

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN  
SELECTED GOVERNMENT AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
BUIKWE DISTRICT**

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## DECLARATION

I, Ssekiziyivu Edward declare that this study is my original work and has never been submitted to any university/ institution for the award of any degree or certificate.

.....

Date: .....

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## APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation has been written under our supervision.

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my wife Nakkazi Rose Mary and children Ssebina Edwin, Bakyazi Enid, Sserugga Edgar and Sserubiri Edriane to whom failure to complete would hurt them most. I remain highly indebted to them. I will never be able to repay them for all the sacrifice they had to endure as I pursued this study.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of conflict management and organisational performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of conflict management and organisational performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District. The objectives of the study were to investigate the existing conflicts in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District; to find out the different conflict management techniques used in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District; and to establish the most appropriate Conflict Management techniques that influence Performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District. The study was carried out using a cross-sectional survey design on a sample of 120 respondents that were teachers, deputy head teachers and head teachers in Buikwe District. The data was collected by use of questionnaire and interview guide. The data was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists 17.0 (SPSS) program. At univariate level, data was analysed basing on the mean, standard deviation and frequencies and multivariate level, the data was analysed basing on multiple linear regression analysis. Qualitative data was analysed by discursive and thematic methods. The study established that several conflicts existed in schools, the dominating conflict management technique was the most dominant conflict management technique employed and the integrating conflict management technique was the most appropriate followed by compromising conflict management and then obliging conflict management technique. Therefore, it was concluded that the several conflicts that existed in schools were between management and staff then between members of management; in schools, the most common conflict management technique used was the dominating conflict management techniques; and the most appropriate management techniques significantly positively related with performance of schools. Therefore, it was recommended that policy makers and management of schools should identify the different conflicts in the schools and what causes them such that they sensitise all those affected such as teachers to avoid them; those involved in supervising schools should ensure that there are mechanisms in schools for resolving conflicts; and head teachers should employ the most appropriate technique that is the composite conflict management technique which is an amalgamation of different appropriate techniques.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background

Conflicts are inevitable and everywhere in organisations (Corvette, 2007). Schools also being typical organisations are prone to having conflicts. From a psychological perspective, whenever there is human interaction; there is a likelihood of personal likes and dislikes. These disagreements and agreements among groups such as subject heads, departmental heads, and class teachers are a common factor in the management of schools. Conflicts arise because of allocation of resources, nature of goals, objectives, organisational rules, policies and procedures. The nature of assignments, distribution of rewards, overlapping jurisdiction, and competition for scarce resources, communication breakdown, personality clashes and unrealistic deadlines are all avenues for conflicts. In addition to being the antecedent for negotiation, conflict may also arise during negotiation (Corvette, 2007).

Conflicts lead to stress, blockage in communication, lack of co-operation, distrust and suspicion. Staff frustrates each other leading to decline in organisational performance as the level of conflict increases (Hotepo et al. 2010). Conflicts affect education in many ways. The World Bank reports that as a result of conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 50% of its schools required repair and construction (Buckland, 2005). All modern systems of learning in the Somalia were destroyed and it has since been a country without any formal programmes of education (Abdi, 1998). During the Lord's Resistance Army conflicts in Northern Uganda, school days were shortened, schools lacked enough teachers and basic materials and insecurity hampered access to school for many children (CSOPNU, 2007).

At school level, if not solved conflicts can impede the school's mission and vision. What is true is that, conflict is an unpleasant fact in any organisation (Ongori, 2009) and if misdiagnosed, can lead to a spiral of antagonistic interaction and aggravated destructive behaviour. This makes it imperative to resolve conflicts in organisations such as schools through proper conflict management. According to Adebile and Ojo (2012), conflict management techniques include integrating (collaborating), compromising (mixed motive), obliging (accommodating) or avoiding style and dominating (competing) style.

#### **1.1.1. Historical Perspective**

Interest in conflict management in organisations is not new, it goes back in history. Interest in conflict management in organisations is not new, it goes back in history. The ideas of Follett a social worker, consultant, and author of books on democracy, and more specifically, human relations and management on negotiation, conflict resolution, and employee participation were extremely influential in the development of studies in organisational management and development (Travis, 2007). On the other hand, Ramsbotham et al. (2011), indicates that the historical evolution of conflict resolution started in the 1950s and 1960s when a group of pioneers from different disciplines saw the value of studying conflict as a general phenomenon, with similar properties whether it occurs in international relations, domestic politics, industrial relations, communities, families or between individuals. Later on, a handful of individuals in

attainment and achievement of organisational goals and objectives. The study further found out that even the most extreme conflicts could be resolved through bonding, dialogue and negotiation. However, none of the above studies were carried out in Uganda or in secondary schools. This thus attracted this study to be carried out in Uganda and in secondary schools.

### **1.1.2. Theoretical Perspective**

The study was underpinned by Galtung's model (1972) of conflict, violence and peace (Ramsbotham et al, 2011). The theory suggests that conflict emerges from contradiction, attitude and behaviour. Contradiction is the clash of interests in a relationship. Attitude includes the parties' perceptions and misperceptions of each other and of themselves. While behaviour involves co-operation or coercion, gestures signifying conciliation or hostility. Violent conflict behaviour is characterised by threats, coercion and destructive attacks (Aliyev, 2005). Accordingly, all the three components have to be present together in a full conflict. He identified peace to be negative and positive. *Negative peace* on its own can be coupled with repression, deprivation, exploitation, injustice. *Positive peace*, in contrast, includes the key ideas of 'legitimacy' and 'justice'. An unjust structure or relationship in this terminology is not a peaceful one. In order to achieve positive peace, therefore, injustice must be removed (Ramsbotham et al, 2011).

Galtung suggested that positive peace was a higher ideal than negative peace. He suggested that the search for peace should not deal with the narrow vision of ending or reducing conflict at a direct or structural level but seek to understand conditions for preventing conflict. The theory suggested that for this to happen, peace and conflict needed to be looked at in totality at all levels

of human organisation. The theory indicated that since personal and direct conflicts are often built into the social structure, it is much better to focus on the bigger picture revealed by structural conflict as this would reveal the causes and effects of violence and conditions for peace. Thus the purpose of peace search is to create conditions for promoting both types of peace (Grewal, 2003). The theory suggested that the general formula to conflict resolution was: first, identify the goals of all parties. Second: distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate goals. Third: bridge, go beyond, transcend the incompatibility among legitimate goals and then peace building and reconciliation; in that order. Accordingly, the key approaches to conflict resolution included producing, early, through deep dialogues with all parties, alternative images of sustainable, potentially acceptable conflict transformation (Galtung, 2002). In this study, it is thus hypothesised that in conflict management there is need to remove injustice. This theory will be the basis for relating conflict management and organisational performance.

### **1.1.3. Conceptual Perspective**

The concepts that are the concern of this study are conflict management and performance. The concept of conflict refers to a state of serious disagreement and argument about something perceived to be important by at least one of the parties involved. Conflict involves the total range of behaviours and attitudes that are in opposition between individuals (Obasan, 2011). While Conflict management implies integration of all factors which can contribute to conflict resolution or its prevention that are improvement of communication and practicing discipline in the organisation, as well as having in mind the life phases of parties included (Turkalj, Fasic & Dujak, 2008). In this study, conflict management was operationalised as integrating, compromising, accommodating conflict management technique and dominating

conflict management technique. Integrating conflict management technique is also called *win-win*, *collaborative*, *cooperative* or *positive sum* which refers to high concern for self and others and is an approach in which the conflict participant attempts to satisfy both sides' needs and wants to the highest degree possible (Song, Dyer, Thieme, 2006). In this study it was defined as making joint decisions, consideration concerns of all parties and reaching acceptable decisions in conflict management.

With compromising, this refers a conflict management strategy in which the participant demonstrates a moderate level of concern for himself or herself and for the other party and pursues give-and-take or sharing, whereby both parties must relinquish something to create a mutually acceptable solution (Kantek & Gezer, 2009). In this study it refers to the situation in which management finds middle course, obtaining solutions through negotiations, give and take decisions and proving temporally decisions when there are conflicts. With accommodating, this is the *obliging*, *non-confrontation*, *yielding*, and *lose-win* that involves a low concern for self and a high concern for others and is often associated with an emphasis on things held in common (Song et al., 2006). In this study, accommodating style has been operationalised as a situation in which management tries to satisfy needs of staff, accommodating wishes, offering concessions and going along. As regards to dominating, is conflict management style which is also known as the competing style and involves a person showing a high level of concern for self and a low level of concern for the other side (Kantek & Gezer, 2009). In this study it was operationalised as the dictatorial leadership process. On the other hand, performance is the effective and efficient use of resources to achieve outcomes (Olum, 2004). It is measured by improvement of service delivery, what gets done, detecting errors, recognising success, enhancing organisational learning and improvement, mobilising support, improving accountability for budget expenditures, and

improving public communication (Yongbeom, 2007). School performance can be measured in terms of competitiveness, student enrolment level, students' completion rate, teaching quality, utilisation of funds, paying suppliers, resource mobilisation and quality of infrastructure among others (Odhiambo, Indoshi & Agak, 2012).

#### **1.1.4. Contextual Perspective**

Buikwe District, a district in the Central Region of Uganda with its district headquarters located at Buikwe. The district experienced a lot of conflicts leading to teachers' demand for transfers, low morale and a high rate of staff turnover. The strikes were caused by in disciplined students, academically weak students, disgruntled teachers inciting students, poor feeding and poor management by head teachers; and school managers missing skills of managing conflicts. In some of the schools in the district, strikes resulted in the destruction of property, sustaining of injuries by students and even teachers (Mazige, 2011). However, review of existing literature on conflict management and performance of secondary schools had not specifically found empirical studies examining conflicts and their management in Buikwe District. This contextual gap led to the unanswered empirical question as to whether the conflict management strategies and processes were related to performance of schools in Uganda specifically in Buikwe District.

#### **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The danger of conflicts in schools cannot be underestimated. Conflicts result into breakdown of healthy communication, suspicion and mistrust, weaken the spirit of unity, lead to hatred and the desire to cause harm even to hitherto confidant ones, loss of valuables, divisiveness and bitterness, needless tension, apathy and development paralysis (Afful-Broni, 2012). The government of Uganda has made efforts to eliminate conflicts in schools in the country. For

instance, to resolve the strike problem in October 2001 the Ministry of Education and Sports established a desk to handle student grievances (Tumwesigye & Basheka, 2008). The Ministry of Education and Sports has warned punishing of school administrators, teachers and students because of strikes. Some head teachers, deputies and teachers have been transferred to resolve conflicts and even there has been arresting of students but who later get released on bond (Baleke, Nangozi, Kimbowa, Ninsiima & Kakaire, 2013). Despite this effort, in Buikwe schools, conflicts have been a consistent problem with violent strikes causing destruction of schools property. In several schools, strikes have resulted into the destruction of property, sustaining of injuries by students and even teachers. Due to conflicts, there are quarrels between head teachers and teachers leading to persistent transfers of teachers, a high rate of staff turnover, low morale and students' strikes. The problem of conflicts had been blamed for poor performance of many secondary schools in Uganda. If the problem of conflicts in the schools was not resolved, performance standards would deteriorate further. It was therefore, necessary to examine whether conflict management in secondary schools enhance performance.

### **1.3. Purpose**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of conflict management and organisational performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District

### **1.4. Objectives**

The study sought;

- i. To investigate the existing conflicts in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District.

- ii. To find out the different conflict management techniques used in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District.
- iii. To establish the most appropriate Conflict Management techniques that influences Performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions;

- i. What were the existing conflicts in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District?
- ii. What were the different conflict management techniques used in Government Aided Secondary schools in Buikwe District?
- iii. What were the most appropriate Conflict Management techniques that influence Performance of Government Aided Secondary schools in Buikwe District?

### **1.6. Research Hypothesis**

The study was analysed basing on the hypothesis here under;

Conflict management techniques influence performance of secondary schools in Buikwe District.

### **1.7. Scope of the study**

#### **1.7.1. Geographical scope**

The study was carried out in Buikwe District, a district in the Central Region of Uganda with its district headquarters located at Buikwe. The district headquarters at Buikwe are located approximately 60 kilometres (37 ml), by road, east of Kampala, the capital city of Uganda and the country's largest city. The district was selected because most of its government aided

secondary schools are located in rural remote areas. The district was experiencing a lot of conflicts leading to teachers' demand for transfers, low morale and a high rate of staff turnover.

### **1.7.2. Content scope**

The content scope of the study was conflict management and performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District. Conflict management was looked at in terms of existing conflicts, the different conflict management techniques and the most appropriate conflict management techniques. Performance of schools was studied in terms of UNEB Examinations results, student enrolment level, students' completion rate, utilisation of funds and resource mobilisation.

### **1.7.3. Time scope**

Time scope for inquiry was 2009 to 2014. This period witnessed a lot of strikes, burning of schools, changes in school managers and transfer of teachers in the country. This helped in establishing the management of conflicts by the schools' administrators and how this affected the performance of schools.

### **1.8. Significance of the study**

The researcher hopes that the findings of the study might help to enlighten the key stakeholders of secondary schools about the attributes of effective performance. From the recommendations drawn, measures can be adopted to effectively manage conflicts in schools.

The findings of the study might guide the Ministry of Education and Sports in promoting conflict management for improved performance of schools. This may be done through working hand in

hand with the managers of the institutions to ensure establishment of the right procedures, skills and techniques of managing conflict in educational institutions.

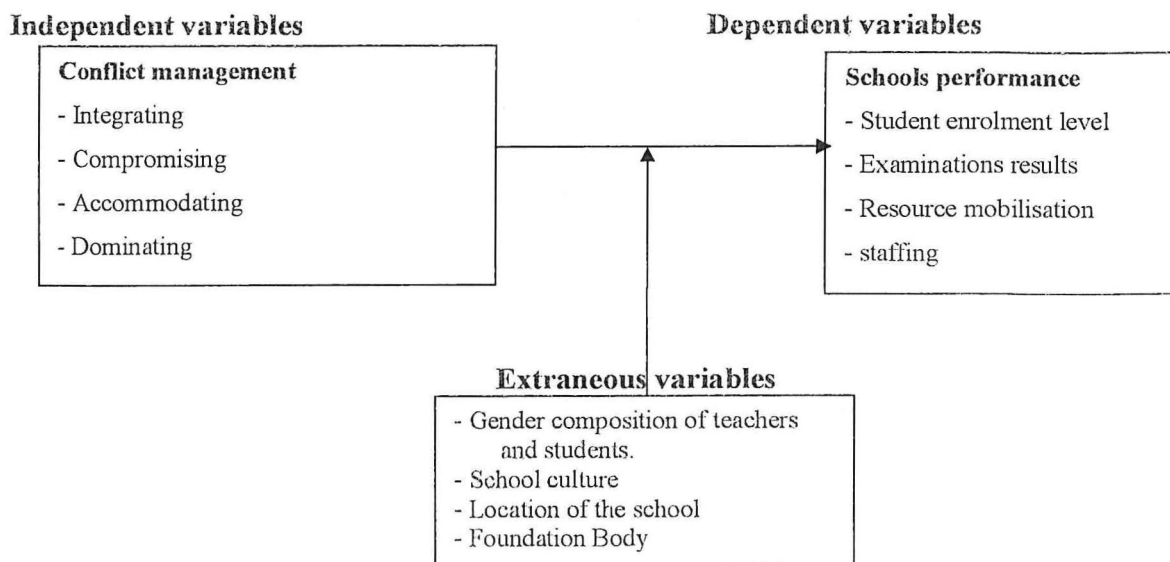
The study shall help human resource managers in organisations other than institutions of learning in initiating and implementing programs that will help in conflict management. This will help the organisations to be able to realise their goals and objectives through effective management of employees.

The study provides researchers and academicians with insights to extend and develop new knowledge in conflict management. The issues raised in the study are likely to lead to involvement of various researchers in discovering the most effective ways of managing organisations, the causes of conflict and the most effective conflict management techniques in public organisations.

### **1.9. Conceptual framework**

The researcher assumed that conflict management affects the performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools. The framework here under describes the relationship;

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



**Source:** Developed for the study on ideas adapted from Stojkovic et al, (2003), Tumwesigye & Basheka (2008) and Dreu & Beersma (2005).

In figure.1 above, Conflict management techniques include integrating conflict management, compromising, accommodating and dominating conflict management techniques. These affected the performance of secondary schools reflected by student enrolment level, students' completion rate, examination results, resource mobilisation and staffing.

However, there were extraneous variables affecting the relationship between conflict management and schools performance. These were gender composition of teachers and students, location of the school, foundation body and school culture. In this study, the extraneous variables mentioned above were controlled by excluding them completely from the research instruments. Using this framework, the study investigated the relationship between Conflict Management and Performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the review of the theory of the study and related literature. The content of the literature on the variables obtained from the studies carried out by scholars in the field of conflict management; provide understanding and insight on the problem of the study. While reviewing literature, gaps and trends on existing conflicts, conflict management strategies and process were evaluated.

#### 2.2. Theoretical Review

The theory that underpinned this study was Galtung's model of conflict, violence and peace. Johan Galtung (1969) proposed an influential model of conflict that encompasses both symmetric and asymmetric conflicts. He suggested that conflict emerges from contradiction, attitude and behaviour. Contradiction is the clash of interests and is inherent in the relationship. Attitude includes the parties' perceptions and misperceptions of each other and of themselves. These can be positive or negative, but in violent conflicts, parties tend to develop demeaning stereotypes of the other, and attitudes are often influenced by emotions such as fear, anger, bitterness and hatred. Behaviour involves co-operation or coercion, gestures signifying conciliation or hostility. Violent conflict behaviour is characterised by threats, coercion and destructive attacks. In this theory, peace is described to be negative and positive. *Negative peace* on its own can be coupled with repression, deprivation, exploitation, injustice. *Positive peace*, in contrast, includes the key ideas of 'legitimacy' and 'justice'. An unjust structure or relationship

in this terminology is not a peaceful one. In order to achieve positive peace, therefore, injustice must be removed. At an intrapersonal level, positive peace goes beyond absence of anxiety and embraces the idea of deep inner peace through integrity (wholeness) of being, physical, emotional and spiritual (Ramsbotham et al, 2011).

Galtung suggested that positive peace was a higher ideal than negative peace. He suggested that the search for peace should not deal with the narrow vision of ending or reducing conflict at a direct or structural level but seek to understand conditions for preventing conflict. The theory suggested that for this to happen, peace and conflict needed to be looked at in totality at all levels of human organisation. The theory indicated that since personal and direct conflicts are often built into the social structure, it is much better to focus on the bigger picture revealed by structural conflict as this would reveal the causes and effects of violence and conditions for peace. Thus the purpose of peace search is to create conditions for promoting both types of peace (Grewal, 2003). The theory suggested that the general formula to conflict resolution was: first, identify the goals of all parties. Second: distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate goals. Third: bridge, go beyond, transcend the incompatibility among legitimate goals and then peace building and reconciliation; in that order. Accordingly, the key approaches to conflict resolution included producing, early, through deep dialogues with all parties, alternative images of sustainable, potentially acceptable conflict transformation (Galtung, 2002). The theory proposes that the need for conflict management in a just manner helps to end bitterness. This theory guided the study in investigating whether conflict management employed by head teachers was just in helping to end bitterness for better performance of schools.

### **2.3. Related Literature**

The literature below presents related literature on conflict management and organizational performance. The related literature is developed according to the objectives of the study. This includes existing conflicts, different conflict management techniques and the most appropriate Conflict Management techniques that influence organizational performance.

#### **2.3.1 Existing Conflicts in Schools**

In organisations like schools, there are different conflicts. According to Stojkovic, Kalinich and Klofas (2003), one form of conflict is intra-organisational conflict. This form of conflict deals with the 'structural makeup of an organisation and includes vertical conflict, horizontal conflict, line staff and role conflict. Accordingly, *Vertical conflicts* occur because the supervisor is always telling subordinates what to do and tries to micromanage instead of letting you do your job. This conflict involves two hierarchical levels and an employee and his/her immediate boss. This type of conflict exists mainly within organisations like schools where the organisational structure has a high degree of formality. Ikeda, Veludo-de-Oliveira and Campomar (2005) further explain that when vertical conflict takes place between operational workers and administration, their sources refer to: psychological distance by which workers don't feel involved in the organisation and feel that their needs are not met; power and status by which workers feel powerless and alienated; differences in value and ideology which represents underlying beliefs on objectives and goals of an organisation and; scarce resources which concerns disagreements regarding benefits, salary and work conditions.

With *Horizontal conflicts*, these occur between employees within the same unit, on the same hierarchical level. Horizontal conflict occurs between individuals of the same level. Horizontal

conflicts can manifest themselves for many reasons, including ideas, decisions about which units or individuals do not agree or the distribution of resources. Further, Ikeda et al. (2005) explains that top management peers perceive more conflict internally between their groups than those of lower positions. This happens because people in the higher hierarchical level, rather than the lower ones, are engaged in non-routine activities and development of politics, where orientation for the actions are less clear and chances for disagreement are bigger and; people in higher hierarchical level, rather than the lower ones, are probably less flexible in their points of view. Hence, conflict resolution is more difficult.

*Line-Staff conflicts* take place between the support staff and the ‘actual units’ within a department. According to Robert (2012), line and staff relationship is based on the assumption that both support each other and work harmoniously to achieve organisational objectives. However, there are frequent instances of conflict between line and staff in the organisation. This generates lots of friction and loss of time and consequently organisational effectiveness. The major cause of line and staff conflict is that staff feels that line managers do not make proper use of them. Quite often staff people are ignored by line managers and decisions are made without inputs from staff. Staff people are informed after the action has been taken. By virtue of his position, a line manager is a king in his area of operations; he can accept, amend, or reject the idea irrespective of its quality and practicability. This study investigated whether lack of involvement by all staff causes conflict in schools hence affecting their performance.

*Role conflicts* can stem from an incomplete or otherwise fallacious understanding of the assignment given to an employee at a specific moment in time. According to the State of Queensland (2012), role conflict occurs when workers are given two different and incompatible

roles at the same time, or their role overlaps with another worker or work group. The greater the role conflict, the higher the likelihood of a worker experiencing occupational stress. This literature attracted the study to investigate whether there were role conflicts at the schools that affected their performance.

In organisations like secondary schools, there are also intergroup conflicts. Rahim (2001) explains that intergroup conflict refers to the collective incompatibility or disagreement between two or more divisions, departments, or subsystems in connection with tasks, resources, information, and so on. Accordingly, “while this form of conflict implies each member of a group is in conflict with those of another, quite often the actual dispute is carried out between representatives. Intergroup conflicts are inevitable in complex organisations having differentiated subsystems with different goals, norms, and orientations; it appeared that intergroup conflict would be an inevitable part of organisational life.” This study investigated the existence of intergroup conflicts in secondary schools and how they affected performance of schools.

Interpersonal conflicts also occur in organisations. Niedria(2012), states that Interpersonal conflicts will occasionally arise in the workplace due to natural differences in human personality, beliefs or work ethics. Co-workers may disagree over problem-solving tactics or shared resources. Managers and supervised employees can also fall into routine disagreements over managerial style or workplace expectations. Interpersonal conflicts can lead to loss of productivity, but there are also ethical considerations that make workplace interpersonal conflict problematic. Interpersonal conflicts including jealousy, competition, squabbling, vicious gossip or intimidation violate this principle of ethical interactions with other people.

In organisations, there is also conflict of interest. A conflict of interest may exist even if an unethical or improper act results. This is because a conflict of interest can create an appearance or perception of impropriety (Stuckler, Basu & McKee, 2011). Sullivan (2013) states that when an individual's personal goals are at odds with the goals of the organisation, the individual may be tempted to fight for his personal goals, creating a conflict situation that will hamper success of the project. With the level of corruption in the country being very high, it is most possible in schools there were conflicts of interest hampering schools performance and this was investigated by the study.

However, all the above literature is reported not from the context of Ugandan schools. For instance Stojkovic et al. (2003) literature was from context of criminal justice organisations in Belmont in USA. The literature for Ikeda et al. (2005) is on organisational conflicts perceived by marketing executives in Brazil. On the other hand, Rahim (2001) based his literature on leader power, followers' conflict management strategies, and propensity to leave a job in a cross-cultural study in the U.S., Greece, South Korea, and Bangladesh. These contextual gaps left the question of the nature of the existing conflicts in Ugandan schools particularly in Buikwe unanswered attracting the investigations of the study to establish the nature of conflicts in the schools.

The other conflict management style is the dominating management style. A dominating style is characterised by high concern for self and low concern for others. This style has been identified with a win-lose perspective or with forcing behaviour by one individual over another as a means to win a position or resolve a conflict situation. An individual using a dominating style typically uses whatever measures necessary to win the objective, and as a result, ignores or minimizes the

needs and expectations of the other party. This style is often used when the issues involved in a conflict seem relatively unimportant or when a quick decision is required. A dominating may style may also be used by upper management for implementing strategies and policies, or when unpopular courses of action must be implemented (Copley, 2008). Voki and Sontor (2010) studied the relationship between individual characteristics and conflict handling styles with Croatian employees from different organisations selected randomly as units of analysis. Their student t-test and ANOVA results revealed that dominating conflict handling style was most frequently used style among Croatian employees overall. However, this study was carried out in Croatia, this attracted the need for this study in the Ugandan context.

### **2.3.2 Conflict management techniques used in Schools**

There are different conflict management techniques. These include integrating (collaborating), compromising (mixed motive), obliging (accommodating) or avoiding style and dominating (competing) style (Adebile & Ojo, 2012). Regarding integrating the integrating conflict-handling technique, this also called *win-win*, *collaborative*, *co-operative*, and *positive sum* involves a high concern for self and others and is an approach in which the conflict participant attempts to satisfy both sides' needs and wants to the highest degree possible (Song, Dyer, Thieme, 2006). The integrating style concentrates on problem solving in a collaborative manner. Individuals with this style face conflict directly and try to find new and creative solutions to problems by focusing on their own needs as well as the needs of others. When the issues are complex, this style is suitable in utilising the skills and information possessed by different parties to formulate solutions and successful implementations. Thus, the integrating style is believed to be both effective and appropriate in managing conflicts and, therefore, is perceived as highly competent. The integrating style is competent because it provides each disputant with access to the other person's

perceptions or incompatible goals, thereby enabling them to find a solution that integrates the goals and needs of both parties (Lee, 2008). In his study, an examination between the relationships of conflict management styles and employees' satisfaction Lee (2008) used staff from major industries in Malaysia including service, manufacturing, mining and construction. In a correlation analysis, integrating style ranked highest among other styles of conflict management. However, this study was carried outside the Ugandan context and in a manufacturing sector. This gap thus called for this study in a context of schools in Uganda.

In a study, conflict management styles in traditional organisations (Slabbert, 2004) used employees of twenty-five middle and twenty-five junior managers in the banking industry as units of analysis. Correlation results indicated significant differences between the two groups. Middle management preferred the assertive styles (such as integrating) with scant attention to co-operation, while junior management primarily used the avoiding style, which is both Unco-operative and unassertive. However, this missing link was whether in the secondary schools under study administration which preferred the integrative approach with teachers and this was investigated in relation to how it affects performance of schools.

Integrating or collaboration conflict management tries to exploit the possible mutual gains of the parties in the dispute and views the conflict as a creative force pushing them to achieve an improved state of affairs to which both sides are fully committed (Hotepo, Asokere, Abdul-Azeez & Ajemunigbohun, 2010). In an empirical study of the effect of conflict on organisational performance in Nigeria used managers in some selected Airlines, Road Transport and Insurance companies in Lagos Metropolis as units of analysis. The descriptive results obtained revealed that collaboration was the second most preferred conflict management style after bargaining

(compromising). However, the extent to which integrative approach was preferred in the schools was not clear and this was investigated in relation to how it affected performance of schools.

Concerning the compromising conflict-handling technique, which is also called *mixed motive, in game theory*, this is a conflict management strategy in which the participant demonstrates a moderate level of concern for himself or herself and for the other party and pursues give-and-take or sharing, whereby both parties must relinquish something to create a mutually acceptable solution (Song et al., 2006). When managers attempt to use compromise technique, they are essentially asking that each employee give up part of what they want so that each goal can be successfully attained (Graham, 2009). Kehinde (2011) studied the impact of conflict management on corporate productivity using all cadres of staff of First Bank of Nigeria Plc. (Lagos Branch) as the unit of analysis. In a student t test, it was established that managers of organisations prefer the compromise in problem solving. The results further showed that the conflict management strategies in place at the organisation had been relatively useful in minimising the incidence of disruptive conflicts while conflict management strategies had positive impacts on workers' productivity which is performance. The results of the above study showed that, managers preferred compromise in conflict management than the lower staff. However, the extent to which this applied in the schools in the area under study had not been established and this was investigated in relation to how it affected performance.

Compromising conflict management involves bargaining. Bargaining assumes that neither party will emerge satisfied from the confrontation but that both, through negotiation, can get something they do not have at the start, or more of something they need, usually by giving up something of lesser importance (Hotepo et al., 2010). In an empirical study, Hotepo et al. (2010)

studied the effect of conflict on organisational performance in Nigeria using managers in some selected Airlines, Road Transport and Insurance companies in Lagos Metropolis as units of analysis. The descriptive results obtained indicated that bargaining was the most preferred conflict management style. However, the extent to which head teachers in Ugandan schools used bargaining in solving conflicts was not established in the review of literature calling for the investigations of this study.

Mukhtar (2012) studied identification of frequent use of conflict management styles. The units of analysis were staff from academia, banking sector and industrial zones. Qualitative results of the study revealed that compromising conflict management style was amongst the most famous techniques used in conflict management. Similarly, Iglesias and Vallejo (2012) studying conflict resolution styles in the nursing profession with nurses Madrid, Spain, who worked in either a university or a clinical care setting as the units of analysis established that the most common style used by nurses overall to resolve workplace conflict was compromising. The above finding was appraised in relation to secondary schools in Uganda.

With the accommodating conflict management techniques, this also called *obliging*, *non-confrontation*, *yielding*, and *lose-win* involves a low concern for self and a high concern for others and is often associated with an emphasis on things held in common. The central goal of this strategy is to meet the needs of the other party. Information tends to flow one direction only, with the accommodating strategist exercising generosity, selflessness, charity, obedience, or some other form of acquiescence, while downplaying any personal needs (Song et al., 2006). With accommodating the readiness for co-operation is extremely high, and the conflict is resolved by putting the other party's interests before its own (Mughal & Khan, 2013). However,

the above literature review did not reveal whether in the schools under study the strategy of accommodating was being employed, this was thus be investigated by the study.

On the other hand, Khanaki (2010) studied conflict management styles in the Iranian general preference compared to the Swedish. Using engineers as the unit of analysis, descriptive results indicated that the accommodating style of conflict management was the least common mode used in settling conflicts. Nevertheless, Mukhtar (2012) in a study identification of frequent conflict management styles used in Pakistan academia, banking and industrial sector contrary results were established. The results indicated that accommodating was one of the mostly used techniques of conflicts management. This contradiction became the basis for establishing whether the accommodating style of conflict management held in Ugandan schools and how it affected teachers' performance.

In conflict management, there is also the use of the dominating style. This is conflict management style which is also known as the competing style. By this, the person shows a high level of concern for self and a low level of concern for the other side. This style can also be described as being consistent with a win-lose resolution or as an individual strengthening their position to win (Kantek & Gezer, 2009). In their study, conflict in schools, they established that the least used management style was the dominating style which resulted into win-lose solutions. However, this study was not carried out in Uganda. This left a contextual gap as to whether the dominating conflict management technique was used in schools in Uganda and this was investigated by the study.

### **2.3.3 The Most Appropriate Conflict Management Techniques**

The integrating style is believed to be both effective and appropriate in managing conflicts and, therefore, is perceived as highly competent. The integrating style is competent because it provides each disputant with access to the other person's perceptions or incompatible goals, thereby enabling them to find solutions that integrate the goals and needs of both parties (Lee, 2008). Vigil-King (2000) studied team conflict, integrative conflict- management strategies, and team effectiveness. In a qualitative analysis, the study found out that the use of more integrative conflict management strategies was likely to have higher commitment than teams using less integrative styles. It was observed that supportive leadership, which is part of integration conflict management engendered respect, job satisfaction and higher productivity from staff. However, literature review was not able to establish whether secondary schools in the area under study used the integrative style to enhance performance which attracted investigations of the study.

Gull, Rehman and Zaidi (2012) carried out a study, the impact of conflict management styles on team effectiveness used employees of the textile sector of Pakistan as the unit of analysis. The correlation results established that integrative conflict management style was highly positively associated with team effectiveness as majority of respondents pursuing collaborative style scored high on team effectiveness. However, the studies were not done in the context of secondary schools in Uganda. This study therefore, investigated whether administration of schools most of the time considered goals and needs of both conflicting parties in resolving conflicts and whether this enhanced performance of schools.

In relation to the above, Song et al. (2006) studied conflict management and innovation performance an integrated contingency perspective. Correlation results of the test statistics between integrating conflict management and constructive conflict were statistically significant.

This means that the greater the use of integrating behavioural conflict-handling strategies, the lower will be the levels of destructive conflict. However, this study was not relating the integrative approach of conflict management to organisational performance. This study thus investigated whether staff appreciated the fact that goals and needs of both conflicting parties were considered in resolving conflicts hence working harder enabling performance of schools.

Integrating is a democratic style of conflict management. Ekong (2000) studied conflict Management Styles in Nigerian universities under military rule and the challenges of democracy with staff of universities as units of analysis. In a correlation analysis, a positive correlation was established between democratic management styles and organisational stability. It was found that, democratic strategies promoted inclusion in decision and by consequence workers identification with decisions and commitment to the organisation which led to organisational performance. However, the extent to which democratic principles were used in managing conflicts in the schools under study were not established thus investigations of this study in relation to how it affected schools performance.

Lee (2008) in a study, an examination between the relationships of conflict management styles and employees' satisfaction used staff from major industries in Malaysia including service, manufacturing, mining and construction as units of analysis. The results of a correlation analysis revealed that compromising style of conflict management was the second in significance after the integration conflict management strategy. However, Gull et al. (2012) studying the impact of conflict management styles on team effectiveness in using employee of the textile sector of Pakistan in a correlation analysis established that compromising style had negative association with team effectiveness. The results of the studies above present a controversy with the study by Lee (2008) indicating that compromising style conflict of management was one of the

significantly employed while Gull et al. (2012) indicated that it had a negative impact on team effectiveness. This attracted the investigations of the study to evaluate whether in the context of schools in Uganda, compromising style of conflict management held.

Song et al. (2006) studied conflict management and innovation performance an integrated contingency perspective. The units of analysis were eligible member companies of the electronic industries association in the USA. Testing the hypothesis that the greater the use of compromising behavioural conflict-handling strategies, the lower will be the levels of destructive conflict, the correlation results were not statistically significant. The analysis found no support for the predictions that the greater the use of compromising behavioural conflict handling strategies, the higher will be the levels of constructive conflict which would enhance performance. However, these results were based on the context of electronic companies in the USA. This made it necessary to investigate the significance of compromising behavioural conflict-handling strategies in the context of secondary schools in Buikwe District, Uganda.

On the other hand, there is the use of obliging (accommodating) technique in conflict management. Accommodation behaviour is characterised by an obliging concern for others (Montoya-weiss, Massey & Song, 2001). On their part, Song et al. (2006) studied conflict management and innovation performance an integrated contingency perspective with staff of eligible member companies of the electronic industries association in the USA a unit of analysis. The findings of their study revealed that accommodating behavioural conflict-handling strategy had positive and statistically significant relationship with employee constructive behaviours, performance implied. However, the context of this study was in the USA and not in school context hence the need for investigations of this study.

Gull et al. (2012) studied the impact of conflict management styles on team effectiveness used employees of the textile sector of Pakistan as the unit of analysis. In a correlation analysis, obliging style of conflict management was found to be positively related with team effectiveness. In the descriptive statistics also accommodating style of conflict management captured highest percentage points in high team effectiveness. The results of the study also showed that majority of sample of manager level employees were using accommodating style of conflict management. However, the use of accommodating style was found to be used by managers in the textile sector in Pakistan and not in the context of Ugandan schools and this was investigated by the study.

Lee (2008) explains that obliging is associated with obliging behaviours that include putting aside one's own needs to please the partner, passively accepting the decisions the partner makes, making yielding or conceding statements, denying or failing to express one's needs, and explicitly expressing harmony and co-operation in a conflict episode. In a study, an examination between the relationships of conflict management styles and employees' satisfaction, staff from major industries in Malaysia including service, manufacturing, mining and construction were used as units of analysis. The correlation results showed that obliging styles of handling conflict showed positive relationships and highly correlated with satisfaction with supervision, something likely to influence organisational performance. This was the basis for ascertaining the use of obliging behaviours in Ugandan schools in Buikwe district and how it affected performance of schools.

Montoya-weiss et al. (2001) posted that obliging is a negative conflict management behaviour because it entails passive involvement in the team task. Thoughtless agreement by one party keeps a team from achieving its full potential for synergy through collaboration. In an empirical

study, getting it together, temporal co-ordination and conflict management in global virtual, they used five-person teams of graduate students in the United States and Japan as units of analysis. The correlation results indicated that accommodation conflict management behaviour had no significant effect on performance. However, this had not been verified basing on the context of secondary schools in Uganda hence attracting the interest of this study.

Lather, Shilpa and Shukla (2010) carried out a study, across cultural conflict resolution styles in an extensive literature review. The investigation aimed at finding out the differences and the similarities which existed across different cultures (Asian, America and Australian) as far as resolving interpersonal conflict was concerned and how cultural factors played a role in choosing different styles to conflict resolution. Results showed that Americans used the competing (dominating) style more often than West Africans. The US people tended to resolve conflict in a more competitive, directive, assertive, and confrontational way. This means that the competing style was more favoured by members of American cultures. However, this study was carried outside the Ugandan context and this attracted the interest of this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents how the study was carried out. It presents the research design, study population, sample size and selection, sampling techniques, research methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, data analysis and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This proposed study adopted a cross-sectional research design. This design was selected because it allowed collection of views at a single point in time and it involved observation of all the population or a representative subset. The cross-sectional design was used to collect information about what was going on at the particular point in regards to conflict management and schools' performance (Olsen & Marie, 2004) and helped in looking at the prevalence of the research problem in the study population. The study adopted both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The quantitative approach was adopted because the study included descriptive statistics and drawing of figures. The qualitative approach supplemented the quantitative approach by providing detailed information in form of statements from interviews for in-depth analysis.

#### **3.3 Study Population**

The study population is the totality of all elements, subjects or members that possess a specified set of one or more common characteristics that define it (Burns, 2000). Buikwe District has 7 Government Aided Secondary Schools. Of the seven schools, one has two Deputies. Buikwe

District pay roll 2014 reveals that, the 7 schools under study had a total population of 275 teachers, of which 8 were Deputy Head teachers and 7 Head Teachers.

### 3.4 Sample Size and Selection

The sample size is the portion of population which represents the total population under study and if the sample is properly selected, the information collected can be used to make statements on the whole population. The total sample for the study was 170 respondents who were teachers, deputy head teachers and head teachers from seven schools. The sample size for teachers was determined by using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size (Appendix I).

**Table 3.1 Sample size**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>sample</b>
Teachers	260	155
Deputy head teachers	8	8
Head teachers	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>170</b>

**Source: Buikwe District Payroll (February, 2014)**

### 3.5 Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling and purposive sampling methods were used for the study. Simple random sampling was chosen because it ensured that each individual was chosen randomly and entirely by chance, thus giving each individual in the population the same probability of being chosen for the study.(Onen, 2005). Simple random sampling enabled the generalisability of the findings.

Purposive sampling was used to select particular people to provide in-depth views since the study was both quantitative and qualitative. The method of purposive sampling used was intensity purposive sampling. Intensity sampling allows the researcher to select a small number of rich cases relevant to the research problem that provide in depth information and knowledge of a phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2003). Patton (2003) further asserts that purposive sampling should be guided by set/s of robust selection criterion/ criteria to avoid bias. Purposive sampling was for the head teachers and deputy head teachers who only respond to interview items.

### **3.6 Data Collection methods**

The study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The qualitative approach captured comments from the key informants. The quantitative approach captured responses from the respondents through restricted responses.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaire**

Amin, (2005) defines questionnaires as a written form consisting of inter-related questions prepared by the researcher about the problem under the study based on objectives of the study to which answers are recorded by the respondents. The questionnaire was the method of data collection used to generate quantitative data. In seeking for quantitative data, a closed ended questionnaire in a scale (five likert) form was used (Burns, 2000). The questionnaire was preferred as the method of data collection because they generate quick responses from a large number of participants and tap attitudes, feelings, interests and opinions of respondents (Amin, 2005). Questionnaires can be relatively economic method in cost and time, of soliciting data

from a large number of people. Time for checking facts and pondering on the questions can also be taken by the respondents which tend to lead to more accurate information. (Sato, 2003).

### **3.6.2 Interview Guide.**

This technique was used to obtain qualitative data. Interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation to explore issues in depth (Boyce, 2006). Interview data was collected from 15 that were 7 head teachers 8 deputy head teachers. This number was sufficient. According to Baker (2012) a sample of not more than 25 interviewees is statistically sound (allows rigorous statistical analysis) and therefore providing the basis for making informed inferences. Interviewing was selected as a method of data collection because open-ended questions are more tolerated through interviews due to the fact that the respondents find it more convenient to give long answers orally than in writing (Sincero, 2012).

## **3.7 Quality Control Methods**

Quality control of data methods help to ensure accuracy and internal consistency of data collection instruments. Data quality was carried out through obtaining validity and reliability.

### **3.7.1 Validity of the Instruments**

Validity refers to truthfulness, accuracy and quality of the instruments. Content related validity which is the amount of substance in the study (Enon, 2002) was established. This was through consultations with researcher's supervisor and colleagues. Inter – judge was used for the test of Content Validity Index. The formula used was;

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number of Relevant items}}{\text{Total number of items}}$$

The CVI for the questionnaire and interview guide was obtained at above 0.70. This was because for the results to be valid, CVI should be above 0.70 (Amin, 2005). Some adjustments were made to make the questions more valid. The results of CVI are presented in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Validity Indices**

Items	Content Validity Index
Existing conflicts	0.70
Conflict management techniques	0.80
appropriate conflict management techniques	0.785
Performance of schools	0.80

**Source: Primary Data**

### 3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability is the degree of consistency and precision in which the measuring of the instrument demonstrates under the same circumstances, same research respondents using the same instrument should generate the same results under identical conditions (Amin, 2005). The strategies that were used to obtain reliability of qualitative data were; peer debriefing, prolonged engagement and audit trails. Peer debriefing involved the researcher working together with one or several colleagues who held impartial views of the study. The impartial peers examined the researcher's instruments and gave their views about their correctness (Morse, 2003).

Reliability for quantitative data was obtained by calculating Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 17.0). This helped in establishing internal consistency after pre-testing of instruments. The instruments were found accurate at above .070. A reliability of 70% indicates internal consistency in the scores that are produced by the instrument (Amin, 2005). The items were adjusted to obtain more correctness of the instruments. The results of Cronbach Alpha are presented in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3: Reliability Indices**

Items	Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ )value
Existing conflicts	.7854
Conflict management techniques	.7396
appropriate conflict management techniques	.7333
Performance of schools	.7190

**Source: Primary Data**

**3.8 Research Procedure**

An introductory letter was obtained from the university introducing the researcher to the informants. Before collecting data from the respondents, they were assured of the confidentiality and guaranteed that data collected would only be used for academic purposes. Appointments were made with the selected respondents to allow them select their own convenient time to participate in the study. While administering the interviews, the researcher jotted down the major points. Thereafter, data was coded, analysed, and the report written.

**3.9 Data Analysis**

The qualitative data collected was coded and then analysed by discursive and thematic methods. The discursive method focused on the detail of the text (Madill & Gough, 2008) interpreting the

analysed text and attributing meaning (Devetak, Glažar & Vogrinc, 2010). Clusters of text with similar meanings were emerged. Quantitative data was analysed at two levels, namely univariate and multivariate. The data analysis at univariate level was carried out using descriptive statistics that were the mean and frequencies. At multivariate level, the dependent variable schools performance was regressed with the variable of conflict management. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) was used for data analysis.

### **3.10 Ethical Consideration**

The researcher was obtained a letter forwarding him to the field for data collection. This saved the researcher from possible resistance from school administrators towards the study and make sure that they are aware about the purpose of the research activity. Consent was obtained from the respondents before collecting data from them. They were guaranteed confidentiality for the responses provided and informed that data provided would not harm them in any way.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the findings of this study. This study investigated conflict management and schools performance of government aided secondary schools in Buikwe District. The core aspects of investigation were the establishing the existing conflicts, finding of the different conflict management techniques used and establishing most appropriate conflict management techniques that influence performance of secondary schools.

#### 4.1 Response rate

The researcher distributed 155 questionnaires to the respondents but 120 questionnaires were retrieved fully filled with relevant data. These were considered sufficient respondents because this was a response rate of 0.774 (77.4%). Taylor-Powell & Hermann (2000) indicated that response rate of 0.60 (60%) is acceptable. More data of qualitative nature was collected by interviews from 15 respondents that were 7 head teachers and 8 deputy head teachers.

#### 4.2 Results on the demographic characteristics of the respondents

This section presents the background information of respondents on gender, age groups, teaching experience, positions in the school, education levels and responsibilities and terms of employment. This information helped in identifying the different categories of teachers that participated in the study. The background data obtained is presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents according to different attributes**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Gender of the Respondents	Male	62	51.7
	Female	58	48.3
	Total	120	100.0
Age group of the respondents	Below 30 years	20	16.7
	31-40 years	48	40.0
	41-50 years	40	33.3
	51 years and above	12	10.0
	Total	120	100.0
Teaching experience in the current school	Less than 5 years	38	31.7
	5 - 10 years	65	54.2
	11 years and above	17	14.2
	Total	120	100.0
Responsibilities of the respondents in the schools	Director of studies	7	5.8
	Head of department	16	13.3
	Club patron	14	11.7
	Class teacher	21	17.5
	Only subject teacher	54	45.0
	Others	8	6.7
	Total	120	100.0
Education level of the respondent	Diploma	41	34.2
	Bachelor's Degree	78	65.0
	Master Degree	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0
Terms of employment in the school	Probation	57	47.5
	Permanent	32	26.7
	Contract	19	15.8
	No contract	12	10.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Primary Data

Data presented in table 4.1 on gender shows that male respondents were slightly more than the females. There were 51.7% male teachers that participated in the study while the females were 48.3%. Whereas male teachers were slightly more than the females, the results shows that both males and females were involved in the study as the margin between them was not very large that is 3.4%. This helped in capturing views representative of both gender groups on conflict management and performance of schools.

Data presented in table 4.1 shows that the larger number of the respondents 40.0% were in the age category of 31-40 years, followed by 33.3% in age category 41-50 years, then 16.7% who were in the age category of below 30 years while those in the category of 51 years and above 10.0%. These results indicate that the respondents with diverse ages participated in the study. This helped in obtaining views on the effect of conflict management on performance of schools representative of people of different ages. The views obtained thus were hoped to show the extent of the problem under study from different perspectives.

Data presented in Table 4.1 shows that the majority 54.2% of the respondents had been in the schools for 5 – 10 years, followed by 31.7% who had been in their current schools for less than 5 years. The remaining 14.2 had been in the schools for 11 years and above. With the majority of the respondents having been in their current schools for more than 5years, they were presumed to understand the existing conflicts and conflict management techniques employed in schools. This thus helped to understand the conflicts and their management in the schools and how they affected the performance of the schools.

The results in Table 4.1 above show that majority of the respondents had some position of responsibility. The data shows 5.8% directors of studies, 13.3% heads of departments, 11.7% club patrons, 17.5% class teachers, 6.7% held other responsibilities like deans and house masters among others as identified were 45.0%. These results mean that the teachers experienced the different conflicts and management practices at their different hierarchical levels. This enabled the study to fully explore the conflicts in the schools and their management and how this affected performance.

Data in table 4.1 shows that the majority of the respondents 65.0% were bachelor degree holders followed by 34.2% grade five diploma holders and only 0.8% possessed master's a degree. The results indicate that all the teachers had the necessary qualifications to teach in secondary schools. The results indicate the schools had qualified staff to teach in secondary schools. This was the basis for examining teachers' understanding of the existing conflicts and their handling in relation to the performance of the schools.

The results in Table 4.1 shows that teachers in the schools were employed under different terms. The larger bulk of the teachers 47.5% were employed on probation that is employed by the government but not yet confirmed as permanent teachers. Then there were 26.7% of the teachers employed by the government and already confirmed. The remaining 15.8% were locally employed by the schools with contracts and 10.0% locally employed by the schools but with no contracts. Understanding the different terms under which they were employed was significant in showing how different conflicts were managed and how this affected the performance of the schools.

### **4.3 Existing Level of Conflicts in the Schools**

This research item considered objective one of the study that sought to establish the existing level of conflicts in the schools. The nature of conflicts considered included conflicts between management and subordinates, conflicts in the top administration, conflicts over overlapping roles. Conflicts between different departments over sharing of resources, conflicts over less involvement of staff in decision making, conflicts existing from staff expectations not being met, conflicts arising from poor leadership styles and conflicts because of poor communication and selfishness. The questionnaire items were measured on a 5 point likert scale ranging from SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, U= Undecided, A = agree, SA= strongly agree. A mean score below 3.00 means that the respondents were in disagreement with the research question items while a mean above 3.00 means that the respondents were in agreement with the question items. On the other hand, a low standard deviation of below 1.0 mean that the responses were close to the mean while a high standard deviation above 1.0 meant that in the responses there was high variation.

The findings on the objective are presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics on the Nature of the Existing Conflicts**

Nature of Conflicts	Mean	Std. Dev	SD		D		U		A		SA	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Management vs subordinates	4.2667	.86708	-	-	6	5.0	15	12.5	40	33.3	59	49.2
Top administration	3.7667	.67030	-	-	-	-	44	36.7	60	50.0	16	13.3
Overlapping roles	4.2000	.70532	-	-	-	-	20	16.7	56	46.7	44	36.7
Between departments	3.8000	1.08155	8	6.7	8	6.7	12	10.0	64	53.3	28	23.3
Less involvement	4.4000	.49195	-	-	-	-	-	-	72	60.0	48	40.0
Unmet expectations	4.1000	.83415	4	3.3	8	6.7	12	10.0	60	50.0	36	30.0
Poor leadership styles	3.9750	1.17725	6	5.0	11	9.2	15	12.5	36	30.0	52	43.3
Poor communication	4.1667	.93784	4	3.3	11	9.2	8	6.7	55	45.8	42	35.0
Personal interests	3.6333	.87863	-	-	20	16.7	16	13.3	72	60.0	12	10.0

**Source: Primary Data**

#### **4.3.1 Existence of Conflicts between Management and Subordinates**

Data presented in table 4.2 shows that respondents agreed that there were conflicts between management and subordinates because a low Mean = 4.2667 with a low Standard Deviation .86708 indicating closeness were obtained. The frequencies were also in agreement with the majority of the respondents 49.2% strongly agreeing, 33.3% disagreeing with only 12.5% remaining undecided and 5.0% disagreeing. These results mean that conflicts existed between management and subordinates in the schools. In the interviews, the respondents pointed that conflicts that existed between management included personal conflicts, conflicts over policy, remuneration that is from the internally generated funds and the head teachers who led the schools. One respondent stated, "Management is arbitrary and suffocates teachers causing friction." In one school, one teacher wrote, "The running of the school is in the hands of the henchmen of the teachers, thus most teachers put in little effort." The respondents explained that this thus weakened their morale and this had led to increased staff turnover, indifference in carrying out of school duties and bickering which affected the performance of the schools as the teachers did not put in maximum effort. In the interviews with head teachers and deputies, they also agreed that conflict with teachers existed. However, it was largely indicated that the conflicts stemmed from teachers' ignorance, failure to fulfil their responsibilities and internal local politics over schools ownership. One respondent indicated that teachers over assumed that the schools generated revenue which could cover some of their expenses like transport, rent and good meals. The head teacher explained that teachers refused to understand, that the Universal education policy puts restrictions on how resources should be used besides being very limited. The schools collect almost nothing from the students to efficiently make the school run. Thus, there was constant bickering which led to failure to have combined synergy and work as a team.

Thus, the school could not attract more students as even some teachers talked badly about the school in the communities.

#### **4.3.2 Conflicts in the Top Administration**

The results in Table 4.2 show the existence of conflicts in the top administration Mean = 3.7667 and Standard Deviation = .67030. The frequencies are also in agreement with the majority of the respondents 50.0% agreeing, 13.3% strongly agreeing and 36.7% not being sure. These results mean that there were conflicts in the top management of the schools. The respondents in the interviews indicated that conflicts in the top administration involved head teachers and their deputies and in some schools, involved directors of studies and heads of departments over power and resources sharing. The respondents explained that this spilled to lower staff causing factionalism, fear and anxiety. According to the respondents, this consequently affected performance as some groups in the schools felt excluded and not part of the system. Due to power struggles, many teachers just restricted themselves to teaching their lessons and weakly and then disappear. One teacher said, "I am not on the pay roll but I get perturbed to see that teachers on the pay roll are rarely present in the school leaving the school to those of us who gain nothing." This means that in the schools there were problems of absenteeism of teachers resulting from conflicts. However, during the interviews with the head teachers and the deputies, it was largely reported that there were no serious conflicts to stifle the work of the schools. One head teacher stated, "I work well with my deputy and other teachers with responsibilities and they help me in the running of the school." One deputy stated, "It is my job; I work because I know the limitations of my responsibility."

### **4.3.3 Overlapping Roles Causing Conflicts**

The question on this research item required the respondents to tell whether overlapping roles of different officers caused conflicts at the schools. The results were in agreement with a Mean = 4.2000 and a low Standard Deviation = .70532 which indicated closeness. The frequencies also had the majority of 46.7% and 36.7% agreeing and strongly agreeing respectively while the remaining 16.7% were undecided. These results mean that overlapping roles in the schools caused conflicts. In the interviews, the respondents indicated that overlapping roles that caused conflicts included individuals being assigned responsibilities but never being allowed to perform and instead the head teachers and sometimes with their deputies performed the roles. One teacher stated, "I am the head of science department but the head teacher determines which chemicals to buy by relying on my junior which undermines me." Another stated, "The head teacher in this school is the alpha and the omega, is all around. We have left everything to him." Even some deputies during interviews revealed that the head teachers much of the time usurped their roles and they remained redundant. One deputy stated, "I cannot make a single decision, even involving students discipline management, I have to wait for the decision of the head teacher and this has worsened the problem of indiscipline in the school." This means that there were conflicts over roles and this undermined performance of the schools such as discipline management.

### **4.3.4 Conflicts between Departments over Resources**

The respondents on this research item were asked to indicate whether conflicts existed between departments over sharing of resources. The results agreed to the existence of conflicts between departments over sharing of resources with the Mean = 3.8000. However, with a higher Standard Deviation = 1.08155, the results mean that the responses were varied meaning that all the respondents did not agree. The results of the frequencies had the majority of the respondents

53.3% agreeing, 23.3%strongly agreeing while 10.0% were undecided. Those who disagreed were 6.7% and another 6.7% strongly disagreed. These results indicate that largely staff conflicted over sharing of resources.

Generally, in the open ended questions, the teachers indicated that conflicts largely resulted from use of financial resources with the head teachers using them largely as their personal finances. This accordingly caused rifts in the schools with some work of the schools not being carried because of anger and frustration. The respondents indicated that most of teachers were in the schools only at the time of their lessons. Accordingly, this affected attainment of the schools goals such as improved academic performance; enough time was not being offered to the students. In the interviews with the head teachers and deputy head teachers, it was pointed out that conflicts over resources existed because the Universal Education Government policy did not allow schools to collect resources. Thus, schools had limited resources which were being struggled over by teachers and administrators and this caused conflicts. One head teacher stated, “Teachers morale is low and it is a struggle to keep them in the schools because for those on government payroll they are here only for their salaries.” This head teacher further indicated that, “Academic performance of the school has remained stagnant though I make effort to make teachers give their best.” The results above mean that there were conflicts over resources and this affected academic progress of the schools.

#### **4.3.5 Conflicts over Less Involvement in Decision Making**

The results on this study item were a Mean = 4.4000 and a low Standard Deviation = .49195 indicating that there were conflicts in the schools resulting from less involvement of teachers in decision making. The frequencies had 60.0% agreeing and 40.0 strongly agreeing. These results mean that less involvement of teachers in decision making caused conflicts. Teachers open responses revealed that their less involvement in decision caused conflicts. The teachers revealed that their contributions during meetings did not matter and even their committees were not functional.

However, in the interviews with the head teachers and their deputies, it was pointed out that teachers were involved in decision making in the schools through being assigned different responsibilities, regular meetings and being members of various schools committees. However, it was revealed that because some teachers' contributions and recommendations were not adopted or implemented, this caused conflicts. One respondent stated, "Teachers are fully involved in management activities because they hold offices such as being heads of departments, heads of committees and patrons of clubs among others which require them to take certain decisions." Another respondent said, "Through regular staff meetings, teachers contribute to decision making by making their suggestions which when adopted influence management of the school." Further, discussions with the interviewees revealed that this stemmed from differences in personalities, ambitions, limited resources and teachers making recommendations that violated the policies of Ministry of Education and Sports such as not wanting to be in schools on daily basis. Overall, the results show that teachers felt they were less involved in decision making and thus felt aggrieved which causes conflicts.

#### **4.3.6 Conflicts because of Unmet Expectations**

On this item of the study, the respondents were asked to tell whether conflicts existed because of unmet staff expectations. The results on the item were in agreement with the Mean = 4.1000 and a low Standard Deviation = .83415. The frequencies were also in agreement with unmet expectations with the majority of 50.0% agreeing, 30.0% strongly agreeing while 10.0% were undecided. Those who disagreed were only 6.7% and 3.3% strongly disagreed. In the interviews, the respondents indicated that unmet expectations that cause conflicts included failure to pay or delayed payment for those not on government pay roll, failure to pay rent for teachers, transport and provide decent meals. One deputy head teacher stated;

The head teacher normally complains that I do not do my work well. He expects me to be fully at school, monitor teachers' attendance to lessons, get schemes of work from teachers and at the end of the day better results. Yet he has failed to consider teachers' problems. No accommodation for teachers, poor meals, no transport yet it's a hard to reach area. Can you imagine that he does not even provide scholastic materials for teachers to write schemes of work but keeps on lamenting that as teachers they should learn to improvise! I wonder how someone would expect huge quantities of milk from ungrazed cows! Everybody is wondering what the USE grants are used for!!

The head teachers also indicated poor work performance as a cause of conflicts that arose as they tried to enforce performance.

#### **4.3.7 Poor Leadership and Conflicts**

This study item explored whether poor leadership styles created conflicts in the schools. The results obtained on the item were in agreement with the Mean = 3.9750 although the Standard Deviation = 1.17725 was high indicating that the teachers were varied in their responses. The frequencies were also in agreement with the larger number of the respondents 43.3% strongly agreeing, 30.0% agreeing while 12.5% were undecided. Those who disagreed were 9.2% and 5.0% strongly disagreed. These results mean that poor leadership in the schools caused conflicts.

In the open responses, the respondents indicated that leadership was autocratic and bureaucratic stifling activities. One respondent stated, "In this school, the head teacher is the school and the school is himself." Another respondent stated, "Our head teacher is a despot; I only do what the policy requires of me to avoid conflicts with him and keep my job." One deputy head teacher stated;

Our head teacher is an old man who looks at us as kids. He looks at things as they were during their years. It has never come into his mind that the world is dynamic. I am his deputy, but just a figurehead. All decisions come from his office and we are supposed to comply without questioning. When you insist on the right thing, then he names you a rebel and the following year, without God's mercy, you cannot survive a transfer!

Generally, the respondents indicated that staff had no opportunity in decision making and often suggestions from departments and individual teachers were ignored. Accordingly, this reduced their work morale leading to poor work performance as they did not have the morale to put in extra effort. These results mean that when the leadership stifles teachers, they put in reduced effort affecting performance of the school.

#### **4.3.8 Poor Communication and Conflicts**

This item of the study sought to establish whether conflicts existed because of poor communication in the schools. Data obtained on the item was in agreement with a Mean = 4.1667 and low Standard Deviation = .93784. The results of the frequencies showed that the majority of 45.8% agreed, 35.0% strongly agreed while 6.7% were undecided. Those who disagreed were 9.2% and 3.3% strongly disagreed. These results mean that conflicts existed because of poor communication in the schools. In the interviews, the respondents indicated that the means of communication included notice boards, telephone calls and meetings. However, generally, the respondents indicated that communication was slow and at times lacking. The

teachers indicated some programmes and projects would be introduced without knowledge and this made some teachers refused to participate in their implementation. This means that when there is lack of communication, there will be conflicts and this will affect performance of some individuals.

#### **4.3.9 Self-Interests and Conflicts**

This item of the study required the respondents to tell whether conflicts existed because of some staff desire to gratify their self-interests. The results obtained on the item were in agreement with the item with a Mean of 3.6333 with a low Standard Deviation = .87863. The frequencies also had the majority of the respondents agreeing with 72 (60.0%) agreeing, 12 (10.0%) strongly agreeing, 16 (13.3%) undecided while those who disagreed were only 20 (16.7%). These results mean that desire by some staff to gratify their interest leads to conflicts. In the open responses, the respondents indicated that this was one of the major causes of conflicts because the head teachers used schools resources largely for their personal interests ignoring the teachers. One respondent said, "Teachers are angry because even the small allowances such as transport and being office holders we used to get before the current head teacher have been removed and this has caused discontent among the teachers." Another respondent stated; "We have committees such as procurement and disposal committees but which the head teacher never allows to sit and plan for the finances of the school because of his personal interests. This creates some unhappiness among the teachers." This means that selfish interests of the head teachers caused conflicts in the schools.

**Table 4.3: Summary table for interview responses**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Nature of Conflict</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Teacher	Management vs subordinates.	<p>“Management is arbitrary and suffocates teachers causing friction.”</p> <p>“The running of the school is in the hands of the henchmen of the teachers, thus most teachers put in little effort”</p>
Teacher.		<p>“I am not on the pay roll but I get perturbed to see that teachers on the payroll are rarely present in the school leaving the school to those of us who gain almost nothing”</p>
Head teacher	Conflicts in the Top Administration	<p>“I work well with my deputy and other teachers with responsibilities and they help me in the running of the school.”</p>
Deputy head teacher		<p>“It is my job; I work because I know the limitations of my responsibility.”</p>
Teacher.	Overlapping roles causing conflicts	<p>“I am the head of science department but the head teacher determines which chemicals to buy by relying on my junior which undermines me.”</p>
Teacher.		<p>“The head teacher in this school is the alpha and the omega, is all around. We have left everything to him.”</p>
Deputy head teacher		<p>“I cannot make a single decision involving students’ discipline management. I have to wait for the decision of the head teacher and this has worsened the problem of indiscipline in the school.”</p>
	Conflicts between departments over resources.	<p>“Teachers’ morale is low and it is a struggle to keep them in the school. Those on the government payroll are here only for their salaries.”</p>
Head teacher.		<p>“Academic performance of the school has remained stagnant though I make effort to make teachers give their best.”</p>
Deputy head teacher	Less involvement in	<p>“Teachers are fully involved in management activities because they hold offices such as being heads of departments, heads of committees and patrons of clubs among others which require them to take certain decisions.”</p>

Head teacher	decision making	“Through regular staff meetings, teachers contribute to decision making by making their suggestions which when adopted influence management of the school.”
Deputy head teacher	Conflicts because of Unmet expectations	“The head teacher normally complains that I do not do my work well. He expects me to be fully at school, monitor teachers’ attendance to lessons, get schemes of work from teachers and at the end of the day better results. Yet he has failed to consider teachers’ problems. No accommodation for teachers, poor meals, no transport yet it’s a hard to reach area. Can you imagine that he does not even provide scholastic materials for teachers to write schemes of work but keeps on lamenting that as teachers they should learn to improvise! I wonder how someone would expect huge quantities of milk from unglazed cows! Everybody is wondering what the USE grants are used for?”
Teacher		“In this school, the head teacher is the school and the school is himself.”
Teacher		“Our head teacher is a despot, I only do what the policy requires of me to avoid conflicts with him and keep my job.”
Deputy head teacher.	Poor leadership styles and conflicts	“Our head teacher is an old man who looks at us as kids. He looks at things as they were during their years. It has never come into his mind that the world is dynamic. I am his deputy, but just a figurehead. All decisions come from his office and we are supposed to comply without questioning. When you insist on the right thing, then he names you a rebel and the following year, without God’s mercy, you cannot survive a transfer!”
Deputy head teacher		“Teachers are angry because even the small allowances such as transport and being office holders we used to get before the current head teacher have been removed and this has caused discontent among the teachers.”
Teacher		“We have committees such as procurement and disposal committees but which the head teacher never allows to sit and plan for the finances of the school because of his personal interests. This creates some unhappiness among the teachers.”
Self- interest and conflicts		

#### **4.4 Different Conflict Management Techniques used in the Schools**

This research item considered objective two of the study that sought to find out the different conflict management techniques used in government aided schools. The different conflict management techniques considered were integrating (collaborating), compromising (mixed motive), obliging (accommodating) and dominating (competing) style each with a number of conflicts considered. The questionnaire items were measured on a 5 point likert scale ranging from SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, U= Undecided, A = agree, SA= strongly agree. A mean score below 3.00 means that the respondents were in disagreement with the research question items while a mean above 3.00 means that the respondents were in agreement with the question items. On the other hand, a low standard deviation of below 1.0 mean that the responses were close to the mean while a high mean above 1.0 meant that in the responses there was high variation. The findings on the objective are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics on Different Conflict Management Techniques**

	Mean	Std. Dev	SD		D		U		A		SA	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Integrating</b>												
Investigate with staff	2.6667	1.20457	17	14.2	51	42.5	18	15.0	23	19.2	11	9.2
Superiors work with staff	2.6000	1.10309	14	11.7	60	50.0	10	8.3	32	26.7	4	3.3
Consider all concerns	2.8167	1.37189	17	14.2	50	41.7	15	12.5	14	11.7	24	20.0
<b>Compromise</b>												
Find a middle course	2.4333	1.30759	25	20.8	61	50.8	10	8.3	5	4.2	19	15.8
Give and take	2.4917	1.39022	38	31.7	32	26.7	18	15.0	17	14.2	15	12.5
Temporally solutions	3.1583	1.19520	13	10.8	32	26.7	4	3.3	65	54.2	6	5.0
<b>Obliging</b>												
Satisfy staff needs	2.6583	1.31249	22	18.3	48	40.0	15	12.5	19	15.8	16	13.3
offer concessions	2.8500	1.28108	14	11.7	52	43.3	6	5.0	34	28.3	14	11.7
Accept suggestions	2.5833	1.19932	16	13.3	62	51.7	9	7.5	22	18.3	11	9.2
<b>Dominating</b>												
Self-concern	4.0667	.86708	5	4.2	3	2.5	2	1.7	79	65.8	31	25.8
Use positions	3.8333	.95560	-	-	17	14.2	15	12.5	59	49.2	29	24.2
Force solutions	4.0833	.95779	4	3.3	7	5.8	5	4.2	63	52.5	41	34.2

**Source: Primary Data**

Data presented in Table 4.4 shows that the data was presented according to four management techniques considered were integrating, compromising, obliging and dominating. The results obtained under each item are presented here under.

#### 4.4.1 Integrating Conflict Management Technique

The integrating conflict management also known as the collaborating technique was studied by considering three constructs. These were namely, superiors trying to investigate issues with staff to find a solution acceptable to all, trying to work with teachers to find solutions problem and

bringing all concerns out in the open so that the issues could be resolved in the best possible way.

Considering superiors trying to investigate issues with staff to find a solution acceptable to all, the respondents were in disagreement. The results produced a low Mean = 2.6667 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.20457. The frequencies were also in disagreement with the larger number of the respondents 42.5% disagreeing, 14.2% strongly disagreeing and 15.0% undecided. Those who agreed were the smaller number 19.2% and 9.2% strongly agreed. In relation to the above, the respondents were asked to tell whether in solving problems, management of schools tried to work with teachers to find solutions to problems, the respondents were in disagreement. The results on the item were a low Mean = 2.6000 with a higher Standard Deviation = 1.10309. The results of the frequencies had the larger number of the respondents 50.0% disagreed, 11.7% strongly disagreed and 8.3% were undecided. Those who agreed were 26.7% and 3.3% strongly agreed. These results mean that management of schools did not try to work with teachers to find solutions to problems.

When the respondents were asked to tell whether bringing all concerns out in the open so that the issues could be resolved in the best possible way, the respondents still were in disagreement. The results produced a low Mean = 2.8167 with a higher Standard Deviation = 1.37189. The results of the frequencies were also in disagreement with the larger number of the respondents 41.7% disagreeing, 14.2% strongly disagreed and 12.5% were undecided. Those who agreed were 11.7% and 20.0% strongly disagreed. These results mean largely the administrators of the schools didn't bring all concerns out in the open so that the issues could be resolved in the best possible way.

In the open responses, the teachers largely indicated that the head teachers did investigate issues with staff to find acceptable solutions to all did not attempt to find solutions together with the teachers and did not bring out all the concerns in the open. It was indicated that the head teachers were dictators and made sole decisions in solving issues. A number of teachers reported that head teachers solved conflicts by threatening teachers with transfers even on mere rumours. However, during the interviews with the head teachers, it was revealed that there were regular meetings through which any cropping up conflicts were solved. The head teachers indicated that difficult matters would be referred to the Board of governors. For issues that could not be handled amicably, the head teachers indicated that teachers got referred back to the Ministry of Education of Education and Sports for transfer. Overall, considering the views presented above, head teachers largely did not handle conflicts by investigating issues with the staff to find solutions acceptable to all.

#### **4.4.2 Compromising Management Technique**

Compromising or mixed motive is another conflict management technique. This technique was studied by asking the respondents three items that concerned whether, superiors in the schools tried to find a middle course to resolve impasses, use give and take so that compromises could be made and temporally solutions to complex problems were at times found. In regard to whether superiors in the schools tried to find a middle course to resolve impasses, the results produced on the item were a low Mean = 2.4333 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.30759 indicating that the respondents were in agreement. The frequencies were also in disagreement with the larger number of the respondents 50.8% disagreeing, 20.8% strongly disagreeing and 8.3% being undecided. Those who strongly agreed were 15.8% and 4.2% agreed. These mean that the

administrators of schools in managing conflicts did not try to find a middle course to resolve impasses.

In the summary open responses of the teachers, they indicated that head teachers as a norm won the conflicts. It was indicated that except in circumstances where head teachers were removed from the schools because of strikes, otherwise in case of problems with the teachers, the teachers had to be transferred. It was indicated that head teachers had capacity to manipulate the Boards of Governors and officials in the Ministry of Education and sport to disorganise the teachers they disagreed with. A number of teachers indicated that there were no mechanisms for handling conflicts and the best alternative was to seek a transfer if one disagreed with the head teacher. For the teachers not on the payroll, one indicated that in case of conflict, the teachers had to just leave because they had no say. This means that in the handling of conflicts, schools administrators did not try to find a middle course to resolve impasses.

Concerning use give and take so that compromises could be made, still the results were in disagreement. The responses produced a low Mean = 2.4917 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.39022. The frequencies had the larger number of the respondents 31.7% strongly disagreeing, 26.7% disagreeing and 15.0% undecided. Those who agreed were 14.2% and 12.5% strongly agreed. These results mean that there was no give and take in the resolving of conflicts in schools. However, in the interviews with the head teachers and their deputies, it was indicated they used give and take in resolving conflicts. They pointed out that in staff meetings they gave in to the demands of teachers and even some indicated that before the board of governors and PTAs they had to give in to some of the complaints to the teachers. However, generally, it

emerges from the above responses that largely school administrators did not use and take in the management of conflicts.

Regarding whether administrators used temporarily solutions to complex problems at times, the respondents agreed. The results on the item were a Mean = 3.1583 although the Standard Deviation was high = 1.19520. In the frequencies, the larger number of the respondents 54.2% agreed, 5.0% strongly agreed and 3.3% were undecided. Those who disagreed were 26.7% and 10.8% strongly disagreed. Teachers in the open responses indicated that temporary solutions were normally reached like waiting to transfer the teachers disagreeing with the head teachers at the beginning of the new. It was also indicated that for some teachers their load would be reduced or some responsibilities withdrawn in order to reduce friction in the schools.

#### **4.4.3 Obliging Conflict Management Technique**

Obliging is a conflict management style also known as accommodating. Obliging conflict management was studied looking at three constructs. These were namely, superiors generally solving conflicts by trying to satisfy the needs of staff, offer concessions to staff interests and often going along with the suggestions of staff. Concerning superiors generally trying to satisfy the needs of staff, the results were in disagreement. The results were a low Mean = 2.6583 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.31249. The results of the frequencies were 40.0% disagreeing, 18.3% strongly disagreeing and 12.5% were undecided. Those who agreed were 15.8% and 13.3% strongly agreed. These results meant that superiors generally did not try to satisfy the needs of staff. In the interviews with the head teachers and their deputies, it was revealed that in case of conflicts, it was not easy to give in to the demands of the teachers because in most cases head teachers did not have the capacity to do so. This was because largely conflicts rotated

around money yet schools did not have money. Accordingly, the only solution to solving conflicts was to instigate the transfer of conflict mongers and their ring leaders. This means that conflicts were never resolved but instead head teachers transferred teachers as a mechanism of resolving conflicts.

As to whether administrators in schools usually offered concessions to staff interests, the results were in disagreement. The results on the item were a low mean = 2.8500 and a high Standard Deviation = 1.28108. The results of the frequencies had 43.3% disagreeing, 11.7% strongly disagreeing and 5.0% were undecided. Those who agreed were 28.3% and 11.7% strongly agreed. Relatedly, when the respondents were asked to tell whether the administrators often went along with the suggestions of staff, the results were in disagreement with a low Mean = 2.5833 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.19932. The results of the frequencies had the larger number of the respondents 51.7% disagreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed and 7.5% were undecided. Those who agreed were 18.3% and 9.2% strongly disagreed. These results mean that administrators often did not go along with the suggestions of staff.

#### **4.4.4 Dominating Conflict Management Technique**

Dominating Conflict management style also known as win – lose solutions on how it was used in the schools. This item was studied by looking at three constructs that asked whether, administrators in the schools solved conflicts through having high concern for them, using their positions to win conflicts and forced solutions to resolving conflicts. Regarding administrators in the schools solving conflicts through having high concern for them, the results were in agreement. A high Mean = 4.0667 was obtained with a low Standard Deviation = .86708. The results of frequencies had the majority of the respondents 65.8% agreeing, 25.8% strongly

agreeing and 1.7% were undecided. Those who disagreed were 2.5% disagreed and 4.2% strongly disagreed. As whether the administrators used their positions to win conflicts, the results were also in agreement. The Mean = 3.8333 with a low Standard Deviation = .95560. The results of the frequencies showed that the majority of the respondents were in agreement, that is 49.2% agreeing, 24.2% strongly agreeing, 14.2% disagreeing and 12.5% remaining undecided. The results from the respondents also showed that forced solutions to resolving conflicts in schools. The results on the item were a Mean = 4.0833 with a low Standard Deviation = .95779. The results of the frequencies had the majority of the respondents 52.5% agreeing and 34.2% strongly agreeing. Those who disagreed were 5.8%, those strongly disagreeing 3.3% and 4.2% were undecided. These results mean that the dominating conflict management style was employed by the head teachers in the handling of conflicts in the schools.

In the open responses, the respondents indicated that the head teachers used dictation in the handling of the conflicts. It was revealed that even during meetings, teachers who tried to articulate issues in the way that disadvantaged head teachers were target for transfer and harassment. However, during the interviews with the head teachers and their deputies, it was revealed that there were participative approaches in which teachers were involved in resolving conflicts involving them. However, going by the responses of the teachers who overwhelmingly indicated that conflicts were resolved in a dominating manner, it means that the dominating style was highly employed.

#### **4.5 The Most Appropriate Conflict Management Techniques**

This research item considered objective three of the study that sought to establish the most appropriate conflict management techniques that influence performance of secondary schools. The different conflict management techniques considered were integrating (collaborating), compromising (mixed motive), obliging (accommodating) and dominating (competing) style each with a number of conflicts considered. The questionnaire items were measured on a 5 point likert scale ranging from SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, U= Undecided, A = agree, SA= strongly agree. A mean score below 3.00 means that the respondents were in disagreement with the research question items while a mean above 3.00 means that the respondents were in agreement with the question items. On the other hand, a low standard deviation of below 1.0 mean that the responses were close to the mean while a high mean above 1.0 meant that in the responses there was high variation. The findings on the objective are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics on the Most Appropriate Conflict Management Techniques**

	Mean	Std. Dev	SD		D		U		A		SA	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Integrating</b>												
Investigate with staff	4.1583	.36658	-	-	-	-	-	-	101	84.2	19	15.8
Superiors work with staff	3.9083	.71002	-	-	12	10.0	-	-	95	79.2	13	10.8
Consider all concerns	4.0083	.90280	-	-	16	13.3	-	-	71	59.2	33	27.5
<b>Compromise</b>												
Find a middle course	4.1583	.36658	-	-	27	22.5	-	-	73	60.8	20	16.7
Give and take	4.0083	.90280	-	-	6	5.0	-	-	104	86.7	10	8.3
Temporally solutions	2.9000	1.23261	15	12.5	41	34.2	16	13.3	37	30.8	11	9.2
<b>Obliging</b>												
Satisfy staff needs	3.0417	1.39263	26	21.7	21	17.5	9	7.5	50	41.7	14	11.7
offer concessions	3.3333	1.31784	18	15.0	12	10.0	26	21.7	40	33.3	24	20.0
Accept suggestions	4.0500	.67176	-	-	8	6.7	-	-	90	75.0	22	18.3
<b>Dominating</b>												
Self-concern	1.8417	.36658	19	15.8	101	84.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Use positions	1.6750	.47034	39	32.5	81	67.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Force solutions	1.8583	.35017	17	14.2	103	85.8	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Source: Primary Data**

Data presented in Table 4.5 shows that the data was presented according to four management techniques from which the respondents were supposed to select the most appropriate; the techniques were namely, integrating, compromising, obliging and dominating. The results obtained under each item are presented here under.

#### 4.5.1 Integrating Conflict Management Technique

This conflict management technique was studied by asking the respondents to tell whether they would consider it most appropriate if superiors always tried to investigate issues with them to find solutions acceptable to all; glad if superiors tried to work with the teachers to find solutions to problems; and superiors tried to bring all teachers concerns in the open so that the issues could be resolved in the best possible way. For items regarding whether teachers would consider it most appropriate if superiors always tried to investigate issues with them to find solutions acceptable to all, the results on the item was a high Mean = 4.1583 and a low Standard Deviation = .36658 indicating that the respondents agreed. The results of the frequencies showed that all the respondents were in agreement with 84.2% agreeing and 15.8% strongly agreed.

Regarding the item concerning whether teachers would be glad if superiors tried to work with them to find solutions to problems, the respondents were also in agreement. The results produced a Mean = 3.9083 and a low Standard Deviation = .71002. The majority of the respondents were in agreement with 79.2% of the respondents agreeing, 27.5% strongly agreeing with only 13.3% disagreeing. The respondents also agreed that they would feel happy if superiors tried to bring all their concerns out in the open so that the issues could be resolved in the best possible way. The results on the item were a Mean = 4.0083 with a low Standard Deviation = .90280. These results mean that the respondents would be glad if the integrating approach was used in resolving conflicts in the schools.

In their summary responses on the item, the teachers revealed that if the head teachers tried to solve conflicts with them, handled problems with them and brought out all concerns in the open, there would be harmony in the schools as problems would be solved harmoniously. Besides, they indicated that restlessness, uneasiness and stress would be reduced and teachers would not be

under the anxiety of fearing transfers at the end of each year. In the interviews, the administrators also indicated that they also preferred that conflicts be solved with teachers and all concerns come out in the open. However, it was pointed out that even when this happened, some teachers continued to dodge lessons, not perform other school duties and this caused frustration enhancing conflict. However, on the whole the respondents appreciated the integrating conflict management approach as a good approach.

#### **4.5.2 Compromising Conflict Management Technique**

To establish whether the compromising conflict management technique was an appropriate technique, the respondents were asked to tell whether, wished their superiors tried to find a middle course to resolve impasses, used give and take so that compromises could be made and would always find temporally solutions to complex problems. The respondents indicated that they wished their superiors tried to find a middle course to resolve impasses. The results on the item were a Mean = 4.1583 with a low Standard Deviation = .36658. The frequency results had the majority of the respondents 60.8% agreeing, 16.7% strongly agreeing and only 22.5% disagreed.

The respondents also agreed that they would wish the superiors used give and take so that compromises could be made. The results obtained on the item were a Mean = 4.0083 with a low Standard Deviation = .90280. The results of the frequencies showed that the majority of the respondents 86.7% agreed, 8.3% strong agreed and only 5.0% disagreed. However, the respondents did not consider that it would be appropriate to always find would always find temporally solutions to complex problems. The results on the items were a low Mean = 2.9000 and a Standard Deviation = 1.23261. The results of the frequencies had the larger number of the

respondents 34.2% disagreeing, 12.5% strongly disagreeing and 13.3% were undecided. Those who agreed were 30.8% and 9.2% strongly agreed. These results mean that whereas largely the respondents appreciated the compromising conflict management approach they did not prefer the use of temporary solutions as a measure to conflict management.

In the open responses, the respondents indicated that temporary solutions did not solve the conflicts but instead hastened tensions as the teachers remained distrustful of the head teachers. The teachers preferred that the conflicts always found permanent solutions. In the interviews with the head teachers, they indicated that temporary solutions were always used to calm down tensions as mechanisms for solving conflicts were being sought. Over all, the respondents to a larger extent appreciated the use of the compromising conflict management techniques.

#### **4.5.3 Obliging Conflict Management Technique**

The study also sought to establish whether the obliging conflict management technique was the most appropriate. The items considered here were whether they would be happy if superiors generally tried to satisfy the needs of staff, offered concessions to staff interests and often went along with the suggestions of staff. In their responses, the respondents agreed that they would be happy if superiors generally tried to satisfy the needs of staff. The results on the item were a Mean = 3.0417 higher Standard Deviation = 1.39263 indicating that there was some respondents whose views varied on the item. The results of the frequencies, the larger number of the respondents 41.7% agreeing and 11.7% strongly agreeing. Those who disagreed were 17.5%, those strongly disagreeing 21.7% while 9.5% were undecided.

The respondents also indicated that they would be happy if the administrators offered concessions to staff interests. The results on the item were a Mean = 3.3333 but still with a high Standard Deviation = 1.31784 indicating that there was some large number of respondents whose views varied on the item. The frequencies had the larger number of the respondents 33.3% agreeing and 20.0% strongly agreeing. Those who disagreed were 10.0%, those strongly disagreeing 15.0% and 21.7% were undecided. However, the respondents indicated that they would be very happy if superiors often went along with the suggestions of staff. The results on the item were a high Mean = 4.0500 with a low Standard Deviation = 4.0500. Those who agreed were 75.0%, those strongly agreeing were 18.3% and 6.7% disagreed. The above results mean that the respondents appreciated the obliging conflict management techniques more especially if superiors often went along with the suggestions of staff.

In the open responses, the respondents indicated that they would be happy if the administrators tried to reason with them in handling conflicts such that problems were amicably solved. The respondents indicated that at times they had good suggestions which however the administrators brushed off. In the interviews, it was revealed that in handling of conflicts, the administrators tried to adopt teachers' suggestions which were useful in resolving of conflicts. The results above mean that obliging conflict was acceptable in resolving conflicts especially when superiors often went along with the suggestions of staff.

#### **4.5.4 Dominating Conflict Management Technique**

This conflict management technique was studied by looking at three practices used when it had been adopted in conflict management. These included asking the respondents if they would be pleased if superiors had high concern for themselves in resolving conflicts, used their positions

to win conflicts and force solutions to conflicts. However, the results obtained on the item indicated that the approach was not appreciated by the teachers. With a high Mean = 1.8417 and a low Standard Deviation = .36658, the respondents indicated that they would not be pleased if superiors had high concern for themselves in resolving conflicts. The frequencies had all the respondents in disagreement with 84.2% disagreeing and 15.8% strongly disagreeing.

The respondents also indicated that they would not be pleased if superiors used their positions to win the conflicts. The results were a high Mean = 1.6750 and low Deviations = .47034. The results of the frequencies had the majority of 67.5% disagreeing and 32.5% strongly disagreeing. As to whether they would be thrilled if their superiors forced solutions to conflicts, still the respondents were in disagreement. The results were a high Mean = 1.8583 and a low Standard Deviation = .35017. Those who disagreed were 85.5% and 14.2% strongly disagreed. These results mean that the respondents completely rejected the dominating conflict management technique as an appropriate technique for conflict management.

In their summary opinions, the respondents indicated that the dominating conflict management approach which was the most common approach used by the head teachers was responsible for the escalating conflicts in the schools. It was pointed out that the head teachers threatened the teachers with transfers whenever there were conflicts. In the interviews, with the head teachers, it was indicated that they used the dominating approach. However, it was indicated that this was because some issues needed to be dictated. Otherwise, the teachers wanted a laissez-faire situation in the schools which according to the head teachers was not good for performance. However, overall the respondents indicated that the dominating conflict management technique was not a good conflict management technique.

#### 4.6 Performance of Schools

This item of the study analysed the dependent variable of the study, schools' performance. To establish schools' performance, the respondents were asked to tell whether schools attracted high enrolment, high retention of students, best students, improved in national examinations and if there was full instruction by teachers. The respondents were also asked to tell whether discipline of the students is high, revenues of the school increased, school had acquired necessary infrastructure and sufficient teachers. The descriptive statistics on schools performance are presented in table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics on Performance of Schools**

Nature of Conflicts	Mean	Std. Dev	SD		D		U		A		SA	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
High enrolment	3.7417	1.26022	6	5.0	26	21.7	-	-	49	40.8	39	32.5
High retention	3.4250	1.14248	21	17.5	18	15.0	9	7.5	61	50.8	11	9.2
Best students	2.4333	1.13562	14	11.7	78	65.0	-	-	18	15.0	10	8.3
Better grades	2.4333	1.13562	14	11.7	78	65.0	-	-	18	15.0	10	8.3
Full instruction	2.7583	1.37196	25	20.8	43	35.8	-	-	40	33.3	12	10.0
High discipline	2.7333	1.28163	21	17.5	48	40.0	-	-	44	36.7	7	5.8
Revenue	1.8417	.36658	64	53.3	56	46.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Infrastructure	1.6750	.47034	38	31.7	65	54.2	-	-	10	8.3	7	5.8
Enough staff	3.6417	1.08307	3	2.5	26	21.7	3	2.5	67	55.8	21	17.5

**Source: Primary Data**

The results in table 4.6 indicate that the respondents agreed that the schools had attracted high enrolment. The results on the item were a Mean = 3.7417 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.26022 indicating that the respondents were varied in their responses with some disagreeing.

The majority of the respondents 40.8% and 32.5% agreed and strongly agreed. Those who disagreed were 21.7% and 5.0% strongly disagreed. In the open responses and interviews, it was revealed that in most schools enrolment was high. However, it was reported that this had nothing much to do with conflict management in the schools but it was the Universal Secondary Education (USE) policy which led to increase in the number of students in the schools. These results mean that the largely high enrolment in schools depended on the USE policy.

The responses of the respondents also indicated that somehow the retention of students was high. The results on the item were a Mean = 3.4250 but with a higher Standard Deviation = 1.14248. Those who agreed were 50.8% and 9.2% strongly agreed with 7.5% undecided. Those who disagreed were 15.0% and 17.5% strongly disagreed. In the interviews with the head teachers, it was revealed that retention of students was fairly. It was revealed that for students joining senior one, 70% - 100% completed ordinary level of education. This means that largely the schools had a high retention of students.

The respondents indicated that the schools did not attract the best students. The results obtained on the item were a Mean = 2.4333 with a high Standard Deviation = 1.13562 which indicates that the responses were varied. The frequency results had the majority of the students 65.0% disagreeing and 11.7% strongly disagreeing. Those who agreed were only 15.0% and 8.3%. In the open responses, most of the respondents indicated that their schools attracted students with poor grades, especially those poor second grades and those in third grade. In the interviews with the head teachers and their deputies it was revealed that in some of the schools in the previous 5 years they had not attracted a single student in Senior one with a first grade in the primary seven leaving examinations. These results mean that the schools did not attract the best students.

The results obtained from the respondents showed that there was no full instruction by teachers in the schools. The results were a low Mean = 2.7583 although the standard deviation = 1.37196 was high. The results of the frequencies had the larger number of the respondents 35.8% disagreeing and 20.8% strongly disagreeing. Those who agreed were 33.3% and 10.0%. In the open responses of the teachers and interviews with the head teachers and their deputies, it was also indicated that instruction was poor. It was revealed that since the schools did not have extra incentives to offer to teachers, teachers did not appear at schools daily because of lack of transport, accommodation and meals. The respondents also revealed that there was lack of science and laboratory facilities because the schools lacked money to purchase them since the USE money was not sufficient to enable acquire them. The results above show that there was a problem of teacher instruction in the schools by the teachers.

The results in Table 4.6 show that discipline of the students was not high with a Mean = 2.7333 however with a high Standard Deviation = 1.28163. The larger number of the respondents 40.0% disagreed and 5.8% strongly disagreed. Those who agreed were 36.7% and 5.8% strongly agreed. These results mean discipline of the students in the schools was not high. In summary responses and interviews, it was revealed that with the USE policy, enrolment in the schools was high and this had made control of discipline difficult. It was indicated that besides, teachers lacked motivation because of lack of incentives, they were not sufficient enough especially in the science subjects to help in the management of students.

The data in Table 4.6 shows that the revenue of the schools had not increased. The results were a low Mean = 1.8417 and Standard Deviation = .36658. Those who disagreed were 46.7% and 53.3% strongly disagreed. These results mean that the schools were not experiencing increase in

the revenue. However, it was revealed that revenue did not increase because of USE policy which did not allow schools to collect money from the students. Therefore, even with the enrolment in the schools, this was not replicated in terms of revenue to the schools.

The respondents also indicated that the schools had not acquired necessary infrastructure. The results obtained on the item were a low Mean = 1.6750 and Standard Deviation = .47034. The majority of the respondents 54.2% disagreed and 31.7% strongly disagreed. These results mean that largely the schools lacked the necessary infrastructure. The respondents indicated that infrastructure was not increasing in the schools despite increase in the number of students. Apparently, this was because schools were not collecting money from the students and even the buildings the government had built as a result of the USE policy were not sufficient.

To establish whether conflict management predicted performance of schools as hypothesised the study carried a multiple linear regression. Multiple regression analysis of the aggregate index schools performance on the four variables namely integrating, compromising, obliging and dominating produced the results in Table 4.7, showing that the three variables considered were collectively good explanatory variables ( $F= 12.120$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ) at one percent level of significance ( $p < 0.01$ ), accounting for 27.2% of the variation in the aggregate index of the schools performance (Adjusted R square .272). This also implies that the balance (72.8%) is explained by other variables not considered in this study. Therefore conflict management had a weak influence in school performance (27.2%).

**Table 4.7: Regression coefficients on Conflict Management and Schools Performance**

Employee performance	$\beta$	P
Integrating	-.043	0.606
Compromising	.082	0.358
Obliging	.066	0.460
Dominating	.504	0.000

R .545    R<sup>2</sup> = .297    Adjusted R = .272    F = 12.120    p = .001

Table 4.7 shows that three variables of conflict namely integrating, compromising, obliging were not positive significant predictors of schools performance and only one variable, dominating variable was significant. However, it should be noted that this was because the results on schools performance were largely negative (Table 4.6) indicating that the schools were not performing. This means that the dominating variable which had negative results (Table 4.5) could positively correlate with negative performance of the schools.

The results in Table 4.7 reveal that the integrating conflict management technique did not influence the performance in the schools with a negative  $\beta = -0.043$  and 0.606 probability above the critical level of 0.05. This means that the integrating conflict management technique did not influence performance in the schools. With the compromising conflict management technique a low  $\beta = 0.082$  and 0.358 probability above the critical level of 0.05 were obtained. This indicated that the compromising approach did not influence performance in the schools. Also, the results for the obliging variable were a low  $\beta = 0.066$  and 0.460 probability above the critical level of 0.05 indicating that it had an insignificant influence on schools performance.

However, the dominating conflict management technique variable had a high positive  $\beta = .504$  and 0.001 probability below the critical level of 0.05. These results mean that the dominating conflict management technique influenced the performance in the schools. This was largely because the performance of the schools was poor (Table 4.6). Therefore, with integrating, compromising and obliging conflict management techniques did not predict poor performance. These results mean that in the schools studied the administrators were not using the integrating, compromising and obliging conflict management techniques and instead used the dominating conflict management technique which led to poor performance in the schools.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the discussion of the results obtained from the data presented in chapter four. The discussion leads to the making of various conclusions and recommendations. The discussion is on effect of Conflict Management and Performance of schools. Focus is specifically centred on the set objectives of the study, which are; investigating the existing conflicts in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District, the different conflict management techniques used in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District and the most appropriate conflict management techniques that influence performance of Government Aided Secondary Schools in Buikwe District.

#### **5.2 Discussion**

##### **5.2.1 Existing Conflicts in Government Aided Secondary Schools**

The study established that in the schools, conflicts occurred between management and the teachers hence affecting morale of the teachers. This finding agrees with views of Stojkovic et al (2003) who indicates that one form of conflict in organisations is vertical conflict. The authors explain that vertical conflict involves two hierarchical levels and an employee and his/her immediate boss. Accordingly, this type of conflict exists mainly within organisations like Universities where the organisational structure has a high degree of formality. According to Ikeda et al. (2005), there are vertical conflict between operational workers and administration. They explain that these conflicts are referred to as psychological distance by which workers

don't feel involved in the organisation and feel that their needs are not met. These conflicts also power and status conflicts by which workers feel powerless and alienated. Further the conflicts are referred to as differences in value and ideology which represents underlying beliefs on objectives and goals of an organisation and; scarce resources which concerns disagreements regarding benefits, salary and work conditions. This as established by the study, weakens the morale of teachers, leads to increased staff turnover, indifference in carrying out of schools' duties and bickering which affects the performance of the schools as the teachers do not put in maximum effort.

The results of the study revealed that in the schools, there were conflicts in the top management that is the head teachers, deputy head teachers and heads of departments. This concurs with the views of Stojkovic et al (2003) who stated that in organisations there occur horizontal conflicts. Accordingly, these occur between employees within the same unit, on the same hierarchical level. Stojkovic et al explains that horizontal conflicts can manifest themselves for many reasons, including ideas, decisions about which units or individuals do not agree or the distribution of resources. Ikeda et al. (2005) explains that top management peers perceive more conflict internally between their groups than those of lower position. Conflicts between top management happen because people in higher hierarchical levels are involved in development of politics with chances for disagreement bigger. This means that conflicts exist in top management of organisations such as schools as the members struggle over power and resources.

The study also established that there were conflicts due to overlapping roles. This finding resonates with the views of the report of the State of Queensland (2012) which expounds that role conflict occur when workers are given two different and incompatible roles at the same time

or their role overlaps with another worker or work group. Apparently, the greater the role conflict, the higher the likelihood of a worker experiencing occupational stress. This means that when leaders let their roles overlap with those of the subordinates, conflicts develop.

The study also found out that conflicts occurred over sharing of resources. This agrees with the views of Rahim (2001) who explains that in organisations there occurs intergroup conflict due to collective incompatibility or disagreement between two or more divisions, departments, or sub-systems in connection with tasks, resources, information, and so on. Accordingly, this form of conflict implies that each member of a group is in conflict with those of another, quite often the actual dispute is carried out between representatives. Intergroup conflicts are inevitable in complex organisations having differentiated sub-systems with different goals, norms, and orientations; it appeared that intergroup conflict would be an inevitable part of organisational life. This means that in organisations like schools, conflicts occur stemming on how resources are shared.

The study further established that conflicts occurred because of unmet staff expectations with school heads not delivering to teachers' expectations. This finding agrees with the findings made by other previous scholars. Niedria (2012) explains that managers and supervised employees fall into routine disagreements over workplace expectations. Also, in agreement, Copley (2008) states that sometimes some leaders, ignore or minimise the needs and expectations of the other parties. This thus causes conflicts and affects performance of organisations such as schools.

The study found out that poor leadership in the schools caused conflicts. This agrees with the findings of other scholars. López-Fresno (2012) indicates that if the leader employs a poor

leadership style, feelings of insecurity in workplaces prevail resulting into an atmosphere- of related problems such as conflicts, and disputes. Savolainen and Malkamäki (2011) explained that when the leadership style promotes trust, employees work effectively and have a high level of commitment. In addition, they share ideas and knowledge, including tacit knowledge. According to López-Fresno (2012) respect and appreciation stimulate the development of trust, while poor leadership underestimates employees' personal competences and this may cause conflicts. As expressed by Chris Argyris (1923) in his immaturity-maturity theory, the reason for so much employee apathy is not because of laziness, but rather because people are treated like children (Mugizi, 2007). This means that poor leadership styles lead to conflicts.

The study established that poor communication leads to conflicts because some individuals refuse to participate in the implementation of programmes and projects they lack knowledge about. The findings agree with the views of other scholars for instance, Okumbe (1998) who indicates that bad communication makes people confused by the message and less likely to do what the sender wants. This is most likely to result into conflicts in schools.

The study also found out that selfish interest of staff caused conflicts in the schools. These conflicts accordingly largely were about how the resources in the schools were being used by the head teachers. This finding agrees with the views presented by other scholars. For instance, Sullivan (2013) states that when an individual's personal goals are at odds with the goals of the organisation, the individual may be tempted to fight for his personal goals, creating a conflict situation that will hamper success of the project. This means that selfish interest of staff in the schools led to conflicts which hamper performance.

### **5.2.2 Different Conflict Management Techniques used in Government Aided Schools**

The findings of the study revealed that in the handling of conflicts, the largely head teachers did not use integrating as a conflict management technique. This is because it was revealed that they did not handle conflicts through investigating issues with staff to find a solution acceptable to all. However, this finding was contrary to the views by Lee (2008) which indicates that when the issues are complex, it is suitable to utilise the skills and information possessed by different parties to formulate solutions and successful implementations. Accordingly, this is a competent style because it provides each disputant with access to the other person's perceptions or incompatible goals, thereby enabling them to find a solution that integrates the goals and needs of both parties. This means if conflicts are to be properly handled there is need to handle conflicts together with different parties involved to find a solution acceptable to all.

The study found out that in the handling of conflicts, school administrators did not try to find a middle course to resolve impasses. However, this was in disagreement with the views of other scholars indicating that one of the mechanisms for resolving conflicts was compromising management techniques by which school administrators try to find a middle course to resolve impasses. For instance Graham (2009) indicates that through compromise, they are essentially asking that each employee give up part of what they want so that each goal can be successfully attained. Hotepo et al. (2010) indicate that compromising conflict management involves bargaining. Neither party emerges satisfied from the confrontation but that both, through negotiation, can get something they do not have at the start, or more of something they need, usually by giving up something of lesser importance. In other words, conflicts are handled through finding a middle course to resolve impasses.

The study found out that largely school administrators did not use the compromising conflict management approach. This was because they did not use give and take in the management of conflicts. However, this is contrary to the views of other scholars who indicate that one of the methods of conflict management is compromising by which give and take is employed. Song et al. (2006) expound that compromising conflict-handling technique is a conflict management strategy in which the participant demonstrates a moderate level of concern for himself or herself and for the other party and pursues give-and-take or sharing, whereby both parties must relinquish something to create a mutually acceptable solution. According to Kehinde (2011) managers of organisations preferred compromise in problem solving. Accordingly, the conflict management strategy had been relatively useful in minimising the incidence of disruptive conflicts.

The study found out that administrators in the schools did not use accommodating conflict management technique. This was because they did not try to satisfy the needs of staff. This is contrary to the views of other scholars who indicate that conflicts can be handled through trying to satisfy the needs of staff. Song et al. (2006) stated that obliging conflict management style involves a low concern for self and a high concern for others and is often associated with an emphasis on things held in common. Accordingly, the central goal of this strategy is to meet the needs of the other party. Information tends to flow one direction only, with the accommodating strategist exercising generosity, selflessness, charity, obedience, or some other form of acquiescence, while downplaying any personal needs. This means if conflicts are to be solved, there is need for satisfying the needs of staff.

The study found out that administrators of schools did not usually offer concessions to staff interests nor go along with the suggestions of staff in resolving conflicts. This means that head teachers in handling conflicts did not consider employing obliging conflict management technique in the management of conflicts. This is because, according to Mughal and Khan (2013), state that with obliging conflict management, readiness for co-operation is extremely high, and the conflict is resolved by putting the other party's interests before its own. This means that conflict is handled by offering concessions to staff interests or going along with the suggestions of staff in resolving conflicts.

The study revealed that the dominating conflict approach was employed in the school. Accordingly, the administrators in the schools solved conflicts through having high concern for themselves, using their positions to win conflicts and forcing solutions to resolving conflicts. However, this finding is contrary to the finding made by other scholars. For instance, Kantek & Gezer, (2009) in their study, conflict in schools; they established that dominating was the least used management style. This means that the conflict management used in managing conflicts in schools in Uganda was the least common in other contexts.

### **5.2.3 The Most Appropriate Conflict Management Technique**

The study established that the integrating conflict management technique was the most appropriate conflicting management technique. This was because all the Means 3.9083 - 4.1583 on the items were high with low Standard Deviations = 0.36658 - 0.90280. The respondents indicated they would be glad if the integrating approach was used in resolving conflicts in the schools by head teachers in trying to solve conflicts by investigating and finding solutions with the teachers, handling problems together and bringing out all concerns in the open. The

significance of the integrating conflict management techniques is recognised by other scholars. Lee (2008), states that the integrating style is believed to be both effective and appropriate in managing conflicts and, therefore, is perceived as highly competent. Accordingly, integrating style is competent because it provides each disputant with access to the other person's perceptions or incompatible goals, thereby enabling them to find solution that integrates the goals and needs of both parties. Vigil-King (2000) revealed the use of more integrative conflict management strategies was likely to have higher commitment than teams using less integrative styles. On their part, Gull, Rehman and Zaidi (2012) revealed that the integrative conflict management style was highly positively associated with team effectiveness.

The study established that compromising conflict management followed in significance in conflict management because two items out of three produced very high means 4.0083 and 4.1583 with low standard deviations 0.36658 and 0.90280. Only one item had a low Mean = 2.9000 and a high standard deviation 1.23261. The respondents indicated superiors' trying to find a middle course to resolve impasses was very appropriate as using give and take so that compromises could be made. However always finding temporally solutions to complex problems was not liked. Therefore, compromising conflict management technique was an appropriate conflict management technique if superiors tried to find a middle course to resolve impasses and used give and take so that compromises could be made. However, this finding is contrary to the findings of other scholars. Song et al. (2006) found no support for the predictions that the greater the use of compromising behavioural conflict handling strategies, the higher will be the levels of constructive conflict which would enhance performance. However, the results of this study indicate that it did not correlate with performance in the schools. This means that if used in Ugandan schools, the compromising conflict management technique can predict performance.

The study established that the obliging conflict management technique followed the integrating and compromising conflict management techniques in appropriateness. This is because only one Mean 4.0500 was high with a low Standard Deviation = 0.67176. The remaining means were moderately high and with high Standard Deviations = 1.39263 - 1.31784. The respondents indicated that they would be happy if superiors tried to satisfy the needs of staff, offered concessions to staff interests and often went along with the suggestions of staff. Regression analysis revealed that it was not a predictor of the poor performance in the schools. Other scholars concur to the importance of obliging conflict management technique although with differing results. Song et al. (2006) found that accommodating behavioural conflict-handling strategy had positive and statistically significant relationship with employee constructive behaviours. Gull et al. (2012) established that accommodating style of conflict management captured highest percentage points in high team effectiveness and that the majority of manager level employees were using accommodating style of conflict management. However Montoya-Weiss et al. (2001) reveals that obliging is not the most appropriate conflict management technique having found out that obliging is negative conflict management behaviour because it entails passive involvement in the team task. Accordingly, thoughtless agreement by one party keeps a team from achieving its full potential for synergy through collaboration.

The study established that dominating conflict management technique was most inappropriate. All the means on the item were negative 1.6750 - 1.8583 with low standard deviations. Besides the study established that dominating conflict management technique which was the most dominantly used predicted the negative performance in the schools. Therefore, dominating conflict management technique negatively predicts schools' performance. However, other

scholars recognise the dominance of conflict dominating conflict management technique. Shilpa and Shukla (2010) indicated that the Americans used the competing (dominating) style more. The US people tended to resolve conflict in a more competitive, directive, assertive, and confrontational way. This means that in different contexts, leaders largely use the dominating conflict management technique in resolving conflicts.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The results of the study led to the following observations that led to the reaching of the following conclusions;

1. Several conflicts existed in schools between management and staff and between members of management. However, the most common in the order of prevalence were those between management and subordinates over overlapping roles, less involvement, unmet expectations, poor management and then poor leadership styles.
2. In schools, the most common conflict management technique used was the dominating conflict management techniques. Integrating, compromising and accommodating conflict management techniques were missing in the resolution of conflict in schools. Unfortunately, the dominating conflict management techniques exacerbated the conflicts in the schools leading to poor performance.
3. The most appropriate management techniques significantly positively relate with performance of schools. These are namely, integrating, compromising and obliging. Thus, because these conflict management techniques were missing in the schools, largely there was poor performance.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The results and conclusions of the study lead to the making of the following recommendations on conflict management techniques in schools.

1. Policy makers and management of schools should identify the different conflicts in the schools and what causes them such that they sensitise all those affected such as teachers to avoid them. These conflicts include conflicts between management and staff, between members of management, conflicts over overlapping roles, less involvement, unmet expectations, poor management and then poor leadership styles.
2. Those involved in supervising schools such as the Ministry of Education and Sports, Education Officials, Boards of Governors and Parents' Committees should ensure that there mechanisms in schools for resolving conflicts. These include holding regular workshops for teachers and head teachers, ensuring that head teachers follow rules and procedures in the management of schools and involvement of teachers in the management of schools. They should also monitor to ensure that head teachers conduct regular meetings in schools.
3. The managers of schools, head teachers in particular in the management of conflicts should employ the most appropriate technique that is the composite conflict management technique which is an amalgamation of different appropriate techniques. This involves working with the teachers to find solutions to problems, bringing all concerns in the open, finding a middle course to resolve impasses, using give and take, trying to satisfy the needs of staff, offering concessions and often going along with the suggestions of staff. Head teachers should avoid dominance in the handling of conflicts.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

This study examined the relationship between conflict management and the performance of schools. Further studies can be carried out on the procedures on conflict management in schools in Uganda, conflict commitment escalation in schools in Uganda and the influence of different stake holders involved in conflicts management in schools.

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**APPENDIX I: DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE**

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	<b>260</b>	<b>155</b>	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

**Note:** *N*- is population size, *S*- is sample size

*Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970)*

**APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE.**

Kyambogo University  
P.O. Box 1, Kyambogo  
July, 2014.

Dear respondent,

I am a student at Kyambogo University conducting a research study as a requirement for the award of a Master of Education in Policy, Planning and Management. The objective of the study is to examine the influence of conflict management on the performance of schools in Buikwe District. You have been selected as one of my key respondents in this study because I strongly believe you have the necessary information required for the study. I humbly request you to spare some time and fill this questionnaire. The information obtained will be treated with most confidentiality.

Faithfully,

.....

Ssekiziyivu Edward

**SECTION (A) BACKGROUND**

1. Your gender?

Male	Female

2. Your age group?

Below 30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51 years and above

3. Your teaching experience?

Less than 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 years and above

4. Your position in the school?

Teacher	Deputy head teacher	Head teacher

Others please specify.....

5. Your level of education:

Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Master Degree

Others please specify.....

6. Your terms of employment

Probation	Permanent	Contract	Temporary

Others please specify.....

**SECTION B: Independent Variables**

Indicate your response in the items in the table below on the scale of 1- Strongly disagree (SD); 2- Disagree (D); 3- Undecided (U) 4- Agree (A); 5- Strongly agree (SA).

B1	Existing Conflicts	SD	D	U	A	SA
B1.1	There are conflicts between management and subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
B1.2	There are conflicts in the top administration of the school					
B1.3	Overlapping roles of different officers cause conflicts					
B1.4	Conflicts exist between different departments over sharing of resources					
B1.5	Conflicts exist over less involvement of staff in decision making					
B1.6	Conflicts exist from staff expectations not being met given the school environment					
B1.7	Poor leadership styles create conflict in the school					
B1.8	Conflicts exist because of poor communication in the school					
B1.9	Conflicts exist over individuals desire to gratify personal interests					

B1.11 In summary, what is your assessment of the existing conflicts in the school?.....

.....

.....

B2	Conflict management techniques	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
B2.1	My superiors try to investigate an issue with staff to find a solution acceptable to all					
B2.2	My superiors try to work with us to find solutions to a problem					
B2.3	My superiors try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.					
B2.4	My superiors try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.					
B2.5	My superiors use give and take so that a compromise can be made					
B2.6	Temporally solutions to complex problems are at times found					
B2.7	My superiors generally try to satisfy the needs of staff					
B2.8	My superiors usually offer concessions to staff interests					
B2.9	My superior often goes along with the suggestions of staff					
B2.10	My superiors have high concern for themselves in resolving conflicts					
B2.11	My superiors use their positions to win conflicts					
B2.12	My superiors force solutions to conflicts					

B13 Overall, summarise your opinion about the conflict management techniques employee in your school .....

.....

.....

<b>B3</b>	<b>The Most Appropriate Conflict Management Techniques</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
B3.1	I would consider it most appropriate if my superiors always tried to investigate an issue with staff to find a solution acceptable to all					
B3.2	I would be glad if my superiors tried to work with us to find solutions to a problem					
B3.3	I would feel happy when superiors try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way.					
B3.4	I would wish that my superiors try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.					
B3.5	I wish my superiors use give and take so that compromises can be made					
B3.6	I would be glad if temporally solutions to complex problems are at times found					
B3.7	I would be happy if my superiors generally try to satisfy the needs of staff					
B3.8	I wish my superiors usually offer concessions to staff interests					
B3.9	I would be happy if my superior often go along with the suggestions of staff					
B3.10	I would be pleased if my superiors had high concern for themselves in resolving conflicts					
B3.11	I like it when superiors use their positions to win conflicts					
B3.12	I feel thrilled when superiors force solutions to conflicts					

B3.13 Precisely, summarise your assessment of what you consider the best conflict management techniques.....  
.....  
.....

**SECTION C: Dependent Variables**

Indicate your response in the items in the table below on the scale of 1- Strongly disagree (SD); 2- Disagree (D); 3- Undecided (U) 4- Agree (A); 5- Strongly agree (SA).

C	Performance	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
C1.1	The school has attracted high enrolment					
C1.2	There is high retention of students					
C1.3	The school attracts the best students					
C1.4	The grades in national exams have improved					
C1.5	There is full instruction by teachers					
C1.6	The discipline of the students is high					
C1.7	Revenue of the school has increased					
C1.9	The school has sufficient teachers					

C1.10 In summary, what is your opinion about the performance of your school?

.....

.....

.....

**Thank you for your time!**

### **APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND DEPUTIES.**

1. How are attempts made to investigate an issue with staff to find a solution acceptable to all?
2. How are attempts made to integrate their ideas with those of staff to come up with a decision jointly?
3. How does administration try to work with staff to find solutions to a problem?
4. In what ways does administration exchange accurate information with staff to solve a problem together?
5. How are concerns brought to the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way?
6. How does administration collaborate with staff to come up with decisions acceptable to staff?
7. In what ways does administration work with staff for a proper understanding of a problem?
8. How does administration try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse?
9. In what ways does administration propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks?
10. How does administration negotiate with staff so that a compromise can be reached?
11. How does the administration employ give and take so that a compromise can be made?
12. Why does the administration use temporally solutions to complex problems?
13. In what ways does administration try to satisfy the needs of staff?
14. How does administration accommodate the wishes of staff?
15. In what circumstances has the administration given in to wishes of staff?
16. How does administration offer concessions to staff interests?
17. In what ways does administration go along with the suggestions of staff?
18. How does administration try to satisfy the expectations of staff?