UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION BETWEEN

HEADMASTERS AND THE TEACHING STAFF IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

IN THE AHAFO – ANO NORTH DISTRICT

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2011

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature .... Date........................

Name : Emmanuel Kumi Asare

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature .... Date...........................

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to look at Conflict Management and Resolution between Headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo–Ano North District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Data was collected from a sample of 72 teachers out of the population of 122 from the two Senior High Schools in the district. The administration of a questionnaire was followed by an interview schedule. The analysis of data involved the use of descriptive statistical methods, particularly percentages and frequencies.

Data gathered indicated the existence of conflict in the schools; it showed that conflict intensity was minimal. The findings indicated that setting clear goals, collective decision making, negotiation and consensus building, fairness and objectivity, and good communication skills were strategies or mechanisms that were capable of managing and resolving conflicts between headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools. However, it was observed that, the Headmasters' use of rational approaches in resolving conflict has helped the schools reduced the levels of conflict intensity in schools.

For effective management and resolution of conflicts, it is recommended from the study that the Headmasters should organize in-service training annually to sharpen the communication skills of teachers.

Also, headmasters who successfully display concern for both personal and professional needs of their staff create a school environment characterized by lower and more manageable conflict levels.

DEDICATION

To my lovely wife, Mrs. Anna Atuahene Asare, and my two kids: Rhoda and

Eugene for their immense contribution in areas of love, care and guidance.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The issue of Conflict in our schools has featured prominently at round table discussions among administrators, teachers and students. It is generally recognized that doing what one likes is a necessity in life and hence it should also follow the discipline of various sorts as an inherent part of succeeding in anything one does. In history, great men were all disciplined and dealt with different situations to avoid conflict. They struggled against apparent insuperable odds until they overcame them.

Conflict according to the Macmillan English Dictionary means disagreement between people or groups. It is also a situation in which it is difficult for two things to exist together or be true at the same time. Conflict has been viewed as battle, struggle, clash and dissension. It is a situation in which incompactable goals, attitudes, emotions or behaviors lead to disagreement or opposition between two or more parties. Therefore conflict has been historically viewed as undesirable and something that prevents social cohesion.

Conflict is inevitable in society, and in contemporary views it cannot be avoided but it can be managed. There is always a disagreement between two or more people on issues because they will not perceive the same situation and precisely the same way. Conflict has been in existence since creation of the world.

It can occur within a single individual or social units, thus interpersonal or intergroup conflict is seen as one of the inescapable phenomenon of life. The fact that people are made up of different ideas, interest and ambitions, drive and desire means that human interaction by their very nature are conflictual because such differences or diversities will compete and clash at times.

Again, conflict can be looked at as functional and dysfunctional. It is functional when there is healthy constructive disagreement between two or more parties. It produces new ideas, learning and growth. It also leads to innovation and encourages creativity. Conflict is dysfunctional when there is an unhealthy, destructive disagreement between two or more parties. The disagreement could involve personalized anger and resentment directed at specific individual or groups rather than specific ideas.

The consequences of conflict help many people to prevent it at all times, it seems more realistic to try to keep its bounds and make use of it. In this present world, many changes depend on conflict. Conflict in the healthy competition naturally increases group cohesiveness which in turn increases productivity. Because of its disastrous consequences for the organization and the individuals concerned for which senior secondary schools are no exceptions, there is the need to find means and strategies to manage and avoid conflict in schools between headmasters and teachers, teachers and teachers, teachers and students and whoever is involved in the running of school.

In Senior High School, whatsoever the cause of conflict is, it is natural and that there are several ways to avoid the occurrences of the conflict and if possible there are ways to manage and prevent them from happening. Conflict

management is one of the activities that a School Head is exposed to and is not restricted to domain of the school; many cases can involve the community and other stakeholders.

According to Albert & Thomas (1980) conflict pervades human existence and threatens the survival of societies, not only is there always wars in one part of the globe or another, but the interpersonal conflicts also occur in human groups and school organizations. If conflicts are managed well, it could yield positive outcomes. There is high degree of loyalty when people unite against a common cause to achieve a common goal. When problems are identified, solutions may be found for necessary changes, and the organization and individuals prosper and survive. Conflict is a vital tool to organizational success because it help to push the organization forward in times of rapid change and prevent it from progressing. When conflicts are not managed and resolved, it brings about chaos in the society, people stop talking to one another, biased perception of one another is reinforced and unbiased communication is blocked. In such situation, the organizations overall objectives are forgotten and petty squabbles become a norm in the scheme of things. With this, the organizational objectives become difficult to be achieved.

The ability to handle conflicts is a key factor in managerial success. Whenever we wish to make changes, there is the possibility for conflict generation. Furthermore, we not only have to handle situation in which there is conflict between ourselves and one or more other members of staff but may also at times have to resolve conflicts between superiors and subordinates. It often happens that one party will deliberately block anything which appears to be the initiative of, or have the backing of the other, and progress may be difficult. On

the other hand one may have more freedom of action while the opposing parties are looked in battle.

Conflict in the sense of an honest difference of opinion, resulting from the availability of two or more causes of action, is not only unavailable but also a valuable part of life. It helps to ensure that different possibilities are properly considered, and further possible courses of action may be generated from the discussion of the already recognized alternatives. Also, conflict often means that the chosen course of action is tested at an early stage, thereby reducing the risk of missing an important flaw which may indicate abdication of responsibilities, lack of interest or lazy thinking.

Most conflicts have both rational and emotional components and lie somewhere along a spectrum between genuine conflict of interest on one hand and personality clash on the other. Examples of genuine conflict of interest occur where a vendor of a house seeks the highest price, while the purchaser needs to pay as little as possible. There is also a genuine conflict of interest between the employer and the employee about the question of salary. In both cases, it is the interest of both parties to resolve the conflict otherwise there is no sale in the first place and strike in the second.

Conflict is a concomitant of social interaction. In a society where there is no social interaction there is little conflict potential. In order to negotiate for a solution, it necessary to, listen to and understand the point of view and needs of the other partly and try to be fair in all matters, it is also important to look for trade-offs, thus something that can concede to the other party. Again, focus on issues and facts and avoid personalizing the conflict.

Conflict persists in every institution and organization; various attempts have been made to avoid its occurrence without much success. There is therefore the need for the study to be conducted to find ways and means to avoid it. Heads of Senior High Schools need to exercise an amount of control to ensure that conflicts are avoided if not managed for coordination and efficiency in the various educational institutions in Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

Conflict has become part and parcel of every human life, I found in every human institution and for that matter Educational Institution. Conflict is now seen to be one of the major factors of the world's retrogression, stagnation and underdevelopment. Social infrastructure and human capital which have taken years to develop can be destroyed during conflicts. At certain times, the interest of both Headmaster and the teachers, teachers and students, and even among students and students are opposed to each other. It takes some effort, time and goodwill to reconcile and resolve the differences. Some headmasters in Senior High Schools in Ghana try to use several mechanisms and an approach dealing with conflict, yet conflict persists in the various educational institutions therefore, there is the need to study and understand conflicts in schools and other social organizations.

Attempts are made to resolve these conflicts through methods such as dialogue and persuasion which never made the problem to explode into open confrontation. However, these attempts never ended some of these conflicts once and for all. There are always lingering bits of the conflicts in most Senior High Schools in Ghana. Appropriate strategies and mechanisms could be developed for

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constructive measures to be found to avoid them from occurring in the various educational institutions. This has called for research into conflict management and resolution in Senior High Schools in Ghana.

The Purpose of the Study

Generally, the study sought to examine ways to manage and resolve conflicts between headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District of Ghana. The study specifically sought to identify the nature, causes and effects of conflicts in Senior High Schools and to determine the strategies of resolving conflicts between headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District

Research Question

The general research questions on conflict management and resolutions in Senior High Schools in Ghana are;

1. How does conflict stir up in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District?

2. What are the causes of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North   District?

3. What are the effects of conflicts on the work of headmasters and teacher in Senior High Schools in Ahafo-Ano North   District?

4. What strategies can be used by Headmasters to manage and resolve conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District?

The Significance of the Study

Every institution expects good and congenial atmosphere, it is an important feature in every successful organization. This calls for an amount of

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control by heads of Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District of Ghana to ensure that conflicts are managed, if possible avoided in their schools in order to promote coordination and efficiency. Various attempts have been developed by Heads to resolve conflicts in their schools, but their efforts do not yield the needed results. This is because the nature and concept of conflict has not been studied and understood well; again appropriate strategies have not been developed to resolve conflicts.

It is therefore hoped that:

1. The study brings into focus the nature of conflicts that exist between Headmasters and teachers in Senior Secondary Schools. It will assist stakeholders in education to identify the various types of conflicts and design appropriate strategies for dealing with them.

2. The study addresses the various strategies or mechanisms that can be used to resolve conflicts in Senior High Schools since conflicts cannot be avoided completely in schools.

3. Also the research benefit administrators, teachers, social researchers and policy makers who may need it as source of reference material and for update on the views of the state of conflicts in Senior High Schools.

4. The research conscientise educationists, administrators, Headmasters, teachers, policy makers and the concerned citizens about the need to avoid conflicts in Senior High Schools.

Delimitations of the Study

There are many areas to research into when it comes to the issues of conflicts in Senior High Schools. These issues may range from effects of conflicts

on the administration of Senior High Schools in the various districts, conflict and quality tuition delivery and Headmasters role in solving conflicts in Senior High Schools. In this study, however I focussed on conflicts management and resolution between Headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District of Ghana. As such, the findings of the research cannot be used to draw generalized conclusion but can be used as basis for an introduction to further research.

Limitations of the Study

Ideally the study should have covered more than one district in the region. However, it has been restricted to only one district, the Ahafo-Ano North district due to work-load, my extra-curricular activities and the limited time frame within which I had to do the work. It was not possible for me to examine all the schools sufficiently, as a result of this; I did not get an insight into the challenges which affected the reliability and validity of the result.

Organization of the Rest of the Study

The rest of the study has been organized into four chapters with each chapter covering a broad heading which is further broken down into sub-headings.

Chapter Two deals with the review of related literature for the study, here attempt is made to bring any relevant information which has a bearing on the topic under research and any theoretical perspective available into focus. Chapter Three also outlines the research methodology employed by looking at the population, sample and sampling method, institutions for collecting data and their mode of administration. Chapter Four focuses on the analysis of the collected data

and findings, while Chapter Five sums the whole study with summary of findings, conclusions as well as suggestions and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study sought to examine ways to manage and resolve conflicts between headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District of Ghana This chapter presents a review of works of authors and writers of books and articles in magazines and newspapers that relate to conflict. Also explanations of some of the concepts that are found in the research problem or illustration of some of the relevant materials that would put the research work into its focus. Conflict management and resolution is an essential factor in managerial success. The chapter is sub-divided into sub-headings as outlined below;

  i. Concept of Conflict

  ii. Nature of Conflict

  iii. Causes of Conflict

  iv. Effects of Conflict

  v. Conflicts Management

  vi. Conflict Resolution

Concept of Conflict

Conflicts are natural and desirable part of any group or organization. Conflict does not erupt, it rather develops through various stages, and in each stage certain factors contribute to the possibility of it.

Conflict has been defined in various ways, Deutsch (1973) said there is conflict whenever an action by one person or group prevents, obstructs, interferes with injuries or renders ineffective to another action with which it is incompatible. From the above, it could be seen that conflict arises when two or more people have divergent interests in a situation or goals. Each of the people involved may not intend any harm or ill-filling towards others.

Hanna and Wilson (1990) stated that, conflict is a struggle involving opposing ideas, values and or limited resources. Essentially, conflict connotes disagreement, disputes or controversy in ideas or views, points held by two or more individuals or groups.

According to Mazuri (1987), conflict is a concomitant of social interactions. Specifically,

(i)   It starts when one party perceives that the other party has frustrated, or is about to frustrate some concern of his.

(ii)   Whenever incompatible activities occur whether money, promotion, prestige, power or whatever is limited and other scarcity encourages blocking behaviour.

The survival of the fittest notion and the class struggle in the Marxist doctrine. The end result is that a conflict state emerges when one party blocks the goal achievement of another.

According to the Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1995), conflict is an active disagreement between two people with an opposing opinions or principles. Also it is fighting between two or more groups of individuals. Kriesberg (1973) saw conflict as a relationship between two or more parties who believe they have incompatible goals. Stoner (1978) also said that a competition exists when the goals of the parties involved are incompatible. However, the parties cannot interfere with each other, if there is no opportunity to interfere with each party's goal attainment, a competitive situation exists. Nevertheless, if the opportunity for interference does exist and the opportunity is acted upon, then the situation is that of conflict.

The Psychological state of the individual level of maturity and value or need was found by Mann (1969) to exercise strong influence on the conflict conceptualization process. In other words, an interpersonal conflict such as an inferiority complex coupled with a desire to climb a hierarchical ladder can seriously affect the person's perception of the external stimulus triggering conflict. A man unconscious of a particular prejudice against some people can easily take an innocent remark for a threat and react aggressively.

Simmel (1955) said conflict is a form of association and that a certain amount of discord, inner divergence and outer controversy, is organically tied up with the very element that ultimately hold the group together.

Conflict as part of any relationship and group, when managed well and constructively are extremely valuable. Robins (1974) had three basic views of conflict. These are; traditional or classical, behavioural, and interactionalist. The traditionalist view saw conflict as bad and should be eliminated or reduced.

Robins said that the traditionalists perceive conflict as unnecessary and harmful, and therefore a signal of ineffectiveness of the organization. He further said that the traditionalists view conflict as a pathological case – a form of illness, that erect suspicion and mistrust.

From the behaviourist view point of conflict, Robins contented that conflict is a frequent phenomenon. He denied that conflict is always a manifestation of abnormal organizational behaviour. He said again that, conflict is inevitable because human needs and interest may clash from time to time. However, the clashes can be dealt with. Although conflict is seen as functional because it helps to address some problems, the behaviourists also see it as harmful and must be eliminated.

Robins (1974) saw conflict as an inevitable, necessary and even permanent in an organization. He said, it is inevitable though it is a game of "one wins and or loses". Based on this "win or lose" concept he feared that it might be harmful and dysfunctional. However, he said that the manager can resolve conflict through the problem – solving techniques thereby encouraging an open-exchange of information for both parties to work through their differences to both of them.

Thomas (1992) presented a general model of conflict showing three main cause-effect relationships. They are as follows;

(i)   Structural conditions (characteristics of the parties and contextual variables) influence the conflict process as they produce stimuli and affect the parties' perceptions of the situation.

(ii)   The conflict process consists of experiences generating thoughts, emotions and intensions leading to behaviours. This process will produce certain outcomes.

(iii)   The conflict outcomes are two-fold relating to the task and the other relating to the social system. (Pg. 106)

The outcome influences or modifies existing structural conditions through a feedback loop leading to the escalating or the reduction of the conflict. An evaluation of conflict outcome takes place consciously and unconsciously generating thoughts and emotions that influence the development of the next episode with the same party or with another party as people use past experience as a guide to help them deal with a new situation.

Nature of Conflict

Conflict is viewed by scholars as a prominent issue that affects our social life directly either positively or negatively depending on how it is handled. According to Albert and Thomas (1980), conflict can be viewed from three (3) distinct communication dimensions; they are: informational, procedural and interpersonal. The types of conflict potentially occurring in groups which correspond in these three dimensions, they are;

Informational Conflict: This occurs when members of a group disagree about the substance of the group dimension. The substance or deliberations involve facts, figures, opinions of qualified authorities, and interpretation of evidence.

Procedural Conflict: This is when a group cannot reach agreement on the steps to follow in reaching a decision. The establishment of a group's agenda, a

procedure normally occurring early in the discussion, usually results in some controversy over when to consider various topics or whether to talk about them all.

Interpersonal conflict: This involves what most people refer to as a personality clash. Members of the group resort to names-calling and expressions of personal dislike or distaste for other participants in the discussion.

Deutsch (1973) asserted that from any angle we view conflict, it is usually about one or the other of several types of issues. He placed conflict into five (5) basic areas; these are Control over resources, preferences, values, beliefs and the nature of the relationship between the parties. Deutsch maintained that control over resources is when power, property, prestige, space, money, food and other essentials are regarded as not being shared. This implies that conflict is likely to occur when two (2) or more parties seek exclusive use of such resources or given part of them. Deutsch thought that conflicts arise when the activities or tastes of one person or group impinges upon another's preference and sensitivities.

According to Deutsch, a third basic area of conflict is that of values. He thought that while an individual might prefer a system of governance that stresses social justice, another individual may prefer a system of governance that stresses justice, another individual might prefer liberty. These differences in values may lead to conflict. He was quick to add however that, it is not the differences 'per se' that lead to conflict but rather the claim that one dominates the other brings about conflict.

Dutch's fourth aspect of conflict is beliefs; this is when conflict arises between two parties claiming dominance over what they regard as "is" over fact, information, knowledge or belief about reality.

With the fifth (5th) aspect of conflict, Dutsch maintained that, two people may come into conflict because of opposing views as well as desires in their relationship.

Mann (1969), Wilson and Hannah (1990) stated that, the sources and conditions which cause conflict have created varieties of patterns on which conflicts occur. They identified the following types of conflicts:

Approach – Approach Conflict: A condition where two alternative ideas or views or values are equally attractive and conflict arises in trying to make a choice between the two. Avoidance – Approach Conflict: It is a condition where the two alternative ideas or views available are equally unattractive but a choice must be made one way or the other.

Approach – Avoidance Conflict: Here the available ideas or views have both attractive and unattractive aspects. Multiple – Approach Conflict: Even though the alternative ideas and views available are attractive, they are so many that making a satisfactory choice among them becomes overwhelming and conflict – inducing.

Substantive Conflict: Although there is an agreement on what should be done, conflicting views and ideas emerge about the substance or the way and means of doing it. Affective Conflict: When choices or ideas or views are made, but the choices do not satisfy personal or group needs, an affective or emotional conflict develops.

Interpersonal Conflict: This is a form of conflict characterized by group members openly expressing their antagonism to the ideas and views expressed by other group members, as a result of which group consensus cannot be achieved and group cohesiveness is jeopardized.

Stoner (1978), like Deutsch, Mann, Wilson and Hannah also identified five (5) types of conflict which are personal or individual, inter-personal, between individuals and the organization, between groups in the organization and between organization. These can be explained as itemized below;

Personal or Individual Conflict

Stoner believed that a person in an organization has some duties to perform. Conflict arises when work demands interference with other demands or work demands are more than the individual can afford to do; stress, the person's response to the demands of the organization may cause conflict.

Interpersonal Conflict

According to Stoner, where personality difference of individuals exists in the same organization, it could resort to conflict. Interpersonal conflict arises between the Head of an institution and the subordinates from role-related pressures.

Conflict between Individuals and the Organization

Stoner observed that conflict arises when individuals do not work according to what their institutions expect from them. Conflict arises because the institution sanctioning or punishing a member be resisted.

Conflict between Groups in the Organization

According to Stoner, conflict arises when there are resources to be shared between groups in the organization and one party tries to cheat the other. The differences in good orientation and values of the group and individuals might bring conflict between them.

Conflict between Organizations

This type of conflict arises in the form of one organization trying to outdo the other in performance. Stoner added that when improved services, technologies, low or high prices and effective utilization of resources in an organization may bring about conflict between two or different organizations.

Causes of Conflict

Conflicts can be said to occur either between managers or between workers or between managers and workers (Vertical and Horizontal axes). Conflict can also exist between people in the organization and those outside the organization .Most of these conflicts come as a result of competition for sales and market or economic aspects of pay and prices.

Deutsch (1973), Wilson and Hannah (1990) identified seven (7) fundamental causes of conflict.

They are:

Control over scarce resources

They said that resources whether physical or emotional are essential to survival. The struggle by different parties to appreciate perceived scarce resources to the self in order to guarantee self or group survival often engenders conflict.

Incompatibility of values

When parties in a social interaction have different and incompatible values and ideas on the same issue, conflict arises because each party regards its values and ideas to be superior.

Belief system

Different belief systems among people in the same social settings precipitate conflict because the strong emotions inherent in belief system often make people unable to rationally appreciate the merit in other people's belief system.

Preferences

Alternative choices are often present during interpersonal and inter-group interactions. If some members of a group have a strong preference for an alternative choice not preferred by other members of the group, a conflict occurs and harmonious social interactions is jeopardized.

Nature of the relationship between parties

Nelson (1997) states that, "people enter relationships with differences in their socio-economic, cultural backgrounds, sex-role expectations, level of self-esteem, ability to tolerate stress, tastes, interest, social and family networks as well as capacity to change and group (p.225). These numerous differences which abound in social interactions are verifiable sources of conflict in interpersonal and inter-group relationships.

Status Struggle

Need for esteem is basic to most human beings. That is why people struggle for positions of high status and prestige when they are in group settings.

Power influence

Need for power has also been identified as basic to human beings. Power is however, often used in group settings by group leaders. Conflict arises when members of a group perceive a leader to be abusing his or her power.

According to Better Schools – Commonwealth Secretariat (1993), at the outset, a conflict situation is often perceived as a single event, but this is seldom the case. It says that conflicts do not simply erupt; rather they develop through stages, and in each of these stages certain factors contribute to the possibility of conflicts. Again, potential conflicts are precipitated by how individuals "see" each other and that these perceptions determine whether conflict will occur. It notes that people's feelings and attitudes towards each other, and the particular cause of conflict will further affect their eventual behaviour. It further states that, based on the two stages, confrontation will occur, being either conflictive or problem-solving.

According to Appleby (1994) the causes of organizational conflict are more related to inter-group conflict, but apply to some extent to conflict between individuals and between groups. He states the following major causes of conflict:

1.   The need to share scarce resources.

2.   Differences in goals between organizational units.

3.   Interdependence of work activities in the organization.

4.   Differences in values, attitudes or perceptions among members of different units.

5.   Ambiguously defined work responsibilities and communication problems.

Fisher (1972), also says that conflict arises in its own special character. He says a conflict cannot be separated from individuals, the particular organization and the unique circumstances in which the problem occurs. He goes on to say that there are however general characteristics of organizations that produce conflict. He notes that by identifying these can sharpen our ability to observe conflict and spot situations that have potential for conflict. He identifies win-lose situations and concerns about status and authority as typical among the sources of conflict.

1.   Win – lose situations:

Fisher contends that sometimes two people or groups have goals that cannot be obtained simultaneously. He says that win-lose conflicts are frequent where resources are limited.

2.   Concerns about status and authority:

Fisher states that issues of status and authority take several forms. There are some of the more common one such as individuals' desire for autonomy and inconsistency between authority and prestige differences.

He observed that personal desires for autonomy lead to conflict in many ways. He argues that conflict can come up around people's desire to have increased control over their work and share in decision – making. He continues that if frustration sets in, the desire for autonomy can lead to active resistance. Fisher states that conflict is much more likely when demands are made on a group by another whose status is seen as inferior.

Hampton (1978) hold the view that, people who fear ambiguity in status, beliefs or authority seem more likely to seek supremacy by defeating their enemies. They contend that conflicts occur when an individual wishes to satisfy

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security, affiliation or esteem needs in a group situation, but the group demands excessive conformity or stressful behaviour. They further states that conflict may arise from an individual's efforts to promote his or her own interests, such as making more money by breaking the group's norm on permissible production. They observed again that such transgression of the emergent rules will often result in collective retaliation on the unfortunate offender.

From this, it could be deduced that there are numerous factors that can cause conflict.

Effects of Conflict

Conflict can be destructive/negative and positive as well. People tend to look at conflict at the work place as being negative. In classical management theory, the existence of conflict is viewed as evidence of breakdown in the organization, failure on the part of management to plan adequately and/or to exercise sufficient control.

In human relation theory, conflict is again viewed especially in negative terms and as evidence of failure to develop appropriate norms in the group. Traditional administrative theory has been strongly biased in favour of the ideal the smooth running organization characterized by harmony, unity, coordination, efficiency and order.

In reality, conflict cannot be eliminated completely from social settings, and if we attempt to do so, we will probably only force some of it underground. Conflict can be an effective way for everyone to grow, learn and become more productive and satisfied in the work place.

Delmer (1981), in his research on effects of conflicts stated that conflict can have positive and negative effects. He further stated that for some people, conflict motivates and arouses enthusiasm, but for others it constitutes a major threat.

Higgins (1991) also states that, conflict can have positive and negative effects. Although many people could like to eliminate all conflicts, it seems more realistic to try to keep them in control. He stated that much of change depends on conflicts. Competition tends to enhance the general welfare of individuals and societies if the conflict level is not too high. Conflict in the form of competition ordinarily increases when people unite against a common foe. If problems are recognized, solutions may be forth - coming and will change result.

Evarald, Morris & Wilson (2004) stated that, conflicts can be dangerous and disruptive. Conflicts become dangerous and disruptive force whenever personal 'glory' is staked on the outcome. The further the conflict develops, the more 'glory' is staked, the more bitter the conflict becomes and the less easy it is to achieve a solution. Decision-taking is paralyzed because neither party dares to make any concessions for fear (probably justified) that these will be seized upon by the other party as a victory and bridgehead for further advances. At such point, we speak of a "win-lose" situation since this is how the parties both do things which are against their own real advantage (as well as wasting their own time on conflict). Real or super-ordinate goals and interests are lost sight of in the heart of battle. Conflicts may be overt, leading to a rehearsal of the same arguments at each meeting. More about the real issue but canvas support from whom they

believe to be influential. They will each also take actions after the other party, without informing him or her.

Evarald, Morris & Wilson (2004) further stated that, conflict can develop into intergroup competition. Competition like conflict, can be of great value to an organization. However, it can easily be destructive. Once intergroup competition develops into a win-lose situation, it is even more difficult to handle than between individuals. If any one member of a group departs from the 'party-line', he or she may be perceived as a traitor and outcast.

Unfortunately, "win-lose" conflict with another group is a very effective means of achieving allegiance within a group.

Subconsciously or consciously, managers who are unsure of themselves will use conflicts to win support – often with disastrous consequences for the organization. The head, the local authority, the examining board or another department will be perceived as the 'enemy' who are always doing things wrong.

Evarald, Morris & Wilson (2004) again discussed possible attitudes to conflicts. They went on to say that participants in any conflict are based on whether or not they believed that they can avoid confrontation, and whether or not they believe that they will be able to reach agreement.

It is worth noting how the so-called 'communication' problems occur because there exists at the roots a conflict of view which is not brought into the open. Instead, the parties each 'do their own things' in the hope of getting it away. They may also devote a great deal of time to building up support for their point of view and talking about the person with whom they are in conflict.

Conflict Management

Conflict management refers to the long-term management of intractable conflicts. It is the label for which the variety of ways by which people handle grievances; standing up for what they consider to be right and against what they consider to be wrong. Those ways include such diverse phenomena as gossip, ridicule, lynching, terrorism, warfare, fending, genocide, law, mediation, and avoidance. Which forms of conflict management will be used in any given situation can be somewhat predicted and explained by the social structure.

Wright (1996), Mashane and Glinow (2000) suggested five (5) strategies for managing interpersonal conflicts in an organization. These are: collaboration, avoidance, competing, accommodating and compromising.

1. Collaborative Style: Conflict management is the best when the parties do not have perfectly opposing interests and when they have enough trust and openness to share information. This style is usually desirable because organizational conflicts are rarely win-lose situations. There is usually opportunity for mutual gain if the parties search for creative solutions. An important feature of this style is information sharing so that the parties can identify common ground and potential solutions that satisfy both of them. For example, if there is a rift between two teachers over the use of the only text book available for their lessons at the same time one of the best options for managing this conflict is to alter the time table so that the two will have their lessons at different times.

2. Avoiding: This style attempts to smoothen over or avoid conflict situations altogether. For instance, tutors in a particular school may rearrange their

work area or tasks to minimize interaction with their colleagues they are at loggerheads with.

3. Competing: Competition is trying to win the conflict at the expense of the other. This style has the strongest win-lose orientation because it has the highest level of assertiveness and lowest level of cooperativeness.

4. Accommodation: This involves giving in completely to the other side's wishes or at least cooperating with little or no attention to one's own interests.

5. Compromising: Compromising is trying to reach a middle ground with the other party. In this style of conflict one looks for a position in which one's looses are offset by equally valued gains.

Conflicts must therefore, be managed, for they have their roots in creating interests, bringing up differing perceptions and unearthing unfulfilled desires. Terry and Erikson (1969) saw conflict management as problem solving under very great stress and stain in the face of intensely emotional environments. According to them, this occurred under serious constraints such as limited resources or time to adjust to the crises. They advised further that there are techniques to use to manage conflicts. He categorized conflicts as gathering all possible and necessary data to the situation, formulating relevant alternatives, creating a serious of management teams with personnel who have special expertise for rapid deployment to the conflict management plan.

Evarald (2004) contend that conflict and frustration will often centre on the way in which a school, college or department is being run, the way things happen here. Such conflicts have a tendency to build up in any organization and

can assume more importance. There is often no coherent opinion about how things should be done. For the head or head of department, the situation is very frustrating and the feeling grows that the staff are working not for you but against you. They go on to say that, if you bend to the suggestions of one body of opinion, another group will be even satisfied. You feel misunderstood by everyone and alone in trying to make the organization work.

Again, Evarald (2004) say that, if we are to be effective managers of conflict to which we are part and of conflicts between other members of staff, we need to develop certain attitudes and skills. The only way to develop these is by self-control and practice.

1.   We need the ability to confront, to be able to say 'No' when a difference of opinion emerges. We should show by our attitudes that we are open to reason, logical discussion and problem solving.

2.   We must be able to present our ideas and feelings clearly, concisely, calmly and honestly.

3.   We need to develop listening skills which include the ability to show someone that we understand what has been said by "playing it back". We also need to develop the habit of asking questions rather than making statements, remembering that successful sale-people (of products or ideas) are those who ask the most questions.

4.   We need skill in evaluating all aspects of the problem, understanding the pressure on the party, 'helicopting' above the limited perspective which we might normally adopt.

5. We need to be able to articulate the common goals which should help both parties to rise above their difference about methods to look to future achievement rather than past frictions.

It is in managing conflict that, emotional intelligence really comes into its own; although it is also relevant in many other management situations. Thus, the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves and our relationships. It includes self-control, anger management, zeal, persistence and above all empathy. Such skills can be learnt, and this can help to prevent unnecessary conflict.

Wofford (1982) believed that conflict management involves the stimulation and control of constructive conflict and the prevention of it as well as resolution of destructive conflict. He went further to say that constructive conflict is a positive thing for change, the manager/administrator should stimulate it. If however, the intensity of constructive conflict becomes too great, then it rather becomes a negative force. To him, destructive conflict must be prevented if possible, but it appears, the administrator should resolve it. He was of the view that, the management of destructive conflict involves prevention and resolution of the conflict.

Conflict Resolution

Although a certain amount of organizational conflict may be seen as inevitable, there are a number of ways in which management can attempt to avoid the harmful effects of conflict. The school administrator might do his best to prevent conflicts from arising in the school. When these attempts fail, the conflicts must be resolved. Some of these strategies used to resolve conflicts are,

good communication skills, clearly and well structured goals, being objective, judging fairly and obeying lawful instructions. The goal of conflict resolution is to work together in order to meet the needs of both people involved.

Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) describes conflict resolution strategies in terms of winning and losing. In expressing them broadly it identified three (3) strategies in resolving conflicts.

1. Win – Lose: This is a strategy which often leaves or yields an unsatisfied outcome in that one party loses and the other wins. This leaves the probability of the conflict regenerating at a later time.

2. Lose – Lose: In this, both parties lose in the deal. Usually a third party is involved and tries to reach a compromise that is seldom acceptable to either of the parties.

3. Win – Win: Here the individuals involved work to bring a satisfactory outcome acceptable to both. Focus is on solving the problem and not defeating each other.

Mankoe (2002) identified four (4) basic types of negotiations that can be used to resolve conflicts in schools. These are Distributive negotiation, Integrative negotiation, Attitudinal Structuring and Intra-organizational negotiations.

1. Distributive negotiation: In this type, Mankoe (2002) refers to as win – lose approach where one party's gain is another's loss. Here the interaction among the conflicting parties takes the nature of guarded communications, limited expressions of trust, use of threats, and disguised statements and demands.

2. Integrative negotiation: This type on the other hand is a joint problem solving approach. The parties identify mutual problems, find and asses alternatives. They openly express preferences and jointly reach a mutual acceptable solution. Here there is trust and the exhibition of flexibility.

3. Attitudinal structuring: This is the process through which conflicting bodies seek to establish desired attitudes and relationships. In such negotiations those individuals exhibit relationship patterns such as hostility/friendliness and competitiveness or cooperativeness.

4. Intra-organizational negotiation: Exhibit a process in which the key parties on each side seek to build a consensus within their side. It aims at resolving intra-group conflict. The groups are represented by chosen few (representatives). These representatives may reach an agreement, however few acceptance by the groups they represent. They must come back to brief the general group, who may or may not agree.

Robbins (1983) stated that when one party seeks to achieve its goals or further its interests regardless of the impact on the parties to the conflict it competes or dominates. He went on to say that the win – lose struggles frequently utilize the formal authority of a mutual superior as the dominant force, and the conflicting parties each will use their own power bases in order to resolve a victory in their favour.

Susan (2007) stated that decision – makers are posed to remedy and resolve conflicts so that the essential trust for the critical contributions of employees for achieving goals is actively nurtured. Susan further alleges that conflict resolution strategies are a key for getting back on plan for the

achievement of goals. Depending on the scope of conflict, there are a number of tools available such as count on careful listening, laser – like focus, and real results from work to resolve key conflicts.

Susan (2007) again observed that, handling anger well means expressions it directly, honestly and openly to the person, without defensiveness, rancor or attack. It also means being able to 'hear' what that person is saying, understand his or her position and try to reach an acceptable solution for all involved.

Evarald (2004) contend that, in order to maximize the destructive effects of conflict, the following principles should be observed:

1. Maintain as much communication as possible with any party whose ideas, interests or attitudes appear to be in conflict with your own. Do not postpone discussing the problem in the hope that it will go away – it will usually get worse.

2. Refrain from temptation to talk about the other person behind his or her back. Do not try to build up any army of opinion on your side. Talk with the other person.

3. If you see signs of interdepartmental conflict, try to establish projects on either neutral or sensitive subjects in which individuals from the various departments will work together. As a general principle, it is good to prevent the build-up of rigid departmental demarcation by having cross-departmental groups. Where there is competition for scarce resources, computers, overhead projectors, rehearsal space, secretarial services or even money, it can be far more fruitful to ask a cross-departmental group of keen Junior Staff to meet to propose a policy to the head and thereby close ranks

in battle order. Such joint projects are also an excellent personnel-development activity.

4.   Try to avoid all the phenomena of the win – lose orientation, and above all try to see all sides of a dispute, remembering that most staff will only behave negatively if they believe they are under threat or attack.

5.   Try, to avoid setting up conflict situations through the 'reward' structure and, if they are already in the structure, change them. If two teachers see themselves as competing for your favour, a lot of their efforts may be directed into 'political' activity and they may each become high consumers of your time in "showing off" rather than getting on quietly with the job. Ensure that you recognized results and not flattery or show.

Kriesberg (1973) adds that although the use of force many be the quickest and neatest method of conflict management since it results in clear victors and vanquished, it may only serve to mark the end of one conflict and the beginning of another.

Fisher (1972) was with the view that, compromising is sometimes the best possible response to conflict, depending on the particular circumstances. He further adds that it has similar weaknesses. Again in the compromise process, once initiated, it prevented the search for better alternative solutions to the problem. The outcome is often less than appealing to both sides, and the original issues have not been dealt with accordingly to their merits.

Summary

The literature so far reviewed brought to fore, divergent but related shades of opinion of several authors on the topic under discussion. These include the

concept of conflict which was defined by authorities as action by one person or group of persons that prevents, obstructs, interferes with injuries or renders ineffective to another action with which it is incompatible. From the above, it could be seen that conflict arises when two or more people have divergent interests in a situation or goals. Each of the people involved may not intend any harm or ill-filling towards others. The other sub-themes discussed were nature and causes of conflict, it was realized that conflict comes in three folds; informational, procedural and interpersonal conflicts. The causes of conflict among other things were: control over scarce resources, belief system, nature of relationship at work places, differences in attitude, just to mention but a few.

On the effects of conflict it was deduced that conflict can be destructive/negative and positive as well. People tend to look at conflict at the work place as being negative. In classical management theory, the existence of conflict is viewed as evidence of breakdown in the organization, failure on the part of management to plan adequately and/or to exercise sufficient control. If problems are recognized, solutions may be forth - coming and will change result. Conflict motivates and arouses enthusiasm, but for others it constitutes a major threat.

Conflict management refers to the long-term management of interactable conflicts. It is the label for which the variety of ways by which people handles grievances. Conflicts must therefore, be managed, for they have their roots in creating interests, bringing up differing perceptions and unearthing unfulfilled desires. The goal of conflict resolution is to work together in order to meet the needs of both people involved. Conflict managements are strategies for managing

interpersonal conflicts in an organization these are: collaboration, avoidance, competing, accommodating and compromising.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of the study was to examine ways to manage and resolve conflicts between Headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo Ano North District of Ghana. This chapter seeks to describe the procedures that were adopted to undertake the study in conflict management and resolution exhibited by Headmasters of Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The chapter is recast on the design, population, sample, sampling procedures, research instruments, pilot testing, data collection procedure, method of data analysis and presentation.

Research Design

The research design for this study was a descriptive survey. This involves collection of data to test hypothesis and find answers to questions covering the current status of the topic under study. The purpose was to generalize from a sample of population so that inferences could be made about some characteristics, attitude or behaviour of the population. The descriptive design again determines and reports the way things are. It is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems, structure questionnaires, interviews and observation. The design has the advantage of producing good amount of responses from a number of people. Again, it involves extracting information from a large number of

individuals using the same set of questions either through personal contact, electronically or via phone.

The descriptive survey depended on direct contact with those persons whose characteristic behaviors or attitudes were relevant for the specific investigation. The study made an effort to describe some aspects of a population by selecting unbiased sample who are asked to complete questionnaires, interviews and tests. The descriptive survey design has a potential of providing a lot of information from quite a large number of individuals. The design is regarded as the most appropriate for arriving at the needed answers in a research like conflict management in Senior High Schools in Ghana.

Population

The study was carried out in two Senior High Schools in Ahafo-Ano North District of the Ashanti Region. Target population for the study was teachers and Headmasters in Senior High schools in the District. This was made up of 122 teachers; the supporting staffs were not included in the respondents. The study concentrated on those who were directly connected with academic work. Thus, the main actors were the teaching staff and the headmasters.

Below is the list of the schools which were involved in the study.

1. Tepa Senior High School

2. Mabang Senior High School

Table 1 presents a breakdown of the population according to school.

Table 1: Population of Respondents According to School and Gender

School	No. of teachers according to sex			No. of teachers for the study		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Tepa Senior High School	74	12	86	44	6	50
Mabang Senior High School	29	7	36	19	3	22
Total	**103**	**19**	**122**	**63**	**9**	**72**

Even though 72 questionnaires were distributed to 63 males and 9 female teachers, it was anticipated that 50 valid ones were going to be retrieved. Out of the 50 copies of valid questionnaire that were retrieved, 42 of them were from male teachers and 8 were from female teachers. These meant that views expressed in the study were predominantly those of the males.

Sample

From the two schools, 72 teachers were selected out of the 122 population representing 59.02% of the population. This was done because the entire population was too large to reach and also the time available for the study, logistics and financial resources were limited. Out of the number of teachers selected, 2 Headmasters and 4 Assistant Headmasters were included in the 72 teachers selected for the study.

Sampling Procedures

The Headmasters and Assistant Headmasters of each school were included in the sample. I had access to the names of staff members, some of them were departmental heads. There were also 9 females teaching in the two Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District. All of them were deliberately included in the sample because of the smallness of their number. Selection of the other 63 members of the sample who were chosen from the male teachers was done through simple random sampling. I had access to the names of the population and sampled the teachers directly. Each individual in the sample had an equal opportunity of being selected.

Research Instruments

The data collection instruments that were used in the study were questionnaire and interview schedule. These instruments were used because the research was aimed at the attitudes and perceptions of individuals. A close-ended questionnaire was designed for the study. This was designed with possible responses provided in the question so that the respondent merely had to select the category which came closest to his/her perception.

The questionnaire was a self-designed instrument made up of 43 items with five parts, namely, sections A, B, C, D and E (See Appendix A)

Section A dealt with background information of the teachers. Some text variables included age, gender, home region, academic, and professional qualification and marital status. This was done so as to ascertain the background information about the kind of respondents whose views had been expressed in the study.

Section B of the questionnaire sought information on the nature of conflicts between Headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools. The text variables included the kinds of misunderstanding inter-departmental conflicts, inter-personal conflicts and viewed issues affecting conflict and how conflicts would be handled.

Section C of the questionnaire required information from respondents on causes of conflict between headmasters and teachers in their respective schools. Some of text variables of this section are high expectations, inability to meet target, poor communication skills, gender and tribal differences as well as lateness and laziness. The section also discusses conflict caused by dominance, overloading subordinates, the use of school facilities, the head showing poor human relationship and many others. While Section D tries to solicit information on the effects of conflicts on the output of work of headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools, poor academic performance, low morale, low concentration on work, undermining of self-concept and production of new ideas are also some of the text variables in this section.

Finally, Section E of the questionnaire was to tap respondents' information on conflict management and resolution techniques employed by the Headmasters in the schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District. On a five-point Likert Scale, respondents were to indicate how they perceived the importance the Headmasters attached to conflict management and resolution techniques listed. Respondents were to indicate their perceptions by ticking appropriately on a rating scale from Very often, Often, Sometimes, Seldom and Never.

The instruments used for the research were questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was to ensure a broad analysis of the social phenomenon under study. The interview schedule used was to serve as a feedback to the questionnaire and a follow-up for complete data. The questions were carefully framed with analysis for relevance and clarity which were basic to the validity and reliability of a questionnaire. All the items were clearly explained so as to have meaning to all respondents.

Pilot Testing

The questionnaire was pilot-tested at Mankranso Senior High School in the Ahafo-Ano South District. The testing was important because it established the reliability and face validity of the instruments and to improve the questions, format and scale.

The school was selected because of proximity and homogeneity. The Senior High School in which the pilot testing took place is in the nearby district with similar environments. The Headmaster and the teachers all have similar qualifications and experiences. Fifteen teachers including the Headmaster and the Assistant Headmaster of the school responded to the questionnaire for the pilot testing.

The pilot testing revealed defects in the draft questionnaire which were corrected. I had personal interaction with the respondents during the pilot testing and the analysis of the pilot testing resulted in the revision of the draft questionnaire. The questionnaire was reconstructed taking into consideration the defects detected after the pilot test, that is the final instrument, is attached as Appendix A.

Administration of the Questionnaire

The administration of the questionnaire was followed up with the interview schedule. It was to obtain certain types of confidential information from the respondents. The interview guide involved the use of open-ended questions. The open-form questions in which the respondents were encouraged to answer in their own words provided greater depth of response and understanding from the various schools.

The interview schedule enabled the study to explore areas not anticipated in the questionnaire. The interview guide became necessary because it served as a follow-up to the questionnaire and people were more willing to talk than to write. This helped me to ascertain certain types of confidential information that the respondents might not want to put into writing.

Data Collection Procedure

Before the data were collected, I went to the school concerned (Mabang Senior High School and Tepa Senior High School) and discussed with the Headmaster the intention to undertake studies on conflict management and resolution in the schools.

Permission was then granted by the Headmasters concerned for me to carry on with the work. I administered some of the questionnaire at Tepa Senior High School and moved to Mabang Senior High School to also administer the questionnaire. In each school, the Headmasters called for a staff meeting at which members of staff were briefed about the exercise. After this, a staff list was obtained from which the sample was selected. Respondents from each school were met and copies of the questionnaire were distributed to teachers and

instructions to the questionnaire and the items were carefully explained to them. A date was agreed upon during which the respondents handed over their completed questionnaire to some volunteers who assisted in collecting them.

The questionnaire administration involved much travelling. Some of the respondents could hardly spare time for the exercise and kept fixing different dates for the researcher to call back and collect the rest of the questionnaire. Due to forgetfulness and sheer apathy, some of the respondents could not return their questionnaire. The return rate was 87.5%. That is out of the 72 copies distributed, 63 were returned or retrieved.

Table 2 presents a summary of the distribution of questionnaire and retrieval by sex and staff.

Table 2: Distribution and Retrieval of the Questionnaire by School and Sex

School	No. of Questionnaire Distributed			No. of Questionnaire Retrieved			% of Return
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Tepa Senior High School	44	6	50	39	5	44	88%
Mabang Senior High School	19	3	22	16	3	19	86.4%
Total	**63**	**9**	**72**	**55**	**8**	**63**	**87.5%**

Procedure for Data Analysis and Presentation

The research was a descriptive survey; the analysis was aimed at obtaining the following;

1.   The nature of conflict between Headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District.

2.   The causes of conflict between Headmasters and staff in the Senior High Schools selected.

3.   The effects of conflicts on the work of Headmasters and teachers.

4.   The conflict management and resolution techniques were used to find solution to some of the problems that arise in the schools.

On the whole 72 copies of questionnaire were sent to the schools. Out of this, 63 copies were retrieved. This represented 87.5% of the copies of questionnaire retrieved. Each item was scored according to the `weight' of the ratings. The analysis was based on the school and not on the individual respondents. Tally cards were prepared for each school on which responses of each of the respondents were scored. The records were used in the study to calculate the percentages used for the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and analyses the data collected from the field. The study was on conflict management behaviours of Headmasters of Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

The analysis of the data was based on the background information of respondents, the nature of conflict, the causes of conflict and conflict resolution techniques employed by the Headmasters of the schools in the district.

The analysis had been carried out in two sections; first, the personal data of the respondents to show the kind of respondents whose views were expressed in the study. This was followed by the analysis of the existence of interpersonal conflict, the nature of conflict, the causes of conflict and conflict resolution techniques.

Presentation and Analysis of the Main Data

This section presents the major text variables of the study. It involves the presentation and analysis of the main variable such as the nature of conflict, causes of conflicts, effects of conflicts and management and resolution techniques in Senior High Schools.

Research Question 1: How does conflict stir up in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District?

The research question sought to find out how respondents perceived conflict in Senior High Schools, the responds are illustrated in Tables 3 – 5.

Table 3 presents the views of teachers on how often they experience misunderstanding among staff members in the schools.

Table 3: Misunderstanding among Staff

Kinds of Misunderstanding	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Administrative	24	48.0
Economic/Finance	16	32.0
Social	9	9.9
Religious	1	1.1
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 3 shows that 24 (48.0%) of the respondents expressed that they had experienced Administrative misunderstanding in Senior High Schools while 16 (32.0%) of the respondents stated that they had experienced Economic or Financial misunderstanding. However 9 (9.9%) of the respondents experienced Social misunderstanding in the Senior High Schools, only 1 (1.1%) of the respondents experienced religious misunderstanding.

This implies that most teachers used for the study have been experiencing administrative misunderstanding.

Views of Teachers on Inter-Departmental Conflict

Inter- departmental conflict in Senior High Schools is presented in Table 10.

Table 4: Inter-Departmental Conflict

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	32	64.0
Strongly agree	6	12.0
Disagree	12	24.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

As reported in Table 4, 32 respondents (64.0%) out of the 50 respondents agreed that inter-departmental conflicts occur, while 6 (12.0%) respondents strongly agreed that inter-departmental conflicts occur in Senior High Schools. Again 12 (24.0%) of the respondents disagree to the view that inter-departmental conflicts do occur in Senior High Schools. This means that most teachers used for the study in Senior High Schools have experienced inter-departmental conflicts before.

Other Nature of Conflict in Schools

The data below presents views of teachers on the other nature of conflicts in Senior High Schools. Table 11 shows the views of teachers on other forms of conflicts.

Table 5: Nature of Conflict in Schools

Nature of conflict	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Intra-School Conflict	16	21.6
Inter-School Conflict	9	12.2
Intra-Personal Conflict	27	36.5
Inter-Personal Conflict	22	29.7
Total	**74**	**100.0**

Here, multiple responses were given hence the frequency increased. Table 5 reveals that 21.6% of the respondents said that intra-school conflicts exist in the schools. Also, 12.2% of the respondents stated that inter-schools conflict exist in schools, while 36.5% of the respondents indicated that intra-personal conflicts also exist in Senior High Schools. In addition, 29.7% of the respondents said they experience inter-personal conflicts in schools.

Respondents further mentioned other types of conflicts such as inter-teacher conflict, inter-house sports conflicts and gender conflicts occurring in Senior High Schools.

Summary

The finding is that, pupils experience various forms of conflict in Senior High Schools in Ghana. Majority of the respondents agreed that people frequently experience conflicts such as administrative, inter-personal, inter-school and other forms of conflicts in Senior High Schools.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of conflict in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District?

The research question aimed at identifying the main causes of conflict between headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools. There was the belief that high expectations from headmasters could cause conflict. Tables 6 – 14 illustrate the responses of the respondents.

Table 6: Views of Teachers on Causes of Conflict

Causes of conflict	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poor Communication Skills	18	36.0
Ill-Defined Goal	8	16.0
Lack of Consensus Building	20	20.0
Lateness and Laziness	4	8.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 6 shows that 18 (36.0%) of the respondents identified poor communication skills as a major cause of conflicts, while 8 (16.0%) of the respondents identified ill-defined goals as one of the causes of conflict. Also, 20 (40.0%) said lack of consensus building could cause conflicts in Senior High Schools, lateness and laziness was some of the causes of conflict identified in schools.

It therefore stands to believe that a good number of the respondents consider poor communication skills conflict in Senior High Schools.

Table 7: Conflict on Goal or Target Not Met

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	5	10.0
Agree	38	76.0
Disagree	6	12.0
Strongly Disagree	1	2.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

In Table 7, responses to item 16 of the questionnaire were given. Here 5 (10.0%) of the respondents agreed that when goals are not met conflict could occur in the schools used for the study, this gives conviction that all the headmasters are unanimous with their views that when goals are not met, conflicts may occur.

According to the table, it could be observed that 38 (76.0%) of the respondents agreed to the assertion that conflict could occur when goals and targets are not met in schools.

Also, 6 (12.0%) of the respondents also said that they disagreed with the view that when goals and targets are not met heads tend to push the blame on the teachers and it could resort to conflict in schools. There was only 1 (2.0%) respondent who strongly disagreed to the view that goals and targets are not causes of conflict in Senior High Schools.

Table 8: Conflict Caused by Communication Barriers

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Often	3	6.0
Often	16	32.0
Occasionally	21	42.0
Seldom	9	18.0
Never	1	2.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 8 brings respondents to item 17 of the questionnaire. The item requested respondents to express their views on the occurrence of conflict caused by communication barriers in senior High Schools.

As usual, this type of conflict was occasionally present in the schools. 3(6.0%) of the respondents said very often, 16(32.0%) of the respondents said often, and 21(42.0%) of the respondents said occasionally. Also, 9(18.0%) of the respondents said seldom, whilst only 1 (2.0%) respondent said such conflicts never occurred in schools, thus it was very low.

Table 9 presents the views of respondents on the conflict caused by tribal and gender difference.

Table 9: Conflict Caused by Tribal and Gender Differences

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sometimes	23	46.0
Often	2	4.0
Never	25	50.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

A close look at Table 9 indicates that, 23 (46.0%) of the respondents said tribal and gender differences sometimes results in conflict. Sometimes cause conflict, while 25 (50.0%) of never cause conflict.

This implies that, most of the teachers in Senior High Schools believe that tribal and gender differences sometimes cause conflicts. Table 10 shows the views of teachers on conflicts caused by dominance.

Table 10: Conflict Caused by Supremacy

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Often	6	12.0
Often	4	8.0
Occasionally	18	36.0
Seldom	13	26.0
Never	9	18.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Responses to item 20 of the questionnaire are presented in Table 10. The item sought the views of the respondents on the conflict caused by dominance.

The results indicates that 6(12.0%) of the respondents said very often, 4 (8.0%) maintained that this type of conflict was often found to be present in the schools, and 18(36.0) of the respondents said occasionally. Also, 13(26.0%) of the respondents said seldom, whilst 9(18.0%) respondent said such conflicts never occurred in schools, thus it was very low.

Table 11 provides the views of respondents on the existence of conflict caused by overloading subordinates.

Table 11: Conflict Caused by Overloading Subordinates

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sometimes	23	46.0
Often	12	24.0
Never	15	30.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 11 provides responses to item 21 of the questionnaire. The item provides views of respondents on the existence of conflict by overloading subordinates with various tasks in the schools. According to the table, it is clearly observed that 23 (46.0%) respondents said that overloading subordinates with tasks could result toward conflict in Senior High Schools. This implies that, a good number of respondents or people do not agree to overloading, hence conflict might occur. Table 12 shows the views of respondents concerning conflict on headmasters not appreciating efforts.

Table 12: Conflict on Headmasters not Appreciating Effort

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	4	8.0
Often	8	16.0
Occasionally	11	22.0
Seldom	18	36.0
Never	9	18.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 12 tries to give responses to item 21 of the questionnaire. From the table, it is clearly seen that most of the headmasters do appreciate their teachers' efforts, 9 (18.0%) of the respondents said that their headmasters do not appreciate teachers' effort. Only 4 (8.0%) of the respondents observed that headmasters very often appreciate teachers' effort by rewarding them as such.

Table 13: Conflict on Headmasters' Poor Human Relations

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	6	12.0
Often	8	16.0
Occasionally	7	14.0
Seldom	19	38.0
Never	10	20.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 13 shows that 6 (12.0%) of the respondents said that poor human relationship exhibited by headmasters very often resort to conflict while 8

(16.0%) of respondents often bring about conflict in schools. Again, 19 (38.0%) of respondents agreed that poor human relations could seldom bring conflict in schools and 10 (20.0%) of respondents also expressed that poor human relation is not the only tool which brought conflict in schools.

This implies that poor human relations contribute to conflict in Senior High Schools in Ghana based on the indicators above.

Table 14 shows the views of teachers concerning conflict on promoting academic performance of students.

Table 14: Conflict on Promoting Poor Academic Performance of Students

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	6	12.0
Agree	24	48.0
Disagree	16	32.0
Strongly Disagree	4	8.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 14 shows that 6 (12.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed that conflict promote poor academic performance of students, while 24 (48.0) agreed that conflicts greatly promote poor academic performance of students. However, 16 (32.0%) disagreed to the view that conflict could contribute to poor academic performance of students in schools. This gives room for assumption that all the headmasters think that conflicts promote poor academic performance of students in their schools.

Summary

The analysis of the causes of the existence of conflict has revealed that generally there was a rare occurrence of conflicts in the schools in the district. A greater number of respondents in the schools perceived that conflict can occur in schools by various forms. Such form may include poor communication skills, ill-defined goals, lack of consensus building, lateness, and conflict on goals not met, dominance and many others.

Research Question 3: What are the effects of conflicts on the work of Headmasters and teachers?

This section seeks to solicit views of respondents on the effects on conflicts in senior high schools in Ghana. Conflict can be seen to have both positive outcome and negative outcome.

Table 15 presents the effects of conflict on the work of headmasters and teachers.

Table 15: Conflict Affecting Teachers' Performance in Schools

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frequently	12	24.0
Very Frequently	9	18.0
Not Frequently	29	58.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

The results as presented in Table 15 depicts that out of the total number of 50, 12 (24.0%) of the respondents indicated that conflict is frequent in schools and this could lower the morale of teachers in the school. Again, 29 (58.0) of the respondents expressed their view that conflict affect teachers' performance very

frequency in the school while only 9 (18.0%) of the respondents indicated that conflict does not very frequently affect the effectiveness of their performance in schools.

Table 16 presents the results of the data collected on whether conflicts promote poor academic performance of students.

Table 16: Conflict as a Negative Phenomenon

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	36.0
No	32	64.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 16 presents responses on conflict as negative phenomena. Two (2) responses were given; Yes and No. From Table 16 (36.0%) said conflict is 'Yes' a negative phenomena while 32 (64.0%) of the respondents also sad that conflict is seen a negative phenomena. This means that majority of respondents agree that conflict is not only a negative phenomena but rather conflict can also bring about positive change in the schools.

Table 17 and Table 18 present outcomes on the phenomena of conflict in schools.

Table 17: Negative outcome of conflict

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Conflict deflect people's attention from important activities	22	24.2
It also undermines self-concept	22	24.2
It pleurisies people and groups	17	18.6

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Table 17 continued

It increases or sharpens the differences	12	13.2
No responses	18	19.8
Total	**91**	**100.0**

Multiple responses were given on Table 23, which shows that, 22 (24.2%) of the respondents said conflict is negative because conflict diverts people's attention from important activities while 22 (24.2%) also said conflict undermines self-concept. Again, 17 (18.7%) of the respondents advocated that conflict pleurisies people and groups, other respondents also said conflict increases or sharpens differences. There were other people who did not give any answer to the responses given 18 (19.8%).

This means that a good number of teachers and headmasters considered plurasation of people and groups as negative outcome.

The data in Table 18 was obtained from item 21 of the questionnaire; it seeks to analyse the positive outcomes of conflict.

Table 18: The positive outcome of conflict

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
It help individuals to develop understanding	19	25.7
It produces new ideas for a problem	22	29.7

Table 18 continued

It promotes harmony and cohesion	13	17.6
No response	20	27.0
Total	**74**	**100.0**

As reported in Table 18, out of the total number, 19 (25.7%) of the respondents said conflict helps individuals to develop understanding, while 22 (29.7%) said conflict produces new ideas for a problem. In the same manner, 13 (17.6%) respondents also said conflict promotes harmony and cohesion among people.

It can be observed from the analysis that a major positive effect of conflict is producing new ideas for a problem followed by helping individuals to develop understanding and cohesion among headmasters and teachers in senior high schools.

This is in line with the fact that conflict can have positive outcomes, and that there may be situations where conflict results in greater creativity, more worker enthusiasm and better decisions.

Summary

This is clearly seen that Headmasters and teachers are generally expected to be effective and efficient at work. When asked whether Headmaster and teacher respondents have concentration on their work during conflicts, some respondents answered 'Yes' while others answered they have no concentration during conflict. Conflict in general produce both positive and negative outcomes,

there may be certain situations where conflict results in greater change, creativity, work enthusiasm and good decision taking.

Research Question 4: What strategies can be used by Headmasters to manage and resolve conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District?

This section aims at obtaining data from the headmasters as to possible ways of resolving conflicts between them and their teachers. The analysis then shows how the headmasters of the schools managed and resolved the many conflicts that arose in the schools.

In order to make the opinions expressed by respondents more distinguishable in the analysis, the researcher used these categories "Very often", Often, Occasionally, Seldom and Never to obtain responses from respondents. Table 19 presents data from item 33 in the questionnaire on possible mechanisms through which conflicts can be resolved.

Table 19: The Headmaster's Use of Isolation Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	1	2.0
Often	8	16.0
Occasionally	17	34.0
Seldom	13	26.0
Never	11	22.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

From Table 19, the items sought to find out from respondents, how often their headmasters' use the 'isolation approach' in resolving conflicts. As Table 23 reveals, a greater number of the respondents pointed out that 'isolation' was occasionally employed by the headmasters in conflicts management and resolution. The expectation was that the headmasters were perceived to have very often used the techniques for resolving conflict.

Table 20: The Headmasters Use of Conforming Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	6	12.0
Often	25	50.0
Occasionally	10	20.0
Seldom	7	14.0
Never	2	4.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Responses to item 33 of the questionnaire are provided in Table 20. Here, respondents had to show their perception of their headmasters' use of conforming approach in conflict resolution. Majority of the respondents representing 50% were of the view that their headmasters often employed this type of technique in finding solutions to conflicts in the school.

From Table 20, it could be observed that most of the schools contended that their headmasters often employed conforming approach to resolve conflicts in their schools.

Table 21: The Headmasters' Use of Coercion Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	5	10.0
Often	2	4.0
Occasionally	8	16.0
Seldom	18	36.0
Never	17	34.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 21 shows the responses to item 34 of the questionnaire. Respondents were required to state how they saw their headmasters' adoption of 'coercion' in conflict resolution. The table reveals that the headmasters of the schools seldom resorted to "coercion" in resolving conflicts. 'Coercion' results in a sharp decrease in co-operation and marked increase in resistance, French (1969). There is the likelihood of conflicts recurring when this technique is employed in conflicts resolution. Again, most of the headmasters never use this technique in resolving conflicts according to the respondents.

Table 22: Headmaster's Use of Imposition Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	2	4.0
Often	5	10.0
Occasionally	7	14.0
Seldom	20	40.0
Never	16	32.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Responses to item 39 of the questionnaire are presented in Table 22. Here respondents were required to indicate their perception of their headmaster's use of "imposition" as a technique to settle conflicts.

Table 22 reveals that a greater number of respondents showed that their headmasters seldom employed this technique in resolving conflict in their schools. However, most of the respondents also stated that their headmaster never resorted to "imposition" as a means of managing and resolving conflicts.

Table 23: The Headmasters' Use of Co-Operative Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	12	24.0
Often	14	28.0
Occasionally	16	32.0
Seldom	7	14.0
Never	1	2.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Responses to item 40 of the questionnaire are presented in Table 23. Respondents were required to indicate their perception of their headmasters' use of 'co-operative approach' as a technique in finding solutions to conflicts.

According to Table 23, it could be deduced that, 16(32%) a majority of respondents in all the schools expressed that their headmasters occasionally employed this technique in resolving conflict. Also, 14 (28%) of the respondents were of the view that the headmasters often adopted "co-operative" approach in conflict management and resolution.

Table 24: The Headmasters' Use of Collaboration Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	4	8.0
Often	21	42.0
Occasionally	18	36.0
Seldom	6	12.0
Never	1	2.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Once again, Table 24 provides the responses to item 41 of the questionnaire. The item sought the views of respondents on their headmasters' use of "collaboration" as a means of finding solutions to conflict. Only 21 (2.0%) of the respondents expressed that their headmaster never used collaborative approach to resolve conflict. Also, 21(42%) of respondents were of the view that their headmasters often use collaboration as a method for finding solutions to conflict.

Again, 18(36%) of the respondents expressed that their headmasters occasionally use collaborative approach to resolve conflict in their schools.

Table 25: The Headmasters' Use of Competitive Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	3	6.0
Often	4	8.0
Occasionally	11	22.0
Seldom	15	30.0
Never	17	34.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

In Table 25, responses to item 42 of the questionnaire are provided. Here respondents were requested to show how they viewed their headmasters' use of "competitive" approach in conflict management and resolution.

Generally, there was a low prevalence of conflicts, 17 (34.0%) of the respondents expressed that their headmasters never use competitive approach to resolve conflicts in their schools. Also, 15 (30.0%) of the respondents showed that their headmasters seldom resort to competition as a means of resolving conflict in their schools.

Table 26: The Headmasters' Use of Arbitration

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	5	10.0
Often	19	38.0
Occasionally	10	20.0
Seldom	11	22.0
Never	5	10.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

In Table 26, responses to item 43 of the questionnaire are presented. The opinions of respondents on the adoption of 'Arbitration' by the headmasters in conflict resolution were sought.

From Table 26, the headmasters of the schools often employed "arbitration" in conflict resolution. Even though there was low prevalence of conflicts in the schools, 11 (22.0%) of the respondents said that the headmasters seldom adopted arbitration technique as a means of resolving conflicts in the schools.

Table 27: The Headmasters' Use of Domination Approach

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	3	6.0
Often	9	18.0
Occasionally	11	22.0
Seldom	8	16.0
Never	19	36.0
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Table 27 provides responses to item 35 of the questionnaire. The item sought the views of respondents on how they perceived their Headmasters' "adoption" of 'domination' in conflict resolution. Majority of the respondents expressed that their Headmasters never employed 'domination' in conflict resolution. The use of 'domination' by the Headmasters did not help matters. This is because as Turner (1969) said, in 'domination' the strategy for conflict

resolution centos about injuring the other party with simultaneously injuring the self. This technique is likely to open the avenue for more conflicts in the schools.

Summary

In as much as conflicting situations rarely occurred in all the schools, whenever any did occur, the heads employed rational approaches in resolving them. These techniques were Isolation, Confirming, Coercing, Imposition, Co-operative, Collaborative, Competitive, Arbitration and Domination approaches. As a result there was reduced level of conflict intensity in the schools.

The headmasters of the schools seemed to have employed such conflict management techniques like "non-response" and "procrastination" as well as the use of force in conflict resolution.

The finding conforms the studies of Mossers (1987) and Byers (1987). Mossers say that a significant negative relationship exists between the perception of conflict and the relationship of problem-solving behaviour.

Byers also say that teachers' attribution of principal's conflict resolution behaviour is significantly related to teachers' perception of conflict and organizational commitment. He indicated that teachers perceived the co-operative conflict handling models-confrontation and compromise as positively related to the level of conflict.

Follow-Up Interview

There was the need for me to follow-up the administration of the questionnaire with interview guide. This provided the means for obtaining unanticipated information. Again, the perceptions, attitudes and opinions which cannot be inferred by observation are accessible through interviews.

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When the questionnaires were analysed, it was observed that, there were high levels of conflict intensity in the schools. I wanted to obtain more information that could explain this situation through the interview guide.

Most of the views expressed by respondents from the various schools were similar. About half of the number of respondents who completed the questionnaire in the schools selected was interviewed. As much as possible, such views were discussed together.

The Relationship between the Headmaster and the Teaching Staff

The first item on the interview guide requested respondents to describe the relationship between the Headmaster and the teaching staff.

Here respondents said the relationship between their Headmaster and the staffs   were cordial. The reasons for the cordial relationship included the following;

a. The Headmasters were approachable

b. The Headmasters cared about staff welfare

c. The Headmasters were considerate

A good number of respondents were of the view that the relationship between the Headmaster and the staff were cordial. Few respondents contended that the relationship between the Headmaster and the staff was not cordial.

They stated that;

    i. The Headmaster maintained a closed atmosphere,

    ii. He was autocratic,

    iii. He did not listen to anybody

    iv. There was communication gab between the Headmaster and the teachers.

Respect and Trust between the Headmaster and Staff

Here, questions 2, 3 and 4 on the interview guide sought views of respondents on the Respect and Trust between the Headmaster and Staff. Some of the responses included;

i.   The Headmaster welcomes suggestions from the staff

ii. The Headmaster has respect for the competences of teachers.

iii. The Headmaster trusts his subordinates.

iv. The Headmaster gives respect to all teachers irrespective of your rank or position.

v.   Seven members of staff have trust for the Headmaster.

It was observed that 2 of respondents in the schools selected maintained that not all members of staff trusted the Headmaster. But majority of the teachers were of the view that they trusted the Headmaster.

The above observation is very important as Blake and Mouton (1984) observed. They note that competing contending groups that develop or inherit traditions of suspicious, distrust and resentment are blinded to the possibility of a relationship based on trust, openness and mutual co-operation.

What the Headmaster does to make the Staff enjoy working with him.

Over here, respondents were asked to state what in their view the Headmaster did that made members of staff enjoy working with him. In all the schools respondents observed that their Headmasters did not do much for them in terms of money. They however expressed that they were free and friendly with the heads, but did not interfere with their work, and that they were ready to help teachers if they could afford.

There were credit unions and other welfare societies in the schools where teachers could go for money in times of need.

Respondents in Mabang Senior High School contended that they enjoyed working with their Headmaster because he is friendly, free, and fair but firm with all members of staff. They said their Headmaster had their welfare at heart, and often organized refreshments for staff.

The Headmaster of Tepa Senior High School was particularly noted for offering financial assistance to needy staff, especially when one was bereaved and during other social activities organized by members of staff.

Generally, respondents from the schools observed that the Headmasters appreciate members' work by commending and praising them for their good efforts. However, the Headmasters from both schools condemned teachers who put up bad and indiscipline behaviours.

Strategies Heads adopt in Managing Conflict

Respondents were of the view that, disciplinary procedures the Headmaster adopted in dealing with offending teachers were similar; the Headmasters of both Tepa and Mabang Senior High Schools were noted to caution offending teachers verbally and asked them to change for the better for the first time. In Tepa Senior High School for instance, the Headmaster sometimes asked colleague teachers to talk to offending teachers. Again, the Headmaster of the school were said to follow up verbal warning with written queries if the offence(s) persisted.

Respondents from Mabang Senior High School also said that the Headmaster had dialogue with offending teachers and cautioned them verbally.

They observed that the heads never used written queries. It was also noted that the Headmaster invited offending teachers to his office and advised them. They then added that the Headmasters rebuked the offending teachers openly if the offenders did not change for the better.

Conflict between the Headmaster and Teachers or between the Teachers

It was observed that none of the respondents interviewed had personal conflict with the headmaster within the last twelve months. Respondents from Tepa Senior High School however pointed out that within the period there was once a conflict between one of the heads of department and another teacher. They said the conflict was caused by low output of work. When asked about how the conflict was resolved, respondents stated the Headmaster did not compromise at all but released the teacher from the staff. The teachers interviewed 2 from each of the schools considered the action by the Headmaster as appropriate. Others felt the Headmaster should have given the teacher the chance to reform.

In Mabang Senior High School, respondents maintained that there has been personal conflict between the Headmaster and the teachers within the last twelve months. They mentioned some of the causes of the conflicts as;

i. Favouritism pertaining to the appointment of heads of department.

ii. Regular use of written queries as a means of disciplining teachers.

iii. Refusal on the part of the Headmaster to grant permission to members of staff who wanted to travel.

iv. Disagreement over the allocation of bungalows.

The respondents observed that they were forced to succumb to the demands of the Headmaster. A greater number of the respondents in the school

contended that they considered the conflict resolution techniques employed by the Headmaster as inappropriate. They further said they were not satisfied with the way the Headmaster went about issues. They said he should have listened to teachers and know their problems and solve them accordingly.

Internal Appointments to Fill Vacant Positions

Respondents were asked to express their views on the way internal appointments of teachers to fill positions such as heads of departments, housemasters, form masters etc. are made by the Headmaster.

Through the interview, it was observed that, greater number of respondents from the schools selected shared similar views. They said the Headmasters were fair in the appointment of teachers to responsible positions. They expressed that the appointments were based on qualification, seniority, experience, and dedication to duty and hard work. They further said the heads followed laid down procedures. The respondents again said that their Headmasters consulted the Assistant Headmasters, Senior Housemaster and other senior members of staff in making these appointments.

The teachers observed that, the Headmasters encouraged and supported those appointed to perform their duties diligently. Some respondents noted that even though the Headmaster did not interfere in the work of those with delegated authority, he drew their attention to any lapses and shortcomings. They then maintained he urged those who might fall short to be alive to their responsibilities.

Other respondents also claimed that the Headmaster appointed those he could trust to occupy responsible positions in the school. They also noted that the

Headmaster was fair in these appointments and allowed those appointed to operate but he interfered with their work at certain times.

What the Headmaster did to frustrate teachers.

Respondents were asked to deliberate on what the Headmaster did that made teachers frustrated in their work.

Some respondents from Mabang Senior High School claimed that they were being frustrated by the way the Headmaster relate with them. They complained that the Headmaster did not listen to anybody. They also said that he issued written queries a lot and no time or sympathy for teachers with personal problems. They then found it difficult to obtain permission to travel or to attend to very pressing issues. They pointed out that the Headmaster was autocratic and that he was always finding fault with them and blamed teachers for every problems in the school.

It was observed that some respondents from Tepa Senior High School claimed the Headmaster did not provide them with incentives; he was not prepared to offer them financial and other assistance. The teachers said that the Headmaster was inactive with regard to disciplining of students. They complained that this attitude of the Headmaster was frustrating them a lot.

Respondents maintained their Headmasters were lenient with students and favoured them. They said the Headmaster were tempted to talk the views of students rather than that of teachers.

Summary

From the follow-up interview, it could be observed that the Headmasters of the Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District shared similar opinions and teachers in the various schools shared the same opinion.

Some respondents claimed that there was mutual trust and respect between the Headmaster and members of staff of each school. The contention was that the Headmasters were sympathetic and considerate and cared about staff welfare. They were however firm in their decisions and did not resort to harsh measures when disciplining teachers but were patient with offending teachers and gave them chance to reform. These Headmasters enjoyed the co-operation of the staff and this situation resulted in low levels of conflict intensity.

Other respondents found their Headmasters not to be friendly, free and fair with the teachers. There was much suspicion and mistrust between the head and the staff. They saw the Headmasters not to be sympathetic and inconsiderate and did not care about staff welfare. The Headmasters did not enjoy the co-operation of the staff. In view of this, he had to contend with high levels of conflict intensity in the school.

From the above, it could be said that teachers enjoy working with Headmasters who ensures that good human relationship exists between them and the te3achers. Such as atmosphere leads to rare occurrence of conflicts. Every teacher gives of his/her best and the school programme is enhanced.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations based on the outcomes of the study. Suggestions for further research work in the area of conflict management have also been provided.

The purpose of the study was to find out the current state of conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District and ways of managing them. Specifically, it was aimed at identifying the nature of conflicts and strategies of resolving conflicts as well as its effects. The study was aimed at exploring conflict situations in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District and how they are managed by Headmasters of the schools. The study is a descriptive survey and the subjects for the study were selected teachers drawn from two Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District. The instruments used for the collection of data were questionnaire and interview guide, the statistical tool that was used in the analysis was the simple percentage, and result presented in a table form.

Summary of the Major Findings

1.   The study revealed that, pupils experience various forms of conflict in Senior High Schools in Ghana. Most of the frequently experience conflicts

were: administrative, inter-personal, inter-school, communication and other forms of conflicts in Senior High Schools

2. The study unearthed that high expectations from Headmasters, inability of teachers to meet goals, poor communication skills and lack of consensus building as well as tribal and gender differences were the major causes of conflicts in Senior High Schools.

3. Again, there was an occurrence of conflicts in all the schools in the district. The type of conflicts that respondents perceived were caused by the following:

   Unresolved prior conflicts,

   Communication barriers,

   Lack of participation in decision making, and

   The Headmaster's dependence on one party whiles the other party is sidelined etc.

4. Also, the study has confirmed that conflicts have both positive and negative effects in Senior High Schools. The negative outcomes identified in the study were: low morale, conflict taking attention away from important activities, undermining self-concept, and pluralize peoples' differences. Conflicts were also seen to have positive outcomes towards group interaction and group decision making. It could be observed that, conflicts help individuals to develop understanding, provide new or improve ideas for resolution of problems and promote harmony and cohesion among people.

5. There was low prevalence of conflicts in all the schools in the district. However the Headmasters adopted such rational approaches such as `compromise', `collaboration' and `arbitration' in resolving the few conflicts that occurred. On the other hand there were conflicting situations in the schools. In order to resolve them, the Headmasters used more of `coercion' and `withdrawal' and loss of `collaboration' and `compromise' in resolving them.

6. The study has also brought to fore that conflicts in Senior High Schools can be prevented through clear goals, good communication skills, negotiation and consensus building, fairness and objectivity and involvement of teachers in decision making. Furthermore, punctuality and regularity, obeying lawful instruction, effective communication and performing one's duty deligerthy were also identified as some of the strategies that were adopted to avoid and prevent conflict situations.

7. The study has then portrayed that regular use of conflict management techniques by Headmasters led to reduced levels of conflict intensity. Also, the adoption of such conflict resolution techniques such as `compromise' and `collaboration' reduced the intensity of conflicts. On the other hand, the use of force and avoidance techniques in conflict resolution resulted in high levels of conflict intensity.

8. The follow-up interview revealed that Headmasters who were free and fair with their teachers were known to be considerate, enjoying the co-operation of the teachers. They experienced reduced levels of conflict intensity and high output of work in their schools. On the other hand the

Headmaster who kept his distance from the teachers and was less concerned with the welfare of the teachers had to contend with higher levels of conflict intensity. He was faced with low teacher morale, apathy and low productivity of the teachers.

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be made from the findings of the study.

Conflict in part and parcel of humans life, it has got both positive and negative outcomes. The prevention of destructive conflict is the most desirable approach to conflict management. It could be observed that Headmasters who attached great importance to conflict management and resolution techniques experienced reduced levels of conflict intensity. By preventing destructive conflict the Headmaster can resolve concerns before they become problems and save the school from unnecessary stress.

Upon all the preventive measures adopted by Headmasters to manage conflicts, they still emerged, if so, the Headmasters must try as much as possible to resolve them, using rational approaches. Some of these may include `compromise' and `collaboration'. Headmasters are encouraged to use rational approaches in resolving conflict rather than by employing force and avoidance in resolving conflicts in their schools.

The Headmaster who demonstrates openness, friendliness and care for the welfare of their teachers employ rational approaches to conflict management. These Headmasters are seen to be successful in managing conflict. On the contrary, the headmaster who keeps a closed atmosphere and is insensitive to

teacher's welfare uses avoidance and forcing technique in conflict resolution. This Headmaster is seen as inefficient in managing conflict.

Recommendations

By considering the findings and conclusions outlined above, the following recommendations are made for; Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano North District

1. Based on the findings that, pupil experience various forms of conflict in Senior High Schools as: administrative, inter-personal, inter-school, communication. It is recommended that, heads and school authorities should organize conflict-based orientations for both students and teachers to enlighten them on the types of conflict and how to relate to each other to avoid some of those conflicts.

2. The study unearthed that high expectation from teachers, inability of teachers to meet goals; poor communication skills and lack of consensus building were the major causes of conflicts. It is therefore recommended that Ghana Education Service should organize regular in-service training should be in Senior High Schools so as to sharpen the communication skills and professional competence of teachers and Headmasters.

3. It has been found out that prevention of destructive conflicts is the most desirable approach to conflict management and resolution. Effects should therefore be made by Headmasters to avoid tendencies that could lead to conflicting situations. Headmasters should therefore avoid engaging in divide and rule tactics, favoring one group against the other.

4.   From the study it was observed that conflict has both positive and negative outcomes. It is again recommended that Headmasters should motivate their teachers through recognition, support, and empathy and also help teachers dig raised their problems in order to avoid the negative effects of conflicts. The Headmasters should be open and involve the teachers in decision making. They should allow divergent views on issues. Participation in decision making help to avoid dissent that could lead to conflict.

5.   The Headmasters must have an open heart and accept constructive criticisms in good faith. He must not consider teachers who criticize them as enemies or people who are undermining their administration. They must be patient and explain issues to the teachers and to make amends when they so wrong. Similarly, teachers should be objective in criticizing issues. They should also avoid situations in which their views on issues are coloured with prejudice.

6.   Furthermore, the study established that the following mechanisms can be used to manage and resolve conflicts in schools: listening to both parties involved in conflicts, judging fairly, adopting good communication skills and setting clear and achievable goals. Therefore it is recommended that teachers use those mechanisms so as to resolve conflicts when the need arises.

7.   Also, the study recommends that, the Headmaster should encourage teamwork. Leaders throughout the staff should be recognized by the headmasters and should be depended upon. When this done, the role of the

headmaster would be shifted from that of domination and control to that of co-ordination and synchronization of efforts of people of the team. This would mean the mashing of various efforts into a unified programme, and as much as possible preventing conflicting situation.

8. Again, the study noted that people have different values, beliefs, skills, attitude and aptitudes. It is therefore recommended that, Headmasters should be encouraged to have understanding of the dynamics of group work and skill for bringing people together on congener terms in the face of differences which must be resolved. It could however be observed that some Headmasters do not have the requisite interpersonal skills and do not have time or the inclination to master such techniques as reflective listening or constructive expression of feelings. It is therefore recommended that in cases where Headmasters do not possess the necessary interpersonal skills to use a co-operative and confirming approach, a member of staff who has these qualities should be designated to act as a communication facilitator to resolve and manage conflict in the school.

9. Next, all suspicions and mistrust must be removed; there should be adequate provision for communication in the school. Teachers must be well–informed about what is happening in the school. Ideas must flow into the center of control and out again. These ideas flowing to the school have some effect on the decision taken by the Headmaster, whereas those ideas emanating from the center must exert some control upon the members of staff.

10. Moreover, the headmaster should attempt to maintain an objective and professional attitude towards disputants, since by so doing, the headmaster's reaction which might escalated the conflict would be avoided. If the headmaster is not part of the parties to the disputes, it will be easier to play the role of a mediator in resolving the conflict. It is initiated if the two parties cannot resolve the issue themselves.

11. More so, it in recommended that there should be conflict management training for both headmasters and subordinates. Conflict management skills could be gained through internship and case studies, in addition to studying theory and research. Provision of conflict management training for headmasters and teachers will go a long way to helping them to be effective and efficient managers of their schools.

Suggestion for Further Studies

The study was not exhaustive because it was restricted to headmasters and teachers or a group of teachers in the Ahafo-Ano North District of the Ashanti Region. There is room for further research work to be done to cover other districts in the Ashanti Region and even in the country so that the findings of the study could be generalized.

It is therefore suggested that further research be conducted into conflict management and resolution between school authorities and students, since such conflict disrupts the school's progress and programme.

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGNED ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION BETWEEN HEADMASTERS AND TEACHERS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN AHAFO ANO DISTRICT IN ASHANTI REGION.

The information in the questionnaire is designed to find out Conflict Management and Resolution in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo-Ano District in Ashanti Region. Please, it would be very much appreciated to provide answers as frankly and truly as possible. Do not write your name. Under no circumstance will your identity be disclosed to any other person with regard to your responses to the items.

Thanks you very much.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name of school: …………………......................……………………….

1. Gender: Male   [ ]   Female   [ ]

2. Age: 20 - 24   [ ]   25 - 29   [ ]
                  30 – 34   [ ]   35 -39   [ ]
                  50 and above [ ]

3. Staff Status:
        Headmaster   [ ]   Teaching Staff   [ ]   Non-teaching Staff [ ]

4. Home Region:
        Ashanti Region   [ ]   Other Region [ ]   Specify ………….

5. District:
        Ahafo-Ano North   [ ]   Other [ ]   Specify …………………

6. Marital Status: Single [ ]   Married   [ ]   Divorced   [ ]

7. Highest Academic or Professional Qualification:
        Basic (Non-Certified) [ ]   B.E.C.E.   [ ]
        M.S.L.C.   [ ]   S.S.S.E.   [ ]

G.C.E. 'O' LEVEL   [ ]   G.C.E. 'A' LEVEL   [ ]
'A' 3 Year Post Sec   [ ]   Diploma, HND or Other   [ ]
B.A, B.Sc, M.Ed, M. Phill   [ ]
Any other, please specify: …………………………………………..

8. Positon in School:

Class Advisor	[ ]
Form Master	[ ]
Housemaster/mistress	[ ]
Head of Department	[ ]
Senior Housemaster/Senior Housemistress	[ ]
Guidance and Counselling Co-ordinator	[ ]
Assistance Headmaster/Headmistress	[ ]
Headmaster	[ ]
Welfare Chairman	[ ]
School Chaplain	[ ]

Any other, please specify:……………………………..

9. Rank (Grade):

Assistant Superintendent	[ ]
Superintendent	[ ]
Senior Superintendent	[ ]
Principal Superintendent	[ ]
Assistant Director	[ ]

Any other, please specify …………………………..........

10. Length of stay at present school (in years):

1 – 5	[ ]
6 – 10	[ ]
11 – 15	[ ]
16 – 20	[ ]

21 or more, please specify……………………………………

SECTION B
The nature of conflict between Headmasters and teachers in Senior High Schools.
Please indicate by ticking the appropriate column.

11. What kinds of misunderstanding do you experience with your co-workers?
       (a) Administrative   [ ]
       (b) Economic/ Financial   [ ]
       (c) Social   [ ]
       (d) Religion   [ ]

12. Inter – departmental conflicts occur in various schools.
       (a) Agree   [ ]
       (b) Strongly Agree   [ ]
       (c) Disagree   [ ]
       (d) Strongly Disagree   [ ]

13. How often do you experience misunderstanding with your co-workers?
       (a) Frequently   [ ]
       (b) Very frequently   [ ]
       (c) Not frequently   [ ]

14. The nature of conflicts you do experience in school. Ticks as many as possible.
       (a) Intra – school conflict [ ]
       (b) Inter – school conflict [ ]
       (c) Intra – personal conflict [ ]
       (d) Inter – personal conflict [ ]

15. Comment on any other conflict no stated: …………………………………

SECTION C

Causes of conflict between the Headmaster and Staff

16. Causes of conflict in your school.
       (a) Poor communication skills   [ ]
       (b) Ill – defined goals   [ ]
       (c) Lack of consensus building   [ ]
       (d) Other (specify) ……………………………………………

17. Conflicts occurring when the goals or target are not being met.
       (a) Strongly agree   [ ]
       (b) Agree   [ ]
       (c) Disagree   [ ]

(d) Strongly disagree   [ ]

18. Conflict caused by communication barriers: insufficient exchange of
information
    (a) Very often   [ ]
    (b) Often   [ ]
    (c) Occasionally   [ ]
    (d) Seldom   [ ]
    (e) Never   [ ]

19. Conflict as a result of tribal and differences.
    (a) Sometimes   [ ]
    (b) Often   [ ]
    (c) Always   [ ]
    (d) Never   [ ]

20. Conflict caused by dominance: the Headmaster attempting to control the
behaviour of subordinates.
    (a) Very often   [ ]
    (b) Often   [ ]
    (c) Occasionally   [ ]
    (d) Seldom   [ ]
    (e) Never   [ ]

21. Conflict caused by overloading subordinates with task.
    (a) Sometimes   [ ]
    (b) Often   [ ]
    (c) Always   [ ]
    (d) Never   [ ]

22. Conflict caused by strict supervision of subordinates' work.
    (a) Very often   [ ]
    (b) Often   [ ]
    (c) Occasionally   [ ]
    (d) Seldom   [ ]
    (e) Never   [ ]
23. Conflicts caused by subordinates using school facilities to promote personal
interest.
    (a) Very often   [ ]
    (b) Often   [ ]
    (c) Occasionally   [ ]

(d) Seldom   [ ]

(e) Never   [ ]

24. Conflict caused by subordinates flouting its code of ethics

    (a) Very often   [ ]

    (b) Often   [ ]

    (c) Occasionally   [ ]

    (d) Seldom   [ ]

    (e) Never   [ ]

25. Conflict caused by subordinates perceiving that the Head does not appreciate their effort.

    (a) Very often   [ ]

    (b) Often   [ ]

    (c) Occasionally   [ ]

    (d) Seldom   [ ]

    (e) Never   [ ]

26. Conflict caused by Head showing poor human relationship.

    (a) Very often   [ ]

    (b) Often   [ ]

    (c) Occasionally   [ ]

    (d) Seldom   [ ]

    (e) Never   [ ]

SECTION D

The effects of conflict on the work of Headmasters and teachers.

27. Conflicts promoting poor academic performance of students.

    (a) Strongly agree   [ ]

    (b) Agree   [ ]

    (c) Disagree   [ ]

    (d) Strongly disagree   [ ]

28. Conflicts affecting teachers' performance in school and outside school.

    (a) Frequently   [ ]

    (b) Very frequently   [ ]

    (c) Not frequently   [ ]

29. Do you consider conflicts as only being a negative phenomenon?

    Yes   [ ]

No   [ ]

30. If Yes, tick as many as possible some of these negative outcomes.
       (a) Conflicts divert people's attention from important activities   [ ]
       (b) It also undermines self – concept   [ ]
       (c) It pleurisies people and groups   [ ]
       (d) Increases or sharpens differences   [ ]
       (e) Other (specify) ………………………………….

31. If No, tick as many as possible some of the benefits.
       (a) It helps individuals to develop understanding   [ ]
       (b) It produces new ideas for a problem   [ ]
       (c) It promotes harmony and cohesion   [ ]
       (d) Other (specify) …………………………….....

SECTION E   Conflict Management and Resolution Techniques
Indicate by ticking the appropriate column the extent to which the Headmaster employs the conflict Management techniques listed below in finding solutions to conflicts that arise in the school.

32. Isolation (Removing or reducing contact between conflicting parties).
       (a) Very often   [ ]
       (b) Often   [ ]
       (c) Occasionally   [ ]
       (d) Seldom   [ ]
       (e) Never   [ ]

33. Confirming approach. (Headmaster engages staff members in resolving conflict stressing mutual respect.
       (a) Very often   [ ]
       (b) Often   [ ]
       (c) Occasionally   [ ]
       (d) Seldom   [ ]
       (e) Never   [ ]

34. Coercion (The Headmaster tries to make the other yield from fear or by use of threats
       (a) Very often   [ ]
       (b) Often   [ ]
       (c) Occasionally   [ ]
       (d) Seldom   [ ]

(e) Never   [ ]

35. Domination (The Headmaster tries to settle the conflict without consulting the other parties
     (a) Very often   [ ]
     (b) Often   [ ]
     (c) Occasionally   [ ]
     (d) Seldom   [ ]
     (e) Never   [ ]

36. Win – Lose (The Headmaster resolves conflict in favour of one party.
     (a) Very often   [ ]
     (b) Often   [ ]
     (c) Occasionally   [ ]
     (d) Seldom   [ ]
     (e) Never   [ ]

37. Lose – Lose (The Headmaster resolves the conflict by helping the parties to reach a compromise that is seldom acceptable to either party.
     (a) Very often   [ ]
     (b) Often   [ ]
     (c) Occasionally   [ ]
     (d) Seldom   [ ]
     (e) Never   [ ]

38. Win – Win (The Headmaster focuses on solving the problems but not defeating each other.
     (a) Very often   [ ]
     (b) Often   [ ]
     (c) Occasionally   [ ]
     (d) Seldom   [ ]
     (e) Never   [ ]

39. Imposition (The Headmaster settles the matter by forcing a resolution.
     (a) Very often   [ ]
     (b) Often   [ ]
     (c) Occasionally   [ ]
     (d) Seldom   [ ]
     (e) Never   [ ]

40. Co-operative approach (The Headmaster tries to bring the parties involved to a compromise. No one winning or loosing.

(a) Very often   [ ]
(b) Often   [ ]
(c) Occasionally   [ ]
(d) Seldom   [ ]
(e) Never   [ ]

41. Collaboration (There is an open exchange of information regarding the problem as each side sees it, and working through their differences to arrive at a solution that is mutually beneficial to both.

(a) Very often   [ ]
(b) Often   [ ]
(c) Occasionally   [ ]
(d) Seldom   [ ]
(e) Never   [ ]

42. Competitive approach (The Headmaster tries to persuade or coerce one party into submission.

(a) Very often   [ ]
(b) Often   [ ]
(c) Occasionally   [ ]
(d) Seldom   [ ]
(e) Never   [ ]

43. Arbitration (The Headmaster see to it that disputants explain and support their claims before a third party from outside the staff.

(a) Very often   [ ]
(b) Often   [ ]
(c) Occasionally   [ ]
(d) Seldom   [ ]
(e) Never   [ ]

Other techniques; Please list other conflict management techniques and rate them.

……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION IN SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS IN THE AHAFO –ANO NORTH DISTRICT.

This interviews is a follow-up to the questionnaire on Conflict Management and
Resolution in Senior High Schools in the Ahafo – Ano North District.

School:…………………………………………………………………………
Date:…………………………………………………………………………

1. What is the relationship between the Headmaster and the teaching
   staff?

   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………
   Please give reasons and examples if possible:
   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………

2. Does the Headmaster give respect to all teachers, whether is high or
   low position (ranks)?

   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………

3. Does the Headmaster welcome suggestions from the staff?

   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………

4. How does the Headmaster trust his/her subordinates?

   …………………………………………………………………………
   Give
   reasons………………………………………………………………

5. What in your view, does the Headmaster do that makes members of
   staff enjoy working with him?
   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………

6. Does the Headmaster appreciate members work?

……………………………………………………………………………………

Give

reasons:………………………………………………………………………

7. How does the Headmaster react to teachers who are involved in such offences as absenteeism, lateness, laziness, etc?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

8. (i) Within the last eight (8) months, has there been any conflict

      (i) Between the Headmaster and any other teacher?

      (ii) Between any teacher or group of teachers?

      (ii) How was it managed? ……………………………………

      (iii) How would you consider the management technique(s) employed by Headmaster as appropriate? Please tick one

Very Good   [ ]
Good   [ ]
Average   [ ]
Below average   [ ]

Give reasons for your answer:

…………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………

9. How does the Headmaster makes internal appointments in the school fill vacant positions such as housemasters, heads of departments, etc?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

10. What does the Headmaster do that make members of staff become frustrated in their work?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………..