SOURCES OF CONFLICTS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN URIRI AND NYATIKE SUB-COUNTIES, KENYA

FARHYA PAMELLA ALABU, Dr. JANE KEMBO &
Dr. OTARA ALFRED
Rongo University, Kenya

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in the selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub-Counties, Kenya. The target population was 1960 teachers, 87 principals and 87 senior teachers in 87 secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub Counties. The study relied on self- administered questionnaires and focus group discussions. The sample consisted of: 392 teachers, 29 principals and 29 senior teachers. The main data collection instruments were questionnaires and focus group discussion. From the research instruments, the researcher sought to elicit information about the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in selected secondary schools. The findings showed that conflicts in the selected secondary schools were both relationship and task-related. The study was conducted using a descriptive survey design which can be used to describe aspects of the population which include opinions, attitudes and beliefs. Stratified random sampling was used to improve the representativeness of the sample and to reduce error. To enhance the reliability of the instruments, a pilot was conducted in 3 secondary schools in the Sub Counties-those outside the sample. The research yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was analyzed in form of frequencies and percentages, while qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed according to the themes. The findings revealed that conflicts in the selected secondary schools sometimes emanated from work-related disagreements between teachers and the administration, distribution of scarce resources, communication breakdown and different views on the preferred outcome. The study proved to be significant for the following reasons: it adds to the existing knowledge in the area of conflict management, it may be useful in developing guidelines for principals and other stakeholders to enable them to manage schools effectively, it may help the Ministry of Education to formulate training materials for school managers to enable them to manage conflicts effectively and it may enable teachers and educators to improve and to manage conflicts in schools more effectively and efficiently.

Keywords: Conflict, Sources, Task, Relationship

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study sought to investigate the sources of conflicts in selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub counties. principals' conflict management techniques and their influence on teacher job satisfaction in selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub Counties. If conflicts are not managed well, may negatively affect output of group work, prevent deep connections and hamper productivity. The impact of conflict at workplace does not only affect performance but may be harmful, dangerous to health and self-wellbeing, it is associated with depression among employees, negative emotional situations, complaints, dissatisfaction with life and psychological morbidity.

1.2 Background to the Study

Conflict is an expressed struggle between interdependent parties who perceive themselves as having incompatible goals, view resources as being scarce and regard each other as interfering with the achievements of their own goals; a controversy or disagreement, coming into opposition with another individual thus influencing their job satisfaction (Cetin, and Hacifazlioglu, 2004). Relational conflict involves personal issues such as dislike among group members and feelings such as annoyance, frustration and irritation (Burke, 2001).

Productivity in any organization is a function of how well employees perform their various tasks and is very much dependent upon other factors such as conflict management. Individual performance is a function of the ability and the willingness of the worker to perform the job (Ngumi, 2003). This willingness is highly dependent on job satisfaction. If employees are happy with themselves, with the administration and with the work environment, they will aspire to do their best in terms of quality and quantity. Although very few people go looking for conflict, more often than not, besides other factors, conflicts may be caused by miscommunication between people with regard to their needs, ideas, beliefs, goals, or values (Deutsch, 2002). It is worthwhile for the principal to be aware of the existence of multiple sources of conflicts in school and how they can influence teacher job satisfaction.

Conflicts have been witnessed in schools and it is the role of the school principal to mitigate their effects so that teachers can have a good working relationship hence improving their job satisfaction.

1.3 Statement problem

The research sought to investigate the sources of conflicts in selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub Counties. If sources of conflicts are established, it is possible for principals to do everything possible to minimize expected conflicts and at the same time arm themselves with congruent techniques to deal with the conflicts as soon as they arise. Teachers will have positive and favourable attitudes which will make them more willing to take extra work, more innovative and more loyal to the school and the administration.

According to a survey by the American Management Association (2014), managers spend 24% of their time managing conflicts. This sounds like a waste of time which is a precious resource, while it could be an opportunity if conflicts are dealt with constructively. Conflicts are the lifeblood of high-performing organizations because if handled well may lead to

creativity, high productivity, job satisfaction and loyalty to the organization (Neck & Manz, 2014)

Okotoni and Okotoni (2003) examined Conflicts in the administration of secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria. The study analyzed the causes and effects of conflicts. Quantitative and qualitative data identified conflicts between management and staff, between staff and students and between communities and schools. Findings indicated that most administrators were not knowledgeable in conflict management and there were no laid down procedures for conflict management. The paper concluded that the issue of conflict management has reached a point where effective use of relevant strategies can no longer be ignored.

Mike Iravo (2011) conducted research on conflict management in organizations as experienced in Kenyan secondary schools. Data were collected from 43 secondary schools in Machakos County. Findings indicated that when conflicts are managed well, schools perform better. It means that establishing the sources of conflicts, making school managers armed with the relevant conflict management techniques is another way of improving performance in schools.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to determine the sources of conflicts in selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub Counties, Kenya.

1.5 Objective of the study

The study was guided by the following objective:

1. To find out the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in secondary schools.

1.6 Research Question

The following research question guided the study:

1. What are the sources of the conflicts that commonly arise in the selected secondary schools?

1.7 Significance of the study

The study may be significant for the following reasons:

1. It may assist the Ministry of education to formulate materials for the training of school principals and other stakeholders to enable them to manage conflicts more effectively so that all conflicts end up stimulating workers to increase productivity.
2. It may enable teachers and educators to improve and to manage conflicts in schools more efficiently and effectively.
3. May help principals whose conflict management techniques are incongruent and don't match the conflict situation to change and adopt better techniques.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in 29 selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike Sub Counties. The Sub Counties had 87 secondary schools and out of which, the 29 were used in this study. Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussions were used as the data collection instruments. 29 public secondary schools, 29 principals, and 29 senior teachers amount to 30% of the target population. 392 teachers, 20%, took part in the research.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the following assumptions:

  i.   That the respondents would cooperate and give relevant information.
 ii.   That the sample population would elicit enough information for better generalization of the findings so that the selected secondary schools give a true picture of the Sub Counties.
iii.   That, conflicts that arise in schools have predictable sources and that it is important to arm principals with the potential sources of conflicts to enable them to prepare relevant techniques of conflict management.

1.10 Organization of the study

This paper is organized into five sections. The first section is introductory and highlights the background of the study, statement of the problem (purpose of the study), objectives, research questions, significance, assumptions, limitation/ delimitations and operational definition of the terms used. The second section presents the literature review, theoretical/ conceptual framework of the study. The third section deals with research methodology and focuses on research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments as well as data collection procedures and analysis techniques that were used in the study. The fourth section brings out the findings and discussions of the study on sources and types of conflicts in selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike sub-counties. The fifth part presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the Reykjanes Ridge J. Petrol (2012) two-factor theory. The theory is heavily based on the needs-fulfilment and how best to satisfy workers. Studies by Aziri (2011) and Ahmed (2015), have been carried out to explore factors that cause workers in white-collar jobs to be satisfied or dissatisfied. The findings showed that the factors that lead to job satisfaction when present are not the same factors that lead to dissatisfaction when absent. Thus, they saw job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as independent of each other. They referred to those environmental factors that cause workers to be dissatisfied as Hygiene Factors which include: quality of supervision, company rules, physical working conditions, a co-worker relationship, job security, chances of promotion, personal growth, acknowledgement, responsibility and achievement. Job satisfaction is considered a by-product of achievement, recognition, challenging work, responsibility and advancement.

Petrol (2012) points out that the opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction but dissatisfaction. Both hygiene factors and motivators are important but in different ways. Applying these concepts to the study, the sources of conflicts either increases or decreases teacher job satisfaction and capabilities should be the core processes upon which efforts to make schools more effective focus. In addition, highly satisfied teachers can create a good social, psychological and physical climate in the classrooms. The environment in which people work has a tremendous effect on their level of pride for themselves and for the work they are doing.

1.12 Definition of operational terms of the study

The key terms in the study have been defined as follows:

Conflict: is an expression of disagreement, antagonism and misunderstanding between individuals or groups or organizations. In this study, conflict is used to mean; a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party or a party wants some mutually desirable resources that is in short supply, such that the wants of all the parties may not be satisfied fully.

Task: refers to a piece of work done as part of one's responsibilities.

Relationship: refers to connection or association, being related to someone, they two or more people behave and are involved with each other, working relationship among teachers.

Sources refers to the happenings in the past occurring before conflicts arise and are perceived to lead to conflicts.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Sources of conflict in secondary schools

Sources of conflicts can be classified into three, namely; competition for scarce resources, drivers for autonomy and goals divergence as a result of differences in opinion. According to Rahim (2011), four factors are known to contribute to conflicts. They are work dependence, differences in goals, differences in conceptions and increased demands for specialist.

Iravo (2011) defines conflict as to any divergence of interest, objectives or priorities between individuals, groups or organizations or nonconformity to requirements of task, activity or process. Conflict is different from the competition, although competition may result in conflict. Several types of conflicts are identified in this paper, including intrapersonal, intragroup, interpersonal and inter- groups. According to Okotono & Okotoni (2003), organizational conflict takes the following forms. : Horizontal conflicts, vertical conflicts and role/ confusion conflicts.

According to Iravo (2011), among the various factors that cause conflicts in secondary schools to include:

- Administrative incompetence of principals
- Misappropriation and embezzlement of funds
- Indiscipline on the part of teachers and students.
- Negligence of duties
- Personality clashes
- Perceived favouritism
- Role conflict.
- Misunderstanding of motives

From a research conducted in Nigeria by Okotoni & Okotoni in the year, 2003 in the Osun State, many of those interviewed were of the opinion that there is a positive correlation between poor staff welfare and occurrences of conflicts. The paper examined the management of conflicts in the administration of secondary schools. They identified and discussed the causes and types of conflicts. Both qualitative and quantitative data were generated from primary and secondary schools. They were of the opinion that a good welfare package for teachers would go a long way to reduce incidents of conflicts in schools. Findings showed that the administration of secondary schools in the state was hampered by the high rate of conflicts. Several types of conflicts that were identified included conflicts between management and staff, between staff and students and between communities and school. The causes of conflicts in schools included:

- Inadequate welfare package for teachers.
- Forceful and compulsory retirement/retrenchment of workers.
- Administrative incompetence.
- Personality clashes.
- Role conflicts.
- Non-involvement of students in the school administration.
- Poor facilities.

The fact that most school administrators are not knowledgeable in conflict management, coupled with the absence of laid down procedures for conflict management in most schools, contributed to high rate of conflicts and industrial action in schools. The paper concluded that school administration has reached a point where effective use of relevant strategies can no longer be ignored.

Iravo (2011), conducted research in 43 secondary schools in Machakos County, on Effects of Conflict Management on Performance, it was discovered that: conflicts between teachers and the administration would result from: those teachers have served for a long time and no longer want to contribute extra work for the betterment of the school as a whole. They put in a minimum amount of required time and do not pull their weight on committees and co-curricular activities. Conflicts between teachers and the administration may also result because a teacher has a negative attitude, and always finds something to complain about. New ideas are shot down even before getting-off ground. Another cause of conflicts could be that a teacher exhibits incompetence within the classroom and does not want to be supervised. Such a teacher always stands with their union to fight against the administration.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methods that were used in carrying out this research study. The chapter contains the following sections: research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, administration of the instruments, and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

The study was conducted using a descriptive survey design. According to Creswell (2012), descriptive survey can be used to describe some aspects of the population which include: opinions, attitudes and beliefs. This is also brought out by Best & Kahn (2005), this design was appropriate because it was describing the types of conflicts that commonly arise in schools, the sources of conflicts and the conflict management techniques used by principals, thus, helped to determine the relationships that existed between specific events regarding the influence of conflict management techniques that are used by principals and teacher job satisfaction. Borg and Gall (2007), noted that descriptive studies are concerned with determining 'what is'. This is supported by Creswell (2012), who adds that descriptive survey designs are useful in quantitative research in which investigations administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population. Descriptive survey design is thus applicable in this study as it is meant to collect the views, opinions and practices on conflict management.

3.3 Area of study

The study was conducted in Uriri and Nyatike Sub Counties which are in Migori County in the Republic of Kenya. The Sub Counties have the following sub-counties on their borders: Awendo on the north, Ndhiwa on the west, Migori on the south and Kilgoris on the east. The sub-counties have five administrative divisions, namely: Oyani, Uriri, Kadem and Muhuru;

3.4 Target Population

The two counties have 87 public secondary schools, Uriri sub-county has 34 public secondary schools while Nyatike sub-county has 53 public secondary schools. The target population was constituted of 1960 teachers, 87 principals and 87 senior teachers from the 87 public secondary schools in the Sub Counties.

Table 3.1: Target Population

Number of Schools	Teachers	Principals	Senior Teachers
87	1960	87	87

3.5 The Sample and Sampling Procedure

3.5.1 Sample

Nsubuga (2000) argues that no specific rules on how to obtain an adequate sample have been formulated. He suggests that in a homogenous situation a small sample would be required while in a heterogeneous situation a large sample is required. The sample of teachers was 20% of 1960 teachers which translated to 392 teachers while 30% of the 87 principals and 30% of the 87 senior teachers, was considered at 29 each, in conformity with Mugenda (2003) and Cozby (2001) who state that a sample of between 10% and 30% is adequate.

3.5.2 Sampling Procedures

The study used stratified simple random sampling in order to improve the representativeness of sampling. This is important because the Sub Counties have several categories of secondary schools such as: Boys' Boarding Schools, Girls' Boarding Schools and Mixed Day schools. The study sample comprised of 392 teachers, 29 principals, and 29 senior teachers. Out of the 29 sample schools, there were 14 schools that had 2 streams, these were categorized as small schools, 13 teachers from small schools took part int the study. The schools that had 3 streams and above were 15 and were categorized as large schools, 14 teachers from large schools took part in the study. Only teachers who had been in their stations for over 2 years were allowed to take part in the study. A table summarizing representative numbers and percentages is shown below.

Table 3.2 Sampling Frame

	Population	Sample	Percentage (%)
Teachers	1960	392	20
Principals	87	29	30
Senior Teachers	87	29	30

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

The study used the following research instruments:

- Teachers' Questionnaires
- Principals' Questionnaires
- Structured Discussion Questions for Senior Teachers' Focus Group Discussions.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), and Cosby (2001) state that questionnaires are cheap and reliable to administer to respondents who are scattered over a large area. As a result, two different types of questionnaires were developed and administered, one for the principals and another one for teachers. Senior teachers took part in the Focus Group Discussion.

3.6.1 Teachers' Questionnaires (TQ)

The teachers' questionnaires were developed and administered to the teachers to elicit information on the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in schools.

The teachers' questionnaires were divided into 7 sections. Section A was intended to elicit information about training, experience, age and gender, the research sought to find out

whether the variables influence perception on sources of conflicts. Sections B-G delved into the information about the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in schools.

3.6.2 Principals' Questionnaires (PQ)

Principals are important in this study because they are the ones responsible for the accomplishment of all school programs and goals. Principals' questionnaires were aimed at eliciting information about the sources of conflicts that arise in schools. It is important to note that equipping the principals with the sources of conflicts in schools is keeping them forearmed with the congruent conflict management techniques.

The principals' questionnaires were divided into 5 sections. Section A was aimed at eliciting information about the principals' age, gender, experience and training. This information was valuable to this study as it was meant to ascertain whether the variables affect the perception of on sources of conflicts. Section B was intended to elicit information about the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in secondary schools.

3.6.3 Focus Group Discussions for Senior Teachers

The position of senior teachers in Kenyan secondary schools carries with it membership to the school leadership team. It is from this premise that the researcher chose to get the views of senior teachers in regard to the principals' conflict management techniques on teacher job satisfaction. Focus Group Discussions consisted of a total of 29 senior teachers 1 senior teacher from each of the 29 sample schools. The questions for discussion were designed to elicit information about the sources of conflicts in schools.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the instruments.

Issues related to validity and reliability of research instruments are reviewed in this section. While reliability is important, it is not sufficient in itself. For an instrument to be reliable, it has to be valid.

3.8.1 Validity of the instruments.

To enhance validity, it is important to match the instruments well with the objectives of the study. To determine the validity of the instrument, this study used content validity because it measures the degree to which the research instruments elicit information required to address the research questions. According to Cooper & Schindler (2003), content and face validity is determined by experts' judgment. To achieve this, the instruments were prepared and forwarded to experts in Educational Administration at Rongo University who are authorities in this area, to scrutinize critically. Their comments and corrections were then used to improve the final draft of the research instruments.

The pilot enabled the researcher to adjust the research instruments by removing the vague terms. The questions for the Focus Group Discussion were scaled down.

3.8.2 Reliability of the instruments.

Reliability is the degree to which a research instrument produces stable and consistent results. Reliability was obtained by administering the same test twice over a period of time to a group of individuals. The reliability was tested using test-retest method and a Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient used to determine the reliability of the questionnaires at the set alpha level of significance of 0.05. The output of the correlation was obtained as 0.83 for the Teachers questionnaire and 0.81 for the Principals' questionnaire which were considered reliable. The questionnaires were administered and re-administered after a period of 6 days.

3.9 Data collection methods and procedures.

Appointments with principals of schools were booked in order to agree on appropriate times to administer the questionnaires to principals and teachers. The sample schools were comfortable with the afternoon. On a material day, the researcher visited the schools, created rapport with the participants (by sharing with them the objectives of the study) and administered the questionnaires to principals and teachers while the senior teachers met later for the Focus Group Discussions.

3.9.1 Questionnaires for Teachers.

The respondents were requested to fill in the questionnaires on the same day to enable the researcher to take them back. The questionnaires were administered to the school by school to the principals and teachers of the 29 sample schools. 13 teachers in the 14 small sample schools and 14 teachers in the 15 large sample schools were given time to fill questionnaires. As the respondents filled in the questionnaires, the researcher and the research assistants were ready to assist them and ensure that the items in the questionnaires were understood. In large schools, 14 teachers sat together with the 2 research assistants as they responded to questionnaires. In small schools, 13 teachers participated. The teachers took averagely 2 hours to fill in the questionnaires.

3.9.2 Focus Group Discussions for Senior Teachers

Senior teachers that were involved in the Focus Group Discussions met at a central place that was convenient for all (at a Youth Polytechnic). The discussants were guided to address the possible sources of conflicts that might arise in the selected secondary schools.

4.0 FINDINGS

Sources of Conflicts in Schools

The research question responded to was: What are the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in Secondary Schools? In order to respond to this research question, teachers and Principals were asked to indicate the frequency of occurrence of following sources of conflict in their schools. Their responses are summarized in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Teachers Response on Sources of Conflict   (Teachers, n=319)

Sources of Conflicts	NR	RA	ST	OF	AL
Administrative issues	16	80	143	55	25
Social relations with a member of the opposite sex	68	130	80	28	13
Indiscipline on the part of teacher or students	18	92	120	61	28
Negligence of duty	41	105	120	39	14
Personality clashes	25	105	140	43	6
Perceived favoritism	48	104	117	38	12
Role conflict	22	92	146	40	19
Misunderstanding of motives	25	103	125	56	10
Politics	107	105	74	31	2
Games and social issues	38	112	114	41	14

KEY
NR= Never   RA= Rarely   ST= Sometimes   OF= Often   AL= Always

Table 4.10 indicates that 16 (5.1%) teachers viewed administrative issues as never a cause of conflict, 80 (25.1%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 143 (44.8%) viewed it as sometimes a cause of conflict, 55 (17.2%) had the view that it was an often cause, and 25 (7.8%) teachers viewed administrative issues as always a cause of conflict in the schools. The frequency distribution shows that 303 (94.9%) teachers identified administrative issues as a common source of conflict in the schools at varied frequencies compared to 16 (5.1%) teachers who did not view it as a cause of conflict. Based on the response, it can be concluded that a greater proportion of teachers viewed administrative issues as a likely source of conflict in the schools.

Similarly, although 68 (21.2%) teachers never considered social relations with a member of the opposite sex as a cause of conflict, 130 (40.8%) teachers considered it a rare cause, 80 (25.1%) teachers considered it as sometimes a cause of conflict, 28 (8.8%) teachers considered it an often cause and 13 (4.1%) teachers considered it as always a cause of conflict in the schools. This further shows that 251 (78.8%) teachers viewed social relations with a member of the opposite sex as a source of conflict in the schools compared to 68 (21.2%) teachers felt it was not a source of conflict. From the frequency distribution, it can be concluded that the majority of teachers identified social relations with a member of the opposite sex as a common source of conflict in the schools.

Equally, while 18 (5.6%) teachers never viewed indiscipline of teachers or students as a cause of conflict in the schools, 92 (28.8%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 120 (37.6%) teachers point out that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, 61 (19.1%) teachers considered it often a cause of conflict and 28 (8.8%) teachers perceived it as always a cause of conflict in the schools. Therefore, suggesting that 301 (94.4%) teachers confirmed indiscipline of teachers or students as a common source of conflict in the schools compared to 18 (5.6%) teachers who indicated that indiscipline of teachers or students was never a cause of conflict.

Moreover, 41 (12.9%) teachers never perceived negligence of duty as a cause of conflict while 105 (32.9%) teachers considered it a rare cause, 120 (37.6%) teachers considered it as sometimes a cause of conflict, 39 (12.2%) teachers considered it an often cause and 14 (4.4%) teachers considered it always a cause of conflict in the schools. As a consequent, 278 (87.1%) teachers viewed negligence of duty as a likely source of conflict in the schools compared to 41 (12.9%) teachers who affirmed it was not a source of conflict. It can then be concluded that a greater percentage of teachers perceived negligence of duty as a common source of conflict in the schools.

Furthermore, 25 (7.8%) teachers never considered personality clash as a cause of conflict, 105 (32.9%) teachers viewed it a rare cause, 140 (43.9%) teachers viewed it as sometimes a cause of conflict, 43 (13.5%) teachers viewed it an often cause and 6 (1.9%) teachers considered it as always a cause of conflict in the schools. The distribution of responses shows that 294 (92.2%) teachers viewed personality clash as a source of conflict in the schools compared to 25 (7.8%) teachers affirmed it was not a source of conflict. This is a clear indication that a significant proportion of teachers viewed personality clash as a more likely source of conflict in the schools than the teachers who considered it as not a source of conflict.

In addition, even though 48 (15.1%) teachers never viewed perceived favouritism as a cause of conflict in the schools, 104 (32.6%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 117 (36.7%) teachers pointed out that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, 38 (11.9%) teachers considered it often a cause of conflict and 12 (3.8%) teachers perceived it always a cause of conflict in the schools. Therefore, it implied that 271 (84.9%) teachers indicated that perceived favouritism was a common source of conflict in the schools while 48 (15.1%) teachers indicated that indiscipline of teachers or students was never a cause of conflict. Consequently, it can be concluded that a significant percentage of teachers considered perceived favouritism as a likely cause of conflict in the schools.

At the same time, 22 (6.9%) teachers never viewed role conflict as a source of conflict in the schools, 92 (28.8%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 146 (45.8%) teachers perceived that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, 40 (12.5%) teachers considered it often a cause of conflict and 19 (6.0%) teachers perceived it always a cause of conflict in the schools. As a result, 297 (93.1%) teachers considered role conflict as a source of conflict in the schools compared to 22 (6.9%) teachers who thought of role conflict as never a cause of conflict, an indication that a significant number of teachers identified role conflict as a likely source in the schools.

Also, 25 (7.8%) teachers never regarded misunderstanding of motives as a cause of conflict in the schools, 103 (32.3%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 125 (39.2%) teachers asserted that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, 56 (17.6%) teachers considered it often a cause of conflict and 10 (3.1%) teachers asserted it always a cause of conflict in the schools. Therefore, indicating that 294 (92.2%) teachers were of the opinion that misunderstanding of motives was a likely cause of conflict in the schools as compared to 25 (7.8%) teachers who indicated that misunderstanding of motives was never a cause of conflict.

Conversely, 107 (33.5%) teachers never regarded politics as a cause of conflict in the schools, while 105 (32.9%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 74 (23.2%) teachers indicated that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, 31 (9.7%) teachers considered it often a cause of conflict and 2 (0.7%) teachers perceived it always a cause of conflict in the schools. The frequency distribution of responses, informs that 212 (66.5%) teachers viewed politics as a source of conflict in the schools while 107 (33.5%) teachers indicated that politics was never a cause of conflict. It can then be concluded that a relatively high number of teachers viewed politics as not a source of conflict compared to the proportion in the other sources of conflict.

Finally, Table 4.10 shows that 38 (11.9%) teachers never considered games and social issues as a cause of conflict in the schools, 112 (35.1%) teachers viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 114 (35.7%) teachers pointed out that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, 41 (12.9%) teachers considered it often a cause of conflict and 14 (4.4%) teachers perceived it as always a cause of conflict in the schools. This meant that 281 (88.1%) teachers affirmed games and social issues as likely source of conflict in the schools compared to 38 (11.9%) teachers who indicated that games and social issues were never a cause of conflict.

Table 4.11: Principals Views on Sources of Conflict			(Principals, n=29)		
Sources of Conflicts	NR	RA	ST	OF	AL
Administrative issues	3	6	18	0	2
Social relations with a member of the opposite sex	16	11	2	0	0
Indiscipline on the part of teacher or students	6	15	6	2	0
Negligence of duty	3	13	11	2	0
Personality clashes	2	9	16	2	0
Perceived favoritism	5	24	0	0	0
Role conflict	0	12	13	2	2

	NR	RA	ST	OF	AL
Misunderstanding of motives	0	12	13	0	4
Politics	9	12	6	2	0
Games and social issues	15	10	4	0	0

KEY

NR= Never   RA= Rarely   ST= Sometimes   OF= Often   AL= Always

Table 4.11 shows that 3 (10.3%) principals viewed administrative issues as never a cause of conflict, 6 (20.7%) principals viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 18 (62.1%) viewed it as sometimes a cause of conflict, and 2 (6.9%) principals viewed administrative issues as always a cause of conflict in the schools. The distribution indicates that 26 (89.7%) principals identified administrative issues as a common source of conflict in the schools compared to 3 (10.3%) teachers who did not view it as a cause of conflict. Based on the response, it can be concluded that a significant proportion of principals viewed administrative issues as a likely source of conflict in the schools.

Conversely, 16 (55.2%) principals never regarded social relations with a member of the opposite sex as a cause of conflict, while 11 (37.9%) principals viewed it a rare cause and 2 (6.9%) principals considered it as sometimes a cause of conflict in the schools. This shows that 13 (44.8%) principals viewed social relations with a member of the opposite sex as a source of conflict in the schools compared to 16 (55.2%) principals who considered social relations with a member of the opposite sex not to be a source of conflict. Therefore, it can be concluded that a relatively greater proportion of principals identified social relations with a member of the opposite sex as never a common source of conflict in the schools.

All the same, 6 (20.7%) principals never viewed indiscipline of teachers or students as a cause of conflict in the schools, while 15 (51.7%) principals viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 6 (20.7%) principals asserted that it was sometimes a cause of conflict and 2 (6.9%) principals considered it often a cause of conflict in the schools. Therefore, indicating that 23 (79.3%) principals affirmed indiscipline of teachers or students as a likely source of conflict in the schools compared to 6 (20.7%) principals who indicated that indiscipline of teachers or students was never a cause of conflict.

Similarly, 3 (10.3%) principals never viewed negligence of duty as a cause of conflict while 13 (44.8%) principals viewed it a rare cause, 11 (37.9%) principals considered it as sometimes a cause of conflict, and 2 (6.9%) principals viewed it an often cause of conflict in the schools. Consequently, 26 (89.7%) principals viewed negligence of duty as a likely source of conflict in the schools compared to 3 (10.3%) principals who indicated it was not a source of conflict. It can therefore be concluded that a significant percentage of principals perceived negligence of duty as a common source of conflict in the schools.

Moreover, 2 (6.9%) principals never affirmed personality clash as a cause of conflict, 9 (31.0%) principals considered it a rare cause, 16 (55.2%) principals viewed it as sometimes a

cause of conflict, and 2 (6.9%) principals perceived it as an often cause of conflict in the schools. The responses show that 27 (93.1%) principals viewed personality clash as a source of conflict in the schools compared to 2 (6.9%) principals affirmed it was never a source of conflict. This clearly indicates that a significant proportion of principals viewed personality clash as a likely source of conflict in the schools than the principals who considered it as not a source of conflict.

In addition, 5 (17.2%) principals never viewed perceived favouritism as a cause of conflict in the schools while 24 (82.8%) principals viewed it as a rare cause of conflict in the schools. This implied that 24 (82.8%) principals were in support that perceived favouritism was a common source of conflict in the schools while only 5 (17.2%) principals indicated that indiscipline of teachers or students was never a cause of conflict. Consequently, it can be concluded that a significant proportion of principals viewed perceived favoritism as a likely cause of conflict in the schools.

Furthermore, 12 (41.4%) principals viewed role conflict as rare a source of conflict in the schools, while 13 (44.8%) principals viewed it as sometimes a cause of conflict, 2 (6.9%) principals perceived that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, and 2 (6.9%) principals considered it often a cause of conflict in the schools. As a result, 29 (100.0%) principals considered role conflict as a likely source of conflict in the schools, an indication that all principals identified role conflict as a source of conflict in the schools.

Also, 12 (41.4%) principals regarded misunderstanding of motives as a rare cause of conflict in the schools, 13 (44.8%) principals viewed it as sometimes a cause of conflict, and 4 (13.8%) principals asserted it as always a cause of conflict in the schools. Therefore, indicating that 29 (100.0%) principals were in support that misunderstanding of motives was a cause of conflict in the schools.

Nevertheless, 9 (31.0%) principals never regarded politics as a cause of conflict in the schools, while 12 (41.4%) principals viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, 6 (20.7%) principals indicated that it was sometimes a cause of conflict, and 2 (6.9%) principals considered it often a cause of conflict in the schools. The frequencies of responses implied that 20 (69.0%) principals viewed politics as a source of conflict in the schools while 9 (31.0%) principals indicated that politics was never a cause of conflict. It can be concluded that a significant proportion of principals viewed politics as a source of conflict in the school.
Lastly, Table 4.11 shows that 15 (51.7%) principals never considered games and social issues as a cause of conflict in the schools, 10 (34.5%) principals viewed it as a rare cause of conflict, and 4 (13.8%) principals considered games and social issues as sometimes a cause of conflict in the schools. This meant that 15 (51.7%) principals affirmed games and social issues as the not likely source of conflict in the schools compared to 14 (48.3%) principals who indicated that games and social issues was a cause of conflict. Therefore, it can be concluded that relatively principals viewed games and social issues as not a source of conflict.

To further determine the statistical significant difference between the teachers' and principals' responses on the types of conflict, the teachers' and principals' responses were transformed into the continuous scale and a two-sample independent t-test computed using

statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) version 24. The results of the analysis obtained were summarized and presented in Table 4.12 below

Table 4.12: Independent t-test between Teachers' and Principals' mean ratings on Sources of Conflict (Teachers, n=319; Principals, n=29)

Sources of Conflicts	R	MR	t-test
Administrative issues	T	2.98	t(346)= 1.356, p=.176
	P	2.72	
Social relations with a member of the opposite sex	T	2.34	t(346)= 6.237, p=.000
	P	1.52	
Indiscipline on the part of teacher or students	T	2.97	t(346)= 4.206, p=.000
	P	2.14	
Negligence of duty	T	2.62	t(346)= 1.099, p=.273
	P	2.41	
Personality clashes	T	2.69	t(346)= .346, p=.693
	P	2.62	
Perceived favoritism	T	2.57	t(346)= 8.134, p=.000
	P	1.83	
Role conflict	T	2.82	t(346)= .137, p=.891
	P	2.79	
Misunderstanding of motives	T	2.76	t(346)= -.565, p=.572
	P	2.86	
Politics	T	2.11	t(346)= .390, p=.697
	P	2.03	
Games and social issues	T	2.63	t(346)= 5.301, p=.000
	P	1.63	

Interpretation of Mean Rating:
1.00-1.44= Never   1.45-2.44= Rarely   2.45-3.44=Sometimes   3.45-4.44=Often   4.45-5.00=Always

From the Table 4.12, it is observed that the difference between the mean rating of teachers' at 2.98 and mean rating of principals' at 2.72 on administrative issues was not statistically significantly different, t (346) = 1.356, p=.176, since the p-value was greater the chosen level of significance, α=.05. This suggests that administrative disagreements and incompatibilities between teachers and principals sometimes caused conflict in secondary schools. Okotoni and Abosede (2003) in their examination of the management of conflict in administration of secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria, show that the administration of secondary schools was hampered by the high rate of conflicts. This finding is in agreement with the finding of this study that administrative conflicts were a source of conflict in the schools. Nevertheless, this study apart from establishing administrative issues as a source of conflict also compares

the mean ratings of the teachers and principals, and further states that it was sometimes a source of conflict in the schools.

On the social relations with a member of the opposite sex, the difference between the mean ratings of teachers' at 2.34 and principals' at 1.52 was statistically significant, t (346) = 6.237, p=.000, since the p-value was smaller than the chosen level of significance, α=.05. Therefore, indicating that teachers and principals had different perceptions regarding social relations with a member of the opposite sex as a source of conflict in secondary schools. The disparity could be as a result of principals considering relationships in the staff positively unlike the teachers who perceive themselves as opponents sharing some professional and cultural references. This shared space has the effect of ensuring that the issues at stake in the conflict are recognized by the actors who oppose one another, struggling to control the same resources, the same values or the same power.

Similarly, an independent t-test analysis showed that the difference between the mean ratings of teachers' at 2.97 and principals' at 2.14 on indiscipline of teachers or students was statistically significantly different, t (346) = 4.206, p=.000, since the p-value was smaller than the chosen level of significance, α=.05. Therefore, it meant the teachers and principals perceived the frequency of occurrence of conflict due to indiscipline of teachers or students differently. Timothy (2008) defines indiscipline as the unwillingness of teachers or students to respect the constituted authority, observe and obey rules and regulations and to maintain high standards of behaviour conducive to the achievement of educational objectives. Kingala (2000) reiterates that men and women who have no calling to teaching vocation take up the training as teachers but have no interest in looking after the young people. He also indicates that due to lack of interest in teaching, they become increasingly brutal to the students. Equally, Philips (2000) affirms the view and indicates that there are teachers who take up the noble teaching profession yet they have no interest. These teachers display incompetence, laziness and lack of interest in their duties. These findings are thus in support that the indiscipline of teachers or students is a source of conflict in schools.

Nevertheless, the observed difference between the teachers' mean rating of 2.62 and the principals' mean rating of 2.41 was statistically not significantly different, t (346) = 1.099, p=.273, since the p-value was greater than the chosen, α=.05, significance level, implying that teachers and principals agreed that sometimes negligence of duty was a source of conflict in the schools. This study finding corroborates Newman (2000) findings explaining that for an action in negligence to be brought against a teacher or institution it must be established that a duty of care existed, that it was breached by either an act or omission, which the student suffered damage or injury was a reasonably foreseeable consequence of the breach. For instance, according to TSC, negligence of duty includes; willful neglect to perform any work or careless or improper performance of any work assigned to the teacher, failure to teach scheduled lessons and prepare the professional document, allowing examination cheating and grading fake marks, failure to attend school assemblies and official meeting, and failure to take students for official duty or functions.

In addition, Table 4.12 shows that the difference between the mean rating of teachers' at 2.69 and the mean rating of principals' at 2.62 on personality clash was not statistically significantly different, t (346) = .346, p=.693, given that the p-value was greater than the

chosen significance level, α=.05. It, therefore, suggests that conflicts were fuelled by emotions and perceptions about others' motives and character. In this source of conflict, members lack understanding of their style differences and how to work cooperatively and are more tied to their own interests than those of others. Being a negative source of conflict, it can result in unproductive behaviours such as gossip, jealousy, insults, forming of cliques, playing favorites and even resigning from the job.

On the other hand, the difference in the mean ratings of teachers' at 2.57 and principals' at 1.83 on perceived favouritism indicated that it was statistically significantly different, t (346) = 8.134, p=.000, since the p-value was smaller than the chosen, α=.05, level of significance. Kayabasi (2005) defines favouritism as a type of corruption in public bureaucracy and political decision-making process. Rights, positions and titles un-rightly gained due to favouritism would cause non-recoverable negativity in an organization. In order to avoid these challenges, some organizations determine appropriate norms within themselves to prevent favouritism. The disparity in rating could mean that the teachers and principals felt insecure about the consequences of favouritism in schools and thus did not give an honest response.

However, on the role conflict, the difference between a mean rating of teachers at 2.82 and the mean rating of principals at 2.79 showed no statistically significant difference, t (346) = .137, p=891, given the p-value was greater than the chosen level of significance at α=.05. Millslagle and Morley (2004) argue that role conflict affects the teacher adversely and can make the teacher consider one role to be more dominant than the other roles in order to relieve role conflict. This occurs when expectations are perceived as incompatible for multiple roles or positions in society.

Similarly, teachers and principals indicated that misunderstanding of motive was a common source of conflict with mean ratings of 2.76 and 2.86 respectively, and with the difference between the mean ratings of teachers and principals showing that there was no statistically significant difference, t (346) = -.565, p=.572, since the p-value was greater than the chosen level of significance, α=.05.

Discussions

This finding was supported by the focus group discussion finding indicating that messages can be distorted by the sender or recipient hence leading to the misunderstanding between the staff and the administrators.

One participant in the FGD 7 attested to this while stating that:

> Teachers may sometimes interpret circulars and policy guidelines in various ways when summarizing them. They interpret the policy statement in order to favor their interest and action, thus, resulting in conflict between the principals and teachers. Equally, some of the teachers paraphrase the policy statement and post in the social media platforms.

The theme brought about in the FGD response above was on communication and misunderstanding of motives. In any organization, communication is a very important factor reducing conflict incidences, providing solutions to conflicts and managing conflicts. Whetten and Cameron (2005) contended that an important message may be distorted if effective communication was not done. They further reiterate that this may occur due to misinterpretation or decision-makers arriving at a different conclusion because of poor communication and misinformation.

Also, the two sample independent t-test computed between the mean ratings of teachers' at 2.11 and the principals' mean rating at 2.03 on politics as a source of conflict in the secondary schools, revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the ratings of teachers and principals, t (346) = .390, p=.697, since the p-value was greater than the chosen level of significance, α=.05. Politics is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live and work. It is linked to conflict and cooperation. According to Ramsey (2006), "Wherever there is the power to be acquired, resources to be divided, recognition to be earned, or influence to be brokered, there is politics". Thus, throughout any school system, politics must be everywhere. The decisions made by the school administrators, regarding educational processes for students in the school, potentially have a greater overall impact than the decisions made by other certified personnel. While Ramsey (2006) acknowledges that politics must be everywhere, this study finding indicates that politics was never a common source of conflict in the schools.

Lastly, the observed difference between the mean rating of teachers' at 2.63 and mean rating of principals' at 1.63 on games and social issues as a source of conflict in the secondary schools, was statistically significantly different, t (346) = 5.301, p=.000, since the p-value was smaller than the chosen, α=-05, significance level. Therefore, suggesting that there was some disparity between the opinion of teachers and principals regarding games and social issues as a source of conflict in the schools. In games, conflict results when trying to meet objectives in the following ways: when challenging the players by forcing them to employ a particular skill or range of skills; when creating a sense of competition which is enjoyable so that players will submit themselves to the efficient means of meeting objectives in order to gain a sense of achievement from game participation. Therefore, conflicts in games are caused by opponents, obstacles and dilemmas.

On the whole, teachers indicated that administrative issues were the most common source of conflicts, followed by indiscipline on the part of the teacher or students, role conflict, misunderstanding of motives, and with social relationships with a member of the opposite sex and politics being the least common sources of conflict in the secondary school. On the other hand, the principals indicate that misunderstanding of motives was the most common source of conflict, followed by role conflict, administrative issues, personality clashes, and with perceived favouritism, games and social issues, and social relation with a member of the opposite sex and politics being the least common sources of conflict in the secondary school. In evidence, the teachers indicate that administrative issues were the most significant sources of conflict and politics the least while the principals indicate that misunderstanding of motives was a most significant source of conflict and the politics being the least. This disparity could be because the teachers are cynical about the rationale and effects of

administrative issues on the teachers. Nevertheless, Naicker, (2003) explains that misunderstanding becomes part of the root cause of conflict in the schools.

Okorie, A.N. (2002) in his study of causes of administrative conflict between teachers and principals in secondary schools, found that non-involvement of teachers in decision making, the leadership style of the principal, lack of motivation and communication barrier were the major causes of conflict. The study concurs with the finding of this study identifying administrative issue and misunderstanding of motives as the main sources of conflicts in the secondary schools.

Equally, the findings agree with Iravo (2011) positing that among the various factors that cause conflicts in secondary schools include: administrative incompetence of principals, misappropriation and embezzlement of funds, indiscipline on the part of teachers and students, negligence of duties, personality clashes, perceived favouritism, role conflict and misunderstanding of motives. However, this study establishes new knowledge that administrative issues and misunderstanding of motives were the most prevalent sources of conflict from the perspective of teachers and principals respectively, and games, social issues and politics were the least common sources of conflict in the secondary schools.

On the other hand, Rahim (2011) identifies the four factors known to contribute to conflicts, as work dependence, differences in goals, differences in conceptions and increased demands for specialist while De Dreu and Gelfand (2008) identify three broad sources of workplace conflict which according to them are scarce resources and conflicts of interest which give rise to these resource conflicts; Secondly the desire to maintain and promote a positive aspect of oneself which invariably gives rise to identity and value conflicts. And lastly, the need to hold the same shared and socially accepted views and beliefs which also can give rise to conflicts of understanding.

Similarly, Bell (2002) suggests six reasons for conflict in the workplace: conflicting needs, conflicting styles, conflicting perceptions, conflicting goals, conflicting pressures, and conflicting roles. A typology that further categorizes sources of conflict is offered by Nelson and Quick (2001) who differentiate between structural factors (causes) i. e. those that develop from within the organization and originate from the manner in which work is organized, and secondly, personal factors, which emerge as a result of individual differences among employees. Although the potential sources of conflict seemingly abound, the important role of communication as a potential source of conflict appears to be understated. However, despite the frequency with which causes (sources) of conflict are nominated or suggested, empirical support for the claimed validity of these causes or typologies is substantively lacking, which suggests that any and each categorization framework is as helpful or unhelpful as the next.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations for policy and practice according to the objectives. Additional

research areas have also been given. Key findings are briefly highlighted in the sections that follow.

5.2. Summary of the Key Study Findings

This study was conducted for the purpose of investigating the sources of conflicts that commonly arise in the selected secondary schools in Uriri and Nyatike sub-counties, Kenya. The study adopted mixed-method approach and its research design was descriptive survey. It was conducted in the twenty-nine (29) selected secondary schools in the sub-counties. The study sample involved three hundred and ninety-two teachers (392), twenty-nine (29) principals and twenty-nine (29) senior teachers. Using simple random sampling, purposive sampling techniques and Glen's Israel formula of getting the sample size was used to get a sample size of 29 secondary schools.

i. The findings established that: distribution of scarce resources, administrative issues, negligence of duty, personality clashes, role conflicts and misunderstanding of motives were sometimes the common sources of conflicts since they showed no statistical differences between teachers and principals. Senior teachers' FGDs concurred with the questionnaire findings by asserting that competition for scarce resources, intolerance of divergent views, differences in cultural orientation and miscommunication as some common sources of conflicts in schools.

ii. Social relations with a member of the opposite sex, perceived favouritism and indiscipline of teachers or students were rare sources of conflicts.

iii. The findings also indicated that there were more relationship-related conflicts arising in secondary schools than task-related conflicts.

iv. The task related conflicts that commonly arise in the selected secondary schools include: incompatible solutions for problems involving the distribution of scarce resources, different views of social entities on the preferred outcome and work-related disagreements between teachers and the administration. The study established that there were significant differences between teachers and principals on the need to punish the opponent with the principals rating higher than teachers. On conflicting parties differing in views on certain issues, teachers rated higher than principals.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher made a number of recommendations for further action by the following stakeholders:

a)   Principals

i. Problems of shared scarce resources should be dealt with by principals before they have emotional impact on teachers.

ii. There should be sufficient and effective communication between and among all stakeholders in schools to reduce conflicts caused by communication breakdown.

b)   Ministry of Education

i.   Administrative issues and misunderstanding of motives came up as the common sources of conflicts in public secondary schools. MOE should provide guidelines to school managers on how to better handle administrative issues.

ii. The study found out relationship conflicts to be more common in secondary schools than task conflict when the reverse should be expected. MOE should give prominence to counselling to ensure that the mental health of teachers, principals and students is addressed. This would lower the relationship conflicts that are not adding value in schools.

iii. The Ministry of Education should embark on training and retraining of all its teachers in the area of conflict management so as to create a congenial working environment in schools.

REFERENCES

Bell, B. and Art, A. (2002). Six Ways to Resolve Workplace Conflicts. McLaren School of Business.

De Dreu, C. K. W., & Gelfand, M. J., (2007), Conflict in the workplace: Sources, dynamics, and functions across multiple levels of analysis" In C. K.W. De Dreu, & Gelfand,

M.J., (Ed). The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organization, 3-54. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.

Iravo, Mike A., (2011). Conflict Management in Kenyan Secondary Schools, Nairobi: KCA Journal of Business Management, Vol. 3(1): pp. 48-56.

Naicker, S. (2003). Effective school management: Conflict management and communication. Department of Education. KwaZulu-Natal: Maskew Miller, Longman.

Okorie, A.N. (2002). The comparison of the perception of school-based and centralized management administrators and teachers toward leadership practices. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Baylor University, Waco, Texas

Okoton, O. and Okotoni, A. (2003), Conflict Management in Secondary Schools in Osun State, Nigeria.Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria.

Philips, F.(2000).Regarding the ethics edge in the management of our secondary schools. African conference of principals Johannesburg South Africa: Associated Press.

Rahim, M. A. and Magner, N. R. (2011).Conformity Factor Analysis of Style of Handling Interpersonal Conflicts: First Order Factor Model and Its Invariance Across Groups. Journal for Applied Psychology, 80, 122,132.

Rahim, M. A. (2011). Managing conflict in organizations; Third Edition. Transaction Publishers.

Rose Faith .W. Edwin (2013) conflict management strategies adopted by commercial banks in Kenya, Research Project. Nairobi University.