins (2003:283) asserts, poor communication is the most cited source of interpersonal conflict because employees spend nearly 70 percent of their working hours communicating. This view, however, is contradicted by Salamon in Tustin and Geldenhys (2000: 108) when they argue

that the significance of conflict both as a cause of conflict and as a means to solve it is overrated.

Bendix (1996:439) argues that conflict escalates if communication is closed and infrequent, and de-escalates in a climate of open an regular communication.

In light of the above arguments, communication can be viewed as central to industrial relations, and could therefore be a determinant of the perceptions held by educators towards the senior management team.

4.3.2 Scarcity of Resources

It has been endorsed by 27% strong agreement that the scarcity of resources lead to conflict among educators in schools. This study was conducted at a previously disadvantaged school, were limited resources, to date, can be experienced. The potential for conflict among colleagues tend to increase when resources are not adequate.

4.3.3 Lack of Shared Values

It has been found out that 34 percent of respondents strongly agree that a lack of shared values contribute to conflict. Only seven percent of the respondents strongly disagree that a lack of shared of values do not contribute to conflict.

4.3.4 Inequality of Personal and Professional Treatment

An overwhelming majority (43%) of the responses indicated strong agreement and professional treatment results in conflict. This is an indication of dissatisfaction that might be prevalent among educators and also an indication of a lack of proper conflict management forums, and the skill of handling conflict.

Lipsky et al (2003:174) is of the opinion that managerial mediation entails listening skill, exploring underlying issues and evaluating which employee conflicts are appropriate for managerial mediation.

4.3.5 Promotion Prospects

It is not surprising that 52 percent of the respondents strongly agree that promotion prospects for educators cause conflict in schools. Promotional prospects in schools is generally slow as evidenced by the high number of educators (36%) at Letsatsing High School who hold postgraduate degrees and have extensive teaching experience, i.e. 11 years and above, but are on post level one. Promotional positions that educators compete for are few, and this creates tension and mistrust among colleagues. This scenario was created by government, when teacher colleges were closed down and universities reduced new enrolments of education students. Government was under the impression that the country had an over-supply of teachers. Teacher salaries and working conditions were also neglected in the process. This resulted in a massive exodus of teachers to other departments and private sector for better promotional prospects and 'greener pastures.'

Today government is faced with the challenge of retaining educators as well as attracting new entrants into the system because it has been observed that a major shortage of teachers is looming.

4.3.6 Lack of Commitment

Five respondents out of a total of 44% strongly disagree that lack of commitment result in conflict. Seventeen respondents indicate lack of commitment as a cause for conflict.

4.4 RESULTS OF CONFLICT

The following table (4.4.1) presents data reflecting the frequencies and percentages relating to the effects of conflict.

Table 4.4.1 Results of Conflict

1. DECLINE IN MORALE		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	1	2.3
	NS	1	2.3
	AG	10	22.7
	SAG	31	70.5
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0
2. DETERIORATION OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	1	2.3
	DAG	1	2.3
	NS	1	2.3
	AG	4	9.1
	SAG	34	77.3
	TOTAL	41	93.2
MISSING	SYSTEM	3	6.8
TOTAL		44	100.0
3. INCREASE IN ABSENTEEISM		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	2	4.5
	DAG	5	11.4
	NS	10	22.7
	AG	13	29.5
	SAG	13	29.5
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0
4. INCREASE IN SICKNESS		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	4	9.1
	DAG	3	6.8
	NS	13	29.5
	AG	11	25.0
	SAG	12	27.3
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0

Table 4.4.1 continued ...

5. INCREASE IN LABOUR TURNOVER		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	6	13.6
	DAG	1	2.3
	NS	13	29.5
	AG	18	40.9
	SAG	5	11.4
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0

6. DIVISION AMONG STAFF MEMBES		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	1	2.3
	DAG	2	4.5
	NS	1	2.3
	AG	7	15.9
	SAG	33	75.0
	TOTAL	44	100.0

7. DECLINING ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
	SDAG	1	2.3
	NS	7	15.9
	AG	10	22.7
	SAG	25	56.8
	TOTAL	43	97.7
MISSING	SYSTEM	1	2.3
TOTAL		44	100.0

4.4.1 Decline in Morale

Seventy percent of responses endorse that a decline in morale is a result of conflict among educators at school level. A decline in morale could further be attributed to general working conditions educators are faced with. These include:-

- Low salaries
- Delayed salaries
- Overcrowding of learners
- Poor infrastructure and
- Lack of resources

4.4.2 Deterioration of Personal and Professional Relationship

Seventy seven percent confirmed that personal and professional relationship deteriorate as a result of conflict. Only two percent of the respondents strongly disagree in this regard.

4.4.3 Increase in Absenteeism

A total of 13 respondents endorse that absenteeism increases as a result of conflict. Vecchio (2000:271), maintains that individuals are usually drawn to situations that are rewarding, while they tend to withdraw from situations that are unrewarding or painful. Therefore less satisfied employees are more likely to miss work and highly satisfied employees are far more likely to make an extra effort in their work engagements. Steers, Porter and Bigley (1996: 273) concur when they mention that when work is satisfying people show up to enjoy it. Bendix (1996: 323) also agrees and mentions that the monitoring of absenteeism is important because high absence rates are indicative of poor management of conflict within the labour relationship.

It is therefore likely that educators at LHS who do not normally absent themselves may become dissatisfied due to a lack of an effective conflict management strategy.

4.4.4. Increase in Sickness

Twenty seven percent of the responses indicate strong agreement that conflict results in an increase in sickness. Four respondents strongly disagree that sickness increase as a result of conflict.
Steward (1998:140) mentions stress as a common feature of workplace sickness, and states that stress ranging from tardiness to small bouts of illness.

ulcers, strokes, headaches, migraines and over-and-under-sleeping are all associated to some degree with stress.

4.4.5 Increase in Labour Turnover

It has been endorsed with 41 percent agreement that conflict results in an increase in labour turnover. Only 14 percent strongly disagree.

4.4.6 Division among Staff Members

Seventy five percent responses indicate strong agreement that staff members become divided due to conflict. According to Spoelstra and Pienaar (1999:189) the potential for conflict in pooled dependence situations is high, such as in schools. The pooled performance of all the groups determine how successful the organization will be.

4.4.7 Declining Organisation Performance

A majority of 25 respondents out of 44 indicate strong agreement that the organisation's performance decline as a result of conflict. Only one respondent strongly disagrees.

Conflict that leads to a decline in performance, according to Mullins (1999: 817) can be referred to as destructive conflict. This conflict can have tragic consequences for individuals and adverse effects on organizational performance.

This type of conflict is characterized by: -

- Non encouragement of cooperation
- Different groups working for their own benefit
- Creation of tension

4.5 WORKPLACE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The following table (4.1.5) presents responses related to conflict management in the workplace

Table 4.5.1 Workplace Conflict Management

1. IN RESOLVING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT FOCUS ON THE PERSONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
YES	34	77.3
NO	10	22.7
TOTAL	44	100.0
2. MANAGEMENT INVOLVES YOU IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENT**
SDAG	14	31.8
DAG	13	29.5
NS	5	11.4
AG	8	18.2
SAG	4	9.1
TOTAL	44	100.0
3. EDUCATORS ARE FREE TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENT**
SDAG	13	29.5
DAG	12	27.3
NS	11	25.0
AG	5	11.4
SAG	3	6.8
TOTAL	44	100.0
4. EDUCATORS FEEL FREE TO GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM CONCERNING CONFLICT HANDLING	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENT**
SDAG	6	13.6
DAG	15	34.1
NS	7	15.9
AG	9	20.5
SAG	7	15.9
TOTAL	44	100.0
5. MANAGEMENT ADOPTS A JOINT PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENT**
SDAG	14	31.8
DAG	7	15.9
NS	9	20.5
AG	6	13.6
SAG	8	18.2
TOTAL	44	100.0

It has been endorsed with 77 percent 'yes' responses that management have the final say in conflict resolution. The responses clearly indicate that LHS is what Slabbert et al (2002: 246) refer to as conflict negative organization. Such organizations are characterized by a strict adherence to "what the rules say" or policies. Management in these organizations is expected to take decisions and solve all problems. Conflict negative organizations belong to the traditional school of conflict which view conflict as destructive.

Thirty two percent of the respondents strongly disagree that educators are not free to make their own decisions in conflict resolutions. This finding can be linked with the previous finding which confirms by (77%) that management acts alone and have the final say in conflict resolution.

At LHS educators are also not free to give constructive criticism regarding the handling of conflict as indicated by 34 percent of the responses. The fear of educators to give constructive criticism pertaining to conflict can be attributed to fear of victimization on the part of management. Management might view vocal educators as been trouble-makers. The responses further reveal that at LHS, open dialogue is not encouraged.

The adoption of a joint problem solving approach in conflict management is strongly negated by 32 percent of the respondents. Lipsky et al (2003:160) emphasizes the inclusion of all stakeholders of an organization in the conflict management process. This inclusion is important because all stakeholders have interest in the effectiveness of the system and are also direct players in the application of the system.

4.6 COMMUNICATION

The following table(4.1.6) represents the role of communication in conflict management.

Table 4.6.1 Communication

1. THE PRINCIPAL IMPARTS INFORMATION FROM AREA PROJECT OFFICE TO EDUCATORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SDAG	14	31.8
DAG	5	11.4
NS	3	6.8
AG	13	29.5
SAG	9	20.5
TOTAL	44	100.0
2. EDUCATORS COPE WITH THE INFLUX OF NEW LEGISLATION RELATED TO TRANSFORMATION IN EDUCATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SDAG	13	29.5
DAG	16	36.4
NS	7	15.9
AG	6	13.6
SAG	2	4.5
TOTAL	44	100.0
3. COMMUNICATION IS CENTRAL IN ISSUES RELATED TO CONFLICT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
SDAG	4	9.1
DAG	6	13.6
NS	3	6.8
AG	9	20.5
SAG	22	50.0
TOTAL	44	100.0
4. DO YOU HAVE A FORMALISED STRUCTURE IN PLACE THAT ENCOURAGES COMMUNICATION AT SCHOOL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
YES	14	31.8
NO	30	68.2
TOTAL	44	100.0
5. DO YOU PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN FORUMS THAT ENCOURAGE COMMUNICATION AT SCHOOL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
YES	11	25.0
NO	29	65.9
TOTAL	40	90.9
MISSING SYSTEM	4	9.1
TOTAL	44	100.0

Fourteen respondents indicate that the principal does not share information from the Area Project Office with colleagues. Thirteen respondents agree that the principal imparts information to educators. The slight margin (23%) between the two responses causes concern. This situation could be attributed to the fact that not all members view communication as central in conflict management.

Pettinger (2002: 92) states that communication feed the quality of all human relations in organizations and good communication underline good relations and enhance the general quality of working life, motivation and morale.

Salamon in Tustin and Geldenhuys (2000 108) view communication not as central in conflict management. He argues that the source of labour conflict lies primarily in differences of objectives and interests and that communication between different levels of an organization only provides a means to identify differences.

Respondents in this study could share the two contradictory views of communication in conflict management.

A minority of 2 respondents strongly agree that educators cope with the influx of new legislation related to transformation in education. Thirteen respondents out of a total of 44 strongly disagree with the minority.

Now legislation and developments regarding transformation in the education system is communicated from the Area Project Office. The responses therefore suggest that failure to cope is caused by delayed communication from the Area Project Office or from the site-manager, who might receive information and fail to disseminate it to all stakeholders.

The responses also suggest that site-managers be workshopped on change management so as to ensure the smooth roll-out of the transformation process.

It has been confirmed with 68 percent 'no' responses that a formalized structure that encourages communication is non-existent at LHS. Sixty six percent 'no' responses further validate the non-existence of this structure when they indicate that they lack participation in such structures.

4.7 INTERVIEWS

The following table present the interview questions and responses related to causes and effects of conflict, conflict in the workplace and communication

Table 4.7.1: Representation of the interviews

QUESTIONS AND RESPONDENTS

NO	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
A.	**CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CONFLICT**	
1.	What are the major causes of conflict among educators?	Policy related issues and scarcity of resources.
2.	What are the major causes of conflict among educators and management?	Workloads and policy issues.
B.	**CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE**	
1.	Do you have a formalized grievance and disciplinary procedure in place? Do you adhere to it?	Yes. The school adheres to the procedure although educators and management differ in the implementation of the procedure.
2.	Can you say trust is high between educators and management.	Yes
3.	How do you resolve conflict?	We follow procedure depending on the nature of the dispute.
4.	What are the effects of conflict?	Division among staff.
C.	**COMMUNICATION**	
5.	Is communication frequent between the school and the Area Project Office?	The Area Project Office attempts to improve the situation.
6.	Do you think communication is central in conflict management	Yes. Communication is important for team work. Effective communication might reduce negative conflict.

The above responses have been obtained from the majority of responses interviewed. At closer scrutiny, the questions and responses of the interviews are similar to those of the questionnaire. The unique nature of interviews is that responses are said with a full expression of ideas. Information collected from interviews was summarized.

What emerged from the interviews is that respondents acknowledged the existence of conflict among members. The interviewees also emphasized the need of effective communication as a prerequisite for effective conflict management. The interviews also revealed that communication between the Area Project Office and the school need improvement, suggesting therefore that communication here is not effective or regular.

4.7.1 Failure to Attempt Questions

Failure to attempt question is reflected as the 'missing system' in raw data collected. The missing system cut across all categories of questions in the questionnaire. Failure to answer questions when a provision for the 'not sure' category is been provided raises eyebrows. Failure to attempt questions ranges from the rate of two percent to seven percent. It is assumed that this scenario could have been created by human error because respondents were assured of anonymity. Alternatively it can be assumed that respondents lack sufficient knowledge regarding the subject at hand, and if this is the case, this indicates that educators at LHS receive little or no training pertaining to conflict resolution.

4.8 A REPORT ON THE HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

4.8.1 Lack of an effective conflict management system escalates conflict.

Twenty percent of the respondents disagreed that a grievance and disciplinary procedure is in place. A total of 14 percent strongly agreed that a written grievance and disciplinary procedure in accordance with the Education Labour relations Council is in place.

The findings suggest that the conflict management system that is in place at LHS is not known to some members (16%) and (21%) the 'not sure' category. This implies that during the designing phase of this system stakeholders were not included, or new entrants at LHS are not inducted properly

It can be concluded therefore, that at LHS a conflict management system is in place. The conflict management system however, is not effective due to the varied degree of responses. Hypothesis no. 2 is therefore valid, because the system of conflict management is not effective

4.8.2 Management style of site-managers contributes to the escalation of conflict.

Data has indicated with 77 percent responses that the management style of site-managers contributes to the escalation of conflict Thirty percent of the respondents also disagreed that management involves educators in conflict resolution. The lack of a joint problem solving approach in conflict management, as indicated by 32 percent of responses further indicates that management at LHS is not participatory.

Bendix (1996:439) and Mullins (1999:82) agree that democratic or participatory management minimizes conflict, while autocratic leadership escalates conflict

This view is also supported by Kemp (1992:71) when he points out that too many controls, restrictions and close supervision of employees results in a workforce that is shackled. The above assertion does not downplay the importance of supervision as an important management activity, the focus is on the manner in which the controls are effected as this could have adverse consequences for employees involvement.

According to Mullins (1999:821) a more participative and supportive style of leadership and managerial behaviour is necessary in ensuring maximum employee involvement. Hypothesis no. 1 is therefore valid.

4.8.3 Lack of communication between site-managers, educators and parents contribute to conflict in schools.

Data collected indicate that 26 respondents strongly agree that infrequent communication is a cause of conflict. Twenty nine respondents also indicated that they do not participate in forums that encourage communication, probably because such forums are non-existent at LHS. Thirty percent responses indicated strong disagreement that the site-manager imparts information from the Area Project Office to educators.

Luthans, as cited in Bendix (1996:325) defines communication as the flow of material information, perceptions and understandings between individuals and between different groups. Pettinger (2002:92) concurs when he maintains that communication feed the quality of all human relations in organizations.

The above arguments and data collected therefore validates hypothesis no. 3

4.8.4 Site managers and educators are not well equipped in conflict management.

Data have suggested that site-managers and educators need to be trained in conflict management. This was validated by the following responses.

DATA CATEGORY	RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
- Management is fair in resolving conflict	SDAG	31.8
- Management is unbiased in resolving conflict	SDAG	15.9
- Management is consistent in resolving conflict	SDAG	29.5
- Management involves educators in conflict resolution	SDAG	31.8

The above brings the researcher to a conclusion that the hypothesis is valid.

4.8.5 Lack of effective conflict management contributes to the declining organizational performance

Fifty seven percent of the responses strongly agree that lack effective conflict manage contributes to the decline in organizational performance. This variable can be discussed in conjunction with absenteeism as a result of conflict. Thirty percent responses indicate strong agreement that conflict results in absenteeism. Absenteeism is a major factor in declining organizational performance. Organisational performance in a school setting can best be measured in learner achievement. The following table (5.1) will present Grade 12 results of LHS of the past three years.

Table 4.9 Letsatsing High School: Grade 12 results

YEAR	NO. OF CANDIDATES	PASS RATE
2002	310	81.2%
2003	245	79.3%
2004	250	68%

In light of the above statistics, the researcher would conclude that hypothesis No. 5 is valid.

4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter served to present and analyse data. An attempt was made to interpret each and every table and graph. Data compilation and interpretation assisted this research to highlight the research aims, objectives, problems and hypotheses.

Data revealed that conflict is prevalent in the organization under study. According to Bendix (1996:251) conflict is not necessarily dysfunctional, if managed properly it can benefit an organization in terms of growth and innovation. In the light of the above, it is evident that conflict management is an essential skill of management. This dissertation essentially attempts to examine effective conflict management in schools.

The concluding chapter will present the main findings of this dissertation, and the recommendations of the researcher.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is based on the research findings and recommendations. This dissertation was about the causes, effects and the handling of conflict among educators at school level. This chapter presents the findings and recommendations based on the problem research questions and research hypotheses.

5.1 THE MAIN FINDINGS

Data analysis revealed a set of findings related to the research questions. The main findings of this dissertation are related to the causes, effects and the management of conflict among school based educators.

The findings are as follows:-

- There is a prevelance of conflict at LHS.
- Inconsistency is prevalent in conflict management
- Infrequent communication contributes
- Promotion prospects are contributory to escalating conflict
- Declining organizational performance is a result of inefficient conflict management.

In elaborating the abovementioned findings, this study revealed factors confirmed by respondents, which are key to the research questions, the problem and hypotheses.

5.1.1 The Prevelance of Conflict

Data collected indicates strong disagreement by 16% that a conflict management system is non-existent at LHS. Twenty three percent of the respondents also deny knowledge of any tool that is in place to monitor conflict.

5.1.2 Inconsistent Conflict Management

Thirty percent of the respondent indicate that management is not consistent in conflict resolution. This inconsistency can be attributed to the fact that the school lacks an effective conflict management system. Indicators of inconsistency are biasness (25%) and focusing on the person when resolving conflict (9%) in the application of conflict resolution.

Masters and Albright (2002:72) mention the following goals assessment in effective conflict management:

- Preventing escalation
- Building relationships
- De-personalizing the disagreement
- Achieving workplace goals.

The above assertion suggests that organisational goals can only be met if members of an organization have strong relationships ..... the conflict that might be prevalent within the organization. Before strong relationships could be build, trust among members has to exist.

5.1.3 Infrequent Communication

The issue of communication needs to be addressed at LHS. Fifty nine percent responses confirm that communication is infrequent.

Robbins (2003:283) Tustin and Geldenhys (2003:110) and Ehlers (2003:25) share different views on the issue of communication as a cause for conflict. Ehlers (2003) argues that infrequent communication does not cause conflict but rather the interpretations thereof. Nel (1997:148) maintains that infrequent communication is characterized by us feedback on grievances, withheld information, biased and distorted information and a lack of opportunity for employees to air their grievances.

1`Based on the argument presented by Nel(1997) the researcher concludes that communication is central in the conflict management process.

5.1.4 Promotion Prospects

The finding on promotion prospects is interesting. Fifty two percent of responses cite promotion prospects for educators as a cause for conflict among educators. Promotions prospects pose a serious threat to the education department nationally as this can result in a loss of experienced and qualified educators to other professions.

5.1.5 Declining Organisational Performance

The decline in organizational performed at LHS is evidenced by 57% of responses. This causes serious concern for the school as a decline in organizational performance indicates the prevalence of dysfunctional conflict. Dysfunctional conflict suggests that management is incapable of managing

conflict. Effective conflict management is essential for all organizations in the realization of their goals.

It should be noted here that conflict per se is not necessarily a deterrent for organizations, but the effective management of conflict. Hatch (1997: 304) mentions that conflict can benefit an organization because of the input of divergent opinions.. Hall (1998:135) concurs when he states that conflict is not inherently good or bad for the participants or the organization but can be viewed as a major shaper of the state of an organization.

Management should therefore possess the skill of identifying conflict that can benefit the organization and conflict that can contribute to the decline of organizational performance.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on all the main findings, the following are the recommendations of this dissertation. The recommendations are with reference to literature surveyed as well as own analysis of the situation at LHS.

5.2.1 Establishment of a Conflict Management System

Data surveyed (14%) revealed the lack of an established conflict management system at LHS contributes to the escalation of conflict.

The first step in designing a conflict workplace system is to determine the scope of issues to be resolved within the system. Employee issues include work assignments, compensation, peer or supervisory conflicts, promotions, training and policies (Lipsky et al, 2003:156).

According to Ehlers (2003:28) conflict management systems enable parties to prevent and deal with conflict that may threaten the harmony in the organization. Therefore conflict management structures need to be in place before or during the formation of a labour relationship.

Slabbert et al (2002:237) concurs when he states that conflict management should be incorporated in strategic management and management practice because the management of conflict is more than merely the handling of a situational problem and demands a more holistic approach.

An effective conflict management system benefits the organization in various ways such as, constructive resolution of conflicts without destroying careers, relationships and reputations, a swift resolution of conflicts, ensuring confidentiality and above all fair resolution of conflict.

5.2.2 Communication as a Tool for Effective Conflict Management

Communication feed the quality of all human relations in organizations and good communication underlie good relations and enhance the general quality of working life, motivation and morale (Robbins and Decenzo, 2004:360). The above assertion suggests that effective communication is essential to maintain harmony in work relationships.

In the light of the above, it becomes imperative to consider the barriers to effective communication. Kemp (1992:52) mentions the following as barriers to communication and makes provision of methods to overcome the barriers:-

- Not listening properly
- Becoming over-emotional
- Judging the other party
- Failing to seek clarity

Other methods that can be applied in [illegible]

- Simplifying language
- Checking the accuracy of information
- Listening actively
- Using different forms of communication
- Watching non-verbal cues

5.3 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLE

Leadership and management style of [illegible] study was probed by the following:-

Table 5.3.1 Leadership and Management Style

NO	QUESTION CATEGORY	[illegible]
1	In resolving conflict management [illegible]	
	Yes	
	No	
	TOTAL	
2	Educators' level [illegible] concerning conflict management	
	SDAG	
	DAG	
	NS	
	AG	
	SAG	
	TOTAL	
3	Management [illegible] conflict management	
	SDAG	
	DAG	
	NS	
	AG	
	SAG	
	TOTAL	

Given the above responses, the researcher concludes that the management style of the organization under study is not participatory and contributes to the escalation of conflict.

Bendix (1996:439), Mullins (1999:82) and Kemp all agree that democratic management minimizes conflict and autocratic leadership escalates conflict.

5.4 CONFLICT CONTAINMENT STRATEGIES

Data has revealed that the management of LHS shows a level of incapability in containing conflict. This incapacity was probed by the responses on the level of trust between educators and management. Thirty nine percent of the responses indicate strong disagreement that trust is prevalent among members at LHS.

Gleason (1997:7) mentions that conflict containment strategies acknowledges the existence of conflict in organizations as natural. Organisations need to pay special attention to the regulation and containment of conflict to guard against the emergence of dysfunctional that can threaten organizational performance.

Gordon (2003:32) suggests the following strategies:-

5.5 USING REPRESENTATIVES

Representatives are used because it is assumed that they are conversant with employee problems and can articulate the groups point of view accurately. However, organizations need to be aware of the following limitations in the use of representatives.

- Representatives are often not free to engage in compromise
- Members may view representatives with suspicion or reject them when they compromise.

- Representatives often opt for deadlocks.

Other strategies that can benefit an organization include:-

- Decreased interaction between the groups in the early stages of conflict management.
- Decreasing the formality of the presentation of issues.
- The use of third party mediators.
- A focus on current issues and goals rather than the recitation of historic events and precedents.

5.6 INDUCTION AND WORKSHOPS

Thirty two percent of the responses indicated that is not fair in resolving, sixteen percent of the responses also conform that management is biased in conflict resolution and thirty two percent responses strongly disagree that management involves educators in conflict resolution.

Given the above data it, induction and workshop programmes must be imitated to correct the situation. Induction will be used for new entrants into the school system and the programme should list conflict management as one of its key items. Regular workshops on conflict management could assist in this regard.

5.7 CONCLUSION

Through interviews and questionnaires it was revealed that effective conflict management is non-existent at the organization under study. This researched proved the validity of all its hypothesis.

The research findings were supported by different recommendations for further action. Recommendations included the establishment of a conflict management

system, improved communication, participatory management and conflict containment strategies amongst others.

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ADDENDUM A

Dear Respondent

The purpose of this research is for academic reasons. I therefore humbly request you to participate in completing the attached questionnaire. All information gathered will not be published anywhere and will be treated as highly confidential.

Thank you in advance.

.....

MR S.K. MANYEDI

1. INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 This questionnaire is for all educators at Letsatsing High School.
1.2 Please answer all questions honestly.
1.3 All responses are important.
1.4 Do not use names when such a need arise.
1.5 Confidentiality will be honoured.

SECTION A

1. BIOGRAPHIC DATA

1.1 Gender

Male	
Female	

1.2 Age

22 – 27	
28 – 37	
38+	

1.3 Marital status

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Other	

1.4 Years of experience in teaching

1 – 5	
6 – 10	
11 and above	

1.5 Educational qualifications

Diploma	
Degree	
Honours and above	
Other	

SECTION B

2. CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE

KEY: Strongly agree (SAG) 5
Agree (AG 4
Not sure (NS) 3
Disagree (DAG) 2
Strongly disagree (SDAG) 1

Please mark with an X in the appropriate box.

	SAG 5	AG 4	NS 3	DAG 2	SDAG 1
1. You have a written grievance and disciplinary procedure in accordance with the Education Labour Relations Council.					
2. Trust is high between management and educators.					
3. Management is fair in resolving conflict situations.					
4. Management is unbiased in resolving conflict resolution.					
5. Management is consistent in resolving conflict situations.					
6. Management does not focus on person when resolving conflict					
7. You have a say in how you do your job.					
8. Transformation process within the education department contribute to the escalation of conflict.					

9. Do you often lose your temper with colleagues? Yes/ No

If Yes, on issues such as:

.....
.....
.....

10. Conflict is high at my workplace. Yes/No

Why is your rating as such?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CONFLICT

KEY: Strongly Agree (SAG) 5
Agree (AG) 4
Not sure (NS) 3
Disagree (DAG) 2
Strongly disagree (SDAG) 1

3.1 Conflict is caused by:-

	SAG 5	AG 4	NS 3	DAG 2	SDAG 1
3.1.1 Infrequent communication					
3.1.2 Scarcity of resources					
3.1.3 Lack of shared values					
3.1.4 Inequality of personal and professional treatment					
3.1.5 Promotion prospects					
3.1.6 Lack of commitment					

3.2 Conflict results in:-

	5	4	3	2	1
3.2.1 Decline in morale					
3.2.2 Deterioration of personal and professional relationships					
3.2.3 Increase in absenteeism					
3.2.4 Increase in sickness					
3.2.5 Increase in labour turnover					
3.2.6 Division among staff members					
3.2.7 Declining organisational performance					

4. WORKPLACE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

4.1 In resolving conflict does management always have the final say?

Yes	
No	

KEY: Strongly agree (SAG) 5
Agree (AG) 4
Not sure (NS) 3
Disagree (DAG) 2
Strongly disagree (SDAG) 1

Please mark with an X in the appropriate box.

	SAG 5	AG 4	NS 3	DAG 2	SDAG 1
4.2 Management involves you in conflict resolution.					
4.3 Educators are free to make their own decisions in conflict resolutions					
4.4 Educators feel free to give constructive criticism concerning conflict handling					
4.5 Management adopts a joint problem-solving approach in conflict management					

5. COMMUNICATION

Same as in 4 above

	5	4	3	2	1
5.1 The principal regularly imparts information from Area Project office to educators					
5.2 Educators cope with the influx of new legislation related to transformation in education					
5.3 Communication is central in issues related to conflict					

5.4 What role does your union play in conflict management at school level?

.....

.....

.....

5.5 Do you have a formalised structure in place that encourages communication at school?

Yes	
No	

5.6 Do you participate effectively in forums that encourage communication at school?

Yes	
No	

If no, why?

.....

.....

.....