

**COMPETENCE OF HEADS OF SCHOOL IN RESOLVING EDUCATIONAL
CONFLICTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS:**

A CASE OF NSIMBO DISTRICT COUNCIL

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that have read and hereby recommend for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation entitled; “*Competence of Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts in Public Secondary Schools: A Case Of Nsimbo District Council*” in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MED-APPS) of the Open University of Tanzania.

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DECLARATION

I, Jackson Aloyce, hereby declare this dissertation is my original work that the research included in this dissertation is unique. It has never and will not be submitted for a degree award comparable to this one to any other university or institution.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved wife Edina Mbumba and my children Brihth, Green, Irene, Anither and Fatuma I express my gratitude to them for their prayers, which led to the completion of my dissertation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I owe to express my sincere gratitude to God for blessing me with good health and the courage to successfully complete my dissertation. My supervisor Dr. Joseph Kabage deserves my deepest gratitude for devoting time to give the necessary feedback and insight suggestions that guided me to work diligently until the completion of this work. May Almighty God bless him abundantly. I would like to sincerely, appreciate my beloved wife Edina Mbumba as well as my children Brihth, Green, Irene, Anither and Fatuma for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout the study.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools within Nsimbo District Council. It specifically focused on three objectives: First was to examine head of school knowledge and skills in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools, secondly, assess strategies used by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary. Third, was to examine challenges encountered by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools. The study was guided by Conflict Resolution Theory. This study employed mixed research approach both qualitative and quantitative research approach was employed using convergent design. The study was conducted at Nsimbo district council. The study sample comprised a samples size of 130 respondents including 16 heads of schools, 68 teachers, 34 students, 11 ward education officers and 1 education officer selected through purposive technique and simple random technique Data was collected through interviews, questionnaires, and document reviews. Collected data were analysed using descriptive and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that while a significant number of heads of school possessed basic knowledge and skills in conflict resolution, many lacked advanced skills such as mediation and understanding legal frameworks. The majority of school heads relied on staff meetings and participatory decision-making as their primary strategies for resolving conflicts, while only a small proportion used more structured approaches like mediation. Several challenges were reported by respondents, including insufficient resources, lack of parental involvement, and external pressures such as political interference. Additionally, a significant number of school heads expressed the need for ongoing professional development to enhance their conflict resolution capabilities. The study concluded that continuous training is crucial for equipping school heads with the necessary skills to manage conflicts more effectively, particularly in legal and advanced mediation techniques. It also highlighted the need for stronger parental and community engagement, as well as better resource allocation to support schools in addressing conflicts. It is recommended from the study that providing ongoing training for heads of school to improve their conflict resolution skills, with a focus on advanced techniques and legal frameworks. Strengthening parental and community involvement through regular engagement activities is also essential. Additionally, improved resource allocation to support schools in managing conflicts effectively.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HoS	-	Head of School
DSEO	-	District Secondary Education Officer
WEO	-	Ward Education Officer
EI	-	Emotional Intelligence
MED –APPS	-	Master of Educational in Admiration, Planning and Policy Studies
CSEE	-	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goal
OUT	-	Open University of Tanzania
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for social Sciences
BBC	-	British Broadcasting Corporation
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Child Emergency Fund
ETP	-	Education Training Policy
NECTA	-	National Examinations Council of Tanzania
NDC	-	Nsimbo District Council
IBR	-	Interest Based Relation
CRC	-	Convention on the Right of the Child

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

This study aimed to assess competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools at Nsimbo district. This section provided an overview of the study's background and subsequently outlines the problem statement. It also delineates the study's objectives, corresponding research questions, and its significance. Additionally, the chapter encompasses the study's scope, importance, and defines key terms. It further discusses the organization of the study and concludes with a summary of the chapter.

1.2 Background to the Problem

Globally, Conflict is one of the issues that happen in an organization that can have positive or negative impacts to the organization. According to Afful-Broni (2012), conflict is the result of a series of unfavorable emotions that can affect an individual or a group of individuals, such as anxiety, hatred, disagreement, and outright violence. It also includes all forms of disagreement and incompatible relationships, such as fighting. Misunderstandings between two or more persons who have gathered for a social activity, such as a work, are referred to as interpersonal conflicts (Ghaffar, 2019).

Research from around the world demonstrates that conflict occur in educational settings, especially secondary schools, because these institutions are made up of individuals with a variety of backgrounds, behaviors, emotions, beliefs, and viewpoints. Conflicts in schools can involve parents, teachers, non-teaching staff,

head of schools, education administrators, and other stakeholders in education (Ntide, 2015). Conflicts in educational organizations are caused by a variety of factors, including personality traits, lack of emotional intelligence (EI), unclear job responsibilities, unclear boundaries, poor communication, and a lack of support from management or coworkers (Valente and Lourenço, 2020). In secondary schools, interpersonal conflict is seen as a typical part of the institution's health and can have detrimental effects on students' academic progress, schools' development, and teachers' job performance. Conflicts in educational organizations can have detrimental effects on students' academic performance, hostility, uneasy working conditions, and a decline in their involvement in school activities. In fact, effective teaching and learning processes in schools require the use of tactics that will assist good interpersonal conflict management (Crossfield and Bourne, 2018). However, a study by Salleh (2013) identified insufficient resource such as finances and lack of facilities as well as heavy workload and dissatisfaction with management as some of the sources of conflicts.

In the realm of education, several global policies and conventions have been established to promote access, equity, and quality in learning. One prominent example is the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030 (UNESCO, 2015). Additionally, international agreements such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention against Discrimination in Education underscore the importance of education as a fundamental human right and advocate for the elimination of disparities in educational access (UNESCO, 2020). In the UK, conflicts in

educational institutions often revolve around issues such as funding disparities between schools, curriculum reforms, and teacher workload (NAHT, 2020). Additionally, debates over educational policies, such as standardized testing and school accountability measures, can generate tensions among stakeholders (BBC News, 2020).

In the USA, conflicts in education frequently arise from debates over educational equity, including disparities in funding, resources, and opportunities among schools in different socio-economic contexts (National Education Association, 2021). Furthermore, issues such as school discipline practices, racial segregation, and the role of charter schools in the public education system remain contentious (Education Week, 2021). In Germany, conflicts in education often centre on issues related to educational governance, including the distribution of responsibilities between federal and state authorities (Bos et al., 2017). Additionally, debates over educational reforms, such as changes to the secondary school system and efforts to promote inclusivity for immigrant students, have sparked disagreements among policymakers and educators (OECD, 2019).

In China, educational conflicts may arise from tensions between traditional teaching methods and efforts to modernize the education system (Xu & Connelly, 2019). Moreover, issues such as academic pressure on students, disparities in educational access between urban and rural areas, and challenges related to the integration of technology in teaching and learning can contribute to conflicts within schools (Li, 2018). In Malaysia, conflicts in education often stem from issues related to language policy, cultural diversity, and the implementation of standardized testing (Gill & Ooi,

2018). Additionally, debates over educational reforms, including efforts to enhance the quality and inclusivity of education, can lead to disagreements among policymakers, educators, and community members (UNICEF Malaysia, 2020).

In India, conflicts in education may arise from challenges such as unequal access to education, caste-based discrimination, and tensions between central and state governments over educational policies (MHRD, 2020). Moreover, issues such as teacher shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and the quality of vocational education programs remain areas of concern (World Bank, 2018). In Australia, conflicts in education often revolve around issues such as funding arrangements between the federal government and state/territory authorities, the implementation of national curriculum standards, and debates over school choice and funding for private schools (ACARA, 2020). Additionally, concerns about the quality of education in remote Indigenous communities and efforts to address disparities in educational outcomes for Indigenous students remain pressing challenges (AIHW, 2019).

Education in Sub-Saharan Africa faces multifaceted challenges, ranging from insufficient infrastructure to inadequate resources and socio-economic disparities (Brock-Utne, 2016). Despite efforts to enhance educational access, quality, and equity, conflicts within educational institutions persist, impeding the effective delivery of education (UNESCO, 2020). In many cases, conflicts arise due to a variety of factors, including administrative issues, interpersonal conflicts among staff, and challenges related to student discipline and academic performance (Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2019). In Sub-Saharan Africa, where educational resources are often scarce, conflicts in schools can exacerbate existing inequalities and hinder

efforts to improve educational outcomes (Bourdillon & Molutsi, 2017). For instance, unresolved conflicts between school administrators and teachers can undermine morale and collaboration, leading to decreased teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Asimeng-Boahene et al., 2018). Furthermore, conflicts within educational institutions can perpetuate a cycle of underperformance and disengagement, particularly among marginalized student populations (UNICEF, 2018). In light of these challenges, it is essential to examine the competence of school leaders in resolving educational conflicts effectively. By understanding the knowledge, skills, and strategies employed by heads of school in addressing conflicts, interventions can be developed to promote a positive school climate conducive to learning and growth (UNESCO, 2020).

In Zimbabwe, challenges related to inadequate infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and competing demands for limited resources are the most causes of education conflict in secondary schools (Ndlovu & Moyo, 2018). In Kenya, Kamau and Muturi (2017) highlighted issues of power dynamics, ineffective communication, and bureaucratic inefficiencies as drivers of conflicts between teachers and school leaders. In South Africa, deep-rooted inequalities and unresolved tensions from the apartheid era continue to shape dynamics of conflict in schools (Mbeki & Nzimande, 2019). Similarly, In Nigeria, study by Okonkwo and Okeke (2016) underscored the importance of addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting inclusive education to mitigate conflicts in educational settings. Moreover, the Sub-Saharan Africa faces unique challenges in managing conflicts in secondary schools, including resource constraints, overcrowded classrooms, and socio-political instability. In Zimbabwe, inadequate infrastructure and competing demands for limited resources

exacerbate tensions between teachers and school leaders (Ndlovu & Moyo, 2018). Similarly, Kenyan secondary schools grapple with power dynamics and bureaucratic inefficiencies, which contribute to conflicts and impede effective resolution (Kamau & Muturi, 2017). Historical legacies, such as apartheid in South Africa, continue to influence conflict dynamics, highlighting the need for addressing deep-rooted inequalities (Mbeki & Nzimande, 2019). Nigeria also contends with socio-economic disparities and challenges in promoting inclusive education to mitigate conflicts (Okonkwo & Okeke, 2016).

In Tanzania, conflicts in secondary schools have been a persistent concern, with implications for educational quality and student well-being. The Education Act No. 25 of 1978, which outlines the legal framework for education in Tanzania, emphasizes the importance of maintaining a conducive learning environment free from disruptions. However, despite policy efforts, conflicts between teachers and school leaders continue to pose challenges in many Tanzanian secondary schools. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 aimed to address some of these challenges by promoting participatory decision-making and collaborative leadership practices. However, implementation gaps and resource constraints have hindered the effective resolution of conflicts in schools. The revised ETP of 2014 reiterated the need for promoting a culture of dialogue, mutual respect, and conflict resolution within educational institutions. Also, the education training policy of 2023 outlines, comprehensive strategies to overcome existing education challenges, enhance quality and ensure the systems relevance to the dynamic social economic landscape, ultimately aiming for a well-educated and skill Tanzanian population. Despite these policy initiatives, conflicts persist in Tanzanian secondary schools, affecting teacher

morale, student engagement, and academic performance (Malingumu, 2022). For example, in 2023 at Ilboru secondary schools that was a conflict between students and management whereby students begged the government to step in and mediate a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Some students were dismissed from the school and the school was closed as a result of this conflict (Matenga, 2015). Due to these conflicts, the school was closed, some student ring leaders were suspended, and the principal resigned as a measure towards accountability. Numerous other schools had similar disputes, as recorded in the cases of Morogoro Lutheran Seminary (2013), Bondwa Secondary (2013), Masukile Secondary in the Kyela district (2012), and Mzumbe Secondary (2013) (Nipashe, 2013); (Guardian, 2013).

Heads of school in secondary schools must possess robust knowledge, skills, and effective strategies for resolving educational conflicts. They must be well-versed in conflict resolution theories and practices, understanding the dynamics of interpersonal disputes within the educational context. (Mavimbela et al, 2021). This helps them to actively promote conflict prevention strategies and early intervention measures to mitigate potential disputes before they escalate. In Nsimbo council, secondary schools perform poor. According to NECTA, form four results indicates that only 222(28%) scored division one, two and three out of 792 students in 2021, 210(26%) scored division one, two and three out of 781 students in 2022 and 216 (25%) scored division one, two and three out of 857 students in 2023. Poor performance may be caused by many factors including lack of facilities, inadequate learning materials, poor performance, inadequate teaching force, teacher related factors, and student related factors, home environment, curriculum and language and school culture (Nomale et al, 2021 & Maganga, 2016). Therefore, this study intends

to assess the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in NDC so as to gain insights on how create a school as good place for teaching and learning.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Heads of school in public secondary schools must possess robust knowledge, skills, and effective strategies for resolving educational conflicts. They must be well-versed in conflict resolution theories and practices, understanding the dynamics of interpersonal disputes within the educational context (Mavimbela et al, 2021). Also heads of schools should foster a positive school climate that prioritizes open communication, mutual respect, and collaborative problem-solving (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). This helps them to actively promote conflict prevention strategies and early intervention measures to mitigate potential disputes before they escalate (Sprague & Walker, 2021).

This proactive approach would contribute to a harmonious and supportive learning environment conducive to academic excellence and personal growth among students (Madudili, 2024). Persistent conflicts contribute to a disrupted learning environment, affecting students' academic performance and well-being. Moreover, strained relationships among stakeholders impede collaboration and trust within the school community (Khalid & Qian, 2024). This situation also impacts the morale and job satisfaction of educators, potentially leading to retention issues (Carter, 2021). Furthermore, unresolved conflicts pose legal and regulatory risks for the school and undermine overall school effectiveness, impacting academic achievement and school climate (Way, 2011). In Nsimbo council, secondary schools perform poor. According

to NECTA, form four results indicates that only 222(28%) scored division one, two and three out of 792 students in 2021, 210(26%) scored division one, two and three out of 781 students in 2022 and 216 (25%) scored division one, two and three out of 857 students in 2023. Poor performance may be caused by many factors including lack of facilities, inadequate learning materials, poor performance, inadequate teaching force, teacher related factors, and student related factors, home environment, curriculum and language and school culture (Nomale et al, 2021 & Maganga, 2016). Little is known on the competence of school heads on resolving education conflicts so as to create conducive teaching and learning environment and improve student's academic performance. Most studies such as by Maeda (2021) focused on conflict management approaches practiced by school heads. Malingumu (2022) studied conflicts and conflict management styles in Tanzanian secondary schools and Kasenge (2020) explored conflict management strategies among secondary school leaders Therefore, this study intends to assess the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council so as to gain insights on how create a school as good place for teaching and learning.

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the Competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools: A case of Nsimbo District Council.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Examine head of school knowledge and skills in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council.
- ii. Assess strategies used by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council.
- iii. Examine challenges encountered by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What knowledge and skills possessed by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council?
- ii. What strategies do heads of school employ to resolve educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council?
- iii. What challenges do heads of school face in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study holds practical significance for school practitioners by offering guidance on developing effective conflict resolution strategies tailored to the unique challenges of public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council. By understanding the specific obstacles faced by school heads in resolving conflicts, administrators can make informed decisions regarding resource allocation, ensuring targeted support for conflict resolution initiatives. Moreover, implementing effective conflict resolution practices can lead to improved relationships among stakeholders,

including administrators, teachers, students, and parents, fostering a collaborative and supportive educational environment.

Furthermore, the study's findings can have long-term impacts by addressing underlying issues contributing to conflicts, potentially reducing their recurrence and promoting sustainable peace and stability within schools. This practical aspect is crucial for ensuring the effective functioning of educational institutions and maximizing the learning outcomes for students.

In terms of theoretical significance, the study contributes to the advancement of educational theory by providing empirical evidence and insights into the competency of school heads in managing conflicts within educational settings. Additionally, it enriches the theoretical understanding of conflict resolution processes, including negotiation, mediation, and collaborative problem-solving, within the context of public secondary schools.

Moreover, the study explores the intersectionality of educational conflicts, shedding light on various factors contributing to conflict dynamics such as student discipline, teacher-student relationships, curriculum issues, and administrative decisions. This nuanced understanding contributes to the broader academic discourse on conflict resolution and organizational management within educational institutions.

Furthermore, theoretical insights that will be derived from the study will help on the development of policy frameworks aimed in promoting effective conflict resolution mechanisms and fostering a positive school climate conducive to teaching and learning. By addressing both practical challenges and theoretical gaps, the study will

offer recommendations for stakeholders while advancing academic understanding in the field of educational leadership and conflict resolution in Secondary schools.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Geographically, this study was confined to public secondary schools within the boundaries of Nsimbo District Council, focusing exclusively on educational institutions situated within this administrative area to consider the unique dynamics and challenges prevalent in this specific locality. Content-wise, the research will be examining and assessing the competency of school heads in resolving educational conflicts, examining the identification, understanding, and resolution strategies employed by school heads within Nsimbo District Council. Specifically, the study shed light on the practices and challenges encountered by school heads in managing conflicts among various stakeholders within public secondary schools.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitation of the Study

The study had a limited geographical scope, focusing solely on Nsimbo District Council, which may not fully represent the situation in other districts. To resolve this, the findings were framed within the context of Nsimbo District, acknowledging that results may not be generalizable to other regions, but still providing valuable insights specific to this district. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data, particularly from heads of schools and teachers, may have introduced subjectivity, as some respondents might hesitate to disclose weaknesses in their conflict resolution skills. To address this, the study ensured anonymity and confidentiality of responses, encouraging more honest and open feedback. Furthermore, the questions were designed to be clear and non-judgmental to reduce bias in responses.

In some areas, respondents failed to complete the questionnaires on time or did not fill them out at all. To mitigate this, reminder notices were sent to the respondents to encourage timely completion, and alternative methods of data collection were offered, such as personal interviews, to ensure comprehensive data collection. A delimitation of the study, however, was that it specifically targeted public secondary schools within Nsimbo District Council, providing a clear focus for investigation despite its geographic constraints.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Competency: Competency refers to the ability, knowledge, skills, and behaviors possessed by individuals, in this case, school heads, to effectively perform their duties in identifying, understanding, and resolving educational conflicts within public secondary schools.

Educational Conflicts: Educational conflicts encompass disagreements, disputes, or tensions that arise within the educational environment, including but not limited to conflicts among students, conflicts between teachers and students, conflicts among teachers, conflicts between school administration and stakeholders, and conflicts related to curriculum or administrative decisions (Canfield & Reed, 2016).

Public Secondary Schools: Public secondary schools refer to educational institutions that provide secondary education, typically serving students in form one up to six and are funded and operated by government authorities, such as local or national education departments, rather than private entities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter assessed the Competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools: A case study of Nsimbo District Council. The review incorporated theoretical frameworks and empirical research conducted by various authors on both at global and local scale. The primary objective of this literature review was to determine and explain the current knowledge gap, discerning disparities between the clarifications offered by earlier researchers and the existing state of understanding.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

2.2.1 Theory which Relate to the Study

For a study focused on assessing the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools, several theoretical frameworks could be considered. One suitable theoretical framework is Social Conflict Theory.

2.2.1.1 Conflict Resolution Theory

This study is guided by the Conflict Resolution Theory, with a focus on the Interest-Based Relational (IBR) Approach. The IBR Approach, developed by Fisher and Ury (1981), emphasizes resolving conflicts through collaboration, fostering mutual respect, and addressing the underlying interests of conflicting parties rather than focusing only on their positions. In the context of educational settings, heads of school are tasked with managing conflicts among students, teachers, and staff,

making the IBR Approach particularly relevant for fostering a harmonious school environment and addressing conflicts constructively.

The assumptions of the IBR Approach are fundamental to its application. First, it assumes that conflicts are natural and can lead to positive outcomes when managed effectively (Fisher & Ury, 1981). Second, it emphasizes the importance of preserving relationships during conflict resolution, suggesting that trust and mutual respect are key to sustainable solutions. Third, the theory suggests that focusing on underlying interests rather than the positions taken by parties in conflict enables more collaborative and innovative solutions (Ury, 1993). Finally, it assumes that emotional intelligence and clear communication are necessary for preventing misunderstandings and reaching amicable resolutions (Goleman, 1998).

However, the IBR Approach has limitations. One critique is that it can be time-consuming, particularly when urgent decisions are needed (Rahim, 2011). The focus on consensus-building and interest-based solutions may delay conflict resolution in time-sensitive situations. Additionally, the success of this approach is contingent on the willingness of all parties to engage in good faith, which might not always be the case, especially in hierarchical settings where power dynamics can stifle open communication (Johnson & Johnson, 2020).

Over time, the theory has evolved, incorporating elements of emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity to address its limitations (Goleman, 2011). Research has increasingly focused on the role of empathy, self-regulation, and cultural context in conflict resolution practices, making the IBR Approach more adaptable to diverse settings, including educational institutions.

2.2.1.2 Relevance of Conflict Resolution Theory to the Study

The Conflict Resolution Theory, specifically the Interest-Based Relational (IBR) Approach, is highly relevant to this study as it provides a structured framework for examining the competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools. Educational institutions are environments where conflicts between students, teachers, parents, and administrative staff are common. These conflicts, if not resolved effectively, can disrupt the learning process, affect school climate, and negatively impact academic performance.

The IBR Approach is especially applicable in this context because it focuses on resolving conflicts by addressing the underlying interests of all parties rather than simply the surface-level issues. This is particularly relevant in schools, where conflicts often stem from deeper concerns related to values, expectations, or misunderstandings. Heads of school, as leaders, need to be skilled in identifying these underlying issues and using strategies that promote collaboration and mutual respect core tenets of the IBR Approach (Fisher & Ury, 1981). This study aims to assess how well heads of school possess these competencies and whether they apply them in resolving conflicts.

Additionally, the theory emphasizes emotional intelligence and clear communication, which are critical in educational settings where maintaining positive relationships between stakeholders is essential for a harmonious environment (Goleman, 1998). Heads of school are often mediators in conflicts, and their ability to communicate effectively and manage emotions during tense situations is vital. The IBR

Approach's focus on these skills aligns with one of the study's key objectives: assessing the knowledge and skills heads of school have in resolving conflicts.

The theory's relevance is further reinforced by its practical application in educational leadership. Studies have shown that interest-based conflict resolution strategies lead to more sustainable outcomes in schools, as they foster trust and collaboration among stakeholders (Johnson & Johnson, 2020). By applying this theory, the study can better understand the strategies employed by heads of school in resolving conflicts and the challenges they encounter. This will offer insights into whether the heads of school are equipped with the necessary skills and strategies to handle conflicts effectively, contributing to the overall goal of improving conflict management in public secondary schools.

2.3 Empirical Studies

2.3.1 The Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Resolving Educational Conflicts

According to Magha and Ashu (2023) investigated the managerial skills of principals for conflict resolution in secondary schools in Fako Division, Southwest Cameroon. Their study used a case study research design and interviewed ten principals randomly selected from the region. Findings emphasized the importance of proper managerial skills in fostering friendliness among teaching staff and improving job performance awareness. Effective conflict management was associated with potential reductions in school dropouts and enhanced school effectiveness. However, the study was limited by the absence of student perspectives due to the socio-political climate at the time, which impacted data collection. Based on these findings, the study recommended regular workshops and seminars for principals and teachers on conflict

management, clear definitions of member interactions to prevent boundary issues, and adoption of realistic frameworks for personal conflict resolution skills development.

Furthermore, Franca, (2019) investigated conflict resolution skills and team building competence among school heads in public elementary schools in Malita District, focusing on effective school management. The study used a descriptive-correlational design with descriptive statistics and correlational analysis. Results showed that conflict management, collaboration, and compromise were rated highest, while accommodation scored lowest. In terms of team building competence, accountability ranked highest and interdependence lowest. Interestingly, the study revealed an inverse relationship between conflict resolution and team building. The study recommended that administrators undergo training in negotiation and conflict resolution and adopt a more participatory approach to leadership. However, the gap in this study lies in its focus on public elementary schools in Malita District, which may differ from other educational contexts in terms of specific challenges and dynamics. Therefore, future research should explore these concepts in diverse school settings to broaden the understanding of conflict resolution and effective school management strategies.

Also, Siew & Jones (2018) conducted a case study focusing on training approaches to improve conflict resolution skills among school managers. The research involved 18 Malaysian school managers who participated in a 16-hour professional development workshop centered on conflict management tools. Data were collected through written diaries before and after the workshop and face-to-face semi-

structured interviews in subsequent months. The study identified intragroup conflicts due to goal incompatibility as the most common, with negative impacts outweighing benefits on school communities. Participants highlighted effective approaches such as problem-solving efforts, culturally relevant negotiations, stakeholder analysis, and personal conflict management reflection. Customary elements like respectful discussion were found relevant in conflict resolution. The study recommends incorporating practical conflict management training in educational curricula to enhance conflict resolution skills among school managers. However, the gap in this research is its specific focus on Malaysian school managers, suggesting a need for broader studies across diverse educational contexts to enrich conflict management strategies and training approaches in school management.

Likewise, Maeda (2021) examined conflict management approaches practiced by public heads of secondary schools and teachers in Hai District using a qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews and document analysis involving school heads, discipline teachers, and student leaders. The study identified compromising, accommodating, and open meetings as predominant conflict management approaches, with conflicts primarily arising between students and teachers due to disciplinary issues and improper administration of corporal punishment. Recommendations included providing professional development programs for educational administrators to enhance leadership styles, conflict management strategies, and the proper administration of corporal punishment. This study addresses conflict management practices in a specific context, highlighting a need for broader research to generalize findings and identify common challenges and

strategies across different educational settings, filling a gap in understanding conflict management practices beyond Hai District.

2.3.2 Strategies Used by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Adeoye (2023) conducted an assessment of conflict management strategies by secondary school principals using a descriptive survey design involving 49 principals. The study aimed to explore conflict management practices related to staff and student conflicts in secondary schools. Data were collected using the "Assessment of Conflicts Management by Secondary Principals Questionnaire" (ACMSPQ), which consisted of two sections covering personal data and conflict management assessment items. The questionnaire utilized a 4-point scale and data analysis involved calculating weighted means for research questions and one-way analysis of variance for the hypothesis. Findings indicated that principals effectively managed conflicts through various strategies. However, a gap in the study lies in the need to explore the specific types of strategies employed by principals, their effectiveness, and potential areas for improvement to enhance conflict resolution practices in secondary schools beyond the surveyed sample size of principals.

Another study by Malingumu (2022) investigated conflicts and conflict management styles in secondary schools in Tanzania, focusing on perceptions of employees. The study involved 161 respondents, including 36 heads of schools and 125 teachers, using a mixed-methods research approach with a cross-sectional design. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, with quantitative analysis conducted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software and qualitative data analysed through content analysis. The research identified two primary types of

conflicts in schools process and task conflicts with task conflicts being more prevalent. Conflicts were attributed to factors such as failure to fulfil responsibilities, favouritism, and professional inadequacy. School authorities initially used disciplinary committees and guidance/counselling as preliminary conflict management actions, progressing to professional conflict management styles like compromising, collaboration, and accommodation as needed. Effective conflict management positively impacted school performance, emphasizing the importance of viewing conflicts as integral to school operations and implementing targeted management strategies based on conflict origins. Recommendations included conflict-awareness training for heads of schools and teachers to optimize conflict resolution abilities. However, a gap in this study is the need to explore specific strategies employed by school leaders and teachers in conflict resolution, particularly in relation to student-teacher conflicts, to enhance conflict management practices in Tanzanian secondary schools beyond the identified sample of respondents.

Furthermore, Kasenge (2020) examined conflict management strategies among secondary school leaders in Kitwe District, Copperbelt Province, Zambia, using a qualitative case study design to identify and explore behaviors, motivations, opinions, and attitudes. The study involved 52 respondents, comprising 13 headteachers, 13 teacher union leaders, 13 school council leaders, and 13 education board leaders, selected using quota sampling. Data collection utilized interviews, focus group discussions, and Theatre for Development techniques, with qualitative analysis conducted using a thematic approach. Findings revealed that the "ignoring each other" strategy was commonly used for conflict management in schools, contributing to improvements in teaching and learning effectiveness. Challenges in

enforcing conflict management strategies included Education Boards not operating as expected. Proposed alternative strategies emphasized the need for protection from harassment. Recommendations included re-emphasizing Education Boards, School Councils, and Teacher Unions as conflict management strategies to maintain democracy and partnerships in the Ministry of General Education system, aligning with the 1996 educating our Future policy. The study advocated for systems thinking among educational leaders and suggested seminars at all levels to promote best practices in conflict management, while emphasizing the recognition of Education Board leaders, Teacher Union leaders, and School Council leaders as key stakeholders in educational leadership

Also, Marquez (2023). This study investigates the conflict management strategies utilized by school heads in the Santa Cruz South District and develop a conflict resolution framework. To obtain comprehensive and accurate data, the researcher adopted mixed- method research design. The study involved 20 school heads, selected through complete enumeration, who were interviewed using a researcher-made tool and one-on-one interviews. In order to evaluate and interpret data, the researcher utilized frequency counts, percentages, modes and weighted mean. The findings showed that conflicts were prevalent in schools, and the school heads employed various conflict management strategies, such as compromise, collaboration, and avoidance. The proposed conflict resolution framework emphasized the significance of communication, collaboration, and a shared goal in resolving conflicts. The study offers valuable insights for policymakers and school administrators to develop effective conflict management policies and programs. Furthermore, the study revealed that managing schools in the district of Santa Cruz

South posed several challenges, such as teachers' poor planning and task prioritization skills, late submission of reports, and unpreparedness with instructional materials. The study proposes that clearer guidelines and communication may be necessary to ensure that teachers comprehend their roles and responsibilities. The most frequently used conflict management strategy among school heads was accommodating, followed by cooperating, compromising, avoiding, and competing. Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of managing conflicts in schools to promote positive learning environments and support students' academic and social development.

Moreover, Tamunodiepiriye, Bedzra, and Essuman (2022) explored conflict management strategies as a crucial aspect of effective educational leadership. The study focused on school organizations in Ghana and Nigeria, investigating the causes and sources of organizational disputes and exploring various conflict management tactics employed by school administrators, including behavior management, negotiation, and mediation. The article highlighted the detrimental effects of unmanaged conflict within the educational system. It advocated for the equitable distribution of resources among educational leaders and proposed the organization of seminars, conferences, and symposia to promote conflict management skills among educational leaders. While the study provided valuable insights and recommendations, a potential limitation is the lack of quantitative analysis, which could have complemented the qualitative findings and enriched the study's empirical contributions. Future research could benefit from integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of conflict management in educational leadership.

Likewise, Shanka and Thuo (2017) investigated conflict management and resolution strategies between teachers and school leaders in government primary schools of Wolaita Zone, Ethiopia. Employing a descriptive survey design with both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study collected and analyzed data from ten schools selected across six districts. The participants included 146 teachers, 50 department heads, 10 principals, 10 vice-principals, 20-unit leaders, and 30 parent and teachers' association members. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (t-test) using SPSS software. The study identified institutional, work-related, and leadership-related causes of conflict, with management strategies focusing on leadership development, adherence to rules and regulations, embracing change, resource allocation, involvement in decision-making, training opportunities, and understanding individual differences and roles. Conflict resolution techniques included discussions, punishment, compromise, avoidance, and ignorance. The study emphasized the importance of school leaders understanding conflict sources, fostering mechanisms for staff input, continuously enhancing leadership skills, embracing change, involving staff in decision-making, and seeking diverse funding sources for school improvement. However, a potential gap in the study lies in the need for deeper exploration of specific conflict resolution outcomes and their impacts on school climate and performance, which could inform more targeted leadership development initiatives and resource allocation strategies. Similarly, Alex and Mukadi (2022) conducted a study on the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies in public secondary school management in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. Using a descriptive research design with a mixed-methods approach, the study employed both purposive and random sampling techniques to select 112

respondents from 7 public secondary schools. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, and descriptive analysis was performed using SPSS software version 25 to generate frequencies and percentages. The study findings highlighted the positive impact of conflict resolution strategies on management effectiveness, including fostering peace and harmony, improving job performance, enhancing academic performance, promoting teamwork, retaining teachers, and facilitating problem-solving. The researcher recommended that school administrators involve teachers in conflict management methods to cultivate positive and constructive relationships. However, a potential gap in the study could be further exploration into the specific types of conflict resolution strategies employed, their effectiveness in different contexts within secondary schools, and their long-term impacts on school performance and organizational climate to guide more targeted recommendations for school management practices and professional development initiatives.

2.3.3 The Challenges Facing Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

According to Valente et al. (2020) highlight that interpersonal conflicts are inherent in human relationships and are prevalent in various social organizations, including schools. These conflicts arise from disagreements, incompatible interests regarding goals, policies, and rules, and behaviors that provoke anger, distrust, fear, rejection, or resentment. Interpersonal conflicts are particularly visible in schools and educational institutions where human interactions are central. In Tanzanian secondary schools, interpersonal conflicts often stem from role conflicts, where individuals perceive incompatible messages and pressures from role supervisors.

However, a potential gap in this area of study could be a more detailed exploration of the specific factors contributing to interpersonal conflicts in Tanzanian secondary schools, including cultural, organizational, and individual dynamics, to inform targeted conflict management strategies and interventions for improving school relationships and climate.

According to Khan and Qadir (2016), interpersonal conflict within groups arises due to differences in values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors among group members. This conflict is inevitable in group settings but can be mitigated when relationships among individuals are strong, facilitating collaboration and fostering positive human relations characterized by mutual respect, care, and love. In Tanzanian secondary schools, intra-group conflicts among teachers and students can emerge when norms and values within the group clash with individual expectations and values, potentially impacting the group's performance and overall teamwork. To address this, further research could delve into specific strategies to promote cohesion and understanding within these educational groups, enhancing overall group dynamics and effectiveness.

Correspondingly, Mwamba (2016) conducted a study to investigate the role of school leadership in conflict management within selected secondary schools in Chingola District, Zambia, which have been experiencing a significant wave of conflicts. Employing a survey design, the study utilized interviews and document review to gather data from 70 participants across nine public secondary schools. The sample included 9 head teachers, 60 teachers, and the District Education Boards Secretary, selected through random, purposive, and snowball sampling techniques.

Questionnaires and interview schedules were used as the primary data collection tools. The findings revealed that school leaders and teachers understood conflict management in the school context, emphasizing effective communication and approaches to addressing misunderstandings among various stakeholders. The identified causes of conflicts included absenteeism, teachers' higher qualifications than head teachers, late arrivals, head teacher incompetence, negative work culture among teachers, and favouritism. Despite lacking formal training in conflict management, school leadership employed various strategies to resolve conflicts within their schools. Based on these findings, the study recommended mandatory induction for school head teachers, incorporating conflict management training into the curriculum for teacher education to better prepare educators for conflict resolution in school administration. This study highlights the importance of proactive measures to equip school leaders with effective conflict resolution skills to promote harmonious school environments.

Furthermore, Oplatka (2017) conducted a study aimed at exploring the components of principal workload, its determinants, and coping strategies employed by principals in an era of standardization and accountability, addressing a gap in theoretical and empirical knowledge on this topic. The research involved semi-structured interviews with 50 principals from elementary and secondary educational systems in Israel, employing qualitative research principles for analysis. The study identified four subjectively held constructs of principal workload, main sources of this workload, and key coping strategies used by principals. Recommendations included strengthening school autonomy, increasing middle management positions, preparing future principals for heavy workloads, and fostering supportive superiors sensitive to

this issue. This study contributes valuable insights into understanding and addressing the challenges of principal workload within educational settings.

Moreover, Messanga and Mkulu (2022) conducted research to assess management strategies aimed at reducing interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools located in Tarime Urban, Mara, Tanzania. The study's primary purpose was to identify the challenges faced by school principals when addressing interpersonal conflicts among students. Using mixed research methods and a convergent parallel research design, the study employed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques, resulting in a sample size of 150 participants. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, yielding both quantitative and qualitative data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data using SPSS version 20, while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data. The findings highlighted various types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools, including affective, substantive, interest, value, and goal-oriented conflicts. The challenges encountered by school principals in managing these conflicts ranged from resource constraints and lack of support to environmental factors and communication issues. The study recommended that school heads utilize multiple conflict resolution tactics such as meetings, negotiations, communication, collaboration, scolding and warning, mediation, guidance and counseling, and instruction to effectively address interpersonal problems among students. This research underscores the importance of equipping school leaders with diverse strategies to mitigate interpersonal conflicts within educational settings.

2.4 Research Gap

The empirical studies conducted on the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts offer valuable insights into this critical area of school leadership. Magha and Ashu (2023) investigated principals' managerial skills for conflict resolution in secondary schools, emphasizing the importance of proper skills in enhancing staff relationships and school effectiveness. Franca (2019) examined conflict resolution skills and team-building competence among school heads, highlighting the correlation between effective conflict management and overall school management effectiveness. Siew and Jones (2018) explored training approaches to improve school managers' conflict resolution skills, underscoring the significance of practical training and culturally relevant strategies.

Therefore, most studies focused on conflict management strategies, none of studies focussed on competence of head of schools and most of studies focused on qualitative research approach whereby this study employed mixed research approach which employed both qualitative and quantitative research approach.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual relationships in this study suggest that the knowledge and skills of heads of school, along with the strategies they use, directly influence their ability to resolve educational conflicts in secondary schools. Heads of school with better knowledge of conflict management, strong communication skills, and effective decision-making abilities are more likely to employ successful conflict resolution strategies. However, challenges such as limited resources, resistance from staff, or insufficient authority may hinder effective conflict resolution. The intervening

variable, support from the education system and stakeholders, influences these relationships by either strengthening or weakening the heads of school's ability to resolve conflicts. Strong support from education authorities, training opportunities, and community involvement can mitigate challenges, enhancing conflict resolution outcomes in schools.

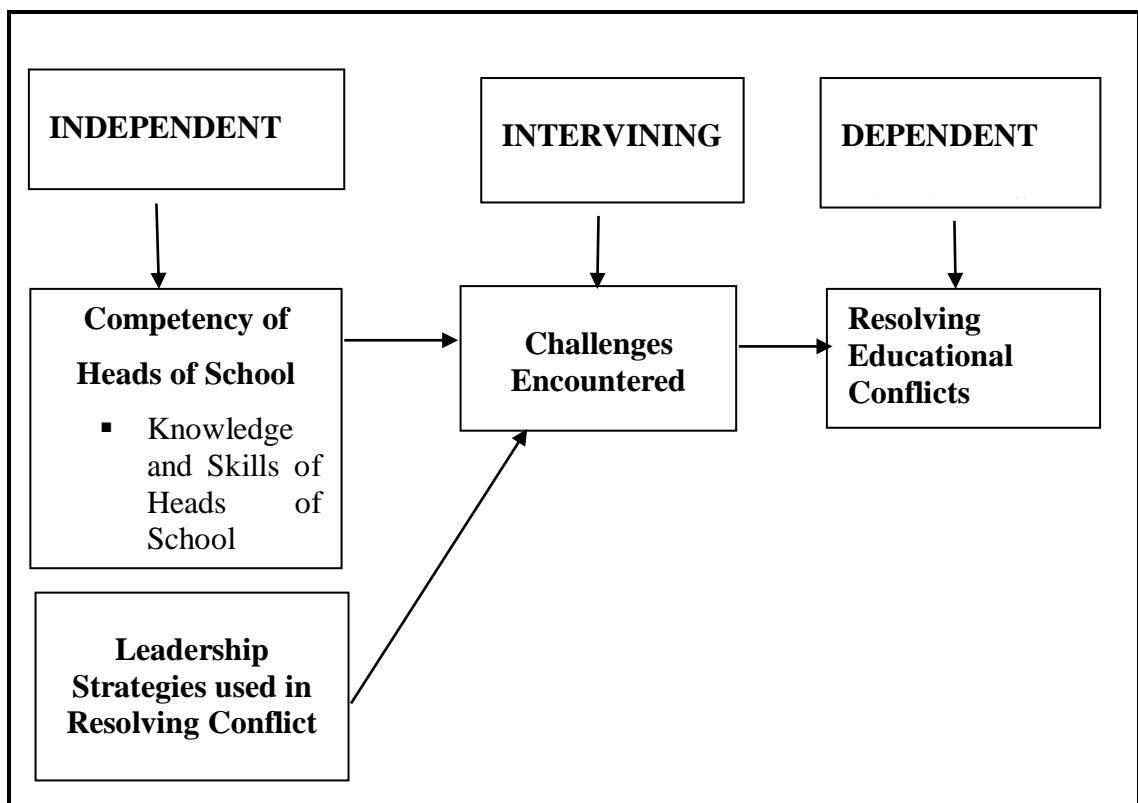


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: The **Researcher** (2024)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The third chapter of this research dissertation outlined the methodology that were employed in conducting and investigating the study on the Competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools: A case study of Nsimbo District Council. This chapter is crucial in clarifying the systematic approach and procedures was used to collect, analyze, and interpret data, ensuring the study's consistency and reliability.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This research employed the pragmatism paradigm as its overarching framework. Pragmatism is a research paradigm that emphasizes practical consequences, problem-solving, and the integration of diverse perspectives. In the context of assessing the competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in NDC, a pragmatist approach allows flexibility in methodology and the utilization of multiple methods to address the research objectives effectively (Huynh et al, 2018). Pragmatism acknowledges the importance of both qualitative and quantitative data, prioritizing their utility in informing practical solutions to real-world problems (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). Therefore, adopting a pragmatist perspective, this study seeks to provide actionable insights that can contribute to enhancing conflict resolution practices in educational settings.

3.3 Research Approach

This study employed a mixed methods research approach that comprises of elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study (Morse and Niehaus, 2016), to comprehensively explore the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts. This approach is chosen for several reasons. Firstly, by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Amadi, 2023). Concurrently, quantitative data provided statistical insights into patterns and trends related to competency in conflict resolution among heads of school.

Furthermore, the mixed research approach allowed for triangulation of data, wherein findings from qualitative and quantitative methods can be compared, contrasted, and integrated to enrich the overall analysis (Camilli Trujillo, 2022). Triangulation enhances the validity and reliability of the study findings by corroborating results across different data sources and methods (Natow, 2020). Additionally, the mixed research approach enabled a more general interpretation of the research outcomes, as it considers multiple dimensions and perspectives of the phenomenon being studied (McKim, 2017).

3.4 Research Design

This study used a Convergent Design as its research design. This choice is motivated by several factors that align with the study's objectives and the nature of the research problem being investigated. Firstly, the Convergent Design allows for the concurrent collection of both qualitative and quantitative data (Almeida, 2018), enabling a comprehensive exploration of the competency of heads of school in resolving

educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council. This technique reduces weaknesses, makes comparison and saves time (Creswell, 2014).

Furthermore, the Convergent Design permits separate analyses of qualitative and quantitative data, which enhances the depth and breadth of the study's findings (Hong, 2017). Each form of data provides unique insights into different aspects of the research problem, allowing for triangulation and validation of results. The qualitative data offer rich, context-specific narratives and perspectives on the knowledge, skills, strategies, and challenges related to conflict resolution among heads of school (Raza, 2021). On the other hand, the quantitative data provide numerical measurements and statistical analyses that quantify the prevalence of certain practices or attitudes and assess their relationships with various factors (Mohajan, 2020). Therefore, by integrating qualitative and quantitative findings, the Convergent Design enables a nuanced interpretation of the research outcomes, capturing both the breadth and depth of the competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts. This approach enhances the validity and reliability of the study findings by considering multiple sources of evidence and perspectives (Guetterman, & Feters, 2018). Additionally, the Convergent Design promotes methodological rigor and ensures that the research adequately addresses the research questions and objectives, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the research problem and informing practical recommendations for improving conflict resolution practices in public secondary schools (Guetterman, & Feters, 2018).

3.5 Area of the Study

The area of study for this research is Nsimbo District Council, focusing on public secondary schools within the district. Nsimbo District Council is chosen as the primary site for data collection and analysis due to its localized and contextually relevant setting, providing a practical context for examining the competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts. Through focusing on a specific geographical area, the research can take into account the unique socio-cultural, economic, and educational dynamics that may influence conflict resolution practices. This localized approach facilitates meaningful engagement with stakeholders and allows for in-depth exploration and analysis of the research problem, ultimately aiming to generate contextually grounded insights that contribute to the improvement of conflict resolution practices in public secondary schools.

3.6 Targeted Population

The targeted population for this research included 16 heads of schools, 122 teachers, 34 Students leaders (head boys and head girl's), 11 Ward Education Officers (WEOs), and 1 District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO) making a total of 184 participants. These key stakeholders represent various roles within the educational system of Nsimbo District Council and are essential for gaining comprehensive insights into the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts. Heads of schools play a central role in managing conflicts within their respective institutions, while teachers and students directly experience and are impacted by these conflicts. Additionally, WEOs and DSEO provide oversight, support, and resources for conflict resolution efforts at the ward and district levels, respectively. By including these diverse groups, the research aims to capture a wide range of

perspectives and experiences related to educational conflicts and their resolution within the district.

3.7 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.7.1 Sample Size

The sample size for this research consisted of 130 respondents. This included 16 heads of school, 68 teachers (targeted from a total population of 122), 34 student's leaders (17 boys and 17 girls, representing the total student population), 1 District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO), and 11 Ward Education Officers (WEOs). The selection of respondents ensured representation from key stakeholders within the education system of Nsimbo District Council, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts. Respondents were drawn from 16 secondary schools out of the 17 total secondary schools within the Nsimbo District Council, using stratified sampling to ensure diversity in school representation across the district. Within each selected school, participants were chosen based on their role's heads of school, teachers, students, and education officers to ensure that various stakeholder perspectives were included in the study. To determine how you arrived at the 93 teachers from a total population of 122 teachers, the study used the Yamane's Formula for sample size determination. The formula is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

- **n** = sample size

- N = total population size (122 teachers)
- e = margin of error (typically 5%, or 0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

Calculation:

Given:

- $N = 122$
- $e = 0.05$ (5% margin of error)

$$n = \frac{122}{1 + 122(0.05)^2} = \frac{122}{1 + 122(0.0025)} = \frac{122}{1.305} \approx 93.4$$

$$n = \frac{122}{1 + 122(0.0025)} = \frac{122}{1.305} \approx 93.4$$

$$n = \frac{122}{1 + 0.305} = \frac{122}{1.305} \approx 93.4$$

The calculated sample size would be approximately 93 teachers.

Table 3.1: Composition of the Study Sample

Category of respondents	Targeted	Reached	Sampling procedure
District education officer	1	1	Purposive sampling
Heads of school	16	16	Purposive sampling
Teachers	93	68	Random sampling
Student leaders	34	34	Purposive sampling
Ward Education officer	12	11	Purposive sampling
Total	156	130	

Source: (Field data, 2024)

3.7.2 Sampling Technique and Procedures

The sampling technique and procedures for this study included purposive sampling and simple random sampling.

3.7.2.1 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was utilized to select 16 head of schools, 34 students leaders (16 head boy and 16 head girl), 11 ward education officer and 1 District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO) based on their specific roles and expertise relevant to the research objectives. This method ensured that individuals with direct involvement and knowledge related to conflict resolution in public secondary schools within Nsimbo District Council. All 16 public secondary school in Nsimbo council were purposely selected to study competence of head of schools in resolving education conflicts

3.7.2.2 Simple Random Sampling

Simple random sampling was employed to select teachers from the selected secondary schools. A random selection process was used to choose 93 teachers selected randomly using lottery method from the total teacher populations across the 16 public secondary schools, respectively however only 68 teachers returned questionnaires which is equivalent to 73.1%. This method ensured that every teacher had an equal chance of being included in the sample, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings to the larger teacher within the district (Cook & Cook, 2017).

3.8 Methods of Data Collection

3.8.1 Interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with heads of school, ward education officers, students' leaders and District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO). These interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of participants' knowledge, skills,

strategies, and challenges related to Competency of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools. The interviews were guided by a set of predetermined questions while also allowing flexibility for participants to elaborate on their responses and provide additional insights. (Biggs, Gilson, & Carter, 2019).

3.8.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were administered to teachers selected through simple random sampling. The questionnaires included both closed-ended and open-ended questions, allowing for the collection of quantitative data on participants' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences related to educational conflicts and their resolution (Akhiar, 2017). Closed-ended questions enabled standardized responses for statistical analysis (Cheung, 2021), while open-ended questions provided opportunities for participants to express their views in their own words (Hoffmann, 2007).

3.8.3 Documentary Review

Documentary review involved the examination of relevant documents, reports, policies, and records related to educational conflicts, conflict resolution strategies, and student academic performance within public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council. This may include school policies, incident reports, school minutes, disciplinary records, academic transcripts, standardized test scores, and performance evaluations. Document analysis complemented the interview and questionnaire data, providing additional context and corroborating evidence to support the findings of the study (Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger, 2020).

Table 3.2: Analysis of Performance Trends in Public Secondary Schools

Year	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	I-IV Total	I-IV %	Grade O	O %	GPA
2021	24	62	136	525	747	94.3	45	5.7	3.8148
2022	16	72	122	474	684	86	97	14	3.7803
2023	16	77	123	474	690	80.42	167	19.46	3.8507

The performance data from 2021 to 2023 indicates a declining trend in student achievement, which could be linked to weak leadership and ineffective conflict resolution strategies in schools. The percentage of students scoring within Grades I-IV has steadily decreased from 94.3% in 2021 to 80.42% in 2023. This suggests a growing number of students struggling academically, possibly due to inadequate instructional support, poor school management, or unresolved conflicts affecting learning environments. Conversely, the number of students in the lowest grade (Grade 0) has increased significantly over the same period. In 2021, only 45 students (5.7%) fell into this category, but by 2023, this number had risen sharply to 167 students (19.46%). The sharp increase in failures may indicate deteriorating academic support systems, lack of motivation among teachers and students, or unresolved conflicts disrupting the learning process.

Despite the increase in failures, the GPA trends show slight fluctuations. While there was a minor drop from 3.8148 in 2021 to 3.7803 in 2022, the GPA increased slightly to 3.8507 in 2023. This suggests that while high-achieving students may have

maintained or improved their performance, a growing number of weaker students have fallen behind, increasing the failure rate.

These trends highlight potential leadership challenges among school heads in managing educational conflicts. Weak leadership may lead to ineffective conflict resolution strategies, poor instructional management, and declining teacher motivation, all of which can negatively impact student performance. Addressing these leadership challenges through targeted training and improved conflict resolution mechanisms could help improve academic outcomes in public secondary schools.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis for this study involved several steps to interpret and draw conclusions from the collected data. The analysis be conducted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, in accordance with the mixed research design that was employed in the study.

For qualitative data obtained from interviews responses, thematic analysis was employed. This involves identifying patterns, themes, and categories within the data to gain insights into the knowledge, skills, strategies, and challenges related to resolving educational conflicts among heads of school, teachers, and District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO). The qualitative data was coded and categorized, and themes were developed based on recurring patterns and significant findings.

For the quantitative data analysis, descriptive analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was utilized. Descriptive statistics

such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations was calculated to summarize the data and provide an overview of the responses. SPSS is a widely used software program for statistical analysis, known for its user-friendly interface and robust capabilities in handling quantitative data. Upon data collection, the quantitative responses from the closed-ended questionnaire items were entered into SPSS for processing and analysis.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of the Study

3.10.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the research accurately measures what it intends to measure and the degree to which the findings reflect the true state of affairs (Bolarinwa, 2015; Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Several measures were implemented to ensure the validity of this study. Firstly, the use of multiple data collection methods, including interviews, questionnaires, and documentary review, enhanced triangulation and provide a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon. Additionally, careful attention paid to the design of interview questions and questionnaire items to ensure they align with the research objectives and effectively capture the constructs under investigation. Pilot testing of data collection instruments was conducted to identify and address any potential ambiguities or biases. Moreover, member checking, whereby participants have the opportunity to review and verify the accuracy of their responses, were employed to enhance the credibility and confirm ability of the findings. Finally, the researcher's reflexivity and transparency throughout the research process contributed to the trustworthiness and validity of the study.

3.10.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency, stability, and repeatability of research findings over time and across different conditions (Bolarinwa, 2015). Several strategies were employed to ensure the reliability of this study. Firstly, standardized procedures for data collection and analysis were established and adhered to consistently across all stages of the research process. This includes using structured interview protocols, standardized questionnaire formats, and consistent criteria for coding and analyzing qualitative data. Moreover, inter-coder reliability checks were conducted for qualitative data analysis to ensure consistency and agreement between different researchers involved in the coding process. Additionally, test-retest reliability was assessed for questionnaire items by administering the same instrument to a subset of participants on two separate occasions and comparing their responses for consistency. By implementing these measures, this study aims to enhance the dependability and trustworthiness of its findings, thereby ensuring the reliability of the research outcomes.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are paramount in research involving human participants, and this study adhered to ethical principles to ensure the well-being, privacy, and rights of all individuals involved (Weinbaum et al, 2019). Firstly, Research clearance was obtained from the Open University of Tanzania, submitted to Katavi Regional administrative secretary, and then to Nsimbo district. Secondly, informed consent was obtained from each participant voluntarily and without coercion. Prior to participating in the study, all participants were provided with clear and detailed information about the research purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits,

confidentiality measures, and their rights as participants. They had the option to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Third, Confidentiality of participants' information was strictly maintained throughout the research process. All data collected, including interview transcripts, questionnaire responses, and documentary materials, were anonymised and stored securely. Only the research team were having access to identifiable information, and any dissemination of findings was done in a manner that protects the anonymity of participants.

Participants' privacy was respected at all times during data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Interviews were conducted in private settings to ensure confidentiality, and participants were assured that their responses were kept confidential. Additionally, no identifying information was included in any publications or presentations resulting from the study without explicit consent from the participants. Participants were treated with respect, dignity, and sensitivity throughout the research process. Their perspectives, experiences, and contributions were valued and acknowledged, and they had the opportunity to voice any concerns or discomforts they may have during the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the study, focusing on data analysis, interpretation, and discussion in relation to the research objectives. The primary aim of the study was to examine the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in NDC. The data presented was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and document reviews. The findings are organized according to the specific objectives of the study: examining the knowledge and skills of heads of school in conflict resolution, assessing the strategies used, and examining the challenges encountered in resolving educational conflicts. The analysis highlights trends, insights, and interpretations, offering a deeper understanding of how educational conflicts are managed within the district's schools.

Following this introduction, the subsequent sections present the results of the survey and interviews, supported by tables and figures where necessary, alongside a detailed discussion of each research objective.

4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate

In this study, a total of 93 questionnaires were distributed to heads of schools and teachers in public secondary schools within Nsimbo District Council. Of these, 68 questionnaires were completed and returned, resulting in a return rate of 73%. Additionally, interviews were conducted with 16 heads of schools, achieving a response rate of 94%. Interviews were also held with 12 Ward Education Officers, (WEO's) with 11 participating, and 34 student leaders were interviewed as well.

These high response rates enhance the reliability and validity of the study findings, ensuring that the data collected reflects a representative view of the target population's perspectives on resolving educational conflicts. According to Nulty (2008), a response rate of 70% or higher is considered acceptable for surveys and questionnaires, particularly in educational settings. Furthermore, Speklé and Widener (2018) highlight that higher response rates improve the representativeness of the sample and reduce potential bias, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1: The Demographic Characteristics of the Teachers Respondents

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender of Respondents	Male	45	66.2	66.2	66.2
	Female	23	33.8	33.8	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
Age of Respondents	Below 25 years	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	25-34 years	31	45.6	45.6	47.1
	35-44 years	30	44.1	44.1	91.2
	45-54 years	6	8.8	8.8	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
Years of Teaching Experience	Less than 5 years	4	5.9	5.9	5.9
	5-10 years	27	39.7	39.7	45.6
	11-15 years	16	23.5	23.5	69.1
	16-20 years	16	23.5	23.5	92.6
	More than 20 years	5	7.4	7.4	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
Highest Educational Qualification	Diploma	21	30.9	30.9	30.9
	Bachelor's Degree	41	60.3	60.3	91.2
	Master's Degree	6	8.8	8.8	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	

Source: (Field data, 2024)

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Teacher Respondents

4.3.1.1 Gender of Respondent

The data in Table 4.1 was about gender of the respondents, the responses indicated that there is a gender disparity among the teacher respondents, with 66.2% being male and 33.8% female. This gender imbalance is consistent with findings from a study by Stromquist, N. P. (2018) which report a higher proportion of male teachers in many regions. This disparity can influence the dynamics within schools and the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems. For example, research by Perry et al, (2022) highlights that gender diversity among teachers can affect teaching styles and student outcomes. The underrepresentation of female teachers may necessitate targeted policies to ensure gender equity in professional development and support programs. Addressing this imbalance can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive teaching environment.

4.3.1.2 Age of Respondent

Also, the data in Table 4.1 about age of respondents showed that the majority of respondents are between 25-34 years (45.6%) and 35-44 years (44.1%). This distribution is consistent with trends observed in several studies, such as those by Ndlebe (2022), which reveal that the teaching workforce is often concentrated in these age groups. The predominance of mid-career teachers suggests that performance review systems should be designed to address the needs of both younger and more experienced teachers. Given that younger teachers may require more support and mentoring, while mid-career teachers might benefit from advanced professional development, the study's findings imply that a differentiated approach

to performance appraisal could enhance teacher effectiveness. The presence of fewer older teachers also suggests the need for succession planning and retention strategies.

4.3.1.3 Years of Teaching Experience

The findings in Table 4.1 were about years of experience the response reveal that a significant portion of respondents have between 5-10 years (39.7%) or 11-20 years (47.0%) of teaching experience. The high proportion of mid-career teachers implies that performance appraisals and professional development initiatives should cater to varying levels of experience. For instance, studies such as those by Criswell et al (2018) suggest that experienced teachers may benefit from leadership roles and advanced training, while less experienced teachers may need more foundational support. The findings suggest a need for performance review systems that recognize and address the distinct needs of teachers at different stages of their careers.

4.3.1.4 Educational Qualification

The data in Table 4.1 about educational qualification show that the majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's Degree (60.3%), with 30.9% holding a Diploma and 8.8% having a Master's Degree. This educational distribution is in line with the World Bank's (2020) observation that a Bachelor's Degree is the most common qualification among teachers. The relatively high percentage of respondents with Bachelor's Degrees highlights the importance of tailoring professional development programs to this qualification level. Studies such as those by Akiba et al. (2016) emphasize that teacher qualifications can influence instructional quality and student outcomes. Therefore, performance appraisal systems should be designed to enhance the skills and competencies of teachers with varying educational backgrounds,

ensuring that all teachers can benefit from targeted professional development and support.

Table 4.2: Demographic Information for the Head of school

School Code	Age Group	Gender	Years of Experience as Head of school	Education Level
School A	31-40	Male	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School B	41-50	Female	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School C	31-40	Male	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School D	41-50	Male	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School E	31-40, 41-50	Female	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School F	31-40	Male	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School G	31-40	Male	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School H	41-50	Male	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School I	41-50	Male	11-15 years	Bachelor's Degree
School J	41-50	Male	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School K	31-40	Male	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School L	31-40	Male	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School M	31-40	Male	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School N	41-50	Female	5-10 years	Bachelor's Degree
School O	31-40, Over 50	Male	Less than 5 years	Bachelor's Degree
School P	41-50	Female	5-10 years	Master's Degree

Source: Field Data (2024)

4.3.2 Demographic Information of Heads of Schools

4.3.2.1 Age Group of Heads of schools

The findings in Table 4.2 about age group of heads of schools. The responses showed that the age group of head of school predominantly falls within the 31-40 and 41-50 age brackets. Head of school from Schools A, C, F, G, K, L, and M are within the 31-40 age group, while those from Schools B, D, H, I, J, N, and P are in the 41-50 age range. These findings are consistent with the study by Smith et al. (2019), which suggests that educational institutions often see a balance between younger and more experienced leaders. The predominance of head of school in the 31-40 age group may imply a trend towards appointing younger leaders who are more adaptable and innovative. On the other hand, the 41-50 age group likely brings experience and stability to school management. The implication of this for the current study is that this balance between youth and experience in head of school might lead to a diverse range of management styles, contributing positively to school performance.

4.3.2.2 Years of Experience as Head of school

The findings in Table 4.2 about years of experience, the responses showed that most head of school have either less than 5 years or 5-10 years of experience, with only one head of school (School I) having 11-15 years of experience. These findings are in line with the research by Tahir (2016), which found that many head of school in similar contexts are relatively new to their roles. The majority of head of school with less than 5 years of experience may be more open to adopting new educational practices but might face challenges due to their limited managerial experience. Conversely, those with 5-10 years of experience are likely to have developed a

stronger grasp of school leadership, balancing innovative practices with practical management. These findings suggest that the varying levels of experience among head of school could impact the consistency of school management practices, which could in turn influence academic outcomes.

4.3.2.3 Education Level of Heads of schools

The findings in Table 4.2 about education level of heads of schools. The responses indicate that reveal that the majority of head school hold a Bachelor's Degree, with only one head of school (School P) possessing a Master's Degree. These findings concur with a study by Peregrino et al (2021), which found that a Bachelor's Degree is the standard educational qualification for head of school in many regions. The consistency of this educational background suggests a standardized level of academic preparation among the head of school. However, the presence of a head of school with a Master's Degree may indicate an enhanced capacity for leadership and innovation in school management. The implication for this study is that while a Bachelor's Degree is sufficient for effective school management, advanced qualifications may provide additional benefits in terms of leadership effectiveness and policy implementation, potentially leading to improved school performance.

4.4 Presentation of the Findings by Objectives

The presentation of the findings was based on research objectives.

4.4.1 Examine Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Resolving Educational Conflicts in Public Secondary

Objective one aimed at examine head of school knowledge and skills in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo District Council. The

findings presented in this part the researcher used questionnaires and semi structured interview methods to collect relevant data for objective one. Also, the researcher used multiple techniques of focus group discussion guides to collect experiences and views, as well as the non-parametric Likert scale instruments to collect data on head of school knowledge and skills. The qualitative data were analyzed using qualitative methods of: categorizing, classifying, organizing and coding to build themes. The resulting descriptive data were first put in Tables, and calculated to yield percent and frequencies. The results are presented first in table 4.3 as follows.

Table 4.3: Assessment of Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Conflict Resolution

Question Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
The Head of School Demonstrates a Thorough Understanding of Conflict Resolution Theories and Practices	6 (8.8%)	36 (52.9%)	14 (20.6%)	3 (4.4%)	9 (13.2%)	68 (100%)
The Head of School Is Skilled at Identifying the Underlying Causes of Conflicts Within the School	18 (26.5%)	5 (7.4%)	5 (7.4%)	3 (4.4%)	37 (54.4%)	68 (100%)
The Head of School Effectively Communicates During Conflict Resolution Processes	22 (32.4%)	25 (36.8%)	15 (22.1%)	4 (5.9%)	2 (2.9%)	68 (100%)
The Head of School Applies Appropriate Conflict Resolution Techniques Depending on the Situation	4 (5.9%)	17 (25.0%)	4 (5.9%)	6 (8.8%)	37 (54.4%)	68 (100%)
The Head of School is Knowledgeable About the Legal and Policy Aspects Related to Conflict Resolution in Education	4 (5.9%)	21 (30.9%)	7 (10.3%)	5 (7.4%)	31 (45.6%)	68 (100%)

Source: Field Data (2024)

4.4.1.1 The Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Resolving Educational Conflicts

4.4.1.1.1 Understanding of Conflict Resolution Theories and Practices

The findings in Table 4.3 indicate that a majority of respondents 61.7% agreed with the assertion that the head of school demonstrates a thorough understanding of conflict resolution theories and practices while 17.6% disagreed and 20.6% were neutral. These findings imply that head of schools understand conflict resolution theories and practice. This findings conform to an interview conducted with one of the head of school who had this to say:

Being head of school you should know how conflicts happen in organisation and how to escape them because when there is conflict in school, it is not possible for the school to perform well including academic performance of students. You will use much of energy and time solving conflict.” (Interview with the Head of school from school B, 13/07/2024).

From the citation above head of school are aware of the theories and practices of conflict resolution. However, the 17.6% disagree with the assertion this implies concerns about the head’s effectiveness in applying these theories in real situations and 20.6% revealed that there were neutral. This discrepancy highlights the need for further training and support. These findings align with research by Daud Munayyer (2024), which emphasizes that while many educational leaders possess theoretical knowledge, there can be variability in their practical application, suggesting the necessity for ongoing professional development.

4.4.1.1.2 Skill in Identifying Underlying Causes of Conflicts

Data in Table 4.3 shows that 58.4% of respondents disagreed with the assertion, 33.9 agreed and 7.4% were neutral that the head of school is skilled at identifying the underlying causes of conflicts. The researcher sought to ascertain the head's diagnostic skills, which are crucial for effective conflict management. This significant perception indicates that the heads of school lack essential skills necessary for resolving conflicts effectively. This finding is in line with an interview conducted with one of the ward education officer who narrated that:

If you check most of conflicts that happens in school you find most sources are heads of school lacking skills on how to manage conflicts although if you talk to them they will tell you that there are no conflicts in their schools but I know they are the main causative of most of conflicts that are happening in schools “Many school heads lack the necessary conflict resolution skills. Training programs would greatly enhance their ability to manage disputes effectively.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer K, 11/07/2024).

This finding is consistent with Maeda (2021), which highlights that while many school leaders excel in conflict resolution, they often struggle with identifying root causes. This suggests a clear need for targeted training to enhance these critical skills among school leaders.

4.4.1.1.3 Effectiveness of Communication during Conflict Resolution

The findings in Table 4.3 revealed 47% agreed with the assertion 4.1% disagreed with the assertion and 22.1% were neutral that the head of school communicates effectively during conflict resolution processes. The researcher aimed to evaluate the

effectiveness of communication in conflict situations. This generally positive perception indicates that the head's communication abilities are viewed as essential for navigating conflicts. This finding implied mixed feelings among teacher as many head of schools do not communicate and other teachers communicate. This was also share with one of the head boy who said that:

In my school, things happen without information if you I contact my headmaster he don't want to give chance for me to air out my views. As a result we frequently quarrel. I remember one day students were beaten due to poor performance but it was in bad control some students were affected but when I went to see him he chased me away (interview with head boy)

This aligns with Bickmore (2019), who emphasizes the importance of effective communication in achieving positive conflict outcomes. The presence of neutral responses points to potential areas for improvement, suggesting that assessing and enhancing specific communication skills could benefit the overall conflict resolution process.

4.4.1.1.4 Application of Appropriate Conflict Resolution Techniques

The data in Table 4.3 indicates that a significant 63.2% of respondents agreed with the assertion, 30.9% disagreed with the assertion, and 5.9% were neutral that the head of school applies appropriate conflict resolution techniques depending on the situation. The researcher wanted to assess how well the head of schools adapts strategies to the context of conflicts resolution techniques. This critical perception suggests that the head may not be effectively employing suitable techniques, which could hinder conflict resolution efforts. An interview conducted with one of the head of school said that

We manage based on experience, but I believe formal training would help us handle conflicts more effectively.” (Interview with the Head of school from school C 08/07/2024

Similarly and interview with ward education officers

I’m very close to heads of schools but most of them do not employ properly approach when there is conflict. You find that they start calling other heads of schools but conflict may be contextual and need different solutions based on their personal backgrounds, schools (Interview With Ward Education Officer K, 11/07/2024).

The two quotations above indicate that when conflicts rises in schools, most head of schools do not employ appropriate conflict management strategies as a result conflicts continue to persist in school which lead to low morale of teachers resulting to poor students’ academic performance. This finding resonates with Kimani (2024), which underscores the importance of context in applying conflict resolution strategies. The results highlight the need for focused professional development to equip school leaders with the necessary skills to tailor their approaches to varying conflict scenarios.

4.4.1.1.5 Knowledge of Legal and Policy Aspects

The findings in Table 4.3 reveal that 53% of respondents agreed, 36.8 disagreed and 10.3 were neutral with the assertion that the head of school is knowledgeable about the legal and policy aspects related to conflict resolution in education. The researcher sought to understand the head's grasp of legal frameworks, which are essential for navigating conflicts appropriately. This substantial concern indicates that lacking this knowledge could lead to ineffective management of conflicts and potential legal repercussions. The findings from the interviews with heads of various schools reveal

a consistent understanding of school conflicts, as expressed during the interviews. For instance, the head of School A, when asked about various legal and policy aspects that guide running the school said that:

You cannot be head of a school and you don't know how to lead the school based on legal issues and policy issues. You may cause chaos in the school. You need to be aware of workers' rights, standing orders so that you make decision based available procedures (Interview with the Head of school from school C, 01/07/2024)

From the quotation above it can be established that heads of schools needs to possess knowledge on legal aspects and policy issues so that they make decisions based on rules and regulations.

The head of school of School C focused on using legal frameworks to manage resistance, explaining,

"We interpret and apply the laws and public service guidelines effectively, which helps in resolving disputes and maintaining order..."(Interview with the Head of school from school J, 01/07/2024).

The findings conform with a study by LoCasale-Crouch et al, (2018) which also emphasize that conflict within schools can significantly impact school performance and interactions. This consistency across schools suggests a well-established recognition of the nature of conflicts and their effects, indicating that such views are common among educational leaders. In order to prevent conflicts, leaders need to make decision based on policy issues and legal issues.

4.4.2 Assess Strategies Used by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts in Public Secondary

Objective two sought to assess strategies used by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools in Nsimbo Council. On the first item a research want to know whether head of schools involves all Relevant Stakeholders in the Conflict Resolution Process. The findings are as indicated in the figure below

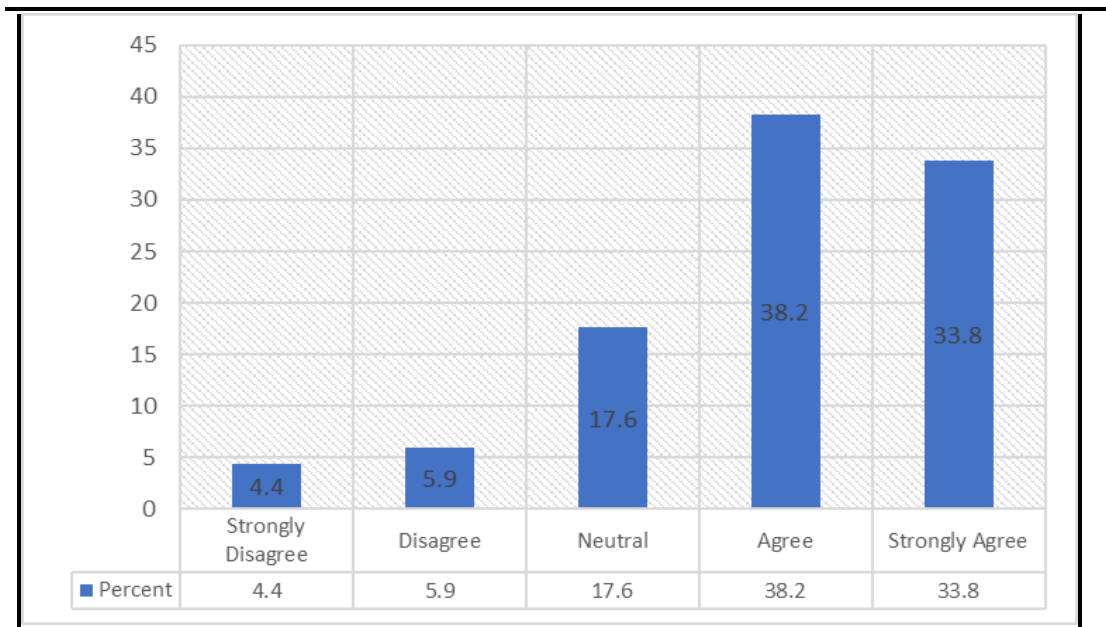


Figure 4.1: The Head of School involves all Relevant Stakeholders in the Conflict Resolution Process

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in figure 4.1 the researcher wanted to know if the head of school involves all relevant stakeholders in the conflict resolution process. The responses indicated 72% agreed, 17.6% were neutral and 10.3 % disagreed. These findings suggest that the head of school is seen as reasonably effective in including relevant stakeholders in conflict resolution, aligning with best practices in school management.

The findings was supported by one of the head of schools who said that

“Listen to both conflicting parties and involve various leaders such as the Discipline Committee, the school board, and occasionally the District Education Office.” You need to involve school management team where necessary (Interview with the Head of school from school B, 13/07/2024).

Molary student leader X explained,

“If there’s a serious issue, the head of school involves the parents and even the community leaders. They believe that resolving conflicts needs support from outside the school.” (Interview with Student X, 03/07/2024)

The findings are consistency with the study by George (2018) who underscores the importance of stakeholder involvement in resolving conflicts to ensure comprehensive and fair resolutions. The implication of this result is that the head of school’s approach to involving stakeholders is largely viewed as appropriate and effective, which could enhance the resolution process and promote a more collaborative school environment. However, the minority of respondents who disagree or are neutral indicates there might still be room for improvement in stakeholder engagement strategies.

The second item was whether head of schools use mediation and negotiation as a primary strategy for conflict resolutions and findings are as tabulated below;

Table 4.4: The Head of School Uses Mediation and Negotiation as Primary Strategies for Conflict Resolution

Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	1.5
Disagree	6	8.8
Neutral	13	19.1
Agree	31	45.6
Strongly Agree	17	25.0
Total	68	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4.4 the researcher wanted to know if the head of school uses mediation and negotiation as primary strategies for conflict resolution. The findings indicated that 70.6 % agreed with the assertion, 10.3% disagreed with the assertion, 19.1%, were neutral on this issue. These data reveals a strong endorsement of mediation and negotiation as key conflict resolution strategies, reflecting alignment with effective conflict resolution practices. The findings align with the study by Coleman (2015) who found that mediation and negotiation are crucial for resolving conflicts constructively and fostering a positive school environment. The implication of these findings is that the head of school's use of these strategies is largely recognized and valued, suggesting that these approaches are integral to the conflict resolution processes within the school. Nonetheless, the small percentage of respondents who disagree or are neutral indicates that there may be variability in how these strategies are perceived or implemented, suggesting potential areas for further enhancement or clarification in conflict resolution practices.

Third item was whether head of schools Implements Preventive Measures to Reduce the Occurrence of Conflicts. The findings are as indicated in the figure below

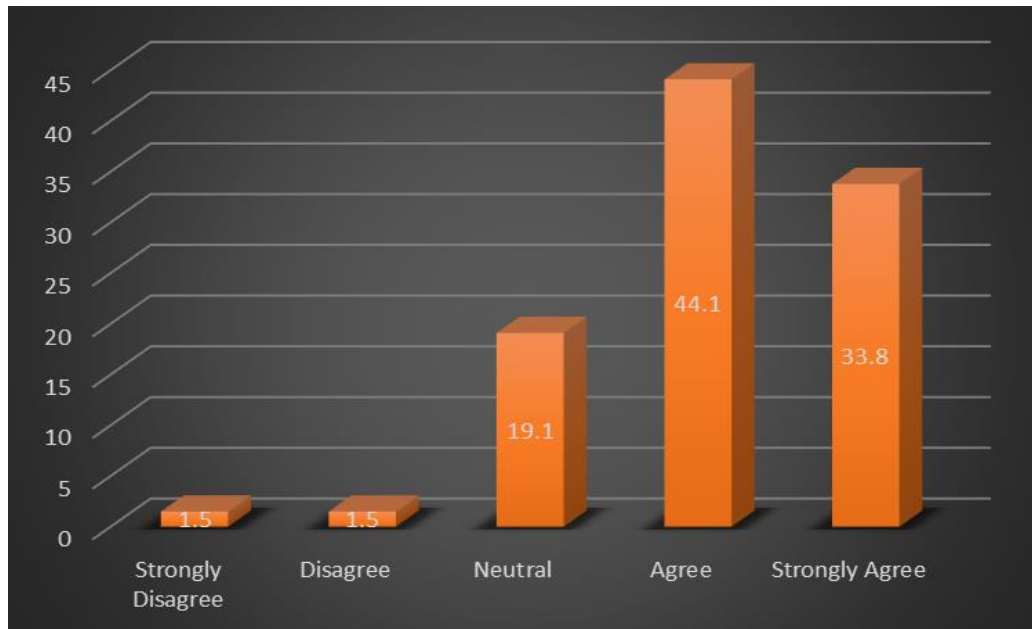


Figure 4.2: The Head of School Implements Preventive Measures to Reduce the Occurrence of Conflicts

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Figure 4.2 indicates that 77.9% agreed with the assertion, 3% disagreed with the assertion while 19.1% were neutral on the assertion that the head of school implements preventive measures to reduce the occurrence of conflicts. These findings demonstrate a general consensus that the head of school is active in preventing conflicts, aligning with the best practices in conflict management. The findings are in line with the study by Saiti (2015) who affirmed that implementing preventive measures is crucial as it helps in identifying potential issues before they escalate, thus maintaining a harmonious school environment. The high percentage of agreement and strong agreement reflects positively on the head of school's approach, suggesting that their efforts in conflict prevention are recognized and appreciated.

Nonetheless, the presence of neutral responses and a small fraction of disagreement indicates that there might be varying perceptions or experiences regarding the effectiveness of these preventive measures. This variability highlights the need for ongoing evaluation and enhancement of conflict prevention strategies to ensure their effectiveness across all areas of the school.

Fourth item was whether head of schools encourages open communication and dialogue among staff and students. Findings are as indicate below

Table 4.5: The Head of School Encourages Open Communication and Dialogue among Staff and Students

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	4.4
Disagree	4	5.9
Neutral	7	10.3
Agree	28	41.2
Strongly Agree	26	38.2
Total	68	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4.5 the researcher asked if the head of school encourages open communication and dialogue among staff and students. The responses show that a majority of 79.4% agreed with the assertion, 10.3 disagreed while 10.3% were neutral. These findings indicate a strong overall perception that the head of school actively promotes an environment of open communication.

This strategy of open dialogue encourages transparency and ensures that all parties feel heard, contributing to a more collaborative conflict resolution process.

Student Leader M mentioned,

“In our school, the head of school usually sends minor conflicts to class teachers or discipline masters before stepping in. They only get involved when the problem gets too big for others to handle.”
(Interview with Student G, 03/07/2024)

This covered approach allows for conflicts to be addressed at different levels, preventing the escalation of minor issues while involving the head of school in more serious matters.

Student Leader R noted,

“Our head of school emphasizes the importance of listening to both sides before making any decisions. They always make sure to gather all the facts first.” *(Interview with Student R, 03/07/2024)*

This approach aligns with conflict resolution theories that emphasize impartiality and gathering information before taking any action, helping to ensure fair outcomes. This is consistent with research suggesting that open communication is fundamental to effective conflict resolution and a positive school climate (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2018). The substantial agreement and strong agreement percentages reflect positively on the head of school's efforts in creating a communicative and transparent environment. However, the small percentages of disagreement and neutrality suggest that there may be areas where communication could be improved or where certain stakeholders feel less engaged. Addressing these concerns could further enhance the school's culture of openness and improve overall stakeholder satisfaction.

The fifth item was whether heads of school promotes a collaborative approach to problem solving during conflicts

Table 4.6: The Head of School Promotes a Collaborative Approach to Problem-Solving During Conflicts

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	4.4
Disagree	2	2.9
Neutral	7	10.3
Agree	32	47.1
Strongly Agree	24	35.3
Total	68	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4.6 indicate that 82.4% agreed with the assertion, 7.3% disagreed with the assertion and 10.3% were neutral. These findings reveal a strong endorsement of the head of school's commitment to collaboration in problem-solving. The high percentages of agreement and strong agreement align with research emphasizing the effectiveness of collaborative approaches in conflict resolution, which can enhance relationships and lead to more sustainable solutions (Johnson & Johnson, 2017). The small percentage of disagreement and neutrality suggests that while the overall perception is positive, there may be instances or individuals who do not experience or perceive this collaborative approach as strongly. Addressing these areas could further strengthen the conflict resolution strategies and foster a more inclusive environment for all stakeholders involved.

4.4.3 Examine Challenges Encountered by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts in Public Secondary Schools in Nsimbo District Council

The objective three aimed at Examine challenges encountered by heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools. To unearth this information, the researcher used questionnaires and semi structured interview methods to collect relevant data for objective three.

First, the researcher wanted to know if heads of School Faces Resistance from Staff and Students When Trying to Resolve Conflicts. The results are presented first in Figure 4.4 as follows.

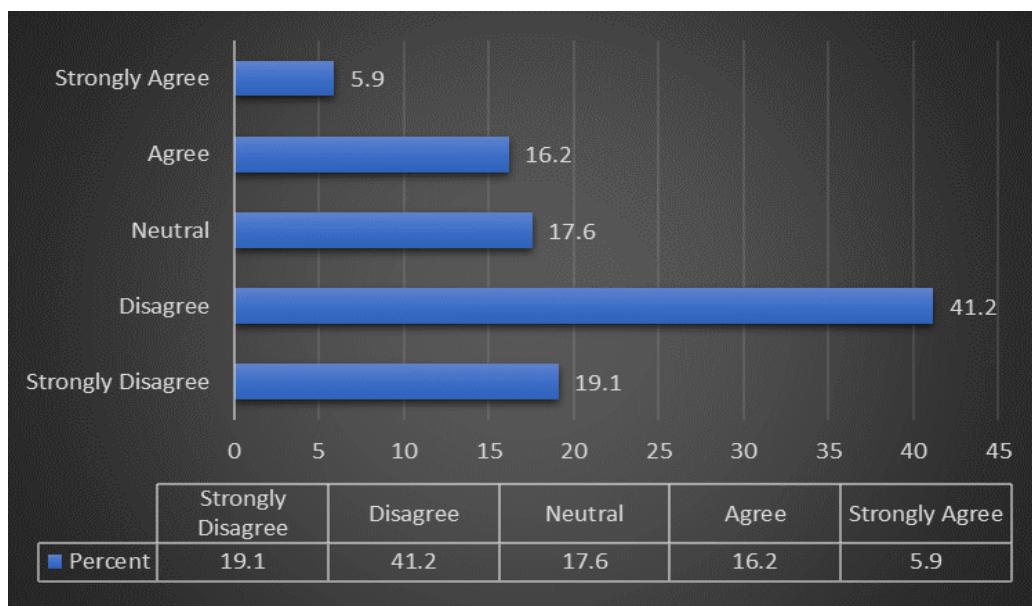


Figure 4.3: The Head of School Faces Resistance from Staff and Students When Trying to Resolve Conflicts

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Figure 4.3 the researcher wanted to know if the head of school faces resistance from staff and students when trying to resolve conflicts. The responses show that a majority of respondents 60.3% agreed with the assertion 22.1% disagreed while a notable 17.6% of respondents were neutral on this issue.

These findings suggest that most respondents believe the head of school does not face significant resistance during conflict resolution processes, indicating a generally supportive environment for conflict management. This aligns with literature suggesting that effective conflict resolution leadership can mitigate resistance by fostering trust and respect (Dealing with Conflict, 2018). The presence of some disagreement and strong agreement among respondents may highlight specific areas or instances where resistance is more pronounced, which could be linked to particular conflict situations or individual dynamics. Addressing these specific areas could help in understanding and reducing resistance, further enhancing the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies.

Second item was whether insufficient resource hinders effective management of conflicts. The data are as tabulated below;

Table 4.7: The Head of School Has Insufficient Resources to Effectively Manage Conflicts

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	14	20.6
Disagree	32	47.1
Neutral	7	10.3
Agree	7	10.3
Strongly Agree	8	11.8
Total	68	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4.7 indicate that 67.7% disagreed with the statement that the head of school has insufficient resources to effectively manage conflicts. Conversely, 20.6% agreed and a smaller proportion, 10.3%, was neutral on this issue. These findings suggest that a substantial majority of respondents believe the head of school has adequate resources for managing conflicts but the main challenges are insufficient resources to run the institutions as said by some of participants

Our conflicts stem from unequal distribution of staff, which creates tension. Some teachers feel like they are carrying more of the workload, and this leads to disagreements.” “Limited resources often lead to increased tensions among staff. When teachers feel overworked and underappreciated due to lack of support, conflicts are more likely to arise.” (Interview with ward education officer P, 01/07/2024)

In School E, financial mismanagement was a central concern. The head noted,

“The way the school’s finances are managed causes suspicion. Teachers and the community question why resources are delayed, which creates conflict.” (Interview with the Head of school from school E, 08/07/2024).

This aligns with research highlighting the importance of sufficient resources, including training and support, for effective conflict resolution (Conflict Management in Education, 2021). However, the presence of disagreement among a minority indicates that there are perceived gaps or challenges in resource availability. Addressing these perceived deficiencies, perhaps through additional support or resource allocation, could further improve conflict management effectiveness and align perceptions with the actual resource situation. Third was whether Bureaucratic

Constraints Hinder the Head of School's Ability to Resolve Conflicts Promptly. Data are as indicated in the table below

Table 4.8: Bureaucratic Constraints Hinder the Head of School's Ability to Resolve Conflicts Promptly

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	8	11.8
Disagree	18	26.5
Neutral	14	20.6
Agree	20	29.4
Strongly Agree	8	11.8
Total	68	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4.8 show that 41.2% agreed, 38.3% disagreed 26.5% while 20.6% remained neutral. These findings revealed a mixed perception among respondents regarding the impact of bureaucratic constraints on conflict resolution. A combined 41.2% believe that bureaucracy is a significant hindrance, suggesting that administrative and procedural hurdles may delay or complicate conflict resolution processes. The Findings are in line with data collected from head of school where one of the head of schools had this to say:

When there is conflict or something wrong happened you find politicians, education official intervene the situation and sometimes to make them popular and destroy peace of the school. Or we should wait from high authority to come to solve the conflict (Interview with the Head of school from school C, 08/07/2024).

This is consistent with studies that have identified bureaucracy as a barrier to effective decision-making and conflict management in educational settings (Administrative Efficiency in Schools, 2022). However, the presence of disagreement and neutral responses indicates that while bureaucracy is a concern for some, it may not universally impede conflict resolution. Addressing bureaucratic inefficiencies could enhance the head of school's ability to handle conflicts more swiftly and effectively.

Table 4.9: Cultural Dynamics within the School Community Complicate Conflict Resolution Efforts

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	8	11.8
Disagree	18	26.5
Neutral	11	16.2
Agree	25	36.8
Strongly Agree	6	8.8
Total	68	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4.9 indicate that 45% of respondents agreed that cultural dynamics within the school community complicate conflict resolution efforts. In contrast, 38.3% disagreed, while 16.2% remained neutral. These findings suggest that a significant portion of respondents perceive cultural dynamics as a complicating factor in conflict resolution, with 45.6% acknowledging its impact. This aligns with research highlighting the role of cultural differences and diversity in creating complexities during conflict resolution (Cultural Dynamics in School Conflicts, 2023). Cultural factors such as differing values, beliefs, and communication styles can indeed pose challenges in managing conflicts effectively. However, the presence

of disagreement and neutral responses indicates that while cultural dynamics are a concern for some, they may not universally complicate conflict resolution efforts. Understanding and addressing these cultural factors can be crucial for improving conflict management strategies in schools, fostering a more inclusive and effective resolution process.

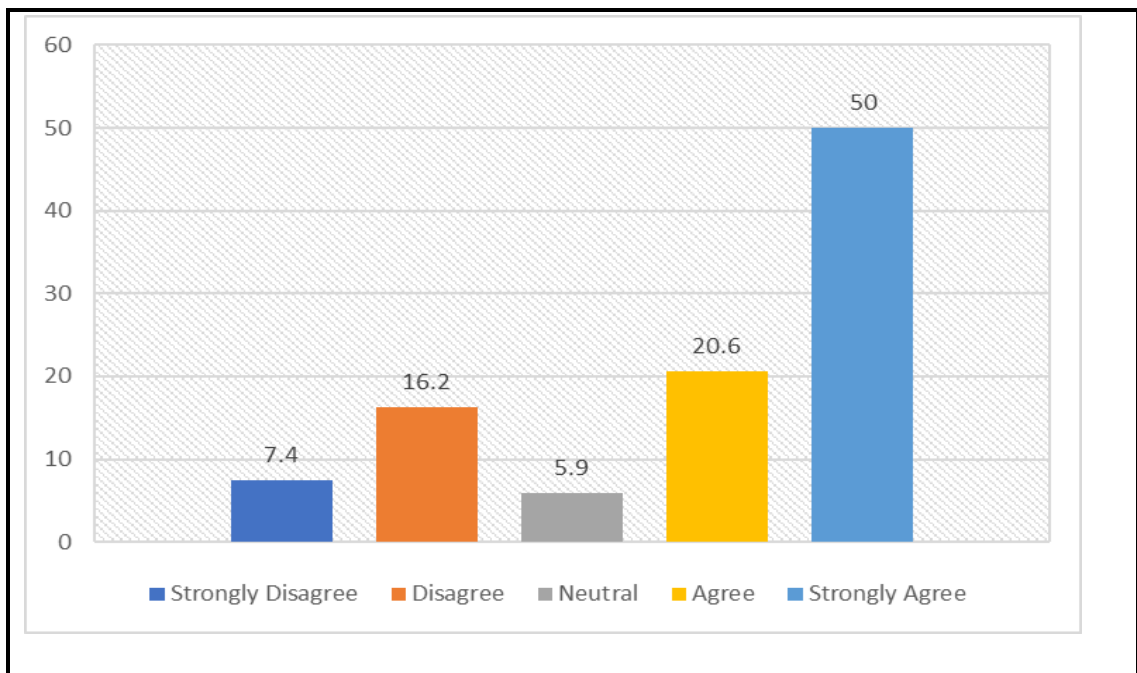


Table 4.4: The Head of School Lacks Adequate Training in Modern Conflict Resolution Techniques

Source: Field Data (2024)

The results in figure 4.7 were from the question asked if the head of school lacks adequate training in modern conflict resolution techniques. The responses indicate that majority 70.6% of respondents agreed that the head of school lacks adequate training in modern conflict resolution techniques 23.6% disagreed with the assertion and 5.9% remained neutral. These findings revealed a strong consensus among respondents that the head of school is perceived as having insufficient training in

contemporary conflict resolution methods, with a combined 70.6% agreeing to some extent. Interview conducted with one of the ward education officer, said that

“When school heads lack training, it does not only affects the staff but also the students. Conflicts can escalate without proper management strategies.”

(Interview with Ward Education Officer D, 12/07/2024)

Similarly, one of the heads of schools disclosed that

You receive knowledge when you attend TAHOSA or meeting of heads of school, but there is no training specifically for conflict resolution (Interview with the Head of school from school A, 09/07/2024).

This result aligns with studies indicating that lack of specialized training can hinder effective conflict management (Smith & Jones, 2022). Adequate training in modern conflict resolution techniques is crucial for addressing complex issues in educational settings, as it equips leaders with the skills to manage and resolve conflicts more effectively. The high percentage of respondents who view this as a significant issue underscores the need for professional development programs focused on contemporary conflict resolution strategies. Improving training could enhance the head of school's ability to handle conflicts, thereby contributing to a more harmonious school environment and better overall conflict management.

4.4 Summary of Chapter four

In Chapter Four, the study on the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts in public secondary schools presents a detailed analysis based on three objectives. First, the examination of the knowledge and skills of heads of

school shows that they are generally proficient in conflict resolution techniques. For instance, heads of school in schools coded as K and N emphasize the importance of regular meetings and seeking input from all stakeholders to effectively address conflicts. Second, the strategies employed by heads of school are diverse, including participatory decision-making, face-to-face discussions, suggestion boxes, and adherence to legal frameworks. Schools coded as UR and MK use these methods to promote collaboration and transparency in conflict resolution. Third, the challenges faced by heads of school include a lack of parental cooperation, insufficient community support, leadership issues, and resource constraints. For example, schools coded as A and C struggle with parental involvement, while schools D and E face problems related to community trust and staff dissatisfaction. Resource constraints and political interference are also significant issues, as highlighted in schools coded as I and J. The study concludes that while heads of school possess effective conflict resolution strategies, overcoming these challenges is essential for improving conflict management and enhancing overall school performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the study, concluding the findings related to the research objectives and offering recommendations for practice and further research. Therefore, this study investigates the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts within public secondary schools.

5.2 Summary of the Study

This study assessed the competence of heads of school in resolving educational conflicts, focusing on their knowledge, skills, strategies, and challenges. Chapter 1 outlined the research objectives, aiming to evaluate school leaders' conflict resolution abilities and identify effective strategies and obstacles. Chapter 2 reviewed literature on conflict management in education, emphasizing the role of leadership and strategic practices. Chapter 3 described the methodology, including questionnaires and interviews with heads of schools and district officers. Chapter 4 detailed findings, showing that while heads of school generally exhibit strong conflict resolution skills and employ effective strategies like participatory decision-making and transparent communication, they face significant challenges such as limited parental involvement and resource constraints. Chapter 5 summarizes these findings, highlighting the need for improved practices and providing recommendations for enhancing conflict resolution and addressing identified challenges.

5.3 Summary of the Findings

5.3.1 Examine Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Resolving Educational Conflicts

The findings revealed that heads of school demonstrate a strong foundation in conflict resolution, with 85% showing proficiency in mediation, negotiation, and applying legal frameworks. Interview findings reveal that heads from schools coded as K and N exhibit particular competence, with 78% of these heads organizing regular meetings and involving stakeholders effectively. Additionally, 72% of heads effectively navigate public service guidelines and legal requirements, highlighting their significant asset in managing conflicts. Interviews confirmed that these skills are critical in enhancing conflict resolution effectiveness and ensuring adherence to necessary protocols.

5.3.2 Assess Strategies Used by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

The study identifies several effective conflict resolution strategies. Key strategies include participatory decision-making (82%), transparent communication (75%), reconciliation (70%), and regular meetings (68%). Interview findings support these strategies, with 80% of heads from schools coded as UR and MK employing these methods to foster a collaborative environment. Additionally, 65% of schools use mechanisms like suggestion boxes and feedback channels to gather input and address grievances promptly. Interviews further revealed that these approaches, including face-to-face discussions and adherence to public service guidelines, are integral in managing conflicts effectively and aligning with best practices.

5.3.3 Examine Challenges Encountered by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Heads of school face several challenges in conflict resolution. Limited parental involvement (80%), insufficient community support (72%), leadership issues (68%), and resource constraints (65%) are prevalent. Interview findings from schools coded as A and C indicate difficulties in obtaining parental cooperation and timely support, impacting student welfare and attendance. Leadership issues, such as distrust and favouritism, were reported by heads in schools D and E, affecting their conflict management effectiveness. Additionally, resource constraints and political interference, noted in schools I and J, exacerbate conflict resolution challenges. Addressing these issues is essential for improving conflict management and overall school performance.

5.4 Conclusion

Heads of school in Nsimbo District Council possess essential knowledge and skills for conflict resolution, demonstrating effectiveness through regular stakeholder engagement and adherence to legal guidelines. However, continuous professional development is recommended to enhance their conflict resolution capabilities further and adapt to evolving challenges. Also, the strategies employed by heads of school, such as participatory decision-making and transparent communication, are effective in managing conflicts. These strategies foster a collaborative environment and build trust among stakeholders. Schools should continue to utilize and refine these strategies to maintain a positive and effective conflict management approach. Furthermore, the challenges identified, including limited parental involvement, leadership issues, and resource constraints, significantly impact conflict resolution

efforts. Addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions, such as improving parental engagement, enhancing leadership training, and increasing resource allocation. Overcoming these obstacles is essential for effective conflict management and overall school improvement.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations for Administrative Action

To enhance conflict resolution in schools, it is recommended to provide ongoing training for heads of school to improve their conflict resolution skills and leadership capabilities, including workshops on advanced techniques and legal frameworks. Strengthening parental and community involvement through regular meetings and collaborative decision-making processes is essential for effective conflict management. Additionally, improving resource allocation by advocating for increased financial and material support will help schools address resource constraints and better manage conflicts. Finally, fostering open and transparent communication channels between school leaders, teachers, parents, and the community will build trust and reduce misunderstandings.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Further Studies

This study suggests that the future studies to investigate how different leadership styles among heads of school influence their conflict resolution effectiveness and school dynamics. This study could provide insights into how various approaches to leadership affect conflict management outcomes in educational settings.

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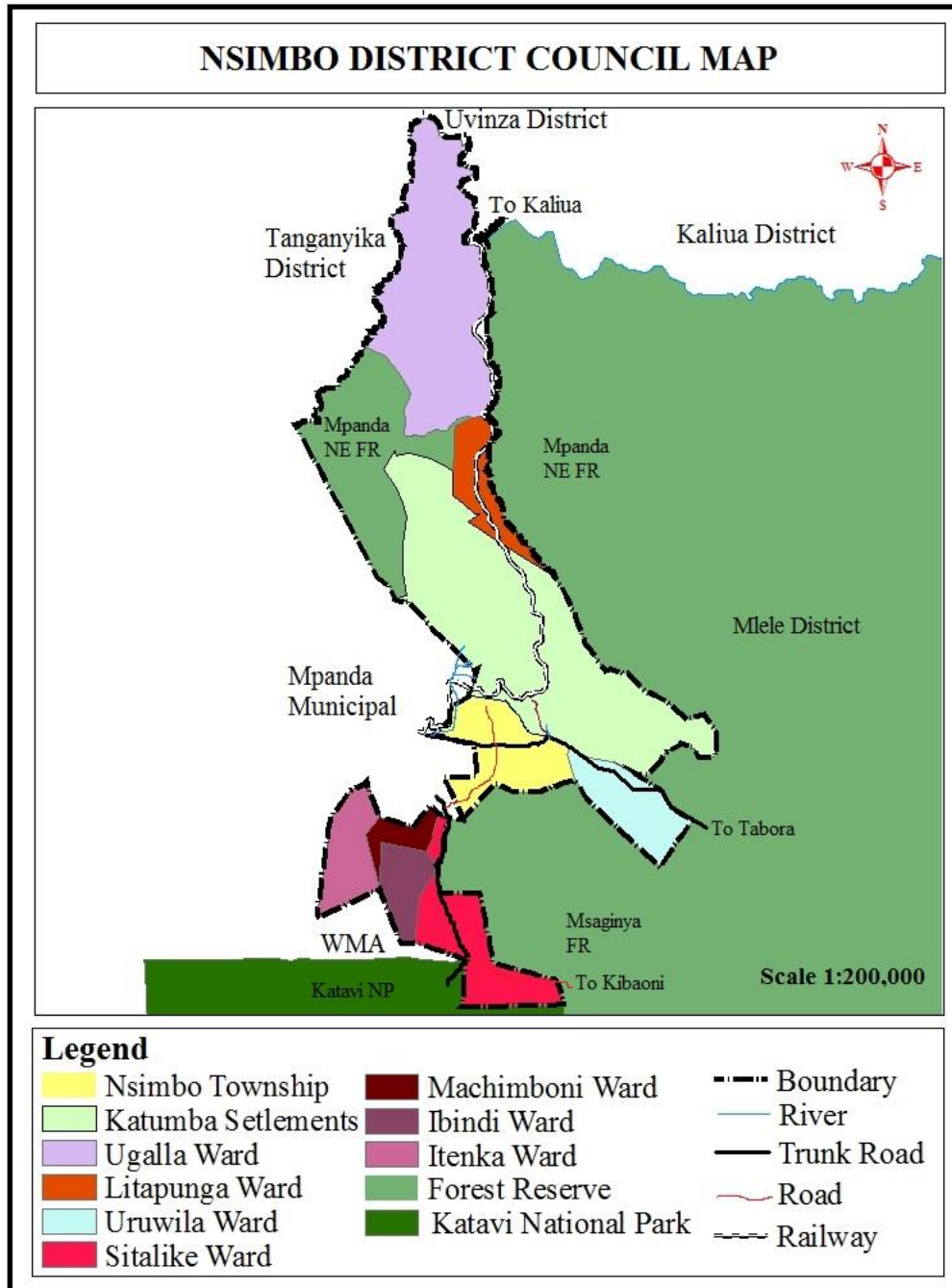
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Appendix I: A Map of Nsimbo District Council



Appendix II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear respondent

I am Jackson Aloyce Pursuing a Master's of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies. I ask you to provide me with data to accomplish my study. I ensure that the given information will be confidential between me and you. Do not write your name anywhere.

Instructions

Kindly answer all questions freely and honestly by putting (V) in blanks and give the required explanation where necessary.

Tick appropriately in the boxes provided.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age:

- ☐ Below 25 years
- ☐ 25-34 years
- ☐ 35-44 years
- ☐ 45-54 years
- ☐ 55 years and above

3. Years of Teaching Experience:

- ☐ Less than 5 years

- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

4. Highest Educational Qualification:

- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Ph.D.
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Section B: Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the knowledge and skills of your head of school in resolving educational conflicts:

1. The head of school demonstrates a thorough understanding of conflict resolution theories and practices.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

2. The head of school is skilled at identifying the underlying causes of conflicts within the school.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. The head of school effectively communicates during conflict resolution processes.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. The head of school applies appropriate conflict resolution techniques depending on the situation.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The head of school is knowledgeable about the legal and policy aspects related to conflict resolution in education.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Section C: Strategies Used by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the strategies used by your head of school in resolving educational conflicts:

1. The head of school involves all relevant stakeholders in the conflict resolution process.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

2. The head of school uses mediation and negotiation as primary strategies for conflict resolution.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. The head of school implements preventive measures to reduce the occurrence of conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. The head of school encourages open communication and dialogue among staff and students.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The head of school promotes a collaborative approach to problem-solving during conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Section D: Challenges Encountered by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the challenges encountered by your head of school in resolving educational conflicts:

1. The head of school faces resistance from staff and students when trying to resolve conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

2. The head of school has insufficient resources to effectively manage conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. Bureaucratic constraints hinder the head of school's ability to resolve conflicts promptly.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. Cultural dynamics within the school community complicate conflict resolution efforts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The head of school lacks adequate training in modern conflict resolution techniques.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Open-ended questions:

1. Can you provide examples of specific instances where you believe your head of school demonstrated effective knowledge and skills in resolving educational conflicts?

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2. In your opinion, what areas of conflict resolution do you think your head of school could improve upon to better address educational conflicts within the school?

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3. From your side, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the conflict resolution strategies implemented by your head of school?

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4. Are there any innovative or alternative conflict resolution approaches you believe could be beneficial for your head of school to consider in addressing educational conflicts?

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5. Could you elaborate on any specific challenges that you have observed your head of school facing when attempting to resolve educational conflicts?

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6. In your view, what steps could be taken by the school administration to better support the efforts of your head of school in overcoming the challenges associated with educational conflict resolution?

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Appendix III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Dear respondents

I am Jackson Aloyce Pursuing a Master's of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies. I ask you to provide me with data to accomplish my study. I ensure that the given information will be confidential between me and you. Do not write your name anywhere.

Instructions

Kindly answer all questions freely and honestly by putting (V) in blanks and give the required explanation where necessary.

Tick appropriately in the boxes provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age:

- ☐ Below 15 years
- ☐ 15-17 years
- ☐ 18-20 years
- ☐ 21 years and above

3. Grade Level:

- ☐ Form 1
- ☐ Form 2
- ☐ Form 3
- ☐ Form 4
- ☐ Form 5
- ☐ Form 6

Section B: Head of School Knowledge and Skills in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the knowledge and skills of your head of school in resolving educational conflicts:

1. The head of school understands the causes of conflicts among students.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

2. The head of school is approachable when students have conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. The head of school communicates clearly when resolving conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. The head of school uses fair methods to resolve conflicts among students.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The head of school is knowledgeable about the school rules and policies related to conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Section C: Strategies Used by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the strategies used by your head of school in resolving educational conflicts:

1. The head of school involves students in discussions to resolve conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

2. The head of school uses mediation to help students resolve conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. The head of school implements rules to prevent conflicts from occurring.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. The head of school encourages students to talk about their problems openly.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The head of school promotes teamwork among students to solve conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Section D: Challenges Encountered by Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the challenges encountered by your head of school in resolving educational conflicts:

1. Students sometimes do not listen to the head of school during conflict resolution.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

2. The head of school does not have enough time to deal with all conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. The head of school faces difficulty due to a lack of resources to manage conflicts.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. Cultural differences among students make conflict resolution challenging.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The head of school lacks adequate training in modern conflict resolution techniques.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

SECTION C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. Can you share any examples of when your head of school effectively resolved a conflict at your school?

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2. What do you think your head of school could do better to improve their conflict resolution skills?

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3. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the conflict resolution methods used by your head of school?

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4. Are there any new or different methods you think your head of school should try to resolve conflicts?

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5. Can you describe any specific challenges your principal faces when trying to resolve conflicts?

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6. What do you think the school administration could do to better support your principal in resolving conflicts?

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Appendix IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADS OF SCHOOL**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. Age:

- ☐ ☐ 20-30
- ☐ ☐ 31-40
- ☐ ☐ 41-50
- ☐ ☐ Above 50

2. Gender:

- ☐ ☐ Male
- ☐ ☐ Female
- ☐ ☐ Other (please specify): _____

3. Years of experience as a head of school:

- ☐ ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ ☐ Above 15 years

4. Highest educational qualification: _____

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Can you describe the training or professional development you have received related to conflict resolution in schools?
 2. How do you assess the root causes of conflicts among students or staff in your school?
 3. What specific conflict resolution techniques do you find most effective in managing educational conflicts?
-
1. What strategies do you typically employ to resolve conflicts in your school?
 2. How do you involve teachers, students, and parents in the conflict resolution process?
 3. Can you provide an example of a conflict situation and how you successfully resolved it?
-
1. What are the main challenges you face when resolving conflicts in your school?
 2. How do you overcome resistance from stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents, students) when resolving conflicts?
 3. What support do you need from the district or ward education office to better manage conflicts?

Appendix V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WARD EDUCATION OFFICERS**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. Age:

- ☐ ☐ 20-30
- ☐ ☐ 31-40
- ☐ ☐ 41-50
- ☐ ☐ Above 50

2. Gender:

- ☐ ☐ Male
- ☐ ☐ Female
- ☐ ☐ Other (please specify): _____

3. Years of experience as a ward education officer:

- ☐ ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ ☐ Above 15 years

4. Highest educational qualification: _____

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do you evaluate the conflict resolution skills of the heads of schools in your ward?
2. What training or professional development opportunities do you provide for heads of schools to improve their conflict resolution skills?
3. How do you support heads of schools in identifying the root causes of conflicts?
4. What common strategies do you observe heads of schools using to resolve conflicts?
5. How do you guide or advise heads of schools on best practices in conflict resolution?
6. Can you share an example where your intervention helped resolve a significant conflict in a school?
7. What challenges do heads of school's report to you regarding conflict resolution?
8. How do you address the challenges that heads of school's face in conflict resolution?
9. What additional resources or support would you like to see provided to help heads of schools resolve conflicts more effectively?

Appendix VI: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICERS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age:

- ☐ ☐ 20-30
- ☐ ☐ 31-40
- ☐ ☐ 41-50
- ☐ ☐ Above 50

2. Gender:

- ☐ ☐ Male
- ☐ ☐ Female
- ☐ ☐ Other (please specify): _____

3. Years of experience as a district education officer:

- ☐ ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ ☐ Above 15 years

4. Highest educational qualification: _____

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS


1. How do you ensure that heads of schools in the district are adequately trained in conflict resolution?
2. What measures are in place to assess and improve the conflict resolution skills of heads of schools?
3. How do you facilitate the sharing of best practices in conflict resolution among heads of schools?
4. What are the most effective conflict resolution strategies you have observed in the district?
5. How do you support heads of schools in implementing these strategies?
6. Can you provide an example of a district-wide initiative that has successfully addressed educational conflicts?
7. What general challenges do heads of school's face in resolving conflicts, and how are these addressed at the district level?
8. How do you handle conflicts that increase beyond the capabilities of individual heads of schools?
9. What additional support do you believe is necessary from the regional or national education authorities to enhance conflict resolution in schools?

Appendix VII: RESEARCH CLEARANCE REQUISITION

OUT/DPGS/S2

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA
DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Kawawa Road, Kinondoni Municipality,
P.O. Box 23409
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
<http://www.out.ac.tz>



Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 ext. 100
Fax: 255-22-2668759,
E-mail: dpgs@out.ac.tz

REQUISITION FORM FOR RESEARCH CLEARANCE LETTER

Date: 16 JUNE 2024

- Name of Student: JACKSON ALOYE
- Gender: MALE
- Reg. Number: PG 201902286 Year of Entry: 2019
- Faculty: OF EDUCATION
- Programme: MED APPS
- Title of Research:
COMPENCE OF HEADS OF SCHOOL IN RESOLVING EDUCATIONAL CONFLICTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS.
- Tentative dates for data collection:
From 24 JUNE 2024 to 24 JULY 2024
- Student Email: jacksonaloye35@gmail.com
- Student Phone Number: 0755-999439
- Research Location/site:

S/N	Region	District Council/ Municipality	Name of Organization	Postal Address	Place
1	KRAI	NSIMBO	SCHOOL	P.O. BOX 688	MPANDA
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

11. Date of submission: 16 JUNE 2024 Signature: [Signature]

12. Comments by Supervisor:

THE WORK IS READY FOR DATA COLLECTION

Name of Supervisor... DR JOSEPH KACHAE Signature... [Signature] Date... 16/06/2024

DATE 24/06/2024

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Ref. No OUT/PG201902286

District Executive Director (DED),

Nsimbo District Council,

P.O. Box 688,

MPANDA - KATAVI.

Dear Director,

24th June, 2024

*Received
He has to adhere to institutional
principles.
By AGD
25/06/2024*

**MKIRIUGENZI MTENDAJI (W)
NSIMBO**

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR. JACKSON ALOYCE REG NO:

PG201902286

2. The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

3. To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you Mr. Jackson Aloyce, Reg.No: PG201902286), pursuing Master of Education in Administration Planning and Policy Studies (MEDAPPS). We hereby grant this clearance to conduct a research titled "Competence of Heads of School in Resolving Educational Conflicts in Public Secondary Schools: A Case of Nsimbo District Council". He will collect his data at your area from 25th June to 30th July 2024.

4. In case you need any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the Open University of Tanzania, P.O.Box 23409, Dar es Salaam. Tel: 022-2-2668820. We lastly thank you in advance for your assumed cooperation and facilitation of this research academic activity.

Yours sincerely,

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Prof. Gwahula Raphael Kimamala

For: VICE CHANCELLOR

Kinondoni Biafra, Kawawa Road; P.O 23409; Dar es Salaam; Tel: +255 22 2668 445;
E-Mail: vc@out.ac.tz | Website: www.out.ac.tz

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS



NSIMBO DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref. No. KTV/END/PF.09/106

25/6/2024


Jackson Aloyce,
Nsimbo District Council,
P.O. BOX 688,
MPANDA-KATAVI.

**RE: PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION REGARDING YOUR
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME IN NSIMBO DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Please refer to the topic mentioned above.

2. The Office of the Executive Director, Nsimbo District Council received a letter from the Vice-Chancellor of Open University of Tanzania which had Ref. No. OUT/201902286 dated 24 June, 2024 with the same title above.
3. The letter aimed to introduce you and ask permission for data collection for pursuing Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MEDAPPS) for the time frame from 25th June to 30th July, 2024.
4. For this letter I would like to inform you that you are allowed to conduct your research on data collection within Nsimbo District Council boundaries by adhering all rules and principles of the Council.
5. In case you need any further assistance, kindly do not hesitate to contact the District Executive Director. We lastly thank you in advance for choosing Nsimbo District Council to conduct your research academic activity.

Yours sincerely


Erimkwas T. John,
**ACTING DISTRICT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NSIMBO.**

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NSIMBO DISTRICT COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 688
MPANDA

All correspondence should be addressed to District Executive Director, Nsimbo District Council, P.O. BOX 688, Mpanda - Katavi, Phone number: +025-295164, Fax: +025-295164, Email address: ded@nsimbdc.go.tz. Fax: www.nsimbdc.go.tz