



Understanding the Causes of Conflict in Public Schools: A Qualitative Analysis of the Teachers' Views in Six Schools in Tshongwe Circuit, UMkhanyakude Education District

Msawenkosi Sandile Mbokazi; John Elphas Masina; Sibusiso Bonginkosi Mbokazi; Peter Emmanuel Nkosinathi Nsibandé

Department of Education Professional Practice, Faculty of Education, University of Zululand, South Africa

Correspondence author: Msawenkosi Sandile Mbokazi, University of Zululand, South Africa

Email Address: MbokaziM@unizulu.ac.za/msmbokazi@gmail.com

<http://dx.doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v5i7.525>

Abstract

This paper investigates the underlying causes of conflicts in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial schools and focuses on the experiences and perceptions of various teachers in six identified schools experiencing intense conflict in the Tshongwe Circuit under the uMkhanyakude District. The study employed qualitative research methods using a case study design and the convenience sampling approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview schedule. The findings revealed that some of the sources of conflict emanate from lack of communication, corrupt school governing bodies, laziness and poor academic performance, gossiping and blackmailing, poor teacher-class attendance, competition for resources, leadership and management issues, politics and unionism, poor initial teacher preparation and contestation for school leadership positions. The study recommends the scrapping of school governing body's powers to recommend the appointment of school principals, deputy principals and departmental heads.

Keywords: *Conflict; Principal; Unionism; Contestation; School Governing Body; Teachers; Circuit Management*

Introduction

Since the dawn of a new democratic era in 1994, education has received intense attention and interest from the government, community, unions and individuals. This attention has resulted in many schools in South Africa, including schools in the uMkhanyakude district, being vulnerable to conflicts. Conflicts emanating from the collision of interest of school stakeholders. As long as people work together, they will not see things through the same lens; they differ in many issues. Barker (2009) argues that the potential for conflict exists whenever and wherever people have contact. When people work together, they compete for resources, and the relationships become hostile. "Conflicts are a natural part of life and therefore a natural part of school life" (Mapolisa and Tshabalala, 2012). Several scholars define

conflict as a relational dispute or incompatibility between and among individuals and organisations over irreconcilable goals, resources, thoughts, rewards, or emotions, which leads to animosity and hostility (Behrman, 1998; Barmao 2012; Doğan, 2016, Shahmohammadi, 2014; Opoku-Asare, Takyi1 & Owusu-Mensah 2015). Conflict brews whenever disagreement or dispute among individuals or groups in any social setting occurs. Conflict in schools is inevitable; teachers, like any other human being, have opposing needs, ideas, views, values, or goals, which leads to conflict in the school (Madziyire 2010). Mapolilisa and Tshabalala (2012), in their study of Nkayi Circuit, found that in Zimbabwean schools, a month hardly goes by without the principal or the teachers clashing with one another. The role of the principal is not only arduous but also daunting; principals' tasks are to manage curriculum delivery, physical resources, human resources, financial resources, and managing conflict within the school. In the past, schools' conflict was mainly between learners themselves or between learners and teachers or principals. Today, we are confronted with new and unexpected conflict patterns centred on principals for example teachers vs principal school governing bodies vs principal, community against principal, or all of the above party's vs principal. Principals are at the centre of these clashes because they are perceived as both players and referees. Principals must find strategies to identify and resolve disagreements amicably in schools to mitigate the effects of conflict. However, it is crucial to recognise that not all conflicts can be resolved, but they may be managed to reduce the likelihood of non-productive escalation (Umstot, 2008).

Literature Review

Isabu (2017) perceives conflict as an inevitable component of organisational existence because the goals of diverse stakeholders are often conflicting. According to Parker & Stone (2003) and Plocharezyk (2007), conflict is often dysfunctional or destructive. When an organisation has a dysfunctionally high level of conflict, management wastes organisational resources trying to win their battles than improving their organisational performance. It also has the potential for beneficial effects in the form of functional or constructive conflict at some time (du Plessis and Cain, 2017). Constructive or healthy conflict improves organisational functionality. If members of the organisation are mature enough, conflict resolution can lead to increased knowledge and clarity on conflicting issues. Schools as organisations frequently appear to be the centre of conflict emanating from hostile relationships within the school. Moore (2003) states that several categories of conflict occur in an organisation: relationship-based conflict and competition for control of resources. According to Moore (2003) "relationship-based conflict results from solid emotions, misperceptions or stereotypes, poor communication or miscommunication, and repetitive negative behaviour."

Furthermore, conflict arises between various persons because of their frequent interactions (Ghaffar, 2019) and competition for control of school resources and competition for control of school resources. Conflict may also erupt due to unequal distribution of resources amongst the stakeholders or as a result of a particular group of people lobbying to control school resources for their benefit. The recent outburst of conflict in the Tshongwe circuit in the uMkhanyakude district has led the principals of three schools to flee their schools, which indicates the seriousness of the conflict. Nkomo, Mavondo, Moyo, Mkhwanazi, Chikuse & Onias (2020) argue that conflict is an inescapable part of daily existence. This shows that conflict may be within oneself, others, or an organisation originating from internal or external struggles or misunderstandings. Mapolisa & Tshabalala (2012), in their study, found that lack of communication, interpersonal relationships within the schools as well as procedural concerns were the key reasons for conflict. Tshuma, Ndlovu & Bhebhe (2016) affirm that conflict was caused by 'structural and personal factors' among school personnel. They further identified the leading structural causes of conflict as sharing of resources, poor work conditions and administrative style of the school leadership and personal factors, including differences in personalities, poor dissemination of information and

favouritism by leadership (Tshuma et al., 2016). Mapolisa & Tshabalala (2012), du Plessis & Cain (2017), Isabu (2017), Sichelwe, Muleya & Simui (2021) in their studies found almost the exact causes of conflict, which include differences in perceptions, limited resources, overlapping authority, amongst others, favouritism; while conflict management strategies include accommodation, avoidance, competition and collaboration. Conflicts between educators have a negative impact and may otherwise become critical, leading to counterproductive behaviour such as a lack of communication, stress, frequent absences, and other behaviours that harm human relations and jeopardise the educational process by lowering staff motivation and performance, and, as a result, pupils' performance.

Significance of The Study

The paper is crucial for all school principals and the Department of Education as it will help them identify the root causes of conflict in their schools and proffer strategies to mitigate them. If the principal can identify the causes well in advance and start addressing them, the conflict will extenuate before it escalates.

Theoretical Framework

Conflict is "a sort of socialisation," according to Coser (1957). No group, he says, can ever be completely harmonious. As a result, friction may arise inside and between social groups, preventing accommodation and habitual relationships from suffocating innovation over time. Confrontation can also arise as a result of a clash of ideals and interests, friction between what is and what certain groups believe it should be, conflict between vested interests and new strata, and groups wanting their fair share of power, riches, and prestige, according to him (Coser, 1957). He recognizes that not all social structures are equally strained and conflicted. As a result, the sources and occurrence of conflicting behaviour differ depending on the type of structure, social mobility patterns, ascribing and obtaining status, and allocating scarce power and money in each society. Coser (1957) differentiates between "realistic" and "unrealistic" conflict. He claims that "realistic" conflicts develop from the dissatisfaction of a specific demand and are pursued as a means to an end. Non-realistic conflicts, on the other hand, are the product of one antagonist's urge to alleviate tension. Conflict is an end in and of itself in this scenario, and it is a reaction to frustrations in which the object appears suited for the release of aggressiveness. Although the object of animosity can change, he claims that there are no choices to tactics. Realistic conflict, on the other hand, is related with distorted emotions and will end if the perpetrator discovers new ways to deal with them. This demonstrates that not all conflicts are marked by violent behaviour. Deeper connections, according to Coser (1957), produce feelings of affection as well as feelings of animosity and ambivalence. As a result, closer social connections involve fundamental aspects of ambivalence. He also says that organizations may repress their hostile impulses out of fear of intense confrontation, and that stacking up concerns would exacerbate conflict once it emerges.

Research Problem

Principals, school management teams, educators, and school governing bodies must work collaboratively. Many public schools are dysfunctional and ineffective due to intense conflicts among school stakeholders. The study was triggered by the conflict in six schools in Tshongwe Circuit, uMkhanyakude District. These schools are under a severe conflicting atmosphere threatening the functionality of the school. Four of them have had their principals vacate their positions, and the other one has been captured by conflict for a prolonged time, and the principal has passed away and the first deputy

principal fired. Therefore, this research paper aims to explore teachers' perceptions regarding the sources of conflict in these six schools and suggest solutions.

Research Question

The research question is a crucial step as it provides a point of departure for an investigation (Bryman, 2007). The following research question was posed to establish what is happening in six identified schools in the Tshongwe circuit under the uMkhanyakude education district. These schools seem to have a problem; some lost their principals. The following research questions are posed for this study, namely:

What are the underlying causes of conflicts in South African public schools?

How does conflict impact school functionality?

Research Settings

The six schools under investigation are situated in the far north of KwaZulu-Natal in a deeply rural, under-privileged area of the uMkhanyakude District Municipality in the Tshongwe circuit. All these schools are quintile one and section twenty-one. They are the poorest schools that receive substantial state grants, and they procure goods and manage their finances. Large enrolments characterise these schools, and some children are orphans, or single parents raise them. Principals of these schools earn high salaries due to their large enrolments. Most children are under the care of and are represented by grandparents because their parents are either students or are seeking employment and live far from their homes. Most teachers come from other provinces and even outside the province, including principals.

Research Methodology

This study is located within the interpretive paradigm (Creswell, 2009) as I wished to understand and explain the bottom causes of conflict in six identified schools in the Tshongwe circuit. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology and employed a case study research design. Convenient sampling (Straus, 2021) was an ideal approach to this study because most educators were reluctant to participate. Participation was voluntary; only teachers available and willing to provide information about their schools were sampled. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews using an interview guide. The interviews were audio-tape recorded as the researcher was permitted to do so. The participants' identities will not be disclosed to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

Six schools were identified because they currently experience conflict, have experienced conflict, some had their principals fled their schools, or parents have demonstrated outside schools' yards and even locked school gates.

Findings and Discussion

All participants consented that there was a conflict in their schools, which has divided their staff members. It also emerged that the conflict is instituted chiefly against the principal. The first question asked aimed at establishing whether there is a fundamental conflict in their schools.

"Yes, the staff is divided. Some support the principal, and those who do not support the principal oppose all the principal says. There is chaos in the school." Another participant had to say: Yes, I agree. "The principal and the chairperson of the SGB has been chased away."

Participants meticulously discussed the causes of conflict in their schools as follows:

Causes	Causes
Unionism	Unionism and Politics and community preferences
Politics	Gossiping and blackmailing
Leadership style	Leadership style
Poor management	Lack of communication
Favouritism	Poor management
Promotion contestation	Favouritism
Selling of post	Promotion contestation
Corrupt SGB	Corruption/selling of posts
Corrupt principals	School finances
School finances	Laziness and poor academic performance
Laziness	Ill-disciplined teachers/lack of respect and tolerance
Ill-disciplined teachers	Poor Teacher-Class Attendance
Lack of respect	
Community preferences	
Community entrepreneurs	
Lack of communication	
Gossiping and lies	
Leadership	
Poor class attendance	
Poor academic results	
Control over resources	

Table 1 Causes of conflict

Significant causes of conflict in schools

Several significant causes unearthed during the interviews of participants are discussed depicted in table 1 are discussed below.

School Governing Body (SGB)

The findings revealed that the school governing body (SGB) corruption is one of the significant causes of conflict in all schools under investigation. Most SGB members are unemployed, and their service to the school is voluntary and non-remunerated. Some of the members joined the SGB in the quest to benefit from schools' funds and nutrition. Therefore, a failure to acquire these desires create conflict in the school. Some even resigned when they learned that such expectations were not met. It was revealed that they canvassed people to vote for them; some have no children in the school but registered children of their relatives as their own to qualify for nominations. Educators commented:

In our school, the primary cause of conflict is the school governing body, and these people join the SGB for their benefit. They want school money. (P5)

It was found that the SGB elections are always callous ones, equal to the local government elections because everyone wants a chance to 'eat' from the school coffers.

One participant in school A revealed that the chairperson of the school governing body, who is a local businessman, demands tenders from the school.

The chairperson of the school governing body demands to do business with the school without following procurement regulations. (P1).

Since the principal was not in collusion with the chairperson, he was regarded as a threat and obstacle. As a result, the principal was no more supported. The primary purpose of the school governing is to promote the well-being and the effectiveness of the school community, thereby enhancing quality teaching and learning. South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996, section 20 elaborates the functions of the school governing body. However, the SGBs in schools under investigation demonstrate a contrary situation. Instead of promoting the well-being of the school, they were making schools ungovernable. In one school, the chairperson demands the principal to run the school the way he wants. One principal from school F had the following to say:

The SGB wants to tell me how to do my work. They claim that they are the school's governors; they want me to overlook the departmental policies.

It seems there is a lack of understanding of the roles of the principal and that of the SGB. The act states one of the functions of the SGB as to support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional duties (SASA, 1996). In some schools, SGBs interfere with the professional duties of the principal and give instructions to the principals on how to run the school. The SGB demands are not subject to the law or school policies. Some principals toed the line and collaborated with the SGB to garner their support.

SGBs are at the centre of the school conflict in all schools under the current study. The results revealed bribery, irregularities in procurement and employment, embezzlement of funds, and theft of resources as the primary forms of SGB corruption. In almost all schools, conflict results from one or some of these factors. The Head of Department (HoD) mandated the SGB to recommend the appointment of

educators at the school subject to the Employment of Educators Act, Act No. 76 of 1998 and the Labour Relations Act, Act no. 66 of 1995. In executing this function, the SGB has to prioritise the school's interest; contrary to this, they collect bribes from applicants. In some schools, it was revealed that the SGB sold school leadership posts, teaching posts and even non-teaching staff posts. The data also revealed that in school B, the deputy principalship post was sold for sixty thousand rands, the departmental post for thirty thousand rands and the principalship post for eighty thousand rands.

Our SGB creates problems for the school. They sell school posts for cash. The principal paid eighty thousand rands, deputy principal sixty thousand rands and the DH thirty thousand rands. (P9)

Bribes are collected from all applicants who are prepared to pay, but the post will eventually be given to the one who paid a huge amount. The same pattern was recorded in other schools. In school F, it was also reported that the principalship post was sold to the departmental head for sixty thousand rands and was recommended for the post, which was later disputed, and the deputy principal, who was acting as a principal, was recommended and appointed for the post. In some schools, the principals were part of the team, cooperating with corrupt actions of the SGB. In other schools, the principals did not collaborate with the SGB in enriching themselves; as a result, punitive measures were implemented to oppose and undermine the integrity of principals. Besides the bribes for the recommendations for appointment of staff members, there are also demanding bribes from the service providers. The SGB is also expected to administer school finances in terms of finance policies, treasury regulation and public finance management act (PFMA); however, these regulations and policies are sometimes ignored. In most schools, the finding portrayed chairpersons and treasures as the most troublesome members who enrich themselves at the expense of the well-being of learners.

Circuit Management

Circuit management was identified as a primary source of school conflict. Circuit management exacerbates rather than mitigates school tensions. Participants reported that circuit managers fail to identify the underlying reasons of conflict in their circuits, resulting in poor decision making. Participants stated,

The disagreement in our school was compounded by the circuit manager, who has buddies among the staff members. His friends would purposefully deliver false information about the principal, and he would believe them. They knew they had the circuit manager's support when they began their struggle with the principal. (P1)

Schools are in such a dilemma because of the circuit manager. He goes throughout the neighbourhood, particularly his political allies, spreading false information about the school and the principal. (P2)

Our circuit manager lacks tenacity. Teachers and the school's governing body use him to accomplish their hidden agendas. (P7)

The data suggests that the circuit management and school principals have inadequate leadership and dispute resolution skills.

Politics and Unionism

Data reveals that teachers consider their unions a priority compared to their work; being a member of the same staff is less important than being a member of the same union. Staff members turn

against other staff members because of union affiliation. If the issue is between teachers of different unions, the issue is beyond control in one school. One educator in school B expressed the sentiments as mentioned earlier.

"There is an unhealthy competition of NATU and SADTU members in the school. Members show less interest in their work than their union matters. They spend much time fighting each other. (P2)

It was revealed that in most schools, conflict is between the South African Democratic Union (SADTU) and National Teachers Union (NATU) in the lobby of management positions. Management positions in schools are also lobbied for union members because the union members want to control the school's resources. Mokoelle & Makhalemele (2020) contend that leadership appointments in South Africa are heavily influenced by the discourse of politics or unions, contrasting to a discourse of professional leadership based on the teaching competency of teachers.

Contestation for school leadership positions

The data revealed that contestation for leadership positions was the primary cause of conflict in many schools under investigation. In school A, the conflict started with the contestation of two deputy principals for the principalship position.

Our school is in shambles because of the power-hungry people. It started with our deputy principals fighting for principalship positions which then divided the staff. (P1)

In school B, conflict began with the fierce contestation of the two deputy principals for the principal position, which the second deputy principal won. The conflict was very tense, and it divided the staff; teaching and learning were compromised. When the second deputy principal was promoted to the principalship position in the school deputy principal position was created. An external appointment filled it. The findings revealed that the post was sold for cash. The same deputy principal was made to act as principal when the principal was on extended sick leave. This exacerbated conflict in the school.

Our school was peaceful until our principal retired, which left the two deputy principals 'a cat and a dog.' The conflict is hereditary; it continues even after the death of the deputy principal, who was promoted to the principalship. The fight is now between the successor and the first deputy principal. (P2)

In school C, the principal fled the school after conflict intensified. It is alleged that the principal and the chairperson of the school governing body (SGB) practised money laundering with school funds. The findings also revealed that the school principal and the deputy principal were at loggerheads in school C. The deputy principal is a local teacher, more experienced and more qualified than the principal. Furthermore, the principal attempted and failed to prevent her appointment as deputy principal, which did not settle well with her.

The deputy principal wants to lead the school, and she has community support since she comes from a prominent and influential family in the area. (P3)

The results also revealed that the conflict emanated from the principalship position in school D. When the former principal was promoted to a circuit management position, he recommended his second deputy principal act as a principal. The conflict and contestation began for the principalship position. The first deputy lost it and decided to back the departmental head (DH) to contest the principalship post, and

the conflict became severe. The interview panel recommended the DH as the principal, which was disputed. The staff was divided, some supported the acting principal, and others supported the first deputy and DH. Teaching and learning were disturbed, and the NCS results dropped.

Lack of Communication

In some schools, B, C and D, the findings portrayed a lack of communication between the school management and staff. Kokemuller (2018) states that poor communication limits the closeness of relationships and employee engagement. Teachers depend on school management to offer guidance, direction, feedback and positive reinforcements.

We are never involved in decision making. We are not told why things happen the way they do. Our inputs are not required. (P2)

It was revealed that one-way communication and top-down decision-making is practised in most schools. Meetings are rare, and teachers are reluctant to participate because their contributions will not be incorporated into any decision-making.

Poor Teacher-Class Attendance

It emerged that teachers do not attend their classes regularly in some schools. Some join their classes after 10-20 minutes, and others leave their classes 10-20 minutes before the expiry of their periods. The teacher in school A said

The principal asks class prefects to call us if it is our period. We do not want that, we know. If I am not in class, I cannot dodge the class, maybe I'm photocopying, or I gave learners some work to do. (T1)

Principal in school D said,

When the bell rings, I leave my office and stand outside to view teacher-class attendance, and I become mad when a class is not attended to or is left on its own. So this creates tension between myself and the teachers. (P4)

Gossiping and blackmailing

In almost all schools gossiping was mentioned as a super spreader of conflict within schools. Gossiping spread lies and rumours about other teachers, which exacerbate conflict. Findings revealed that in school A and B gossiping and blackmailing has divided the staff and caused infights. Participant 4 in school A had the following to say:

“Teachers in this school hate each other and blackmail others. Some teachers enjoy conflicts and hate peace. (P4)

In school B, participant 6 had the following to say:

Gossiping has destroyed the working relations in our school. Some teachers are story creators, and others are storytellers. (P6)

Laziness and Poor Academic Performance

The findings showed that poor academic performance of the school creates conflict amongst teachers and school management teams. Good performing teachers and school management teams blame underperforming teachers for the school's poor performance. Teachers in schools E and A complained about the laziness of other teachers who jeopardise their excellent work. Participant 1 in school A had the following narrative:

“We work very hard in this school, and some teachers are backlashing our efforts as a result of their laziness and underperformance. They are not teaching our learners, and they do not want to be called into order.

Participant 15 in school E responses were almost similar to participants 1 and 3 in school A.

Some lazy teachers hate the principal because our principal condemns underperformance. When the principal commends hard-working teachers, they pass negative comments to discourage them. Those excelling and commended by the principal are said to be sell outs and are side-lined. (P15)

Leadership and Management Issues

The finding revealed that the leadership and management style of the principal influence the relationships in the school. Participants from schools A, C and E portrayed their principals' leadership style as another leading cause of conflict in their schools.

Our principal is stone-headed, his decision is final, and no one else can challenge him.

If he sees a pen as a knife, it is a knife, and no one can change him. (P13)

Another participant from school C narrated their principal leadership style as follows:

Our principal's decision is final, and this school's top-down approach is the order of the day in our school. We are told all the time even our departmental heads tell us that the principal said this and that. (P8)

Participant 3 in school E had the following to say:

“The autocratic leadership style of my principal is the leading cause of conflict in our school. The principal does not involve us when planning activities that will affect us, and they are the ones who are expected to implement those activities. (P3)

Poor initial teacher preparation

The finding revealed that conflict is more prevalent in teachers who were not initially trained as teachers but who have converted to the teaching profession. Teaching is a calling; therefore, not anyone can become a good teacher. However, some teachers never intended to become teachers. They trained for other professions such as engineering, journalism, tourism; due to lack of employment in their field, and they converted to teaching. They have no love for children; they teach to earn a salary.

Lack of respect and tolerance

The findings also depicted a lack of respect and tolerance amongst teachers as the common causes of school conflict. Teachers lack respect for diversity in culture, religion, background, viewpoints, values and beliefs. A teacher from school A responded as follows:

"We, teachers, do not respect one another; we seem to forget that we are unique and that we come from different backgrounds. We need to tolerate our uniqueness, beliefs, and religion. (P2)

Our differences must be seen as a source of innovations and inspiration that help us generate new ideas, creatively respond to learners' needs and enhance collaborative teaching.

Impact of Conflict on schools' functionality

The findings indicated that school conflict impacts negatively on the functionality and academic performance of the school. Schools with conflict are characterised by a high absenteeism rate, late coming, banking and dodging classes and poor academic performance.

The rate of absenteeism, late coming and non-class attendance is prevalent in our school, and that leads to the poor academic performance of the school. (P14)

Participants from school F told us that teachers teach only when the principal is around, and they have no respect for the school management team.

Teachers teach when the principal is around and when he is absent; they remain in the staffroom for the rest of the day. Even the school management team does not honour their teaching periods. (P18)

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

The powers of the school governing body to recommend the appointment of principals and other school management positions to the Head of Department must be scrapped. School principals and their school management teams must be empowered to hire and fire employees. Unions' must not be allowed to overpower the employer. Unions power must be limited to supporting teachers and schools and not being kingmakers. Regular communication about issues affecting teachers is crucial. The foundation of teacher education is paramount.

Conclusion

Conflict is prevalent in South African schools. The current study investigated the causes of conflict in six schools in the Tshongwe circuit under the uMkhanyakude education district in KwaZulu-Natal. The following causes were identified as significant causes; namely, school leadership contestation, corrupt school governing bodies, favouritism, leadership and management issues, laziness and poor academic performance, gossiping and blackmailing, poor-teacher-class attendance and poor communication, politics and unionism.

References

- Anderson S. (2011). *Conflict management*. London: Sage
- Barker B C. (2009). *Investigating of conflict*. London: Cassel.
- Barman, C. (2012). Causes and Effects of Conflict on Teacher Morale in Public Primary Schools in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 1(1); 22-29.
- Behrman, H. W, (1998) *The practice of facilitation, managing group process and solving problems*. Greenwood Publishing, London.
- Bryman, A. (2007) The Research Question in Social Research: What is its Role? *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 10:1, 5-20, DOI:10.1080/13645570600655282
- Coser, L.A. (1957). Some Social Functions of Violence. *The American Academy of Political and Social Science Annals*, 1966, 364, 8-18.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Doğan, S. (2016). Conflicts Management Model in School: A Mixed Design Study. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 5 (2), 200-219.
- Du Plesis, A., Cain, G. (2017). Exploring Perceived Sources of Conflict Among Educators in Three Eastern Cape Schools. *Journal of Education*, 2017, 70, <http://joe.ukzn.ac.za>
- Ghaffar, A. (2019). Conflict in Schools: Its Causes and Management Strategies. *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, III (II), 212-227.
- Isabu, M.O. (2017). Causes and Management of School-Related Conflict. *African Educational Research Journal*, 5 (2), 148-151.
- Kokemuller, N. (2018). How Does a Lack of Communication Cause Conflict in the Workplace? <https://bizfluent.com/13362276/how-does-a-lack-of-communication-cause-conflict-in-the-workplace>, accessed, 18 December 2021.
- Madziyire, N.C. (2010). Supervision of Educational Personnel. Harare: *Zimbabwe Open University*, 67-78.
- Mapolisa, T. & Tshabalala, T. (2012). An Investigation into the Causes of Conflict in Zimbabwean Schools: A Case Study of Nkayi South Circuit. *Nova Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(1), 1-6. S229279131200004-1, www.novaexplore.com
- Mokoelle, T.M & Makhalemele, T. (2020). Teacher leadership in South African schools. *International Journal of Management in Education*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2020.
- Moore, C. (2003). *The mediation process*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Nkomo, J. Mavondo, G.A., Moyo, O., Mkhwanazi, B.N., Chikuse, F.F. & Onias, M. (2020). Teachers' Perceptions on Management of Conflict in Primary Schools in Mberengwa District. *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science*, 33 (4), 33-51.

- Opoku-Asare, N. A., Takyi, H., & Owusu-Mensah, M. (2015). Conflict Prevalence in Primary School and How it is Understood to Affect Teaching and Learning in Ghana. *SAGE Open*, 5.
- Parker, C. & Stone, B. (2003). *Developing management skills for leadership*. London: Prentice Hall Financial Times.
- Plocharczyk, L. (2007). On organisational conflict: Reaping the Benefits of Effective Conflict Management. *Journal of Access Services*, 4(1–2), 85–120.
- Shahmohammadi, N. (2014). Conflict Management Among Secondary School Students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 159, 630 – 635.
- Sichalwe, C., Muleya, G., & Simui, F. (2021). Unearthing the ‘Taproot’ of Conflicts between Teachers and School Administrators and its emergent ‘Bitter Fruits’ in Selected Primary Schools of Lusaka, Zambia. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, V (IV), 170-178. www.rsisinternational.org.
- Stratton, S. (2021). Population Research: Convenience Sampling Strategies. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, 36(4), 373-374. doi:10.1017/S1049023X21000649.
- Tshuma, R., Ndlovu, S., & Bhebhe, S. (2016). Causes of Conflict Among School Personnel in Gwanda District Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 21, (4), 32-41. *Nova Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(1), 2012:1-6, www.iosrjournals.org.
- Umstot, D.D. (2008). *Understanding organisational behaviour concerns and applications: St Paul Muir: West*.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).