

Influence of Interpersonal Conflicts on Teaching and Learning in Public Secondary Schools: A Case of Magu District, Mwanza – Tanzania

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to assess influence of interpersonal conflict on teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Magu District. Mwanza; Tanzania. The objectives of the study were; to identify the types of interpersonal conflicts commonly found in public secondary schools, to examine the strategies employed by heads of schools in managing interpersonal conflicts and to explore the challenges faced by heads of schools in managing interpersonal conflict. The study was guided by Conflict Theory. The study employed mixed research approach and convergent parallel research design. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze quantitative data while qualitative data were analysed thematically. The targeted population was 1861 from whom the sample of 181 respondents were selected using purposeful and simple random sampling. Majority of the respondents said poor communication channel among teachers, the use of abusive language and names calling, scarcity of resources, indiscipline among students, corporal punishment to students and poor academic performance were the types of interpersonal conflicts between teacher-teacher and teacher – students in their schools. Nevertheless, the study discovered that heads of schools preferred negotiations, regular meetings, compromising, conferences, seminars and avoiding as the strategies for interpersonal conflict management. Furthermore, the study revealed most of heads of schools are not well trained on prior interpersonal conflict management. Therefore no specific strategies employed by heads of schools in managing interpersonal conflict in Magu district rather most of heads of school use their own experience in handling interpersonal conflicts.

Keywords— Influence, Interpersonal conflicts, teaching and Learning, Public Secondary School.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education has been understood for thousands of years as a tool which prepare an individual for life (Paschal and Pacho, 2021. p. 13). Despite the fact that educational stakeholder such as the government has made a number of reforms to improve education, teaching and learning in schools continues to have a number of challenge (Paschal and Mkulu, 2020) One among the things that shakes school goals in today’s communal world is the school interpersonal conflicts among the members of school community. This is because school as a social organization has people with unique personalities among whom conflicts are almost inevitable. For the purpose of the study, the definition of Olu and Abosede (2003) which says conflict management

is a process of coordinating all resources through the processes of planning, organizing, leading and controlling interpersonal conflicts in order to attain the objectives of organizations is adopted, Therefore, in order to meet the expected goals in an organization, school heads and subordinates should react and act cooperatively in working through teamwork, unity and without any kind of misunderstanding. Interpersonal conflicts can take place among teachers, between administrators and teachers, teachers and students, students and teachers or among students. It should be kept in mind that regardless of the types of interpersonal conflicts or the group that take part in it, interpersonal conflicts will deepen and be more complicated unless they are well resolved and that people involving in the interpersonal conflict will experience

negative feelings (Argon, 2016). Worldwide, conflict in schools is a normal thing in the developed and developing countries both in public and private schools (Oboegbulem, 2013). In developed countries such as in America and Europe, Johdi and Apitree (2012) note the scenario of interpersonal conflicts among teachers in Thailand. The study found that the existence of several interpersonal conflicts in schools are caused by individual different perceptions about the school organization. Also, another study by Matenga (2015), when tracing the history of conflicts in California schools, he founds that there are interpersonal conflicts among teachers as well as between teachers and students. He claims that racial discrimination and favoritism among individuals are the main sources of such interpersonal conflicts. Like in the developed countries, there are several elements of conflicts which have been documented in some African countries. Tshuma (2016), on the study about the causes of conflicts among school personnel in Gwanda District Secondary School in Zimbabwe discovered the departmental interpersonal conflicts among teachers in different departments and conflicts between head teachers and teachers. The study argued that interpersonal conflicts happen often due to teachers' poor working conditions and shortage of resources in schools.

In Tanzania, the dominance of interpersonal conflicts is increasingly and negatively affecting the rights of students to learn in safe and fair environment. A study conducted by Moris (2008) reports an incident of interpersonal conflicts between parents and heads of schools in one of the schools found in Ruvuma Region-Tanzania in which a form one boy of 13 years was hospitalized for several days after being severely punished by his headmaster for misbehaving. Also, in 2013, interpersonal conflict at Morogoro Lutheran Junior Seminary arose between the school administration and some students who were demanding for the new qualified teachers. This conflict affected the school timetable and the school finally was closed due to the existence of that conflict. The other effect of that interpersonal conflict was that the headmaster resigned from his position and some of the students were suspended from studies (Mwananchi, 2013). Interpersonal conflicts in secondary schools occur in different ways including; interpersonal conflicts which are destructive phenomena and should be avoided. According to the traditional view, they are positive forces and necessary for organizations today to continue their existence (Robbins and Judge, 2012). Conflict is not desired as it generates failure and causes stress, shame, sadness, unhappiness, hardness and jealous simply because they are not well managed and therefore, they might generate negative results to the teachers concern and commitment. Therefore, the focus should be on how to solve interpersonal

conflicts and the ways used to handle these problems. The question is how these problems have been solved by the victims and by the management. Therefore, approaches used to resolve interpersonal conflicts in a positive manner are crucial for organizational life because lack of success in interpersonal conflict resolution will not only cause breakdown in the relationship among the personnel, but also, it might affect their performance, motivation and efforts negatively (Judge, 2012). From the discussion above, it is reflected that interpersonal conflicts also reflect on organizational goals. In this context, it is crucial to take necessary precautions to prevent interpersonal conflicts to occur and to generate and implement solutions to satisfy both parties in case interpersonal conflicts occur.

Moreover, Mwananchi newspaper (2021, July 19) reported a very painful story about the occurrence of interpersonal conflict between students of form four and form three; the day students and boarding students at Geita boys secondary school (GESECO) in Geita. The day students were complaining to the administration about the favor to boarding students in the distribution of their daily meals comparing to the day students which resulted into the burning of the dormitories, laboratory and teaching and learning materials. Therefore, due to the occurrence of this scenario, three students got injured and were rushed to the hospital, eleven form four and form three were suspended from school and thirteen teachers and the head of school were transferred from the school and called to the disciplinary committee by administrative secretary.

Furthermore, according to the DEO (2020), secondary schools in Magu district are not free from interpersonal conflicts. One of the notable interpersonal conflicts which existed at Kinango Secondary School in 2016 was a conflict between teachers and the headmaster. The conflict happened because some teachers were not ready to prepare lesson plans and lesson notes and some of them were using abusive languages during school supervision as well as using name calling to the students. Furthermore, Kinango experienced other interpersonal conflicts which were caused by sexual affairs between teachers and students and those teachers were sacked due to that scandal. Another incident, of interpersonal conflict was reported by DEO in Magu Day Secondary School where one teacher was transferred to another school after encouraging the students to vote for him during Tanzanian election campaign of (2020). Therefore, there is a need to assess the influence of interpersonal conflicts on the teaching and learning. This is why the researcher wants to find out the influence of interpersonal conflicts on teaching and learning in public secondary schools, challenges and the way forward in Magu District, Mwanza; Tanzania.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The backbone of teaching and learning is a soul determinant of whether a school will realize its mission and vision thus achieving its goals and objectives (Lekule, 2020). When this pillar is interfered by friction sets in a form of conflicts, they will hinder the whole process of teaching and learning in the organization or institutions. Teachers' commitment, teamwork and preparation for teaching and learning materials will be affected either positively or negatively depending on how the conflicts are treated. Despite, various initiatives done by the government to promote and give status to public secondary schools in Magu district to offer A-level education, there is still poor performance in their final examinations (Paschal and Mkulu2020). From the DEOs report (2021), showed there is a decrease in academic performance from 100% in 2019 to 94.92% in 2020 equal to 5.08%. This had been influenced by the increasing conflicts in their schools. The most remarkable type of conflicts in public secondary schools in Magu district is interpersonal conflict. Nowadays, the widespread of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools in Magu district, are increasing including; student-student conflict, teacher-teacher conflict, teacher-head of school conflict and teacher-student conflict. The interpersonal conflicts which occurred in schools have adverse effects on teaching and learning process. This is because, if interpersonal conflicts are not solved on time, they might lead into strikes and strains, which makes it difficult for effective teaching and learning process to take place. Thus in turn hinders the success of provision of quality education to students (Aidoo, 2010). As a result, the researcher notes that there is a need to conduct a research on the influence of interpersonal conflicts on the teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Magu District.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To assess the influence of interpersonal conflicts on teaching and learning in public secondary school in Magu District, Mwanza Region, Tanzania.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study includes the following;

- i To identify the types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools in Magu District.
- ii To explore the challenges in managing interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools in Magu District.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study will be beneficial not only to the researcher but also to other researchers, policy makers and head teacher. Also, add knowledge and skills about the types of interpersonal conflicts, the ways to manage interpersonal conflicts and overcome the challenges of conflicts in teaching and learning in public secondary schools. Moreover, add knowledge to education planners and those who are responsible for appointing chief executive officers of educational institutions to let them know about the types, strategies and challenges facing public secondary schools in managing interpersonal conflicts and all of its criteria forms and the way to handle those interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools, Before appointing them to their positions.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The independent variable is influence of interpersonal conflict, that comprises of interpersonal conflict between individuals in school setting. Where by interpersonal conflicts will affect either positively effective teaching and learning will lead to teamwork, unity, teachers commitment and high performance or negatively teaching and learning which leads to ineffective teaching that will lead to poor performance, low morale to teachers and indiscipline depending on how conflict are treated by both parties got to interpersonal conflict. The dependent variable is teaching and learning which is measured by the effective teaching and learning in accomplishment of school goals and students high performance in their final examination.

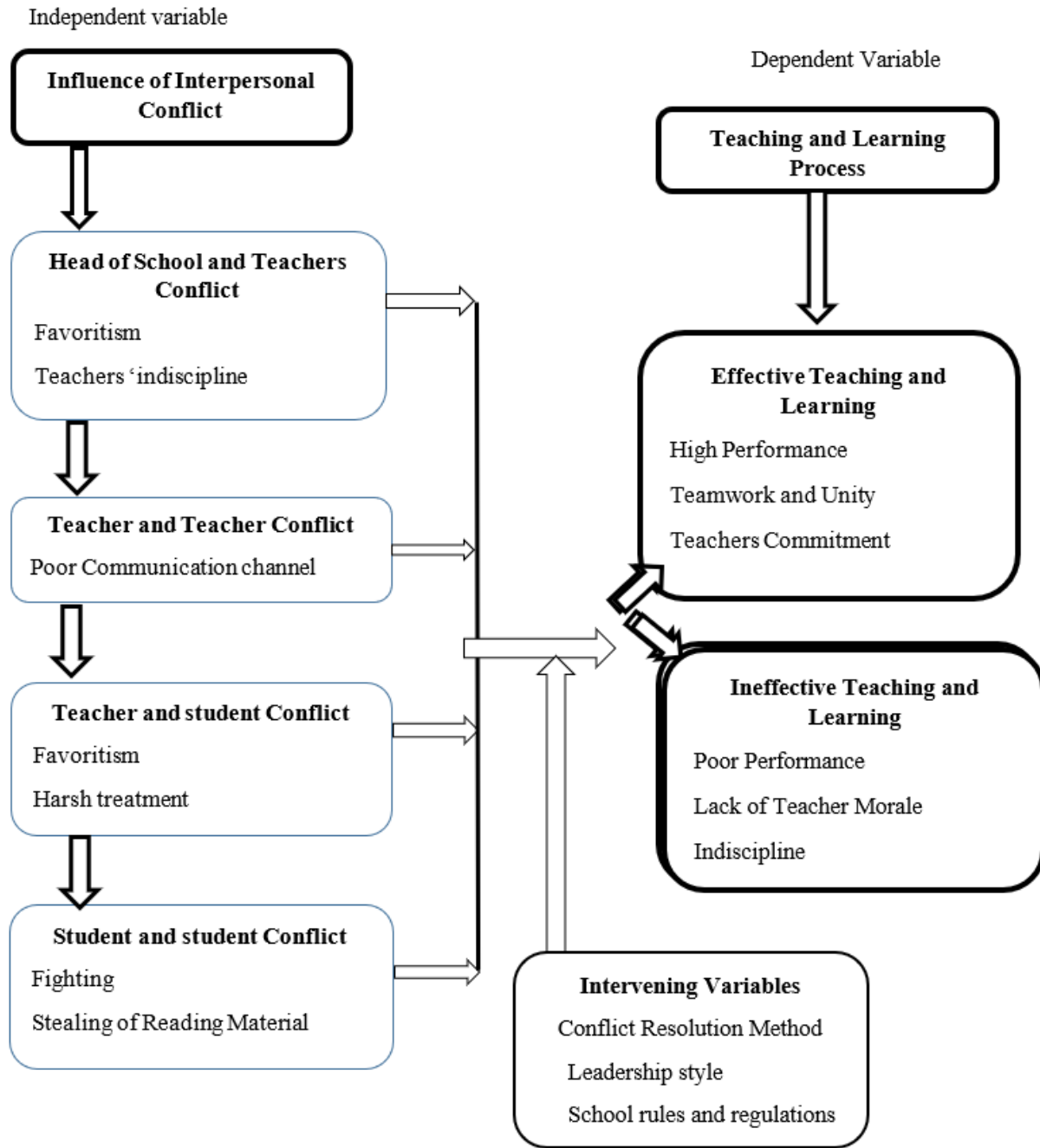


Figure 1.1

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study guided by Karl Marx Conflict theory 1818 – 1883. The theory was used in examining social problems within societies because societies are in a state of continuous conflict due to the competition for limited resources, individuals in any organization are competing because of the limited resources available in the society. Conflict theory argues that, social problems occur when the dominant groups (those in power or the haves lead to mistreat the subordinates those who have no power or the weak). For example, in school setting the group of powers

(heads of schools) tend to mistreat the subordinates (teachers) and the subordinates also tend to mistreat the group of the weak that is students. Therefore, due to this theory, social problems in school setting starts within an organization. Therefore, interpersonal conflicts might rise because of the emergence of two groups between the haves and the have nots. This means the conflicts among those individuals who do not have the same values, interest or expectation as they vary according to the needs, position, desires, privileges, ability, class background and wealth (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). So far, the agreement tends to

appear among those who have the same powers; values, interest and desire. Therefore, the assumptions underlying this theory triggers the researcher to use this theory in an attempt to explain the influence of interpersonal conflict on teaching and learning, identifying the challenges and suggesting the strategies. It can be said that conflicts occur in school settings because people are interrelated and co-existing in an organization. Thus, due to their differences in values, expectations, goals, desires as well as limited resources, the possibility of interpersonal conflict occur might appear.

Relationship between the theory and the study

The Conflict theory is applicable to the influence of interpersonal conflicts on the teaching and learning. Thus, the study opts to use Conflict Theory since the theory states that all members in school setting do not have the same powers, values, interest or expectations. In contrast, they vary from different perspectives and thoughts. Thus, the principal assumptions underlying this theory is an attempt to explain why and how interpersonal conflicts related to occur in the school setting because individuals are there and competing because of the limited resources available and misunderstanding tend to occur for those who lack powers to compete with powers thus misunderstanding rise.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of interpersonal conflict

Teacher - student interpersonal conflicts

Globally, Thapa (2015) conducted a study in Nepal on the impact of conflict on teaching and learning process in schools. The findings of the study reveal that indiscipline and poor communication channel between students and teachers were the common types of interpersonal conflicts usually occur between students and the teachers. The study concludes that when interpersonal conflicts are not well resolved, they will destruct teaching and learning process. Similarly, the study conducted by Ayoma (2015) shows that interpersonal conflict between teachers and students is characterized by differences in terms of student family backgrounds and favouritism between students in school organization. This creates teacher-student conflict particularly in cases where the student is coming from a family that has a historical background of violence. Indiscipline students often get into problems with the teachers since they are often trapped in the wrong matters in the school. Therefore, this may affect their academic performance as well as reduce teachers' morale in the whole process of teaching and learning.

Head of school – teacher interpersonal conflicts

The study conducted by Crossfield and Bourne (2018) in Jamaica on the management of interpersonal conflicts between principals and teachers in selected secondary school in Bermuda revealed that interpersonal conflicts between heads of schools and teachers are due lack of autonomy, unfair performance appraisals and lack of implementation of rules and regulations. These contribute to interpersonal conflicts resulting into ineffective teaching and learning and poor performance to students. In selected schools in Bermuda such conflicts occur due to the differences in perception between heads of schools and teachers. The study concludes that when interpersonal conflicts are not well resolved, they will result into destruction of teaching and learning process.

Teacher –Teacher interpersonal Conflict

Catana, (2016) comments that among of the types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers in a school organization is due to difference in information and experience among teachers; difference in perception among teachers; difference in allocation of activities, lack of transparency and personal goal and interest as well as gossips between teachers. In the long run, all these lead to ineffective teaching because they may trigger teachers to feel a psychological torture, inferiority and reduce morale and teamwork leading to students' poor performance in their final examinations as well as reduced teachers' commitment. Similarly, Thapa, (2015) comments that among the types of interpersonal conflicts to the teachers themselves are due to ineffective communication; teachers' recruitment and superiority among teachers caused by differences in the historical background such as level of education, ranks in the organization as well as favoritism from school heads in timetabling as well as work load within the organization.

Student – Student Interpersonal Conflicts

Thapa, (2013) conducted a study on students' conflict in schools in Nepal. Its main propose was to explore the causes and effects of students' conflict at secondary school level. The results indicated that interpersonal conflict between students is due to difference in interest. Differences in socio-economic family backgrounds and bullying factors are the causes of interpersonal conflicts between students. In a long run, they may lead to inferiority to some students, unhappness, jealous and poor performance to some students in their final examination. This is because, most of the students who are engaging in interpersonal conflicts are not enjoying school and some of them opt to misuse school materials such as school particulars as well as teaching and learning materials so as to make the process of teaching and learning difficult resulting into ineffective teaching and poor performance to students. Moreover, Omondi (2016)

comments that students interpersonal conflicts are mainly influenced by their background. Omondi continues arguing that student's interpersonal conflicts can affect teaching and learning process in the way that when students steal the reading materials of other students it will impact to difficult learning process of the other student. Generally, interpersonal conflicts between students may lead to disunit among students, decrease of love among themselves thus impact to teaching and learning process to be poor and difficult to meet school goals and objectives.

Challenges Facing Head of school in Managing Interpersonal Conflict

Okotoni and Okotoni (2003), in their study examined the management of conflict in secondary schools in Osun state, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and mixed research approach. The study found that most of school administrators handle conflicts by trial and error because they don't have specific procedures and methods of managing interpersonal conflicts. Also, staff and students rarely participate in dialogue as a resolution technique. Moreover, the study of Gyan and Offin-Tandoh (2014) on the conflicts resolution in institution as being experienced in Ghanaian Senior High School used descriptive research design. The findings revealed that the challenges facing human resources in resolving interpersonal conflicts include peer influence and absenteeism. These were reported to be major challenges in most schools among Ghanaian public secondary schools. Also, the other challenges include friction and infighting, rudeness, stealing, dissatisfaction, and insubordination.

Furthermore, Msila (2012) conducted a study on conflict management and school leadership in South Africa using survey research design and mixed research approach. The study findings revealed that few school leaders are not prepared enough for interpersonal conflict management. Most of them tend to misunderstand the effects of interpersonal conflict and maintain that it should be avoided and if to some circumstances it occurs, it should be handled effectively. The author also noted that many school leaders faced a lot of challenges in handling interpersonal conflicts such as lack of negotiation and mediation skills when conflict situations arose. Therefore, the study recommended that it is important to empower school leaders with interpersonal conflict management training before selecting them to their leadership positions.

Also, the study conducted by Monobe, Dingwe and Morake (2011) on the challenges facing managers in managing interpersonal conflicts in schools in the south- and south-central regions of Botswana used exploratory research design but the current study will employ convergent parallel research design. The findings revealed that among the

challenges facing most of the managers in the education system is due to the rise to these positions without any prior management training. Some get these positions because of their long-services in the system, while others assume them because of their flowery curriculum vitae or having excelled in the interview. This suggests that school management team should know the sources of interpersonal conflicts and strategies that can be used in reducing and handling interpersonal conflicts in the school organization.

Moreover, according to Barmao (2013), in her study on the causes and effects of conflicts on teacher's morale in public primary schools in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya. The challenges were; head teachers have poor interpersonal conflict resolution skills. As such, most of the conflicts are not resolved because most of the head teachers are not skillful on handling such cases. About 85% of the head teachers, in Kenya, do not have conflict management skills at school organization. As a result, poor communication channels between employees may be higher due to the strategies employed in managing interpersonal conflicts in their schools. Other challenges include poor management style, lack of initiative from head teachers, lack of support from employees, scarce financial resources together with forced participation in resolving interpersonal conflicts in school setting.

III. RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

The researcher employed mixed research approach and convergent parallel design. The rationale using mixed approach the researchers wants to collect both quantitative and qualitative data at once and separately in analysis. By using quantitative approach the researcher wants to collect data with questionnaires in a single time. Moreover, in qualitative approach, the researcher wants to obtain in-depth information through recording and note taking through interview guide. Also, the rationale of using convergent parallel research design was to collect concurrent data at once. So as to reduce some mistakes and quality of data that might happen when using single approach.

Study Area and Rationale

The study was carried out in Magu district which is among the seven district in Mwanza Region. The study involved five public secondary schools. The rationale of choosing the area is because of the fact that about four years, interpersonal conflicts between head of school and teachers, teachers and teachers, students and teachers as well as student and student are very common in Magu District. Most of such conflicts were reported to the DEOs of Magu for resolution. Also, teachers were transferred from their current working post because of such interpersonal conflicts as reported by DEOs office in Magu in 2020.

Targeted Population

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), population is an entire group of persons who have characteristics common to entire group. The target population of the study were 1861 which included 448 teachers, 1391 form four students, 21 heads of schools and 1 District Education Officer (DEO). Therefore, a sample of teachers, form four students, head teachers and the DEO were selected to represent the whole population in Magu District.

Sample size and Sampling technique

The study employed sample size of 181 respondents. Also, this study employed both probability sampling and non-probability sampling technique where by stratified simple random sampling and purposive sampling were adopted. In stratified simple random sampling public secondary school teachers and student of Magu District- Mwanza were selected. While in purposive sampling technique heads of schools and DEO was selected in the field because they are directly involved in managing ongoing activities in school setting and they have the information needed for this study.

Research Data Collection Methods

Kothari (2004) defines questionnaire as a list of printed questions in a definitive order on a form. Through questionnaire, the researcher was able to reach a large group of respondents within a short time. In this study, the questionnaire contained a number of closed and open ended questions on the influence of interpersonal conflicts on teaching and learning in public secondary schools, were administered to 82 teachers and 93 students. Closed and open-ended question were included in order to obtain the information which are quantitative and qualitative in nature. The questionnaires were drawn from the specific objectives of the study. Also, the researcher employed semi-structured interview whereby 5 heads of schools and 1 DEO were interviewed. The technique enabled the researcher to gather in-depth information, opinions of the respondents on the types, strategies, challenges and effects of interpersonal conflict for improving the whole process of teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Magu District.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

In quantitative, the researcher used content and face to ensure validity. Where, the researchers prepared the instruments and gave them to the fellow research experts and supervisor for the aim of observing the arrangement of content, structure as well as language used in the

questionnaires and interview guide. While, in qualitative trustworthiness were ensured through triangulation method was employed because it involves the use of multiple approaches within a single study such as opened-ended questionnaires and interview.

Moreover, reliability of the instruments was ensured through the use of split half method, which involved administering a test to a group of individuals then splitting the test into halves using the odd-even split method. In this method, the even numbered items formed one half of the test and the odd numbered items formed the other half of the test. The correlation coefficient of the result obtained among the two tests was calculated by using Cronbach alpha and the results were above 0.79. Therefore, the instruments were reliable and suits to be used.

Data analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive analysis with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 and presented in frequency tables and percentages. Moreover, qualitative data were coded thematically and analysis were done similar themes were grouped together and analysed in order to make it well and easy understood. The researcher analysed data according to the objectives then the most appearing themes were generated.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents the analysis and presentation of the findings. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of interpersonal conflicts on teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Magu district. The study guided by the following objectives: to identify the types of interpersonal conflicts commonly found in public secondary schools in Magu district, and to explore the challenges in managing interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools in Magu district.

Types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools

In the first objectives, teachers were asked to respond on the types of interpersonal conflicts which people encountered in public secondary schools in Magu district. Teachers were required to mention types of interpersonal conflicts which they encountered in schools and the results are shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Teachers Response on the types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools

No	Statement	Types of interpersonal Conflict	Frequency (F)	Percentage(P)
1.	Teacher-teacher	i)Hate and gossips	34	42.5
		ii) Jealous	2	2.5
		iii)Abusive language and favourism	3	3.8
		iv)Poor communication	23	28.7
		v)Debts to some teachers	2	2.5
		vi)Intolerance	8	10
		vii)Indiscipline	8	10
2.	Teacher-student	i)Severe punishment	23	28.7
		ii)Indiscipline	34	42.5
		iii)Sexual abuse	3	3.8
		iv)Names calling	8	10
		v)Favoring to some students	8	10
		vi)Using abusive language	2	2.5
3.	Teacher-HOS	i)Favors to some teachers	23	28.7
		ii)Verbal abuse	16	20
		iii)Mistreatment and discrimination	21	26.3
		iv)Demoting to some teachers	8	10
4.	Student-HOS	i)Coming late to school	34	42.5
		ii)Unnecessary suspension and harassment	8	10
		iii)Public verbal warning	8	10
		iv)Severe punishment	16	20
5.	Student-student	i)Infighting among students	23	28.7
		ii)Forcing sexual relationship with others	8	10
		iii)Names calling	16	20
		iv)Stealing others properties	24	30
		v)Forcing other students to do things they wont	8	10

Source: Field, Data (2021)

Teacher – Teacher Interpersonal Conflict

Item 1 in Table 4.3, shows that 34(42.5%) of teachers agreed that hate and gossips were the types of interpersonal conflicts among teachers in public secondary schools in Magu district. Moreover, 23(28.7%) of the teachers also said poor communication between teachers was another type of interpersonal conflict between teachers while 8(10%) of teachers and 8(10%) of teachers said intolerance and indiscipline between teachers were other types of interpersonal conflicts. in the other hand, 3(3.8%) as well as 2(2.5%) of teachers said the use of abusive language and failure to pay debts to some teachers are the types of

interpersonal conflict between teachers in public secondary schools in Magu district. The findings are in line with Catana (2016) who commented that among of the types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers in a school organization is due to differences in information and experience among teachers; difference in perceptions among teachers; difference in allocation of activities, lack of transparency and personal goal and interest as well as gossips between teachers in the long run leads to ineffective teaching because these interpersonal conflicts trigger teachers in psychological torture, inferiority and reduces their morale and teamwork which leads to students' poor

performance in their final examination as well as poor teachers commitment.

Teacher – Student Interpersonal Conflict

Item 2 in Table 4.3 shows that about 34(42.5%) and 23(28.7%) of teachers said indiscipline and severe punishment were the common types of interpersonal conflict between teachers and students. Also 8(10%) as well as 8(10%) of teachers also said favours to some students and the use of names calling during teaching and learning was another types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and students moreover 3(3.8%) and 2(2.5%) of teachers said sexual abuse and using abusive language to some teachers during teaching and learning process was another type of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and students in public secondary schools in Magu district. The findings agrees with that of Mackenzie (1993), that favours to some students is a type of interpersonal conflicts between teacher-student. This may arise due to favours where some students are given superior treatment because they are bright, they come from influential families or because of their gender differences. The finding indicates that if these types of interpersonal conflicts are not well handled at a proper time, they will lead to interpersonal conflicts and lastly lead to poor academic performance in a school organization.

Teacher – Head of School Interpersonal Conflict

Item 3 in table 4.5, Shows that 23(28.7%) and 21(26.3%) as well as 16(20%) of teachers said favours to some teachers in timetabling and provision of workload as well as mistreatment and discrimination to some teachers done by heads of schools and the use of verbal warning/abuse are the types of interpersonal conflicts between head of school and teachers in public secondary school in Magu district. Not only that, but also few teachers 2(2.5%) said that demoting some teachers by heads of schools was another type of interpersonal conflict between head of school and teachers. This implies that most of the time decisions are made especially when heads of schools are out of mood because of some tightness at work place.

The findings are similar with that Johdi and Apitree (2012), who also said that interpersonal conflicts between teachers and school management normally occur due to disagreements, misunderstandings, quarrels, and favours that occur from issues related to work and responsibilities of individuals at work place.

Head of school – student interpersonal conflict

Item 4 in Table 4.5 shows that 34(42.5%) of teachers said coming late to school with 16(20%) saying severe punishment to students were the types of interpersonal conflicts between heads of schools and students in public secondary school in Magu district. Also, 8(10%) of teachers said unnecessary suspension and 8(10%) presented public verbal warning to students done by the heads of schools were other types of interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools between heads of schools and students in Magu district. Therefore, from the findings, it can be concluded that interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools act as a catalyst to break the flow of communication between heads of schools and students. This is because interpersonal conflicts lead to decrease in the flow of communication and coordination of school programs that hinders the accomplishment and effectiveness of intended objectives and goals.

Student – student interpersonal conflict

The findings on item 5 in table 4.5 indicate that 24(30%) as well as 23(28.7%) and 16(20%) of teachers said stealing others materials, infighting among students and names calling between students respectively are the types of interpersonal conflicts among students. Moreover, 8(10%) and 8(10%) of students said some students forcing other students to do things they won't and forcing students to engage in sexual relationship were the types of interpersonal conflicts between students and students respectively.

The findings were in line with Kaluma (2017), on Conflict management in secondary schools in Tanzania: a case of selected secondary schools in Shinyanga. The findings of the study revealed that interpersonal conflicts that occur between teachers and students is due to students change in their behaviours including disobedience of school rules and regulation and stealing school particulars such as school teaching and learning materials which leads to difficulties in the whole process of teaching.

Under the same objective, students were also asked to respond on the types of interpersonal conflicts which they encountered in public secondary schools in Magu district. Students were required to mention types of interpersonal conflict which they encountered in schools and the results were shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Students Response on the types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools

No	Statement	Types of interpersonal Conflict	Frequency (F)	Percentage(P)
1.	Teacher-Teacher	i)Hate, gossips and jealous	22	23.7
		ii)Lies and entrust to teachers	22	23.7
		iii)Intolerance to some teachers	12	12.9
		iv)Poor communication	15	16.1
		v)Interfering teaching timetable	21	22.5
2.	Teacher-student	i)severe punishment	28	30.1
		ii)Sexual abuse	10	10.7
		iii)Names calling	7	7.5
		iv)Abusive language	13	13.9
		v)Favours in grading marks	15	16.1
		vi)Indiscipline	20	21.5
3.	Teacher-HOS	i)Discrimination	17	18.2
		ii)Improper behaviour	28	30
		iii)Interfering in teaching and learning timetable	20	21.5
		iv)Hate to some teachers	28	30
4.	Student-HOS	i)Improper uniform	15	16.1
		ii)Unnecessary suspension	27	29
		iii)Truancy	21	22.5
		iv)Indiscipline	30	32.2
5.	Student-student	i)The use of abusive language	15	16.1
		ii)Infighting between students	21	22.5
		iii)Insulting other students	14	15
		iv)Stealing materials from others	28	30.1
		v)Names calling	15	16.1

Source: Field Data, (2021)

Teacher – Teacher Interpersonal Conflict

Item 1 in Table 4.6 shows that 22(23.7%) of students as well as 22(23.7%) of students said hate, gossips and jealous as well as lies and entrust are the types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers in public secondary schools in Magu district respectively. Not only that, but also 21(22.5%) of students said interfering of teaching timetable in classes and teachers on duty is another type of interpersonal conflicts between teachers in public secondary schools in Magu district. Moreover 15(16%) of students as well as 12(12.9%) of students said intolerance and poor communication are the types of interpersonal conflict between teachers in public secondary schools in Magu district.

The findings are supported by Thapa (2015) that among the types of interpersonal conflict between teachers are ineffective communication; teachers' recruitment and superiority among teachers. This is due to the historical background such as level of education, ranks in the organization as well as favouritism from school heads in timetabling as well as work load within the organization. This, indicate that any destructive conflict or unresolved interpersonal conflict between teachers that is not properly handled can negatively influence reduction in the provision of quality education and achievement of school goals and objectives, mission and vision thus, poor teaching and learning.

Moreover, with regard to the interview results from respondents on the same question, the DEO said;

Many conflicts occur among teachers because teachers themselves get into conflicts due to various reasons including lack of cooperation and truth. The occurrence of conflicts among teachers in the workplace is therefore due to the fact that some teachers tend to be harsh to others. There are also some teachers who get into conflicts due to debts that they owe each other. Some of them when they borrow from their groups, they fail to pay back on time leading into conflicts among them in the workplace.

Teacher – Student Interpersonal Conflict

Item 2 in Table 4.5 shows that 28(30.1%) and 20(21.5%) of students said severe punishment and indiscipline among student to their teachers are the common types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and students. Not only that, but also 15(16.1%) and 13(13.9%) of students said favours done by teachers in grading marks to some students and the use of abusive language during teaching and learning process respectively were other types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and student. Moreover, 10(10.7%) and 7(7.5%) of students also said sexual abuse done by some teachers to students as well as the use of name calling to some students were other types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and students in public secondary schools in Magu district. The findings are supported by Ayoma (2015) that when teachers over use traditional authoritarian responses, the students may riot leading into conflicts between them. Severe punishment are among the types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and students which result into anger, fear, dislike, damaged relationships and further violence and lastly make students to perform poorly in their final examinations because they are not enjoying school activities. Therefore, this also happens in the study area where in the past four years, students have been performing poorly in their final examinations due to poor relationships between teachers and students which lead to teacher's loss of morale to perform their daily duties in school settings.

Teacher – Head of School Interpersonal Conflict

The data on Item 3 in Table 4.5 indicate that 28(30%) and 28(30%) of students said that hate and favours to some teachers by heads of schools and improper behaviour to some teachers encountered with the use of alcohol during class time and forcing students inter into sexual relation as well as improper dressing style in schools are the types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and head of school. Not only that, but also 20(21.5%) of students as well as 17(18.2%) of students said interfering in teaching and learning timetable and discrimination done by heads of schools to some teachers are other types of interpersonal

conflicts between heads of schools and teachers in public secondary school in Magu district.

These findings are supported by Karl Marx in Conflict theory (1818-1883), that some conflicts in schools occur when people with powers tend to mistreat those with no powers i.e. subordinates. For instance, in school settings, the heads of schools tend to mistreat those with no powers including teachers, students and non-staff with whom they differ in ideas, arguments, conclusions, theories or opinions. Some individuals do not agree with others during conversation or when both intend to make an agreement about a certain issue. Competition for limited resources such as furniture and other teaching equipment were also remarked as a kind of interpersonal conflicts encountered among teachers in public secondary schools. Therefore, it is a clear indication that most of interpersonal conflicts occurring in public secondary schools in Magu district are a result of limited resources and disagreements between teachers and heads of schools. With regard to interview results from respondents, one head of school said;

Most of times, conflicts between teachers and heads of schools occur when teachers disobey work standing orders. Some teachers in my school go for breakfast during class hours instead of teaching students.

Therefore, from the findings, interpersonal conflicts are said to lead to stress, reduce confidence on some teachers and psychological withdrawal because teachers feel humiliated and unsatisfied with job. This may lastly lead to physical diseases leading to low morale in performing their daily duties which will affect students in performing in their final examinations.

Head of School – Student Interpersonal Conflict

Item 4 in Table 4.6 indicates that 30(32.2%) as well as 27(29%) of students said indiscipline and unnecessary suspension done by heads of schools on students are the types of interpersonal conflicts between heads of schools and students. Not only that, but also 21(22.5%) and 15(16.1%) of the students said truancy and improper uniforms are the types of interpersonal conflict between heads of schools and students in public secondary school in Magu district. The previous studies showed that interpersonal conflicts between students and heads of schools are growing every day because most of the time heads of schools, teachers and students had different understandings and attitudes towards school academic progress as supported by (Kibui, 2014). Therefore, the study concludes that most of students in public secondary schools in Magu district are disciplined enough; thus, they cannot misbehave in front of their heads. That is why interpersonal conflicts between students and heads of schools are rare in

Magu district. This is due to the presence of less day to day interaction with their school heads. Therefore, the findings indicated that when schools experience interpersonal conflicts, students tend to leave and dodge classes as conflict lowers teaching and learning morale. Thus, the findings recommend that the presence of interpersonal conflicts between head of schools and students may lead to stress, fear, anger, frustration and lack of self-confidence to students. Also, it may lead students to perform poorly in their final examinations.

Student – student interpersonal conflict

Item 5 in Table 4.5, shows that 28(30.1%) and 21(22.5%) of students said stealing teaching and learning materials in school setting and fighting between students are the types of interpersonal conflicts among students. Not only that, but also 15(16.1%) as well as 15(16.1%) of students said the use of abusive language to some students and the use of name calling were other types of interpersonal conflicts among students. Moreover, 14(15%) of students said insults by some students to their fellow students was another type of

interpersonal conflict between students and students in public secondary schools in Magu district.

The findings are in line with Omondi (2016) who argues that students’ interpersonal conflicts can affect teaching and learning process in the way that when a student steals teaching and learning materials of other students it will impact into difficult in learning process of the other students. Generally, interpersonal conflicts between students lead to disunity between students themselves, hate, lack of peace among students thus leading into poor and difficult teaching and learning process which will fail to meet school goals and objectives.

4.1.2 Challenges Faced by Heads of Schools in Managing Interpersonal Conflicts in Public secondary schools.

Under the second objective, the researcher was interested to find out the challenges faced by heads of schools in managing interpersonal conflicts. Teachers were asked to tick on the challenges faced by heads of schools in managing interpersonal conflicts and table 4.2 shows the results.

Table 4.3. Teachers Response on the Challenges in Managing Interpersonal Conflicts in Public Secondary Schools.

Statement	SA		A		UN		D		SD	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Poor conflict resolution and management skills	61	76.3	16	20	-	-	2	2.5	1	1.3
Employing poor management styles	33	41.3	42	52.5	3	3.8	1	1.3	1	1.3
Scarce financial resources to gather with forced participation in resolving conflicts	15	18.8	26	32.5	29	36.3	9	11.3	1	1.3
Lack of specific procedures and methods towards handling conflicts	27	33.8	36	45	15	18.8	2	2.5	-	-
Lack of prior management training	38	47.5	25	31.3	14	17.5	2	2.5	1	1.3
Most of heads of schools do not understand the effects of conflict	4	5	3	3.8	3	3.8	16	20	54	67.5

Source: Field data, (2021)

Poor conflict resolution and management skills

Item 1 in table 4.9 shows that 76.3 percent of teachers strongly agreed that poor conflict resolution and management is a challenge facing heads of schools in the management of interpersonal conflicts. Likewise, 20 percent of teachers equal to 16 teachers agreed that the poor conflict resolution and management skill is a challenge in the management of interpersonal conflicts. Despite the high percent of agreement, none of the respondents were neutral.

However, 2.5 percent of teachers disagreed that poor conflict resolution and management skill is an obstacle in handling interpersonal conflicts in school as well as 1.3 percent of teachers who strongly disagreed. This means that in Magu district, heads of schools have poor conflict resolution and management skills which become a challenge in the management of interpersonal conflicts in schools.

Employing poor management styles

Item 2 in table 4.9 shows that 41.3 percent of teachers strongly agreed that heads of schools employ poor management styles in the resolution of conflicts in schools thus, lead to the failure in management of interpersonal conflicts. Likewise, 52.5 percent of teachers agreed to the statement. However, 3.8 percent of teachers were neutral to the response on the statement. Despite the agreement percentage, 1.3 percent of teachers disagreed on the statement that head of school face a challenge of employing poor management styles in the handling of interpersonal conflicts in school. Comparably, 1.3 percent of teachers strongly disagreed to the statement. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that heads of schools face challenges of employing poor management strategies in the management of interpersonal conflicts in schools. That means, heads of schools fail to handle effective management of interpersonal conflict due to the use of poor management skills.

The findings are supported by the study by Barmao (2013) who found that about 85% of heads of schools in Kenya do not have conflict management skills at work place. This results into poor communication, lack of support from employees and poor participation of parents in resolving conflict.

Scarce financial resources and forced participation in resolving conflicts

Item 3 table 4.9 shows that 18.8 percent of teachers equal to 15 teachers strongly agreed that scarce financial resources is among the challenges facing the heads of schools in resolving interpersonal conflicts. Likewise, 32.5 percent of teachers equal to 29 teachers agreed to the statement. Despite the agreement percentage, 36.3 percent of teachers equal to 29 teachers were neutral to the statement. Moreover, 11.3 percent of teachers equal to 9 teachers disagreed that the scarce financial resources is an obstacle in the management of interpersonal conflict in school as well as 1.3 percent of teachers equal to one teacher strongly disagreed. Majority of the respondents agreed that head of schools in Magu district face a challenge of the scarce of resources in the management of interpersonal conflict in school.

Lack of specific procedures and methods towards handling conflicts

In item 4 as indicated in table 4.9, 33.8 percent of teachers equal to 27 teachers strongly agreed that heads of schools encounter a challenge of lack of specific procedures and methods toward handling conflicts. Likewise, 36 teachers equal to 45 percent agreed to the statement. However, 15 teachers equal to 18.8 percent of teachers were neutral to the agreement while 2.5 percent of teachers equal to 2 teachers

disagreed on the fact that heads of schools face a challenge of lack of specific procedures and methods towards handling of conflicts in schools. Nevertheless, none of the teachers strongly disagreed to the statement. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that heads of schools lack specific procedures and methods towards handling conflicts in schools thus it's a challenge in the management of interpersonal conflict in school.

In the same line, the findings were supported by Okotoni and Okotoni (2003) who examined the management of conflict in secondary schools in Osun state, Nigeria and found most of school administrators handled conflicts by trial and error because they didn't have specific procedures and methods of managing conflicts. Also staff and students rarely participate in dialogue as a resolution technique. These findings are similar to those this study which found that few of heads of schools encourage the use of dialogue during interpersonal conflict resolution and therefore, most of the time, decisions are made from one side only.

Lack of prior management training

Item 5 in table 4.9 shows that 47.5 percent of teachers equal to 38 teachers strongly agreed that head of schools face a challenge of lack of prior management training in handling interpersonal conflicts in schools. Similarly, 31.3 percent of teachers equal to 25 teachers agreed that heads of schools lack of prior management training in handling interpersonal conflicts in schools. However, 17.5 percent of teachers equal to 14 teachers were neutral in the response. Despite the agreement percent, 2.5 percent of teachers equal to 2 teachers disagreed that heads of schools lack prior management training in handling interpersonal conflicts in schools. Likewise, 1.3 percent of teachers equal to 1 teacher strongly disagreed that heads of schools lack of prior management training in handling interpersonal conflicts in schools. Majority of the respondents agreed that heads of schools in Magu district lack prior management of training which could enable them to handle interpersonal conflicts in schools.

The findings correspond with Monobe, Dingwe and Morake (2011)'s findings which explained that most of the managers in the education system rise to these positions without any prior management training. Some get these positions because of their long-services in the system, while others assume them because of their flowery curriculum vitae or having excelled in the interview.

Most heads of schools do not understand the effects of conflict

Item 6 in table 4.9 shows that 67.5 percent of teachers equal to 54 teachers strongly disagreed that heads of schools do not understand the effects of conflicts in the management of interpersonal conflicts in school. Likewise, 20 percent of

teachers equal to 16 teachers disagreed that heads of schools lack an understanding of the effects of conflicts leading into mismanagement of interpersonal conflicts. Despite the higher level of agreement, 3.8 percent of teachers equal to 3 teachers agree that heads of schools do not understand the effects of conflicts in schools. Also 5 percent of teachers equal to 4 teachers strongly agreed that heads of schools do not understand the effects of conflicts in schools. However, 3.8 percent of teachers equal to 3 teachers were neutral to the agreement. Thus means that in Magu district most of the heads of schools have knowledge on the effects of interpersonal conflicts in schools. Likewise, the findings by Gyan and Tandoh-Offin (2014) in their study concerning conflict resolution in institution as being experienced in Ghanaian Senior High School revealed the challenges facing human resources in resolving conflicts including, peer influence and absenteeism of conflicting parties during conflict resolution in school setting. Therefore, due to the challenges faced by heads of school led to the decrease of student academic performance in their final examination.

V. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

Grounded from the findings, this study concludes that poor communication, hate, jealous and gossips were the types of interpersonal conflict between teacher-teacher and experienced in the studied five (5) public secondary schools in Magu district and that they negatively influenced poor teaching and learning, thus decreasing students' academic performance in their final examination. The researcher noted that if this conflict are not handled timely and properly teacher- teacher interpersonal conflicts will affect students' academic performance in their final examinations again and again, and will also lead to disunity among the teachers, unaccomplishment of teaching syllabus, and indiscipline among students to their teachers, thus lead teachers to have low morale to perform their daily duties. Moreover, majority of respondents responded that poor communication channels encountered with scarcity of resources used by teachers is a type of interpersonal conflicts between teachers, as well as poor performance of students in the examination and corporal punishment done by teacher to students are the types of interpersonal conflicts between teachers and students.

Recommendation of the Study

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study from specific objectives; First, Tanzanian government has a responsibility to ensure all citizens acquire quality education through the allocation of resources needed for its people. Basing on the first objective on the types of interpersonal conflicts, the government is also responsible for improving teacher's

salary and working conditions by providing good social services like, enough water, teaching resources and electricity. In relation to this, the study findings proved that many teachers complained of scarcity of resources, poor working conditions, and poor social services which indicates that most teachers inter into conflicts because they lack resources on meeting their daily duties. So, it seems the government is not playing its roles accordingly. In this case, the government should motivate teachers by improving their salaries and allowances and prepare conducive environment for teaching process by allocating the required resources so as to improve teacher's morale in the whole process of teaching and learning and to reduce unnecessary interpersonal conflict might occur in school setting.

Furthermore, in relation to the second objective the government syllabus is too biased that it cannot complement the understanding of students on how to solve their differences in schools that is interpersonal conflicts. In addition, the study discovered that poor resolution skills by heads of schools is a major challenge in managing interpersonal conflicts. In this situation, the head of schools have been found to have no specific way of solving interpersonal conflict, even teachers and students are not knowledgeable enough in handling interpersonal conflicts. Therefore, the government is advised to take immediate measures to review and reset its curriculum so that it can capture all angles of provision of quality education to all citizens. Therefore, the researcher has shown that there is a need for interpersonal conflict management course to be introduced in universities and teachers training colleges and to motivate heads of school and teachers to be more skilful in managing interpersonal conflict when they arise at school settings.

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