

**DETERMINANTS OF CONFLICTS IN WORKPLACE : A CASE OF  
TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHWISERO SUB -  
COUNTY KAKAMEGA COUNTY -KENYA**

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## DECLARATION

This research report is my original work and has never been submitted to any other university or institution for examination

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This research report is submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.



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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents Eunice and Jackson Malika for their passion and support they have always had towards education.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

- B.O.G : Board of Management
- CDF : Constituency Development Fund
- CDFC : Constituency Development Fund Committee
- KNUT : Kenya National Union of Teachers
- KUPPET : Kenya Union of Post Primary Education and Training
- PTA : Parents Teachers Association
- SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Sciences
- TESCOM: Teaching Service Commission
- USA : United States of America

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to establish Determinants of conflicts in the workplace-a case of teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub-County, Kakamega county-Kenya. In public secondary schools conflict occurs among teachers and their colleagues, teachers and principals and teachers and students. The study was based on four objectives of school Management, school external environment, conflict resolution mechanism and resources distribution. The study used descriptive research design in order to gather detailed information from the field. The instrument used was questionnaire and interviews with selected respondents. The target population was 28 public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub - County, Kakamega County. The sample size was 9 secondary schools out of 28 Public secondary schools were sampled purposively from the four wards in Khwisero Sub-County to ensure all the wards were captured in the study. The respondents were school principals, teachers, and directors of studies, school bursars and board members. The data was collected using questionnaires with structured and unstructured questions. The SPSS-version 21 was used and analysis presented using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequencies. Pearson correlation was used to test relationships between and among determinants of conflicts. The study had a return rate of 83% with majority of the respondents' female at 59%. The findings also indicated only 35.6% of the respondents had experience of 2 years or below in their respective schools. The majority of schools did not have conflict resolution policies. Majority of respondents with 93% indicated that there was not policy effective for conflict resolution. Among the recommendations was that the school management should involve all stakeholders more in conflict identification and management in public secondary schools to allow for creation of positive relationships among teachers and between teachers and the external stakeholders such parents, teachers unions and the teachers employer. Further research should be done to cover all public and private secondary schools as determinants of conflicts tend to vary from situation to situation and may need in depth analysis in order to get more information.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

A Conflict in the workplace is inevitable. Sometimes lack of communication provokes huge arguments, whereas in other cases a poorly completed task can be a reason for misunderstanding and fights. Nonetheless, conflict shouldn't be ignored. It is important to figure out its causes immediately and resolve them. When it comes to conflicts in workplace, schools are not spared either and it is against this backdrop that this study aimed at establishing the determinants of conflicts in workplace with bias at public secondary schools in khwisero sub county-Kakamega County.

According to Nelson Mandela-former South African president, (Sins of Past, 2009) Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of mine worker can become the head of the mine, and that the child of a farm worker can become the president of a great nation. However, soon this may be impeded if the conflicts witnessed in learning institutions is not checked and resolved.

Bennett, (2007) opines conflicts are an important part of human institutions around the world arising in all kinds of human relationships and social settings. Conflict is a phase of interactions and circumstances in which the desires and behaviors of individuals face block and disable the achievement of the goals of one group. Conflict is described by Cowling (2009) as the differences between and among people. Conflict is seen as a aspect of human nature that is perceived to be part of the complexity of life that moves people into the future. In any social context, they are critical but should be properly controlled in order to create a healthy organizational atmosphere for the successful performance of duties. International labor organizations have recorded employee conflict in the workplace as a normal phenomenon that arises from disagreements and values between organizations and employees. Foster (2012) suggests that both the workplace and personal lives have become a common and natural part of conflict.

According to Kipyego (2013), the evolution of disputes in developed schools is primarily affected by actual or perceived challenges to the supply and demand of resources. However, the school is responsible for cultivating beneficial attitudes to each child's learning and relationships, and so all attempts must be made to reduce the occurrence of conflicts. This is critical because it is at school where students are required to connect with each other for their growth, with teachers and educational administrators. Education, as advanced by several government policy papers and numerous scholars, is an element in stimulating social economic growth (ROK, 2007; WorldBank, 2005).

A country that is unable to invest in education to improve its people's knowledge and skills and to use them effectively in the national economy will be unable to improve anything else, according to Todaro (2004). It should also be remembered that secondary education is an important ingredient for economic growth. The most significant stakeholder in driving this human capital pool, however, is teachers who, despite their tremendous commitment, are not always acknowledged.

In schools, conflict usually occurs among school heads, teachers, pupils, subordinate staffs, parents and even community( Mensah 2015).Conflict is part of daily life, normal and essential and unavoidable human phenomenon(Dogan,2016) because where there is human interactions; there is likelihood of agreement and disagreements. These agreements and disputes between persons and groups contribute to conflicts. (Shahmohammadi, 2014) suggest that conflict arises if there are disputes in a social atmosphere over drug problems or if emotional antagonism creates tension, dispute or discord between individuals or groups when one or more group members' views or acts are either opposed by or unacceptable to one or more other group members. Conflicts can be said to be a contest or disagreement between two or more opposing parties with differing needs ideas, beliefs, values and goals co-existing in the same organization and can be harmful to employee satisfaction and job performance if it becomes excessive and unmanageable. School administrators, external environment, mechanism of conflict resolution and availability of resources influence conflicts in schools. The study intended to look into deep understanding of these determinants of conflicts among teachers.

### **1.1.1 Global Perspective of determinants of Conflict in Schools**

Developed countries like USA and Japan have large pool of highly skilled human resources. This enabled them not only exploit local natural resources but also to identify and negotiate for other countries resources. Secondary school education is fundamental ingredient for creating economic development. In the United States it has been more important than increased capital in accounting for workers productivity and US economic growth (Smith, 2003).

Conflicts among teachers is not only a Kenyan experience, in Nigeria for instance Teaching Service Commission TESCO reported several conflicts in secondary schools. In 1998, conflict arose between the principal and some teachers who were accused of making life difficult for the principal. The teachers became uncontrollable; they further instigated the students against the school rules and constituted authority. TESCO set up a committee to investigate the case and one of the recommendations of the team was; posting out teachers involved to far places.

In Nigeria, in Agboran School of science, there was a crisis between the principal and nineteen teachers over sharing of royalties that accrued to the school on the proceeds of palm trees on the school land. The teachers were alleged of misconduct by the principal. The conflict blew open and the local inspector of education (L.I.E) and the ministry of education had to involve. The administration of the school was affected as staff was polarized, some for some against the principal. Internal examinations could not be held for a term, the staff salary was delayed for some months.

Amasa (2012) conducted a research on conflict resolution between head teachers and teachers in Masvingo Zimbabwe and concluded that the main source of conflict in school is the administration and how it treats the individual or group of individuals within the system. However, in Kenya, the teaching career is not promising in most districts. Teachers also complain of higher pupil teacher ratios, and many secondary schools are understaffed. Many school management committees claim that they are unable to hire additional teachers through PTAs as a result of the prohibition of levies.

### **1.1.2 The School Environment and Conflicts**

Conflicts are of poor repute. Conflict is most commonly related to raised voices, heated arguments, and great anger. While sometimes these comparisons are correct, particularly when there are negative behaviors, it is important to consider the benefits of constructive conflict. Conflict is not the same as discomfort, conflict is an issue when it hampers productivity, decreases morale, causes more conflicts or causes unacceptable behaviors. Diversity and collaboration are hallmarks of a strong team, and the occasional source of disagreements in the workplace. Conflict provides the company with a competitive and cooperative sense, although it varies according to the situation. Conflict offers competitive as well as cooperative context in the organization but it varies according to the situation. Problems occur in conflict management where the context and the processes for conflict resolution are incongruent. Watson (2010) argues that when the context of the classroom and school is competitive, the efficacy of a dispute resolution and peer mediation program can be reduced.

The working climate, both positively and negatively, affects employee morale, efficiency and engagement. It is the nature of the working environment that most affects their level of motivation and subsequent efficiency, according to Chandrasekhar (2011). How much they communicate with the company, how much their immediate environment impacts their error rate, degree of creativity and cooperation with other workers, absenteeism, and eventually how long they remain in the job. It is also not possible to stop at work but should not be overlooked if it has happened. Wilmot and Hoher (1998), ignoring conflict in the workplace, whether based on substance or personality, sets disruptive forces in motion and spreads the conflict to others, thus reducing morality and competitiveness to irreparable levels. As an independent entity, the school does not avoid conflict because it is made up of people. Siann (2000) clarified that parents and teachers, as they know them better than anyone else, are the two pillars of almost every child's universe.



Lyons and Hatherly, (2002) while conducting research on conflict in schools in Tanzania indicated that organizational health is determined by the institutions levels of trust as well as individual autonomy in patterns of supervision and control. The indicated that in a healthy organizational environment relationships are honestly characterized by high degree of trust and poor performance and other problems are confronted and joint solutions. Conflicts are therefore considered as part of the human environment, are natural and are expected in relationships mainly because of the high value placed on individualism. Frimpong et al (2005) reported in their studies that conflict is inevitable between people working alongside each other in close proximity for any length of time. They stress that increased interactions is also an ingredient in the conflict mixture. Miller (1992) concur that the more people interact, the more potential there is for conflict. This study establishes how, among other factors, the environment influences conflicts in schools.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Conflicts in schools like any other organization are a reality. Bridges, (2007) argue that there have been fights between school deputies and the principals that are geared to parents. In secondary schools conflicts occur among teachers and their colleagues, teachers and principals and principals and teachers. Unfortunately little attentions are paid to how these conflicts are resolved. Educationists argue that despite the many policies in place to solve these conflicts, educational institutions have continued to report increased cases of conflicts among teachers. Conflicts in Kenya s public secondary school have become a major problem that all stakeholders in education should take great concern. The researcher believed that the best resolution approaches should be engaged in order to deal with conflicts in public secondary schools with cases such resource distributions, administration challenges, resolution mechanisms and school environment being cited. This study established the determinants of conflicts in workplace a case of public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub Count, Kakamega County.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to establish determinants of conflict in workplace a case of secondary schools in Khwisero Sub-County, Kakamega County.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The study was guided by the following objectives;

- i. To establish how school management practices determine conflicts among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub county Kakamega County.
- ii. To establish how external environments determine conflicts among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub County Kakamega county Kenya.
- iii. To find out how conflict resolution mechanisms determine conflict among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub-county, Kakamega County.
- iv. To investigate how resource distribution determines conflict among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero Sub-county, Kakamega County.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The research sought to answer the following questions through this study:

1. To what extend does the school administration determine conflict among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub County Kakamega county Kenya.
2. How does external environment determine conflict among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub County, Kakamega County?
3. To what extent does conflict resolution mechanisms determine conflict among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub county, Kakamega-county?
4. How does resources distribution determine conflict among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub County, Kakamega County?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

It was expected that the study would contribute to the existing literature in addressing future research problems in the field of conflict among teachers in schools. Education policy makers in the government may use this study to look for solutions in conflicts in school. It would also provide an opportunity for stakeholders in the education sector an

opportunity to give their opinions on factors influencing conflict in secondary school. The study would assist the ministry of education in developing a curriculum that can be used to enhance the capacity of the administrators, the teachers and the student in handling conflict in schools. The study was worthy because it addressed the determinants of conflicts in workplace case teachers and was able to propose solutions to improve stability in education institutions and even public institutions with similar conflicts.

### **1.7 Basic Assumptions of the Study**

It assumed that the targeted sample was reachable and individuals would respond to research questions. The sample size was representative of the population and that the instrument for data collection would measure the desired constructs.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

Since the study was carried in the expansive Khwisero Sub-County the issue of budget constraint was likely to occur due to transport costs involved in moving from one school to another, however, this called for budget adjustment and where possible used local means of transport such as motor bike and even bicycle. The study was carried out in strict conformity with Covid-19 protocols to ensure both the researcher and respondents put on face masks, observe 1.5 meter distance rule, wash their hands frequently and use sanitizers to curb spread of the deadly virus. Where possible those working from were reached through telephone calls even though it would be an additional cost to the researcher.

### **1.9 Delimitation of the study**

The study was restricted to secondary schools in Khwisero sub county Kakamega County. The study was limited to use of questionnaires and observation schedule as the method to collect data.

### **1.10 Definitions of Significant Terms**

**Conflict:** According to this study refers to the expression of hostility, negative attitudes, antagonism, aggression, rivalry and misunderstanding.

**Conflict Resolution Mechanism:** Methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict and retribution.

**Availability of Resources:** Is the access to the right resources for a given project or task at a given time with the necessary skill sets or necessary technology.

**School Management:** Refers to a wide variety of skills and techniques that school administrators use to keep schools organized, orderly, and focused to ensure academic productivity in the learning institution.

**Stakeholders** : Refers to people or individuals who may be affected by the decision made by a group or an organization.

**Public Secondary Schools:** Refers to schools that are state owned and managed by the government policies as they receive government support; for example posting of teachers and funding.

**Workplace:** Refers to any or all places where people are employed.

**External Factors:** Factors outside the organization or group that affect conflict within the organization.

**Teaching staff:** Refers to the school employees that are involved in giving curriculum instructions and general guidance to the students.

### **1.11 Organization of the study**

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one covered the introduction to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study assumptions of the study, definition of significant terms and organization of the study.

Chapter two covered literature review which examined an introduction, relevant literature review on the four objectives that the study focused on, Theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

Chapter three dealt with research methodology under; introduction, Research design, Target population, Sampling Technique and sample size, Research instruments validity of

Research instruments, Reliability of Research instruments Data collection procedure and Data Analysis.

Chapter four presents data that was captured from the field; Analysis of data was organized in themes based on the research questions.

Chapter five presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, literature which is of relevance to the study was reviewed. The study further put into context the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. The chapter reviewed literature based on objectives and the research questions.

#### **2.2 School management as a determinant of conflicts among teachers in public secondary schools in Khwisero sub- County Kakamega County.**

The determinants of conflicts between the teachers and the school administration are varied. Lack of proper communication to teachers, imposition of strict deadlines for various activities, difference in perception on management of certain issues in school. Dictatorial tendencies on part of school management, dilapidated working conditions, uncooperative school administration in provision of learning aids as well as failure to give psychological support when they are in need serve as some of the recipe to conflict among teachers and management.

Study shows that leaders set the tone for conflict management through their style of leadership. School management can have a positive or negative impact on their school climate and research shows that many still have a negative impact. Some of the conflicts experienced in schools sometimes emanate from leadership of principals, board of management, chairpersons or students (Mudis and Yambo, 2011).

It is important to note that head teachers who are unable to adopt and respond to complexities in their learning institutions fast. Some boards are quick to get impatient because they expect quick positive change and when changes fail to occur that fast, the principal is accused of being a low performer and the head teacher is quickly ejected out of the school and a new one brought in. Head teacher who lack experience in school administration sometimes run into serious administration challenges when they fail to use their scarce resources well. A number of head teachers are confronted in their schools because of poor financial accountability.

Some it is argued that are not transparent in their financial matters of their schools. The principals do not discuss financial issues with their board (Mudis and Yambo, 2011) When financial issues are brought in the agenda of the board meeting, it is usually the last item of the agenda when members are tired unable to discuss the item in detail.

Parents are sometimes forced to authorize use of school finance hurriedly without counter checking during school meetings without considering the implications. This has been the reason why some school principals misappropriate school funds. The result has been parents going to such schools to evict such principals and even pulling away their children and sponsorship to the school.

Poor communication problems may also cause conflict. Some school administrators are not good communicators especially to their juniors. Plunkett (2009) communication is seldom perfect and imperfect communication may result in misperception and misunderstanding. The result can be disagreement about the goals, roles or intentions. Sometimes information which is withheld intentionally for personal gain or to embarrass a colleague may be counterproductive and can bring conflict in schools or learning environments.

Communication breakdown is highly rated as one of the main reason of conflict in schools (Iwuagwu, 2011).School managers who introduce innovation or ideas without first informing the teachers and students of the nature and benefits of the innovation in the school may not expect genuine cooperation and participation from them, and this may lead to conflict in learning institution or school. When decisions are not disseminated effectively conflict can spring up.

When Conflicts occur between the teachers and the school administrators this may result in polarization of the school, as camps may emerge between those supporting the school managers on one hand and those on the side of the teachers. Institutions cannot function effectively or achieve their goal if the individuals are polarized and working against each other. Disharmony in school is bound to inhibit the smooth running of the school and its

overall performance. It is in recognition of the crucial role of manager's leadership in conflict management and concern about the quality in education. Dick & Thodlana (2013) argues that there is a need to have disciplinary structures for resolving conflict affecting teachers, students, parents and school heads.

Where school management uses resources appropriately, for personal selfish gain this may lead to conflict in the school environment. Teachers who fail to meet deadlines, unauthorized absenteeism, tribalism, setting unrealistic targets for teachers and engaging teachers in crush programs where they have to cover wide sections of syllabus in fraction time and unreasonable demands by school administration also lead to conflict in schools. Autocratic heads tend to fail to achieve purposeful cooperation and collaboration among teachers hence teachers lack self-commitment and personal motivation. Such leadership tendencies by school heads do not develop teachers to be innovative and self-motivated to continuously develop and drive the school as an organization.

Katumanga and Kipyego (2013) note that in some schools heads are constantly absent, it therefore conclusive to note that school managers may influence conflict if there is ; inequitable task allocation, bad communication, inequitable allocation of the schools resources, inequitable allocation of administrative tasks, subjective performance appraisal and absence of clear procedures for the same.

### **2.3 External Environment as a determinant of Conflict among teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Khwisero Sub County Kakamega County.**

Environment play critical role for any institution or organization. It consists of the set of external conditions and forces that have the potential to influence the organization. The external environment to school provides the resources to schools as well opportunities and threats to the school based on the relationship between the school and the environment. Studies done on impact of school external environment attest to the fact that there is significant relationship between the school external environment and the how teachers or students perform in the school (Mayama, 2012; Lumuli, 2009) several researchers have identified factors that contribute to quality of education in schools.



These factors are classified under; factors based on school or non-school factors that are external-not within school control. Internal factors are factors within school control for instance instructional management and teacher training (Digolo, 2003).

Factors that emanate from outside the organization also affect the institution and must also be carefully studied. The important thing to note about these factors is that both workers and management respond to them. Some of these factors may not directly instigate industrial action but they influence general community expectation. Mensah (2007) indicated the employer and unions policies on promotion, remuneration and job security plays critical role in accelerating conflicts in school.

Teachers unions also play a role in bringing conflicts among teachers. For instance one union may call for the strike while the other union may be against it. This can create conflict among staff members from the various unions. Unions provide the rights and scope to organize workers rights around issues (Cole, 1998) and have incorporated the expansion of worker rights around issues such as conflict management, promotion and salary adjustment into their traditional collective bargaining strategies with some success. Contrary to this most union leaders are politically motivated by making a big case out of nothing in order to obtain cheap popularity. They cause confusion in their organization when they capitalize on trivial issues to blow their trumpets but they don't help the employees to bigger margin. Kenya has two main teaching staff unions; KNUT and KUPPET that are registered by the ministry in charge of labor issues and the teacher employer TSC. Both unions are expected to meet their clients' expectations by addressing all issues that affect teachers including solving disputes that arise between the teachers and the employers.

Teacher's employer TSC has also been cited as one of the players influencing conflicts among teachers. This happens when teachers have grievances and objections about the way the employer is handling the existing contract for all or some specific individual teachers in a school set up. Among the issues the teacher employer is accused of violating

include the union contract, such as firing an employee with just cause, salary dispute, disciplinary cases and job security.

Parents play a big role in influencing conflicts within the school set up. A healthy relationship between the school and the community is often cited as important. Totten and Manley (1996) viewed the community in which the school exists as one that brings influence on the school through school committees and parents teachers association. For this reason, the school authority should cultivate a good relationship with the immediate community. It is also important to note that parents and teachers play a major role in children's growth and development. Smith (2004) states that when there is a school based conflict, it is almost always good to avoid a win or lose outcomes so that the players continue to work in harmony in the best interest of the student. The last thing that is needed in conflict in the school situation is for one party to feel like a winner and the other a loser because these stakeholders need to have harmonious coordination for the sake of students. Parents should avoid situations of preferring to work with some teachers and disrespecting other teachers based on tribe or religious beliefs to avoid conflicts among teachers.

#### **2.4 Conflicts resolution mechanisms as a determinant of conflict among teachers in Khwisero sub county Kakamega County.**

Conflict resolution mechanisms in any working environment is good to ensure that whenever they arise the organization can still find themselves standing and working in harmony. Robins (2004) shared the eight conflict resolution strategies for solving conflict, namely 1) Problem solving 2) superordinate goals 3) Avoidance 4 Smoothing 5) Compromise 6) Authoritative command 7) altering the human variable 8 Altering structural variables.

Thomas (2001) examines conflict management strategies by focusing on general strategies used by managers in an educational environment. In his research, he noted there was a difference between management and leadership. Since conflict is seemingly

unavoidable, it is necessary for school managers to recognize conflict and view it constructively as well see how to manage it properly.

Jhonson & Jhonson (1996) when conflicts are managed well ; they result in an outcome that all parties are satisfied with , improve the relationship between the conflicting parties and enhance the ability of disputants to resolve the future conflicts in constructive manner.

Bodin and Crawford (1999) notes that because schools are made up of different people with varied ages, mediation and negotiation must be accepted as the best way for conflict elimination. The stages involved include; the negotiator to face and find a solution to them; these circumstances are conflict-oriented role and partnership, conflict-oriented intellectual and emotional conflict, compromise, and conflict-oriented win. Conflict management is noted as satisfactory if, by achieving a win-win or approach-approach or consensual compromise agreed by all parties, it has accomplished its objective.

Another method of dispute management used today is mediation. Mediation is defined by Bentley (1996) as a method of problem solving mechanism where impartial third parties help conflicting parties to find an agreement that is mutually acceptable. Mediation is a good tool since it requires a democratic and organized mechanism that helps disputants, with the help of a professional peer, to settle their own disputes. Deutsch (2005) state that mediators are taking the following steps: a) forming a working relationship with the parties; enhancing the environment between the parties; c) resolving the issues; and d) applying pressure for resolution. Mediators should aim to create a working relationship with each of the opposing parties and to build a process and decision for a creative community. Mediators should also get extensive knowledge of the topics on which disputes are based. The root causes of disagreements are unreasonable expectations by some head teachers to handle disciplinary issues and disputes.

## **2.5 Resource Distribution as a determinant of Conflict among teachers in public Secondary Schools in Khwisero Sub County Kakamega County, Kenya.**

Provision and sharing of scarce resources is one of the major causes of conflicts in secondary schools. Failure to provide adequate teaching and learning resources by school heads while at the same time demanding quality results has always been the central cause of conflict between school heads and teachers .In cases where for instances students share text books it becomes difficult to give homework and any additional work. There have been cases where classes have been conducted under trees especially during cold and rainy seasons because classrooms are not enough which may be viewed to bring conflict between teachers and school heads.

Johdi & Apitree (2012) argued that in most schools teachers are forced to share resources and the inadequate resources. Due to budgetary constraints it is not feasible for departments to get budgetary allocation of funds that enable the departments to purchase all their requirements hence conflicts over provision of resources is inevitable in schools as departments are allocated more according to needs while others get less. In some schools in which there are two similar sessions or hot sitting, classes share the same learning class and materials. If one, class using the classroom first delays to vacate the classroom timely or failure to handover a clean and swept classroom for the next classroom for the next session, conflict between the two educators may occur, Okotoni & Okotoni (2003) noted that teachers work in highly dilapidated conditions due to low pay by the government and poor of service. Some schools lack necessary facilities and even teaching materials, which constitutes apt ground for conflict in school.

The availability of physical facilities in a school can dramatically affect the school's retention capacity. Thomas and Martin (1996 ) claim that those who serve as teachers and associate staff, school buildings, furniture, books and buildings in school provide some of the means by which we turn our expectations and ambitions for the education of children into everyday opportunities for learning.

Financial resources are also a key element in school. Financial resources are used to acquire other facilities, such as physical materials, textbooks and human capital and to enable the school to get what is needed for it to run. Despite this most schools have a small income base, consisting mainly of school fees. School fees make up 90 percent of schools' overall revenue (Selina, 2012). Even if the government has told the subsidized Secondary Education SSE of the contribution, the contribution will be insufficient unless well controlled. Fee collection also varies between colleges and institutions. The state of the infrastructure is still poorly established, undermining the delivery of content if collections are insufficient. This has resulted in a lot of pressure on resources, undermining the academic progress of the teaching staff leading to disputes in schools.

## **2.6 Theoretical Frameworks**

The word theory was described by Chen (2000) as a frame of reference that helps people understand their environment and how to work within it. The research was based on the framework of the theory of sociological conflict and conflict theory.

### **2.6.1 The Sociological Conflict Theory**

Conflict for a long time has been central fact of society; every society is faced with peculiar conflicts. Greek scholar from sophists to Heraclitus treated conflict as a primary social fact Jean Bodin, the harbinger of modern theories of sovereignty, expanded the ideas of conflict from Nicolo Machiavelli who founded the origin of the state and its key institutions in the same place. Thomas Hobbes (1951) developed them into a materialistic rationalism. There are two destruct traditions of conflict theory useful for this study. The power relations traditions of political philosophy, reflecting view of: Machiavelli, Bodin, Hobbes and Mosca who analyzed conflicts policy in terms of power relationship as well as seeing the state as the object of analysis. Sociological conflict Theory was largely a synthesis of these two traditions focusing on the uneven distribution of rewards in society. While Karl Max was its leading architect, Wright Mills and Herbert Mucus were among the noted conflict theorists of contemporary sociology, understanding the role of conflict in institutions of public.

### **2.6.2 Conflict Theory**

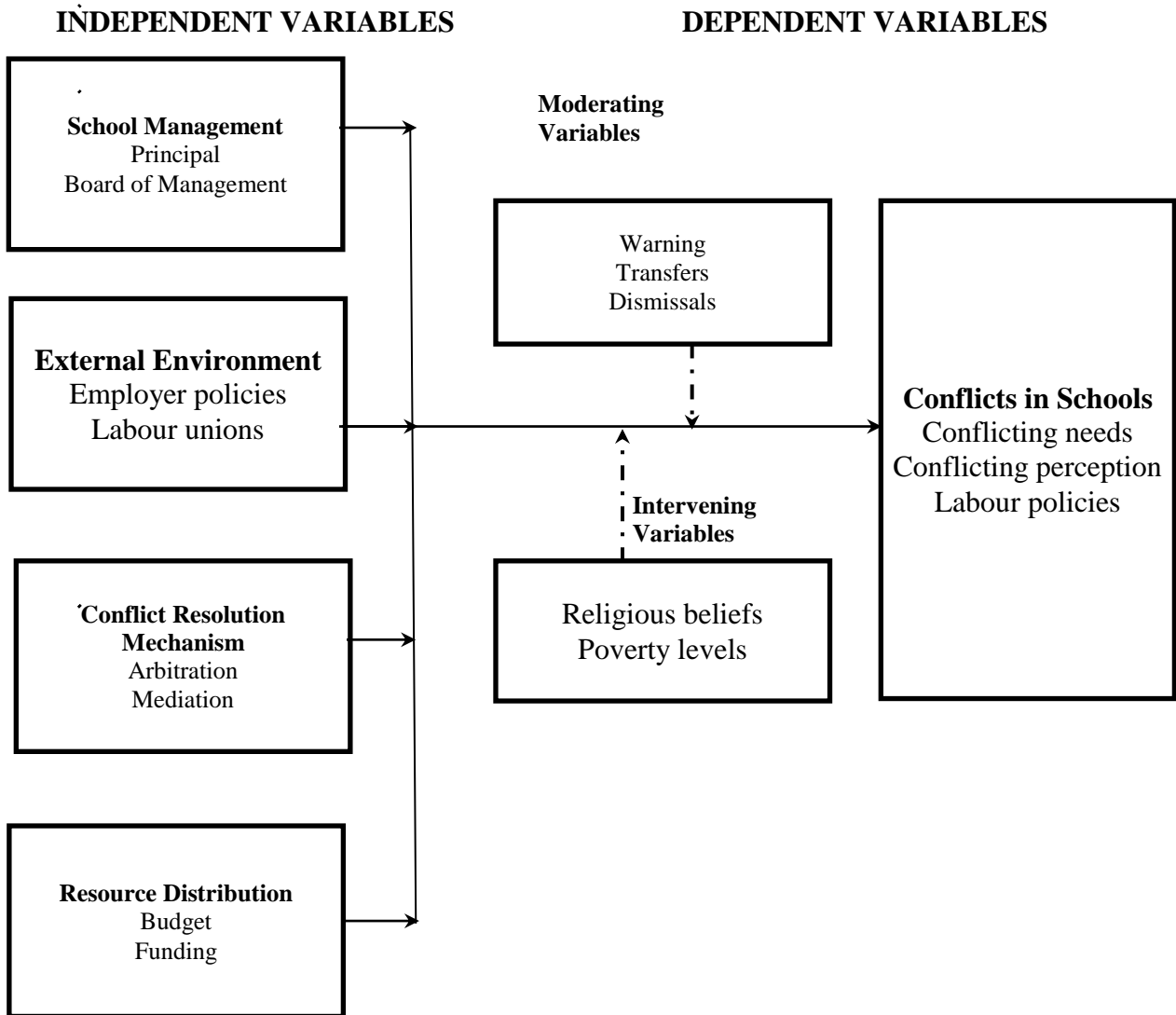
Conflict theory states that conflicts and tensions crop up when resources, power, and status are not distributed equally between groups in society and these conflicts become the engine for social change.

In this context power can be understood as control of material resources and accumulated wealth, control of politics and the institution that make up society such as school and one's social status compared to others.

Conflict theory describes cases where conflict occurs between people for a variety of reasons. The essence of this theory is best epitomized by the classic pyramid structure in which those in positions of authority dictate terms of the larger masses. All major social structures and rules are designed to support those who have traditionally been in power, or groups that are superior in society according to this theory. It is in the interests of those who have wealth or in position of authority to keep and extend what they own, whereas it is in the interests of those who have little or no wealth to try and improve their lot in life. The theory can be applied on both at macro level like state or micro level like the case of this study at school level. This study was aimed to establish how school management, external environment, conflict resolution mechanism and competition over scarce resources were at the center of conflicts in public secondary schools.

### **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

Kothari (2004) defines the conceptual framework as a structure that defines the relationship in a study between different variables that are considered important. This describes the opinions of researchers about the essential structures in a sample. In this study, the researchers view conflict in secondary schools as influenced by schools management, schools external environment, conflict resolution mechanism and lack of resources. It is important to note that independent variables were school management, external environment; conflict resolution mechanism and resources distribution. Dependent variables were conflict in public secondary school. Moderating variables were warning, transfers and dismissals while intervening variables were religious beliefs, culture and poverty levels as shown below. Presented in figure 1 below



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**

### 2.8 Knowledge Gap

The review of literature indicates that conflicts in secondary schools shows that conflicts have continued to ravage various schools across the country and even beyond borders of this country and the fact that no single reason has been cited as having the main determinant of conflict in schools, then there was still need to do more research in order to fill that knowledge gap.

## **2.9 Summary of Literature Review**

To address the question of conflict in schools the literature review revealed that conflict occurs among teachers in the same and different departments, between teachers and school heads and among teachers, parents and students. Literature showed school management, school external environment, and conflict resolution methods and resources distribution contributed to conflict in schools.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter discusses research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, ethical, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis techniques, ethical consideration and operational variables.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is described by Ogula (2005) as described as a plan, structure and strategy of investigation aimed to obtain answers to research questions and control variance. It is the plan of action the researcher adopts for answering the research questions and it sets up the framework for study (Kerlinger, 2003). This study adopted descriptive research design. According to Mugenda (2013), research design is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. The main feature of survey research design was to describe specific characteristics of a larger group of persons, objects or institution through questionnaires. Besides, the design was used because of its descriptive nature in order to help the researcher in collecting data from members of the sample for estimating the population parameters.

#### **3.3 Target Population**

Population refers to an entire group of individuals who are the concern for the study within the area of the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2013); a population is a well-defined set of people, services, elements and events, group of things or households that are investigated. A complete group fits the researcher's specification from which the researcher generates the result of the study. This study was carried out in Khwisero sub-county Kakamega County Kenya and targeted Secondary and schools in Khwisero Sub-County, Kakamega County. According to the Ministry of Education there are 28 secondary schools in Khwisero sub-county: One boys National school, 2 extra county schools-1 for boys and 1 for girls, 1 county school for girls and 24 sub county schools-where 4 are girls schools and 20 are mixed secondary schools. These 28 schools formed

the target population of the researcher where researcher's target population consisted of school heads, teachers, bursars, directors of studies and members of the board of management representing parents.

### **3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

The researcher in the study used a purposive sampling method to select respondents from the various categories in Khwisero sub County, Kakamega County.

#### **3.4.1 Sample size**

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) a subset of a particular population selected for the purpose of the study to make conclusions about population. Mugenda (2013) however stresses that if the population size is small, then it is good that the researcher does a complete census of the population. Gupta (2007) who researched on the advantages of census that it did not have any bias due to sample size selection. However, due to the vastness of Khwisero Sub-County, the researcher did not use a complete census.

Out of the 28 schools in Khwisero, 9 public secondary schools were sampled which represented 30% of the schools in the sub county. Mugenda opine that a sample of 30 % is representative enough for research. The researcher interviewed school heads, teachers, director of studies, bursars and representatives of parents' in order to collect adequate information on the topic of the study.

#### **3.4.2 Sampling procedure**

This study adopted a descriptive research design where the researcher conducted a field survey in public secondary schools. The survey design was based on the use of questionnaires that were used for data collection instruments. The population of the study was scattered since the schools were located separate from each other. The major purpose of descriptive research design is description of the state of affairs as it exist at present (Kothari, 2003).The researcher applied this design to investigate the current situation on the conflict resolution mechanisms applied in public secondary schools. This design was

adopted because it allows the collection of large amounts of data from the target population.

The target population of this study consisted of 28 public secondary schools administrators, teachers, and students drawn from Khwisero sub-county. The sampling frame for the school was a list of all schools as obtained from the regional education office. They formed the respondents of the study. To ensure representativeness,

A random sample of respondents was drawn from each ward. The respondents were selected through simple random sampling from selected schools within each cluster. This ensured no bias in sampling since the universal population of schools, teachers, students and administrators in Khwisero is large. The selection of administrators and teachers was done using purposive sampling. This purposive sampling was done to satisfy a given criterion (Kothari, 2003). This category of sample consisted of 9 head teachers, 18 teachers, 9 Directors of studies, 9 school bursars and 9 members of the school management board.

### **3.5 Research Instrument**

The questionnaire is the principal instrument for primary data collection. The questionnaire had both open and closed ended questions; one set for head teachers and the other set for directors of students. It sought information on determinants of conflicts in the workplace, a case of teachers endeavoring to find solutions to these conflicts. The use of questionnaires was important and advantageous because they saved time on the part of the researcher and they emphasized independence and accuracy of responses from respondents (Jwan, 2010).

Direct observation was used to capture the state of teaching and learning resources in the schools. This enabled the researcher to verify information in various documents. The use of various instruments as proposed in this study was acceptable technique in research (Kothari, 2008).

The questionnaire consisted of two parts; the first section of the questionnaire dealt with demographics such as name, age, marital status, level of education and years of teaching. The subsequent section sort information based on various variables, the respondents were asked to indicate on a five point scale their perceptions of various variables and conflicts among teachers. The scale range was: 5-Strongly Agree-Agree, 3-Neutral-Disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

### **3.5.1 Pilot Testing**

This involved checking for suitability of the questionnaire and interview guide. The quality of the research instrument determined the outcome of the study. (Mugenda, 2013), argue that pilot study was good and useful in assessing the validity of research. A pilot test was done using questionnaires that were distributed to respondents in the area of study. This was done using 10% of the sample size of the respondents using simple random sampling. After the piloting, the questions in the questionnaire were assessed and those found not to be clear reframed to ensure clarity.

### **3.5.2 Validity of the Research instrument**

Instrument validity is defined as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences drawn from the research findings. It is the magnitude to which results obtained from the analysis of the data usually represents the phenomena under study (Mugenda 2013).In this study, the validity was taken to mean extent to which the instrument covers objectives. Validity refers to the quality of data gathering instruments or procedures that enable the instrument to measure how it is supposed to measure (Kumar 2005).The questionnaire was given to some professionals including my supervisor to critique it and assure the construct validity of the instrument. It helped ensure the questionnaire remained focused, accurate and consistent to the study objectives.

### **3.5.3 Reliability of the instrument**

Reliability is the ability of the instrument to give consistent results after a number of repeated trials (Kerlinger, 2003) It was enhanced through use of instrument triangulation technique which is acceptable technique in survey research that is qualitative in nature it

lends credibility to the findings of the study(Kothari, 2008).Reliability is assessed using the test retest reliability method and is increased by including many similar items on a measure by testing a diverse sample of individuals and by using uniform testing procedures.

Cronbach's Alpha was applied to measure the coefficient of internal consistency and therefore reliability of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 is considered high enough for the instrument to be used for the study (Jwan, 2010).

### **3.6 Data collection procedure**

Data collection is the means by which information is obtained from the selected subject of an investigation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The researcher sought permission from the university and the national commission for science technology and innovation NACOSTI. Data collection involved a self-administered questionnaire. The researcher dropped the questionnaires in person to the respondents, which were fully filled and collected for further processing.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Technique**

Data analysis was aimed at reporting information collected from respondents of the study. Findings were presented, analyzed and discussed in conjunction with the objectives of the study so as to select the most accurate and quality information from the feedback by the various respondents.

This study was expected to produce both quantitative and qualitative data to explain the determinants of conflicts in the workplace, a case of teachers in Khwisero sub county Kakamega County. Once the questionnaires were received, they were coded and edited for completeness and consistency. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis using statistical packages for social sciences SPSS.

### 3.8 Ethical Consideration

For the purpose of this study, the permission to carry out the study permission was requested from the respective project officials. A number of ethical issues were considered which included confidentiality, disclosure of the purpose of the study, legitimacy of data, respect of values and views of respondents, professional assessment of the respondents and obligation to share the study findings with the relevant authorities.

**Table 3.1: Operational Definition of Variable**

Objective	Variable	Indicators	Measurable scale	Tools of Analysis	Type of Tools
To identify how school management influence conflicts among teachers.	<b>Independent Variable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Resource availability</li> <li>● Resource sharing</li> <li>● Unmet deadline</li> <li>● Organization policies</li> </ul>	<b>Dependent Variable</b> Conflicts between the staff and administration	Interval	Descriptive statics	Frequency distribution Tables, Percentages
To identify how external environment determine conflict among teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employer policies</li> <li>● Promotion</li> <li>● Parents intervention</li> </ul>	Conflicts among teaching staff	Interval	Descriptive statics	Frequency Distribution tables percentage
To identify how conflict resolution mechanism determine conflict among teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Arbitration</li> <li>● Mediation</li> </ul>	Conflict among teachers	Interval	Descriptive statics	Frequency distribution tables, percentages
To identify how distribution of resources determine conflicts among teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Budget</li> <li>● Funding</li> </ul>	Conflicts among teachers	Interval	Descriptive statics	Frequency distribution tables, percentages

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

The study was conducted to analyse determinants of conflicts in the workplace, a case of teachers in Khwisero sub county, Kakamega County Kenya. The objectives of the study were; to establish how school management practices determine conflicts among teachers in public secondary schools, to establish how external environment determine conflicts among teachers, to find out how conflict resolution mechanisms determine conflicts among teachers and to investigate how resources distribution determine conflicts in workplace a case of teachers in Khwisero sub county in Kakamega county, Kenya. The chapter provides data analysis, presentation, interpretation of findings and discussions of the results based on the research objectives in order to answer research questions.

#### 4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate

A total of 54 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Out of these, 45 questionnaires were returned fully completed. A response rate of 50% is satisfactory, 60% is good, 70% is really good and 80% and above is excellent (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2013).The findings are set out in Table 4.1

**Table 4.1: Questionnaire Return Rate.**

<b>Research instrument</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Questionnaires returned	45	83
Questionnaires not returned	9	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

### 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The respondents in this set were requested to indicate the following personal information: Type of institution they work, Age of the respondents, gender and experience in the institution.

#### 4.3.1 Respondents' type of school

The researched targeted respondents' type of school. The study findings are indicated in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Respondents' type of school**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
National Boys	5	11.1
Extra County boys	5	11.1
Extra County Girls	5	11.1
County School Girls	5	11.1
Sub County Girls	10	22.2
Sub county School Mix	15	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings were; 11.1% worked in the national boys' school, 11.1% worked in extra county boys' school, 11.1% worked in extra county girls' school, and 11.1% worked in county girls' school, 22.2 worked in sub county girls' school and 33.3% worked in sub county mixed school. The percentage represented in each stratum was good for data collection.



### 4.3.2 Respondents' Age

This study determined the age of the respondents. The study results are indicated in the Table 4.3

**Table 4.3: Respondents' Age**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
30 Years and Below	13	28.9
30 - 40 Years	15	33.3
40 - 50 Years	11	24.4
Above 50 Years	6	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The research showed; 28.9% of the respondents were 30 years and below, 33.3% of the respondents were between 30-40 years, 24.4% of the respondents were between 40-50 years and 13.3% of the respondents were 50 and above years. This depicted that 30 years and above mature, knowledgeable and filled the questionnaires adequately, collecting the right information.

### 4.3.3 Gender of the respondents.

The study sought to study how different gender view and respond to issues of conflicts at the workplace. The study findings are as set out in Table 4.4

**Table 4.4: Respondents Gender**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	18	41
Female	27	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

From the findings majority of the respondents were female at 59% while 41% of the respondents were male. The study indicated that the issue of gender in conflict is well represented and adequate for study.

#### 4.3.4 Respondents' experience in the institution

The study sought to determine the level of experience of the respondents. The findings of the study are as indicated in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5 Respondents' experience**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
0 - 2 Years	16	35.6
2 - 4 Years	19	42.2
4 - 6 Years	6	13.3
More than 6 Years	4	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the research findings more than half of the respondents were experienced having worked 2 years and above. 35.6% of the respondents were between 0-2 years, 42.2% were 2-4 years, 13.3% 4-6 years and 8.9% had worked more than 6 years. This meant that the majority of the respondents had the vast experience and vast information regarding conflicts in determinants of conflicts among teachers in their respective schools in Khwisero Sub County.

#### 4.3 Determinants of conflicts in Schools.

This study aimed at determining the extent to which the respondents agreed with statements relating to conflicts among teachers in Khwisero sub county-Kakamega county Kenya. The participants were to indicate with: Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Not sure =3, Disagree=4, strongly Disagree=the study results are as shown in Table 4.6

**Table 4.6: Conflicts among teachers**

	F		%		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Are you aware of existence of conflicts among the staff members in the school	17	28	38	62	1.77	.765
What is the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the administration	6	39	14	86	2.75	.908
What is the frequency of conflict occurring among the Teaching staff in the school?	12	33	27	73	2.82	.936
What is the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the teachers' employer TSC?	10	35	23	77	2.95	.975
What is the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between teachers unions and the teaching staff?	7	38	16	84	2.97	.965
Do you have a conflict resolution/Management policy in your school	3	42	7	93	1.33	.476
If your answer to question 6 above is yes, is the policy effective in conflict resolution/management?	3	42	7	93	1.33	.476
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>		<b>100</b>		<b>15.92</b>	<b>5.501</b>
<b>Average</b>					<b>2.27</b>	<b>0.785</b>

Table 4.6 shows that the respondents agreed that the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between teachers unions and the teaching staff was to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.97, the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the teachers' employer TSC was to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.95, the frequency of conflict occurring among the Teaching staff in the school was to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.82, the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the administration was to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.75, the respondents were aware of existence of conflicts among the staff members in the school to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 1.77 and the respondents also indicated that they had a conflict resolution/Management policy in your school a low extent as shown by a mean score of 1.33.

#### 4.4 External conflict factors

The study was conducted to determine the extent to which the respondents agreed with statements relating to External conflict factors in Khwisero sub county-Kakamega county Kenya. The participants were to indicate with: Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Not sure =3, Disagree=4, strongly Disagree=the study results are as shown in Table 4.7

**Table 4.7: External conflict factors**

	F		%		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Unions represent teachers effectively with the employer.	21	24	47	53	2.08	.924
Unions are conversant with teachers conflict issues and intervene effectively	12	33	27	73	2.06	.939
Unions are trusted by teachers to intervene their issues	15	30	34	66	2.06	.939
The employer policies on issues that affect teachers are effective and motivating	16	29	36	64	2.15	.737
Timely reactions are always forthcoming from the employer to the teacher	14	31	32	68	2.17	.747
The employer shows concern and always try to solve conflict in school	17	28	38	62	2.11	.775
Parents recognize the teachers of this school because of the past history	5	40	12	88	2.17	.886
Parents represent the teachers effectively in the surroundings communities	11	34	25	75	2.20	.894
Parents are involved in conflict resolution and management in the school	7	38	16	84	2.22	.926
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>		<b>100</b>		<b>19.22</b>	<b>7.767</b>
<b>Average</b>					<b>2.135</b>	<b>0.863</b>

An average score of 2.13 shows that the respondents agreed to a moderate extent in that; parents were involved in conflict resolution and management in the school to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.22, parents represent the teachers effectively in the surroundings communities to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.20, Parents recognize the teachers of this school because of the past history to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.17, timely reactions are always forthcoming from the employer to the teacher to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.17, the employer policies on issues that affect teachers are effective and motivating to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.15, the employer shows concern and always try to solve conflict in school to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.11, unions represent teachers effectively with the employer to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.08, unions are conversant with teachers conflict issues and intervene effectively to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.06 and unions are trusted by teachers to intervene their issues to a low extent as shown by a mean score of 2.06.

#### **4.5 Conflict resolution mechanisms**

The study was conducted to determine the extent to which the respondents agreed with statements relating to Conflict resolution mechanisms in Khwisero sub county-Kakamega county Kenya. The participants were to indicate with: Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Not sure =3, Disagree=4, strongly Disagree=the study results are as shown in Table 4.8

**Table 4.8: Conflict Resolution Mechanisms**

	<b>F</b>		<b>%</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		
Absconding work and negligent of duty is not common in this school					2.02	.891
Indiscipline among teachers is not common in this school	17	28	38	62	2.06	.889
There is high inter-independency among the teachers	6	39	14	86	2.02	.891
Differences in experience and expertise do not affect working relationships among then teachers in this school	12	33	27	73	2.44	1.056
Cultural differences do affect working relationships	10	35	23	77	2.35	1.003
Differences in education levels have no effect on working relationships among the teachers	7	38	16	84	2.48	1.057
Personality clashes are not common in this school	12	33	26	73	2.17	1.050
Misunderstanding of motives is not common among the teachers in this school	8	37	18	82	2.17	.983
Teachers of different ages work in harmony in this school.	15	30	34	66	2.20	.943
<b>Total</b>					<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.943</b>
<b>Average</b>					<b>2.21</b>	<b>0.977</b>

An average score of 2.21 shows that the respondents agreed to moderate extent on statements relating to Conflict resolution mechanisms in that; differences in education levels have no effect on working relationships among the teachers to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.48, differences in experience and expertise do not affect working relationships among the teachers in this school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.44, cultural differences do affect working relationships to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.35, Teachers of different ages work in harmony in this school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.20, Personality clashes are not common in this school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.17, Misunderstanding of motives is not common among the teachers in this school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.17, Indiscipline among teachers is not common in this school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.06, There is

high inter-independency among the teachers to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.02 and Absconding work and negligent of duty is not common in this school to a moderate extent as shown by a mean score of 2.02.

#### **4.6 Resource Distribution**

##### **4.6.1 Working materials and space always available when required**

The study was conducted to determine the extent to which the respondents agreed with statements relating to Resource Distribution in Khwisero sub county-Kakamega county Kenya. The participants were to indicate with: Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Not sure =3, Disagree=4, strongly Disagree=the study results are as shown in Table 4.9

**Table 4.9: Working materials and space always available when required**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	6	13.3	13.3	13.3
Agree	21	46.7	46.7	60.0
Not Sure	12	26.7	26.7	86.7
Disagree	6	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

The study findings were; 13.3% strongly agreed that working materials and space always available when required, 46.7% of the respondents agreed, 26.7% of the respondents were not sure while 13.3% of the respondents disagreed that materials were always available when required.

#### **4.7 Regression Analysis Results**

Multiple Regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between independent variables which were School management, External environment, Conflict Resolution Mechanism and Resource Distribution against the dependent variable Determinants of Conflicts among teachers in public Secondary schools. A statistical model was generated. These are shown in table 4.10

**Table 4.10: Regression Analysis Results.**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of estimates.
1	0.661	0.437	-0.33	0.77791

According to the model summary the predictors explained 66% of change in the dependent variable (Y). The dependent variable is Determinant of conflicts and the independent variables or predictors are School Management, External factors, Conflict Resolution Mechanism and Resource Distribution.

**Table 4.11:ANOVA table**

Model		Sum of Squares	D f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.254	20	.563	.930	.561
	Residual	14.523	24	.605		
	Total	25.778	44			

The ANOVA table shows that F value was statistically significant. This implies that the model used for analysis was fit (F=0.930, p<0.05)

#### **4.8: Reliability Statistics**

**Table 4.12: Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.959	45

Reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over a time. Creswell (2012) indicates that a research instrument should have a composite Cronbach Alpha of at least 0.8 for all items under the study. The findings of the study indicate 0.959 which is acceptable.



**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1 Introductions**

This chapter contains the following: summary of findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendations attained from the analysis of the study data, driven by research objectives. It also outlines the suggestions for further research in line with the study's outcomes.

**5.2 Summary of findings**

The respondents agreed that the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between teachers unions and the teaching staff was to a moderate extent, the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the teachers' employer TSC was to a moderate extent, the frequency of conflict occurring among the Teaching staff in the school was to a moderate extent, the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the administration was to a moderate extent, the respondents were aware of existence of conflicts among the staff members in the school to a low extent and the respondents also indicated that they had a conflict resolution/Management policy in your school a low extent.

An average score of 2.13 shows that the respondents agreed to a moderate extent in that; parents were involved in conflict resolution and management in the school, parents represent the teachers effectively in the surroundings communities, Parents recognize the teachers of this school because of the past history, timely reactions are always forthcoming from the employer to the teacher, the employer policies on issues that affect teachers are effective and motivating, the employer shows concern and always try to solve conflict in school, unions represent teachers effectively with the employer, unions are conversant with teachers conflict issues and intervene effectively and unions are trusted by teachers to intervene their issues to a low extent.

An average score of 2.21 shows that the respondents agreed to moderate extent on statements relating to Conflict resolution mechanisms in that; differences in education levels have no effect on working relationships among the teachers, differences in experience and expertise do not affect working relationships among the teachers in this school, cultural differences do affect working relationships, Teachers of different ages work in harmony in this school, Personality clashes are not common in this school, Misunderstanding of motives is not common among the teachers in this school, Indiscipline among teachers is not common in this school, There is high inter-dependency among the teachers and Absconding work and negligent of duty is not common in this school.

#### **5.2.1. Statement on school management on conflict.**

Majority of the respondents 62% were not aware of the existence of conflicts in schools compared to 38% who said that they were not aware. On frequency of conflict among staff 73% of respondents said there were no conflicts among teaching staff compared 23% of the respondents who agreed. 77% of the respondents said teachers unions and teachers service commission didn't influence conflicts among teachers compared to 23% of the respondents agreed that they influence. Majority of the respondents 84% did not agree that teachers unions caused conflicts among teachers while 16% agreed that the unions influenced conflicts among teachers.

The findings also indicated that all the school heads irrespective of their schools category agreed that were aware of cases of conflicts in their schools and expressed the need to involve all the teachers in training on conflict resolution since all teachers were viewed as the central cog in running school affairs. All the principals who were interviewed expressed dissatisfaction in the way the resources were distributed, especially the money meant for free secondary education citing delays in disbursement. In some incidences there were schools with classes which were under construction but had not been completed because they were still waiting for disbursement from constituency development funds. On whether school principals were involved in tackling conflicts in

their schools; principals interviewed agreed that they were fully involved in addressing conflicts in their schools and were satisfied in the manner in which they are addressed.

### **5.2.2 External factors on conflict**

On the question whether unions represent the teachers effectively, 16% of the respondents agreed while 84% did not agree. 23% said unions were conversant with issues affecting teachers while 73% disagreed. 36% the respondents agreed that employer's policies determined conflicts while 64% of respondents disagreed. 32% of the respondents agree there is a timely reaction from the employer in case of conflict compared 68% disagree. 38% of the respondents agree that employers try to solve conflicts while 62% of the respondents did not agree. On whether parents represent teachers effectively in the surrounding communities 25% of the respondents agreed while 75% disagreed. 84% of the respondents that parents were not involved in conflict resolution while 16% agreed that they were involved.

### **5.2.3 Conflict resolution mechanism on conflict**

The study indicated that 32% agreed that absconding and negligent of duty is not common in the school while 62% of the respondent disagreed. 14% of the respondents agree that there is high interdependence among teachers while 86% of the respondents disagreed. 27% of the respondents agreed that experience and expertise do not affect working relationships among teachers in the school while 73% disagreed. 23% agree that cultural differences do affect working relationships while 77% said it did not affect. 16% of the respondents were of the view that differences in education levels did not have an effect on working relationships among teachers while 84% did not agree. 26% of the respondents agree that personality clashes are common in the school while 74% did not agree. 18% of the respondents agreed that misunderstanding of motives is not common among teachers in the school while 82% disagreed. 34% of the respondents agreed that teachers of different ages work in harmony while 66% said it did not influence.

#### **5.2.4 Distribution of resources**

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that there was no interdependency among the teachers as 86% of the respondents indicated in the findings implying a need for each department to have their own resources. This will aid to avoid conflicts which may occur when departments are competing over the same scarce resources.

Resources need to be distributed every year to ensure that all departments in the school get the desired learning materials, equipment and facilities much needed for success in the school environment.

#### **5.3 Discussion of Findings**

The respondents agreed that the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between teachers unions and the teaching staff was to a moderate extent, the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the teachers' employer TSC was to a moderate extent, the frequency of conflict occurring among the Teaching staff in the school was to a moderate extent, the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the administration was to a moderate extent, the respondents were aware of existence of conflicts among the staff members in the school to a low extent and the respondents also indicated that they had a conflict resolution/Management policy in your school a low extent. The study was supported by Mudis and Yambo (2011) who was of the opinion that the determinants of conflicts between the teachers and the school administration are varied.

Dictatorial tendencies on part of school administration, poor physical working conditions, lack of administration support in provision of learning aids as well as psychological support when they are in need serve as a recipe to conflict among teachers and administration. Leaders set the tone for conflict management in the way they apply their leadership styles. Leaders can have a positive or negative impact on their school climate and too many still have a negative impact. Some of the conflicts experienced in schools sometimes come from leadership of school managers, Board of management chairpersons or student leadership.

An average score of 2.13 shows that the respondents agreed to a moderate extent in that; parents were involved in conflict resolution and management in the school, parents represent the teachers effectively in the surroundings communities, Parents recognize the teachers of this school because of the past history, timely reactions are always forthcoming from the employer to the teacher, the employer policies on issues that affect teachers are effective and motivating, the employer shows concern and always try to solve conflict in school, unions represent teachers effectively with the employer, unions are conversant with teachers conflict issues and intervene effectively and unions are trusted by teachers to intervene their issues to a low extent. The study was in line with Robins (2004) who concentrates on strategies specifically labelled as resolution techniques. He lists eight techniques as follows 1) Problem solving 2) superordinate goals 3) Avoidance 4 Smoothing 5) Compromise 6) Authoritative command 7) altering the human variables Altering structural variables. Thomas (2001) had examined conflict management strategies by when he focused on general strategies used by school managers in an educational setting. He pointed out that there was a difference between management and leadership. Since conflict was inevitable, particularly in a scholarly setting, it was necessary for managers to be recognizing conflict, to view its constructive as well as destructive potential, how to manage conflict and to apply conflict management strategies in the best way.

An average score of 2.21 shows that the respondents agreed to moderate extent on statements relating to Conflict resolution mechanisms in that; differences in education levels have no effect on working relationships among the teachers, differences in experience and expertise do not affect working relationships among the teachers in this school, cultural differences do affect working relationships, Teachers of different ages work in harmony in this school, Personality clashes are not common in this school, Misunderstanding of motives is not common among the teachers in this school, Indiscipline among teachers is not common in this school, There is high inter-dependency among the teachers and Absconding work and negligent of duty is not common in this school.

The study corresponded with Johdi & Apitree (2012) who was of opinion that provision and sharing of resources is one of the major causes of conflicts in secondary schools. Failure to provide adequate teaching and learning resources by school heads while also demanding quality results has always been at the heart of causing conflict between school heads and teachers. In cases where for instances students share reading materials it was difficult to give homework and any additional work. There has cases where by classes have been conducted under trees especially during cold and rainy season because classrooms are not enough which may viewed to bring conflict between teachers and school heads. In many schools teachers are obliged to share learning materials and the scarcer they are, the greater the potential for conflict. Due to budgetary constraints it is not feasible for departments to get budgetary allocation of funds that enable the departments to purchase all their requirements hence conflicts over provision of resources is inevitable in schools as departments are allocated more according to needs while others get less. In some schools where there are two sessions going on at the same time or hot sitting, classes share the same furniture and learning classes. If one, class using the classroom first delays to vacate the classroom timeously or fails to handover a clean and swept classroom for the next classroom for the next session, conflict between the teachers may occur, Okotoni & Okotoni (2003) was of view that teachers least motivated since they are not paid well by the government. Teachers have been confronted by bad situations in terms of condition of service. Some schools face numerous challenges in providing required facilities and teaching materials, which constitutes fertile ground for conflict.

#### **5.4 Conclusions**

The following Conclusions were made based on the findings of the study.

Majority of parents are not involved in conflict resolution and management in school with only 16% contradicting that opinion while 84% agreed that parents were not involved.

That majority by 73% agreed that unions were not conversant with issues affecting teachers' policies that affect teachers.

Absconding work and negligent of duty was not common as 62% of the respondents said it not bring conflicts in the schools while 38% agreed that this was a determinant of conflict in schools.

Misunderstanding of motives was not common among teachers in the school as the findings revealed that only 18% had different opinions.

It is also important to note that the researcher was in the field noticed some projects that had stalled in one of the schools and when reached out for further clarification from the principal the response was the problem of delayed funding.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

### **5.5.1 General Recommendations**

The recommendations were drawn based on the study findings as follows.

- i. School management should involve other stakeholders in conflict management in public secondary school to allow for the creation of positive relationships among the teachers and between the teachers and the external school community.
- ii. Transparency and effective communication are important and should be considered a must implement policy in public secondary school.
- iii. The school management could try to find out the root cause of determinants of conflicts in schools and ensure that these determinants were well understood and dealt with on time.
- iv. The Ministry of education and the teachers' service commission may conduct regular management training seminars to educate teachers on the virility of conflict management strategies as well as where and when they can be used. Otherwise, the tendency to rely on a few techniques for all situations will continue and this is not healthy for the schools.
- v. The external environment, especially the teachers' employer TSC, teachers' unions and parents should strengthen their relationship with school and teachers so that they play complementary roles to one another.

## **5.6 Suggestions for further Research**

Further Research may be done to assess the following areas of conflict in schools.

1. Determine the role the school management play in fueling conflict among teachers and on the other hand teachers role in fueling conflict among managers.
2. Determine the actual effects of conflicts policies in schools, whether they exist and if they have been implemented.
3. Extend the study to cover determinants of conflicts in other schools in the country including private schools.
4. The area of focus can be expanded to include other workplaces such as hospitals and parastatals and further dispute resolution mechanisms explored.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Introduction Letter

Wilfred Nanjira Malika  
P.O Box 382-00200  
Khwisero  
Mobile 0724158985  
[wilfredmalika80@gmail.com](mailto:wilfredmalika80@gmail.com)

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi, School of Continuing Education and Extra Mural Programme. I am in the process of carrying out a research project on Determinants of Conflicts in the workplace- a case of teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Khwisero Sub-County, Kakamega County.

I kindly wish to invite you to give your opinion and views according to your experience on issues of conflicts among teachers and how they can be addressed by filling in the questionnaire provided.

The findings of the study will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will help in improving conflict resolution in secondary schools in Kenya through informed policy development and implementation.

Please answer all the questions from all the sections that are relevant to you or your institution as objectively as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**Wilfred Nanjira Malika**

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire

### Part 1: Biography

1. Position in the institution :( Tick as appropriate):

School Teacher ( ) School Administration ( )

2. Type of School: National Boys ( )

National Girls ( )

National Mixed ( )

County School Boys ( )

County School Girls ( )

County School Mix ( )

Other ( ) Please Specify.....

3. Age:

30 years and below ( )

30-40 years ( )

40-50 years ( )

Above 50 years ( )

4. Gender:

Male ( )

Female ( )

5. Experience in the institution:

0-2 years ( )

2-4 years ( )

4-6 years ( )

More than 6 years ( )

## **Part 2: Conflict Factors**

### **Section One: General Information**

**1.** Are you aware of existence of conflicts among the staff members in the school?

Yes ( )

NO ( )

**2.** What is the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the administration?

Very High ( )

High ( )

Moderate ( )

Low ( )

**3.** What is the frequency of conflict occurring among the Teaching staff in the school?

Very High ( )

High ( )

Moderate ( )

Low ( )

**4.** What is the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between the teaching staff and the teachers' employer TSC?

Very High ( )

High ( )

Moderate ( )

Low ( )

**5.** What is the frequency of occurrence of conflicts between teachers unions and the teaching staff?

Very High ( )

High ( )

Moderate ( )

Low ( )

**6.** Do you have a conflict resolution/ Management policy in your school?

Yes ( )

No ( )

7. If your answer to question 6 above is yes, is the policy effective in conflict resolution/management?

Yes ( )

No ( )

8. Briefly explain your answer to question 7 above

.....

.....

.....

.....

**9. External conflict factors**

<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>1</b>	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree			Strongly Agree	
			<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The role of the unions</b>	Unions represent teachers effectively with the employer.						
	Unions are conversant with teachers conflict issues and intervene effectively						
	Unions are trusted by teachers to intervene their issues.						
<b>The role of teachers service commission</b>	The employer policies on issues that affect teachers are effective and motivating.						
	Timely reactions are always forthcoming from the employer to the teachers						
	The employer shows concern and always try to solve conflict in school.						
<b>The role of parents</b>	Parents recognize the teachers of this school because of the past history.						
	Parents represent the teachers effectively in the surroundings communities.						
	Parents are involved in conflict resolution and management in the						

	school.					
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### 10. Conflict resolution mechanisms

<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>			
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>			
			<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Conflicting styles</b>	Absconding work and negligent of duty is not common in this school.						
	Indiscipline among teachers is not common in this school.						
	There is high inter-independency among the teachers.						
<b>Conflicting perceptions</b>	Differences in experience and expertise do not affect working relationships among then teachers in this school.						
	Cultural differences do affect working relationships.						
	Differences in education levels have no effect on working relationships among the teachers.						
<b>Conflicting goals and values</b>	Personality clashes are not common in this school						
	Misunderstanding of motives is not common among the teachers in this school.						
	Teachers of different ages work in harmony in this school.						



### 11. Availability of resources


5	4	3	2			1	
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree			Strongly agree	
			5	4	3	2	1
<b>Conflicting roles and pressures</b>	Work always assigned as per individuals expertise experience and balanced						
	Tasks here are professionally done without unnecessary power wielding						
	There is always clarity of roles for both the teachers and administration						
<b>Unpredictable policies</b>	School policies on conflicts management, resolution and teacher motivation exist						
	Most teachers here have no difficulties with administration						
	School policies are communicated and implemented fairly to all staff members without favouritism						
<b>Conflicting needs</b>	There is a policy on sharing working materials and space						
	Working materials and space always available when required						
	Working materials are always shared fairly according						


**Appendix 3: Interview guide for school principals**

**DETERMINANTS OF CONFLICTS IN WORK PLACE-A CASE OF TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHWISERO SUB COUNTY KAKAMEGA COUNTY.**

1. Type of school   Girls School   
                             Boys School   
                             Mixed School
2. Which personnel in your school need to be trained on conflict resolution mechanism?
3. Does your school have adequate resources to implement its projects?
4. Are you aware of any conflict in your school? What have you done to solve it?
5. Are you satisfied with the manner in which conflicts are handled in your school?  
Yes       No
6. If the answer in above 5. Is No give the reason for dissatisfaction.
7. To what extend does school management get involved in school conflicts?  
a) Very high       b) High       c) Moderate   
d) Low       e) Very low
8. Are you aware of any conflict in your school which the teachers' service commission and teachers unions were involved?  
Yes       No
9. If the answer is yes in 8 above, how was it solved?


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