

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**ASSESSING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN
THE WESTERN PART OF SAVANNAH REGION OF GHANA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Masters of Commence in Human Resource Management and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the university except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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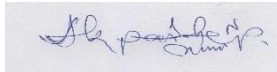
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Professor John Yaw Akparep



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ABSTRACT

While many studies have investigated the causative factors of school conflicts, less academic attention has been paid to school conflict resolution practices. This study addresses this gap by investigating the various conflict resolution practices in senior high schools located in the western part of the Savannah Region. The Study specifically aimed to identify the conflict management strategies adopted by schools, their perceived effectiveness, embedded challenges, and the influence of cultural factors on school conflict resolution. A mixed methods approach was adopted and a total number of 372 participants, involving teachers, students, and school management were recruited to participate in the study. While the students and teachers were chosen through stratified and simple random sampling techniques, the school management was selected through expert purposive sampling. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to gather primary data and these were analysed using simple descriptive statistics and inductive thematic analysis. The study found that mediation, sanctions, restoration, reconciliation, and forgiveness were the commonest strategies employed in managing school conflicts in the study area. It also found that these were largely perceived to be effective as they were able to resolve conflicts as well as restore peace although there were concerns about their inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. The study also identified challenges of lack of conflict resolution skills, training, financial resources, and dealing with diversified individuals. It was also found that cultural factors such as respect for authority, the traditional peace practices of reconciliation, forgiveness, and restorative justice have a positive impact on resolving school conflicts, promoting a sense of collectivism and communalism among students and staff both engender and frustrate school conflict management processes. The study therefore recommended that school management should train conflict resolution experts, make conflict management processes inclusive, transparent and fair and also leverage on engendering cultural practices to build sustainable peace structures.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interactions, and schools are no exception (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). In the context of senior high schools in Ghana, managing conflicts effectively is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment, promoting positive student-teacher relationships, and fostering overall academic and personal development. By effectively managing conflicts in school settings, school management teams can help staff and students navigate these challenges, promote empathy, enhance communication skills, and foster a positive and inclusive working and learning environment (Danso, 2018). It is important to recognize that conflicts are not inherently negative (Marfo et al., 2019). They can provide opportunities for personal growth, learning, and the development of conflict resolution skills.

Schools play a fundamental role in shaping the future of individuals and society as a whole. They serve as a primary setting for knowledge acquisition, skill development, and character formation.

Schools not only impart academic knowledge but also serve as socialization agents, shaping students' values, attitudes, and behaviour patterns. Moreover, schools provide a platform for fostering essential life skills, interpersonal relationships, and emotional intelligence (UNESCO, 2016). In the case of senior high schools in Ghana, they cater for students in their final three years of secondary education, typically aged 15 to 18 (UNESCO, 2018). These years are critical for students as they prepare for higher education or transition into the workforce. Senior high schools often act as the bridge between primary and tertiary education, setting the stage for future academic pursuits and career choices. Consequently, the quality of education, as well as the overall experience within these schools, significantly impact students' future prospects and well-being (UNESCO, 2016, 2018).



According to Marfo et al. (2019) conflict can arise in schools due to various factors, including differences in opinions, values, cultural backgrounds, and personal interests among students, teachers, and other staff members. Individuals within a community, including students, teachers, and staff, come from different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. These diverse perspectives can lead to differences in opinions, values, and beliefs, which can often result in conflicts when individuals with contrasting viewpoints interact. Schools cater to individuals in different stages of their personal and social development (Danso, 2018). Adolescence, particularly in high school settings, is a period of rapid growth, exploration, and identity formation. As students navigate their own identities and assert their independence, conflicts can arise as they challenge authority, express individuality, and seek autonomy. Schools, like any other organization, have limited resources such as classrooms, teachers, funding, and extracurricular activities (Syabwanta, 2022). The competition for these resources can create tensions and conflicts among students, teachers, and administrators, especially when the distribution of resources is perceived as unfair or unequal.



Hierarchies and power imbalances exist in school communities, with teachers and administrators holding authority over students. Power dynamics can contribute to conflicts when there is a perceived abuse of authority, favouritism, or inconsistent application of rules and policies. Kheswa (2015) argue that schools are social environments where students interact and form relationships with their peers. These relationships can be complex, influenced by factors such as friendship, peer pressure, competition, and social hierarchies. Conflicts can arise from misunderstandings, jealousy, gossip, exclusion, or clashes between different social groups. Schools place academic expectations on students, including assignments, tests, and grades (Marfo et al., 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Syabwanta, 2022). Antiri (2016) also believe that the pressure to perform well academically can lead to competition, stress, and conflicts



among students striving for limited academic opportunities or recognition. Again, schools are not immune to issues such as bullying, harassment, and conflicts among peers. Power struggles, differences in social status, or personal conflicts can escalate into aggressive behaviours, resulting in conflicts that require intervention and resolution (Baiden et al., 2019).

In senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region of Ghana, conflicts stemming from power imbalances, resource competition, and cultural differences are prevalent. These conflicts often manifest in instances such as teacher-student power dynamics, administrative decision-making processes, and competition for limited educational resources and extracurricular opportunities (Syabwanta, 2022). Moreover, cultural differences, including ethnic or tribal disparities and varying religious practices, contribute to tensions among students and staff ((Marfo et al., 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Peer relationships, such as cliques and bullying, further exacerbate conflicts, while parental involvement can sometimes escalate disputes over issues like academic performance and resource allocation. Addressing these conflicts necessitates a comprehensive approach involving dialogue, empathy-building, equitable policies, and inclusive practices to foster a harmonious and supportive school environment for all stakeholders.

Conflicts in schools can also stem from external influences, such as societal issues, cultural norms, and family dynamics. Students may bring their personal challenges, biases, or experiences into the school environment, leading to conflicts with their peers or teachers (Opoku-Asare et al., 2015). Unresolved conflicts can have detrimental effects on the school environment, leading to reduced academic performance, increased absenteeism, a decline in student morale, and the emergence of social and psychological issues among students. A harmonious and peaceful school environment is conducive to learning and personal growth. By effectively managing conflicts, schools can create an atmosphere that encourages students to

engage actively in their academic pursuits, fosters creativity and critical thinking, and promotes positive social interactions.

1.2 Problem Statement

School conflicts, just like any other conflict, are a global phenomenon. In Europe and America, reports on school shootings and rioting are often reported on both traditional and social media. Scholars like Sampson (2016) and Nelde (2017) have also extensively elaborated on the incidences of school conflicts in European high schools. Malhi et al. (2014) describe similar situations in Asia pointing out its prevalence in India and Pakistan. Similar situations are reported in Africa by Badri (2014) and Devries et al. (2014). While these scholars identified varied causes of such conflicts, in Africa, scholars report that socioeconomic factors such as poverty, unequal resource distribution, and limited access to quality education create tension and competition among students and lead to conflicts. Ethnicity and cultural differences are also reported by many scholars as contributing to school conflicts. Africa is culturally diverse, with various ethnic groups coexisting within communities. Differences in language, customs, and traditions can sometimes result in conflicts, particularly when stereotypes, prejudices, or misunderstandings arise. Ngqela and Lewis (2012) further found that conflicts between teachers and students can stem from issues such as perceived favouritism, harsh disciplinary practices, or ineffective communication. Power imbalances and differing expectations can contribute to strained relationships. Badri (2014) identified role differentiation and culturally induced perceptions of feminism as leading factors of gender-based conflicts in schools. This means that conflicts in African schools, including those in Ghana and Northern Ghana, stem from a combination of socioeconomic factors, cultural differences, gender discrimination, and unequal treatment of students by teachers.





While the causes of conflicts in senior high schools have been extensively studied, there is less literature on conflict management that is the reason for this study. This is contained in the literature regarding the assessment of conflict management practices in the Western part of the Savannah Region of Ghana. The lack of research in this specific context hinders the development of effective strategies to address conflicts and promote a harmonious learning environment for students and educators. Conflict management is crucial in senior high schools as it contributes to the overall well-being and academic success of students. However, the absence of literature on conflict management practices in the Western part of the Savannah Region limits the understanding of the specific challenges and potential solutions in this geographical area. Consequently, educational stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, and policymakers, are left without evidence-based guidance to effectively handle conflicts in this particular context.

Without a comprehensive assessment of conflict management practices, schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region may continue to rely on generic or out-dated strategies that may not adequately address the unique needs and dynamics of their student population. This knowledge gap hampers the implementation of targeted interventions and the advancement of conflict resolution techniques that could improve the school climate, student-teacher relationships, and overall academic performance. Furthermore, the Western part of the Savannah Region is characterized by its own social, cultural, and environmental factors, which can influence the nature and intensity of conflicts in senior high schools. It is imperative to conduct a case study in this specific region to identify and evaluate the conflict management practices employed by senior high schools, examine their effectiveness, and propose contextually relevant recommendations for improvement.



Addressing the lack of literature on conflict management practices in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region is essential for enhancing educational practices, promoting peaceful school environments, and supporting the personal and academic development of students. Conducting a comprehensive assessment will contribute valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge and provide actionable recommendations for schools, educational policymakers, and other relevant stakeholders to foster effective conflict resolution strategies in this Region.

1.3 Research Questions

The Main research question for this study is what are the conflict management practices in Senior High Schools located in the western part of the Savannah region?

1.3.1 Specific Questions

- I. What are the current conflict management strategies employed by senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region of Ghana?
- II. How effective are the conflict management practices implemented in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region?
- III. What are the challenges of managing conflicts in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region?
- IV. How do cultural and contextual factors influence conflict management practices in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to investigate conflict management practices in Senior High Schools located in the western part of the Savannah Region.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

- I. To ascertain the conflict management strategies employed by senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region of Ghana
- II. To assess the effectiveness of the conflict management practices implemented in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region
- III. To find out the challenges of managing conflicts in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region
- IV. To determine the cultural and contextual factors that influence conflict management practices in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its contributions to the literature, relevance to policymakers, education stakeholders, and the research community in the following ways. First of all, the study focuses on the assessment of conflict management practices in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region of Ghana, this study fills a gap in the existing literature.

The scarcity of research on conflict management practices in this specific region limits the knowledge base and hinders the development of contextually relevant strategies. The findings of this study will contribute to the literature by providing new insights, empirical evidence, and practical recommendations for effective conflict resolution in senior high schools in the area.

Policymakers in the education sector rely on research to inform evidence-based decision-making. This study will be valuable to policymakers in Ghana, particularly those involved in shaping educational policies and guidelines. The research findings can guide the development and implementation of policies that address conflict management practices, promote peaceful school environments, and enhance the overall quality of education in the Western part of the Savannah Region.

School administrators, teachers, students, and parents are essential stakeholders in the education system. Understanding and improving conflict management practices directly impact their experiences within senior high schools. The study's findings will provide valuable insights and practical recommendations for education stakeholders, enabling them to develop effective strategies to manage conflicts, foster positive student-teacher relationships, and create a conducive learning environment.

Finally, this study contributes to the research community by adding knowledge and understanding of conflict management practices in a specific regional context. The methodologies, findings, and recommendations can serve as a foundation for future research endeavors in conflict resolution, educational psychology, and school administration. It offers a reference point for scholars and researchers interested in exploring conflict management practices in similar or diverse settings, promoting comparative studies and the advancement of conflict resolution theories and practices in educational contexts.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study is primarily focus on the assessment of conflict management practices within senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region. It will investigate strategies, policies, interventions, and approaches employed by schools to prevent, address, and resolve conflicts among students, teachers, and other members of the school community. Geographically, the study will be limited to the Western part of the Savannah Region in Ghana. It will specifically examine senior high schools within this geographical area, taking into account the unique cultural, social, and environmental factors that may influence conflict management practices. The study focuses on various types of conflicts that commonly arise within senior high schools, including interpersonal conflicts among students, conflicts between students and teachers, and

conflicts between different groups or factions within the school community. The study aims to capture a broad range of conflicts encountered in this context.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Conflict: In the context of this study, conflict refers to disagreements, disputes, or tensions that arise between individuals or groups within the senior high school setting. Conflicts may manifest in various forms, including verbal arguments, physical confrontations, social exclusion, bullying, or other instances of interpersonal or intergroup conflict.

Conflict Management Practices: Refers to the strategies, policies, interventions, and approaches employed by senior high schools to prevent, address, and resolve conflicts among students, teachers, and other members of the school community. These practices may include conflict resolution techniques, mediation processes, disciplinary measures, peer support programs, or any other methods utilized to manage conflicts effectively.

Stakeholders: Stakeholders in this study refer to individuals or groups who have a vested interest in the outcomes of conflict management practices in senior high schools. This includes school administrators, teachers, students, parents, educational policymakers, and any other relevant parties who play a role in shaping or implementing conflict management strategies.

Contextual Factors: Contextual factors refer to the specific cultural, social, and environmental elements that are unique to the Western part of the Savannah Region and may influence conflict management practices. These factors may include local customs, traditions, community dynamics, socioeconomic conditions, and other contextual elements that shape the nature of conflicts and impact their management within senior high schools.

Educational Policies: Educational policies are the guidelines, regulations, and directives set by governmental bodies or educational authorities that shape the overall framework for education.





In the context of this study, educational policies may include policies related to conflict management, student behaviour, disciplinary measures, or any other policies relevant to managing conflicts in senior high schools.

Conducive Learning Environment: A conducive learning environment refers to a supportive and harmonious setting that promotes effective teaching and learning. In the context of this study, a conducive learning environment is one where conflicts are effectively managed, allowing students and teachers to feel safe, respected, and engaged in their educational pursuits.

Empirical Evidence: Empirical evidence refers to data or information that is collected through systematic observation, measurement, or experimentation. In this study, empirical evidence will be gathered through surveys, interviews, observations, or other research methods to provide factual support for the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

1.8 Organisation of Study

The Thesis shall be organised in seven chapters. Chapter one consists of the background of the study, the statement of the research problem, research questions and objectives, significance of the research and the scope of the study. Chapter two consists of the literature review where relevant theories and existing literature on conflict management will be reviewed. Chapter three consists of the methodology of the study where the research philosophy, research approach and research design that were adopted for the study is explained and the reasons for their adoption given. The chapter further describes the target population for the study, the sampling procedures, data type and data instruments as well as data analysis techniques that would be used in the study. The extent to which the study ensured relevance, credibility, reliability and validity of the study will also be contained here. The chapter ends with a description of the ethical considerations that were made. Chapter four consists of the presentation and analysis of primary data on the research objectives. Chapter five discusses the results of the findings and chapter six,

which is the final chapter of the thesis, consists of the summary of major findings, conclusion and policy recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature on school conflict management in senior high schools. It begins by examining the concept of school conflicts, emphasizing their multifaceted nature and the diverse forms they can take within educational settings. The chapter delves into the factors that contribute to the emergence and escalation of conflicts in schools. From interpersonal issues and power dynamics to intersectionality and cultural differences, a wide range of factors play a role in school conflicts. Furthermore, the chapter reviews various school conflict management strategies. In addition, this chapter examines the current practices of school conflict management specifically in senior high schools. Drawing from empirical studies, it explores the implementation and perceived effectiveness of conflict management practices in these settings. Finally, the chapter explores the influence of cultural practices on school conflict management. It acknowledges that cultural factors play a significant role in shaping how conflicts are perceived, addressed, and managed within educational contexts.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 School Conflicts

The concept of school conflict refers to conflicts that occur within educational settings, involving various stakeholders such as students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members (Dunlap & Thompson, 2022; Thompson et al., 2021). These conflicts can arise due to a variety of factors, including differences in values, interests, power dynamics, resource allocation, disciplinary issues, and educational policies (Dunlap & Thompson, 2022). In critical literature on conflict, the concept of school conflict has been extensively debated and analysed. Scholars have examined the underlying causes, dynamics, and impacts of conflicts within educational



institutions, as well as the potential strategies for conflict resolution and transformation. Different theoretical frameworks and perspectives have been employed to understand and interpret school conflicts.

Across different regions, including Europe, America, Asia, Africa, and Ghana, the dynamics of school conflict can vary due to diverse cultural, social, and educational contexts. For example: In European countries, school conflicts may revolve around issues such as educational reforms, curriculum changes, inclusion of marginalized groups, language policies, or cultural clashes in multicultural schools (Metz, 2022). School conflicts in the United States involve debates on educational equity, racial tensions, school funding disparities, disciplinary practices, LGBTQ+ rights, or freedom of expression. In Asian countries, school conflicts can arise from pressures related to academic achievement, competition for limited educational resources, traditional teaching methods, gender inequalities, or clashes between traditional values and modern education (Fronius et al., 2019). In African countries, school conflicts are influenced by factors such as ethnic or tribal tensions, access to education, language policies, political instability, religious differences, or the impact of colonial legacies on educational systems (Amemiya et al., 2020; Onyango et al., 2019). In the specific context of Ghana, school conflicts could encompass issues like teacher-student relationships, disciplinary measures, school infrastructure, curriculum content, educational policies, and conflicts between traditional cultural practices and formal education. Instances of school conflict in these regions can be found in various forms, such as student protests, strikes by teachers, parent-teacher disputes, conflicts over educational policies, disciplinary incidents, bullying, or conflicts arising from cultural or religious diversity (Akpaprep, 2019). Critical literature on school conflict provides valuable insights into the complexities of these conflicts, highlighting power imbalances, systemic inequalities, and the need for transformative approaches to conflict resolution. It emphasizes the importance of promoting



dialogue, fostering inclusive educational environments, addressing structural issues, and empowering stakeholders to actively engage in conflict resolution processes within schools (Acquah, 2017; Kumi-Yeboah, 2020; Opoku-Asare et al., 2015; Shibuya, 2020).

2.2.2 Factors causing School Conflict

Critical perspectives emphasize that school conflicts are not isolated incidents but are often rooted in broader societal structures of power, privilege, and inequality. They highlight how factors such as socioeconomic disparities, racial or ethnic discrimination, and unequal distribution of educational resources contribute to conflicts within schools (Acquah, 2017; Akparep, 2019; Fronius et al., 2019; Gyan et al., 2015; Kumi-Yeboah, 2020; Shibuya, 2020). Akparep (2019) argues that unequal distribution of resources, such as funding, qualified teachers, educational materials, and infrastructure, creates disparities among schools. Schools in disadvantaged areas often face resource shortages, overcrowding, and inadequate facilities, which can lead to frustration and conflicts among students, teachers, and parents who perceive these disparities as unjust. Gyan et al. (2015) also believe that socioeconomic inequalities impact educational experiences and outcomes. Students from low-income backgrounds may face challenges related to access to quality education, educational support, and extracurricular opportunities. These disparities can generate conflicts between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, perpetuating divisions and feelings of injustice.

Mantey (2017) argues strongly that discrimination and ethnocentrism within educational systems contribute to conflicts in schools. Minority students may experience biased treatment, stereotyping, exclusion, or cultural insensitivity, which can lead to tensions, conflicts, and a hostile school climate. Conflicts can arise between different racial or ethnic groups, exacerbating divisions and perpetuating inequality. Kumi-Yeboah (2020) thinks that discrimination goes hand in hand with power imbalance. Hierarchical power structures within schools, such as the





authority of administrators and teachers over students, can contribute to conflicts. When power is disproportionately held and exercised, conflicts can emerge as students feel unheard, disempowered, or subjected to unfair treatment. Power imbalances can also be reflected in disciplinary practices, favoritism, or discriminatory policies. Scholars highlight the importance of recognizing and amplifying the voices of students in school conflict discussions (Amemiya et al., 2020; Gyan et al., 2015; Kumi-Yeboah, 2020). They argue that empowering students to participate in decision-making processes and expressing their perspectives can lead to more inclusive and effective conflict resolution strategies (Haines-Saah et al., 2018).

Critical literature also acknowledges the intersectional nature of school conflicts, considering how multiple social identities and systems of oppression intersect within educational settings. This includes analysing conflicts through lenses of race, gender, class, sexuality, and other intersecting identities. Intersectionality recognizes that individuals can experience discrimination based on multiple aspects of their identity simultaneously (Stienstra & Nyerere, 2016). For example, a student who is both female and a racial minority may face unique challenges that stem from both gender and racial discrimination. These overlapping forms of discrimination can lead to conflicts when students encounter biased treatment, stereotypes, or exclusion based on multiple aspects of their identity. According to Cantalupo (2019) intersectionality can result in the formation of identity-based cliques and divisions within educational settings. Students may seek support and solidarity among those who share similar identities or experiences, leading to the creation of social groups that can sometimes clash with one another. Conflicts may arise when these groups compete for resources, express stereotypes, or engage in exclusionary behaviors. Educational settings that fail to address intersectionality may inadvertently perpetuate conflicts. For instance, if policies, curriculum, and disciplinary practices are not inclusive or sensitive to the diverse identities and experiences of students, conflicts can arise as marginalized



students feel unheard, invisible, or invalidated. Lack of representation and recognition can contribute to tensions among different identity groups. Kemp-Graham (2018) believes that intersectionality brings attention to the diversity of cultural backgrounds within educational settings. Conflicts may arise when students from different cultural backgrounds have differing values, beliefs, or practices that are not adequately understood or respected. Cultural clashes and misunderstandings can escalate into conflicts if there is a lack of intercultural dialogue, appreciation for diversity, or a supportive framework for addressing differences.

It is important to note that the nature and dynamics of school conflicts can vary within and across regions, and critical literature reflects the contextual nuances and specific challenges faced in different educational settings. The debates and perspectives presented in critical literature contribute to a deeper understanding of school conflicts and provide insights into potential strategies for creating more inclusive, equitable, and peaceful learning environments. While critical literature on school conflict has extensively debated the causes and dynamics of conflicts in various educational settings, there remains a notable gap in the investigation of conflict management practices, particularly in schools located in the western part of the Savannah region. While understanding the causes of conflict is crucial, exploring effective strategies and practices for managing and resolving conflicts is equally important for promoting a peaceful and productive school environment. By examining conflict management practices in different schools, researchers can shed light on the specific strategies, interventions, and policies that have been successful in mitigating conflicts and fostering positive relationships among students, teachers, and administrators. This makes studies like this relevant. Investigating conflict management practices in these schools can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges and contextual factors that influence conflict dynamics in the region. It can also identify successful approaches that can be replicated or adapted in similar educational settings to address



conflicts more effectively. Moreover, such research can contribute to building a comprehensive understanding of conflict management in diverse cultural and regional contexts, enriching the existing literature on school conflict. By bridging this gap and expanding the scope of research to include conflict management practices in schools located in the western part of the Savannah region. This study offers practical recommendations and strategies to educators, policymakers, and stakeholders, fostering the development of more inclusive and effective conflict resolution approaches. This will not only contribute to a more harmonious school environment but also promote the overall well-being and academic success of students in the region.


2.2.3 Approaches to School Conflict Management

School conflict management refers to the processes and strategies employed by educational institutions to address and resolve conflicts that arise within the school environment. Conflicts in schools can involve students, teachers, parents, administrators, and other stakeholders, and they can emerge due to various factors such as interpersonal disagreements, disciplinary issues, power imbalances, or conflicting interests. The nature of school conflict management is multifaceted and encompasses various aspects. Some of the characteristics of school conflict management are explained here.

2.2.3.1 Proactive and Reactive Strategies

Proactive and reactive are two complementary approaches within school conflict management that address conflicts from different angles. Proactive conflict management involves taking preventive measures to reduce the likelihood of conflicts before they occur (Opoku-Asare et al., 2015). It focuses on creating a positive school climate and equipping individuals with the necessary skills to navigate conflicts effectively. Here are some key elements of proactive conflict management. This is done by creating a positive school climate. Schools can proactively foster a positive and inclusive environment by promoting respect, empathy, and open

communication (Hervie & Winful, 2018). This includes developing clear behavioural expectations, promoting anti-bullying initiatives, and encouraging a culture of dialogue and understanding. Proactive conflict management also involves integrating conflict resolution and social-emotional learning into the curriculum. Students can learn skills such as active listening, problem-solving, empathy, and negotiation, which enable them to handle conflicts constructively. Hervie and Winful (2018) believes that peer mediation and restorative practices where schools implement peer mediation programs and trained student mediators to help their peers resolve conflicts in a structured and supportive manner is one of the best practices of school conflict management. Restorative practices, such as circles or conferences, can also be used to foster dialogue, repair harm, and build relationships (Arhin, 2015). Cobbinah (2017) argues that open lines of communication between students, teachers, parents, and administrators can prevent conflicts from escalating. Regular meetings, newsletters, and parent-teacher conferences create opportunities for dialogue and early identification of potential issues and all these go into proactive measures that aim to prevent school conflicts.



Reactive Conflict Management refers to the strategies and interventions employed in response to conflicts that have already occurred. When conflicts arise, it becomes necessary to address and resolve them effectively to restore relationships and maintain a positive school environment (Arhin, 2015). Reactive conflict management often begin with assessing the nature and causes of conflicts. According to Gyan et al. (2015) this is crucial in developing an appropriate response. This involves gathering information, listening to all parties involved, and understanding the underlying issues and perspectives. In cases where conflicts involve individuals or groups, mediation or facilitation can be employed to assist in finding mutually agreeable solutions. A neutral third party helps guide the dialogue, promote understanding, and facilitate a resolution that satisfies all parties involved (Acquah, 2017). Depending on the nature of the conflict,



various strategies may be used, such as negotiation, problem-solving, or compromise. These approaches aim to find a fair and sustainable resolution that addresses the root causes of the conflict and rebuilds relationships. In some instances, conflicts may involve behaviour that violates school policies or poses a threat to the well-being of individuals or the school community. In such cases, disciplinary actions may be taken (Amemiya et al., 2020)

2.2.3.2 Multilevel Strategies

School conflict management operates at multiple levels within the educational system. It involves addressing conflicts between students, conflicts between students and teachers, conflicts among staff members, conflicts involving parents or guardians, and conflicts between different groups or stakeholders within the school community (Fronius et al., 2019). Each level requires specific approaches and interventions tailored to the nature and dynamics of the conflict. By recognizing and addressing conflicts at multiple levels, schools can create a comprehensive approach to conflict management. This allows for tailored interventions that consider the specific dynamics, concerns, and needs of different stakeholders, promoting a positive and harmonious school environment conducive to learning and personal growth (Gyan et al., 2015).

Student-Level Conflict Management: Conflicts between students are common in schools and can arise due to various reasons such as interpersonal disagreements, bullying, competition, or differences in values or perspectives. Student-level conflict management involves strategies and interventions aimed at resolving conflicts between individual students or groups of students. This may include mediation, counselling, restorative practices, or teaching conflict resolution skills to empower students to handle conflicts constructively. The varied levels of school management may include:

Teacher-Student Conflict Management: Conflicts between students and teachers can occur due to disciplinary issues, classroom management challenges, misunderstandings, or differences in



expectations. It is essential to address these conflicts promptly and effectively to maintain a positive learning environment. Teacher-student conflict management may involve open communication, active listening, clarification of expectations, and collaborative problem-solving to find resolution and restore positive relationships.

Staff-Level Conflict Management: Conflicts among staff members can impact the overall functioning of a school. These conflicts may arise due to differences in teaching approaches, disagreements over curriculum or policies, communication breakdowns, or interpersonal issues. Staff-level conflict management involves creating channels for open dialogue, fostering a culture of respect and collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and employing conflict resolution strategies such as mediation or facilitation to address conflicts among staff members.

Parent and Guardian Involvement: Conflicts involving parents or guardians can arise from various sources, such as disagreements over student performance, disciplinary actions, or communication breakdowns. Effective conflict management includes engaging parents and guardians as partners in resolving conflicts. This can be achieved through regular communication, parent-teacher conferences, open forums, or mediation processes that allow for the expression of concerns, active listening, and collaborative problem-solving.

Group and Community-Level Conflict Management: Schools are diverse communities with various groups and stakeholders, including student organizations, clubs, parent-teacher associations, or community partners. Conflicts can arise between these groups or involve multiple stakeholders. Group and community-level conflict management involves creating spaces for dialogue, fostering understanding, promoting inclusion and diversity, and facilitating collaborative decision-making processes to address conflicts and build stronger relationships within the broader school community.



2.2.3.3 Collaborative Strategies of School Conflict Management

Effective conflict management in schools often involves collaboration among various stakeholders (Onyango et al., 2019). This includes students, teachers, administrators, parents, counsellors, and other relevant individuals. Collaborative approaches recognize that conflicts affect multiple parties and require the collective effort of the school community to find resolution and restore relationships. collaborative conflict management in schools recognizes the importance of involving all stakeholders, promoting open communication, employing mediation and facilitation techniques, emphasizing consensus building and negotiation, empowering individuals, and fostering skill-building and education (Gyan et al., 2015). By implementing this strategy, schools can create a more inclusive, respectful, and constructive environment for conflict resolution, ultimately promoting positive relationships and a healthier school community. Collaborative conflict management promotes inclusive decision-making processes that involve all stakeholders affected by the conflict (Opoku-Asare et al., 2015). This includes students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other relevant individuals. By including multiple perspectives, the strategy aims to ensure that decisions and resolutions are fair, balanced, and reflective of the needs and interests of all parties involved.

According to Shanka and Thuo (2017) effective collaboration in conflict management requires open and honest communication among stakeholders. It encourages individuals to express their concerns, feelings, and perspectives without fear of judgment or reprisal. Active listening is an essential component, as it enables participants to understand and empathize with different viewpoints, promoting a sense of respect and trust. Dampson et al. (2018) also argue that collaborative conflict management often employs mediation or facilitation techniques. These processes involve the assistance of a neutral third party, such as a trained mediator or facilitator, who helps guide the conversation and promote constructive dialogue. Mediators ensure that all



voices are heard, facilitate problem-solving, and help parties reach a mutually acceptable resolution. Collaborative conflict management focuses on consensus building and negotiation rather than imposing unilateral decisions. It encourages stakeholders to engage in constructive discussions, explore options, and find common ground through compromise and shared decision-making (Amemiya et al., 2020; Cantalupo, 2019). The goal is to reach agreements that satisfy the needs and interests of all parties involved to the greatest extent possible. Mantey (2017) believes that collaborative conflict management empowers individuals to take ownership of the resolution process. It recognizes that those directly affected by conflicts are often best positioned to identify solutions.

By involving stakeholders in decision-making, the strategy fosters a sense of responsibility, ownership, and commitment to the agreed-upon resolutions, enhancing the likelihood of their successful implementation. Extending the debate on collaborative conflict management further, Onyango et al. (2019) posits that collaborative conflict management also involves providing stakeholders with the necessary skills and education to engage effectively in conflict resolution processes. This may include training sessions, workshops, or educational programs focused on communication, negotiation, active listening, empathy, and problem-solving skills. Building these competencies equips individuals with the tools to navigate conflicts constructively and promote a culture of collaboration and understanding.

The nature of conflict management in schools is context-specific. Each school has its unique dynamics, culture, and challenges, which influence the nature of conflicts that may arise. Therefore, conflict management approaches should be tailored to the specific context and take into account the cultural, social, and institutional factors that shape conflicts within the school. School conflict management should be supportive and empowering for all parties involved. It should provide a safe and non-judgmental space for individuals to express their concerns,



emotions, and perspectives. Conflict management approaches should aim to promote understanding, empathy, and growth, allowing individuals to develop skills for constructive dialogue, negotiation, and problem-solving. Conflict management in schools is an ongoing process that requires continuous improvement. It involves evaluating the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies, learning from past conflicts, and making adjustments based on feedback and experiences. Schools should be open to learning and adapting their approaches to better address conflicts and create a positive school climate.

2.3 Theoretical Review

2.3.1 Integrative Bargaining Theory

Integrative Bargaining Theory (IBT) is a negotiation approach that focuses on creating mutually beneficial outcomes through cooperation and collaboration. It emphasizes the importance of finding creative solutions that meet the needs and interests of all parties involved. IBT theory does not have a single founder, as it emerged as a result of contributions from various scholars and practitioners in the field of negotiation and conflict resolution. However, the works of Roger Fisher and William Ury (Thakore, 2013) have significantly influenced and popularized the concepts and principles associated with integrative bargaining. Several scholars and practitioners have contributed to the development and promotion of integrative bargaining theory. In addition to Fisher and Ury, other notable proponents include, Bruce Patton , and Daniel L. Shapiro (Thakore, 2013). These individuals have advocated for a collaborative and problem-solving approach to negotiation, emphasizing the potential for win-win outcomes.

IBT emphasizes cooperation and collaboration among negotiators (Cross & Rosenthal, 1999). The parties involved work together to identify shared interests, create value, and find solutions that maximize the overall outcomes for all parties. It encourages a problem-solving mind-set rather than a competitive or adversarial stance. Instead of taking rigid positions, integrative



bargaining encourages negotiators to explore underlying interests and needs. By understanding each other's interests, parties can identify common ground and develop creative options that address the underlying concerns of all parties involved. What this means is that IBT expands opportunities (Sanson & Bretherton, 2001). They always look out for opportunities to increase the overall value and benefits available to all parties. By exploring additional resources, alternative options, or innovative solutions, negotiators can create mutually beneficial outcomes that go beyond simple compromise. Cross and Rosenthal (1999) argue that open and honest communication is a fundamental aspect of integrative bargaining. Negotiators share relevant information about their interests, priorities, and constraints to foster understanding and build trust. By sharing information, parties can collaborate more effectively and explore options that meet the needs of all involved.

Integrative bargaining recognizes the importance of maintaining and enhancing long-term relationships. It emphasizes building trust, fostering rapport, and establishing a foundation for on-going cooperation (Cross & Rosenthal, 1999). This perspective recognizes that successful negotiations can strengthen relationships and provide a basis for future collaborations. The theory encourages creative problem-solving approaches to generate multiple options for resolution. Parties are encouraged to think outside the box, consider various perspectives, and explore innovative solutions that address the interests and needs of all stakeholders (Cross & Rosenthal, 1999). In Summary, integrative bargaining theory advocates for a cooperative and collaborative negotiation approach that seeks win-win outcomes. It emphasizes focusing on interests, expanding the pie, sharing information, building long-term relationships, and employing creative problem-solving techniques. By adopting these principles, negotiators can create mutually beneficial agreements that satisfy the needs and interests of all parties involved.



While integrative bargaining theory has been widely embraced and influential in the field of negotiation and conflict resolution, it is not without its criticisms. Some critics argue that integrative bargaining theory relies on certain assumptions that may not always hold true in real-world conflicts. For example, the theory assumes that both parties have shared interests and are willing to collaborate to find mutually beneficial solutions. However, in some conflicts, parties may have conflicting interests or deep-rooted power imbalances that make it difficult to achieve integrative outcomes. Some critics also argue that integrative bargaining theory may be more applicable to certain types of conflicts, such as those involving distributive issues where there are potential gains to be divided. However, in complex conflicts involving value differences, identity issues, or deep-seated grievances, the theory's focus on creating value and maximizing joint gains may not adequately address the underlying dynamics. Despite these criticisms, the researcher believes that these criticisms do not invalidate the entire integrative bargaining theory. Rather, they highlight areas where the theory may have limitations or require further development to address the complexities and nuances of real-world conflicts. The theory provided an analytical framework which helped the researcher to understand and analyse conflict management practices in senior high schools. The theory's key principles, such as cooperation, interests, expanding the pie, information sharing, long-term relationships, and creative problem-solving, served as lenses to examine and interpret the conflict management approaches employed in the schools. The theory provided guidance on development of the research tools what types of data to collect to understand conflict management approaches. The analytical framework of integrative bargaining theory guided the analysis of the collected data. The researcher examined the data to identify instances of cooperative approaches, interests-based negotiations, expanding the available options, information sharing practices, building long-term relationships, and creative problem-solving strategies. The analysis can reveal patterns, similarities, and differences in the conflict management approaches employed by different senior high schools in the region.



By using integrative bargaining theory as an analytical framework, the study provided a systematic analysis and understanding of conflict management approaches in senior high schools in the western part of the Savannah region of Ghana. While this theory explains conflict management, it does not provide a framework for understanding the causative factors of conflict in schools. To better manage conflicts, understanding their causation is very necessary. The Power-Conflict Theory was therefore adopted to augment this lapse.

2.3.2 Power and Conflict Theory

Power and Conflict Theory (PCT), also known as Power-Conflict Theory, is a sociological perspective that examines the relationship between power dynamics and social conflict. It focuses on how power inequalities in society lead to conflicts between different groups or individuals. Theory does not have a single founder, but it has been influenced by various sociologists and scholars. Some notable contributors to the development of this theory include Karl Marx, Max Weber, Ralf Dahrendorf, and Lewis Coser (Gaski, 1984). Each of these thinkers provided important insights into the relationship between power and social conflict. PCT asserts that power is a central aspect of social relationships and plays a significant role in shaping social interactions and conflicts. Power refers to the ability of individuals or groups to influence or control others, allocate resources, and make decisions that affect society's distribution of wealth, status, and opportunities (Coser, 1976). The theory suggests that power inequalities are inherent in social structures and create conflicts between those who hold power and those who are disadvantaged. These power imbalances lead to tensions and struggles over resources, rights, and social positions. Conflicts arise as subordinate groups seek to challenge or change the existing power structures to improve their position in society (Kühne et al., 2019). Power and Conflict Theory recognizes two types of power: structural power and symbolic power. Structural power refers to the ability of individuals or groups to shape social institutions, rules, and policies.



Symbolic power refers to the power to shape people's beliefs, values, norms, and identities. Both types of power contribute to social conflicts and reinforce power differentials (Clegg, 1994). The theory views conflict as a normal and inevitable part of social life. Conflicts emerge as a result of power struggles and competing interests. These conflicts can occur at different levels, including interpersonal, group, and societal levels. The theory suggests that conflict is not necessarily negative, as it can lead to social change and the redistribution of power.

Power and Conflict Theory emphasizes the significance of social class in power dynamics and conflicts. It argues that social classes are formed based on individuals' positions in the social and economic structure (Clegg, 1994; Coser, 1976; Gaski, 1984). The dominant class, typically the capitalist class, holds significant power and controls resources, while subordinate classes struggle to gain access to resources and challenge the existing power relations. The theory highlights that social conflicts have the potential to bring about social change. When subordinate groups challenge the dominant power structures, it can lead to social movements, revolutions, and transformations in society. Social change occurs as power relations are renegotiated, and new power structures are established (Coser, 1976). In general, Power and Conflict Theory posits that power inequalities are a central cause of social conflicts. The theory emphasizes the role of power in shaping social relationships, the inevitability of conflicts in societies with power imbalances, and the potential for social change through challenging and restructuring power dynamics. It provides a lens through which to analyze and understand social conflicts in various contexts, including economic, political, and cultural spheres.

Critics argue that Power and Conflict Theory often oversimplifies the concept of power. The theory primarily focuses on power as a resource that is possessed by certain individuals or groups, neglecting the complex and multidimensional nature of power. Power is not solely about domination and control but can also be exercised through collaboration, persuasion, and



influence (Blau, 1963). Barbalet (1985) also criticized the theory arguing that it tends to downplay the role of non-power factors in social conflicts. The theory emphasizes power differentials as the main driver of conflicts, overlooking other factors such as cultural differences, ideological conflicts, historical contexts, or interpersonal dynamics that can contribute to conflicts independently of power imbalances. Despite these criticisms, the researcher found the theory useful in explaining varied forms of conflict in senior high schools in the western part of the Savannah Region. By applying Power and Conflict Theory in this study, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of the underlying power dynamics, inequality, and social change potential within the school environment.

First of all, PCT provided a lens to examine the power dynamics that exist within the school setting. It helped researcher to analyse how power is distributed among different stakeholders, such as teachers, administrators, students, and parents, and how these power dynamics influence conflict management practices. This perspective allowed for a deeper understanding of how power imbalances may contribute to conflicts and shape the strategies employed to manage them. The theory highlights the role of power inequalities in conflicts. By applying the theory, the researcher explored how power imbalances, such as hierarchical structures or disparities in resources and decision-making authority, impact the resolution of conflicts in senior high schools. It sheds light on whether conflict management practices perpetuate or challenge existing power differentials, and how these practices may contribute to social justice and equity within the school environment.

Again PCT emphasizes structural power, which refers to the ability to shape social institutions and policies. This helped the researcher to examine how structural power influences conflict management practices in senior high schools. The researcher, informed by this, was able to analyse how school policies and administrative decisions impact the resolution of conflicts and



whether they perpetuate or challenge power imbalances. This analysis provided insights into how structural changes can be made to create a more inclusive and equitable conflict management approach. The theory's application was also helpful to the researcher in examining how power operates along the lines of intersecting identities, such as gender, ethnicity, or social class, within senior high schools. It can shed light on how these intersecting power dynamics influence conflict management practices and the experiences of different groups within the school. This analysis can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of conflicts and guide the development of conflict management approaches that address the diverse needs and experiences of students and staff.

Integrative Bargaining Theory emphasizes collaboration, creativity, and fostering long-term relationships to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes, yet it can be time-consuming, reliant on cooperation, and complex, particularly in multi-issue negotiations. In contrast, Power and Conflict Theory offers insights into power dynamics, aiding in recognizing imbalances, predicting conflict sources, and empowering parties to protect their interests; however, it risks exploitation, focuses less on collaboration, and grapples with the complexity of power relationships. Together, these theories complement each other: integrative bargaining can be seen as a strategy within Power and Conflict Theory, combining collaborative approaches with power analysis to navigate conflicts effectively and secure sustainable agreements.

Relationship between the Theories

Integrative Bargaining Theory and Power and Conflict Theory are not mutually exclusive; instead, they can complement each other in understanding and managing conflicts. Integrative bargaining can be seen as a strategy within Power and Conflict Theory, emphasizing collaborative approaches to address power imbalances and resolve conflicts. In contrast, Power and Conflict Theory provides a framework for analyzing the underlying power dynamics that

influence negotiation processes and outcomes in integrative bargaining scenarios. By incorporating insights from both theories, negotiators can develop more nuanced strategies that leverage collaboration while also addressing power differentials to achieve sustainable and mutually beneficial agreements.

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1 Current conflict management strategies employed by senior high schools in Ghana

Afful-Broni (2012) explored the conflict management strategies employed by senior high schools in Ghana, focusing on communication, negotiation, and mediation. The findings highlighted the importance of effective communication channels and the need for trained mediators to address conflicts. Another study by Gyan (2014) investigated the role of school administrators in managing conflicts in senior high schools. The research emphasized the significance of proactive approaches, such as fostering a positive school climate, promoting open communication, and implementing conflict resolution policies. Gyan and Tandoh-Offin (2014) examined teachers' perceptions of conflict management strategies in senior high schools. The research highlighted the importance of teacher training in conflict resolution techniques, as well as the need for collaborative approaches and involvement of all stakeholders in conflict management. Asamoah (2016) focused on the perspectives of students regarding conflict management strategies. The research highlighted the importance of student involvement in conflict resolution processes, peer mediation programs, and fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment. Antwi (2013) explored the role of guidance and counselling services in managing conflicts in senior high schools. The findings emphasized the need for well-trained guidance counsellors, the provision of emotional support, and counselling services to address underlying causes of conflicts. While these studies have identified various contemporary strategies of managing school conflicts, there was no particular study that focused on the senior





high schools in the western part of the Savannah Region. This suggests that there is limited empirical information specifically focused on conflict management strategies in senior high schools in that region. This makes study such as this which conducts further studies in the Western part of Bole valuable and necessary because it provided data on the unique challenges and effective strategies for conflict resolution in this specific context.

2.4.2 Perceived effectiveness of the conflict management practices implemented in senior high schools in Ghana

Many studies have investigated the effectiveness of conflict management strategies adopted for conflict management in Ghanaian senior high schools. For instance a study by Gyan (2014) in the Ashanti Region of Ghana investigated the management of conflicts by school authorities in five selected senior high schools in the region. They employed a mixed methods approach involving 300 participants drawn from students, teachers and parents. Their study found that different strategies were used in addressing different levels of conflict. Mediation was used largely for staff-management conflicts and staff-staff conflicts. Students-staff conflicts were addressed largely through punishment. Their study revealed that while mediation was successful for staff-management and staff-staff conflicts, however, punishment for student-staff conflicts were largely unsuccessful. Abudu (2020) also investigated conflict management in senior high schools in the Northern Region of Ghana and found that schools employed punishment, mediation and counselling for conflict management. They concluded that counselling and mediation were more effective as strategies of conflict management than punishment.

Danso (2018) also investigated conflict management in senior high schools in Ghana and found there is an overwhelming perception that involving parents in conflict management is an effective strategy. They concluded that parental involvement is often considered crucial for conflict management. Schools encourage parents to actively participate in addressing conflicts by



attending meetings, providing guidance to their children, and working collaboratively with school staff to find resolutions. Kesse (2019) also carried out a qualitative study involving five selected senior high schools in the Greater Accra and found that participants perceived conflict resolution training as a very effective and sustainable conflict resolution strategy because it involved all stakeholders. They concluded that in many cases some schools organize workshops and training sessions for teachers, administrators, and students to enhance their conflict management skills. These programs aim to equip individuals with effective communication, negotiation, and problem-solving techniques and participants perceived as a more effective strategy of conflict resolution at all levels.

2.4.3 Challenges of managing conflicts in Senior High Schools

Studies have indicated that conflict management in schools is not without difficulties although the challenges faced by school management in managing conflicts can vary based on the specific context, resources, and policies of each school. These challenges highlight the need for ongoing professional development, stakeholder engagement, and the implementation of effective conflict resolution strategies to address conflicts in educational settings successfully. In a study by Oboegbulem and Alfa (2013) in Nigeria, they investigated the challenges of managing conflicts in senior secondary schools in North-Western Nigeria. Their study employed a survey design involving 400 participants drawn from teachers, students, and parents' populations. Their study found that while varied forms of conflict existed in secondary schools in the North-Western Nigeria, school management faced challenges in managing the conflicts because the staff lack training and the required resources needed for effective conflict management. Their study revealed that school management lacked adequate training and resources to effectively handle conflicts. Conflict management requires specific skills such as active listening, mediation, and negotiation but these were not be adequately developed or supported by school management.



In another study by Kaluma (2017) in Tanzania which investigated the factors impeding school conflict management in secondary schools in the Tangahika province, the study employed a purely qualitative approach involving 80 participants. Their main finding was that school administrators and staff often have a wide range of responsibilities and limited time to address conflicts comprehensively. They argued that balancing administrative duties, curriculum implementation, and conflict resolution can create time constraints and affect the quality of conflict management in secondary schools. Lukwesa (2022) also investigated the phenomenon of conflict management in senior high schools in South Africa and found that schools are diverse environments with various stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and support staff. Each stakeholder group had different perspectives, expectations, and interests and this made it challenging to address conflicts in a way that satisfies everyone involved. Their study further revealed that school conflicts were often emotionally charged, involving students who may be experiencing stress, frustration, or other personal issues. Managing conflicts that evoke strong emotions requires a delicate approach and emotional intelligence on the part of school management and this was often challenging.

2.4.4 How Cultural Factors Influence Conflict Management in Ghana

Studies have indicated that Ghana is a diverse country with various ethnic groups and cultural practices. The specific influence of cultural and contextual factors on conflict management in senior high schools can vary within different regions and communities in Ghana. In a study by Oduor (2015) in Kenya which was aimed at determining the cultural factors that influence conflict management in Ghana, they employed a mixed methods approach involving 355 participants. Their study revealed that the Kikuyu culture places importance on respect for authority figures, such as teachers and school administrators. This cultural value impacted conflict management, as students were more inclined to defer to authority and accept decisions



made by teachers or school management during conflict resolution process. They recommended that in conflict management within schools, the involvement of parents, extended family members, or community leaders may be sought to help resolve conflicts. Their role may be to mediate, provide guidance, or influence decision-making processes so that students are not always compelled to accede to the decisions of school authorities or teachers.

Another study by Abudu (2020) in the Northern Region also investigated how cultural values impacted conflict management in senior high schools. The study found that the Northern culture emphasizes respect for elders and their wisdom. Therefore, in conflict resolution, school management had always sought the intervention of respected elders within the community or school to mediate conflicts and provide guidance to the involved parties. They further found that gender roles and norms as practiced in the Northern Region had influenced conflict management practices in schools because boys and girls were treated differently during conflict resolution processes.

While previous studies have examined conflict management practices, their perceived effectiveness, and the cultural factors influencing conflict management in schools, it's important to note that these studies were not specific to the western part of the savannah in Ghana. Therefore, conducting a current study that investigates the phenomenon in this specific area is highly relevant and valuable. By focusing on the western part of the savannah in Ghana, this study provided localized insights into the challenges experienced in managing school conflicts and the influence of cultural factors on conflict management practices. The cultural dynamics, community structures, and contextual factors unique to this region may present distinct challenges and opportunities for conflict resolution in senior high schools. Moreover, a study specific to the western part of the savannah can shed light on the effectiveness of conflict management practices implemented in this particular area. The findings can contribute to the

development of contextually appropriate strategies and interventions that address the specific needs and realities of schools in this region. By acknowledging the limitations of previous studies and conducting research in the western part of the savannah, this study filled the gap in knowledge and provides valuable insights into conflict management practices, challenges, and cultural influences within this specific geographical context.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structure that provides a foundation for understanding, analysing, and interpreting a particular phenomenon or topic. It serves as a guiding framework for researchers, helping to define the scope, variables, relationships, and theoretical underpinnings of a study. The purpose of a conceptual framework is to establish a coherent and logical structure that helps researchers organize their thoughts, develop research questions, and formulate hypotheses. It provides a roadmap for how the research will be conducted and how the findings will be interpreted.

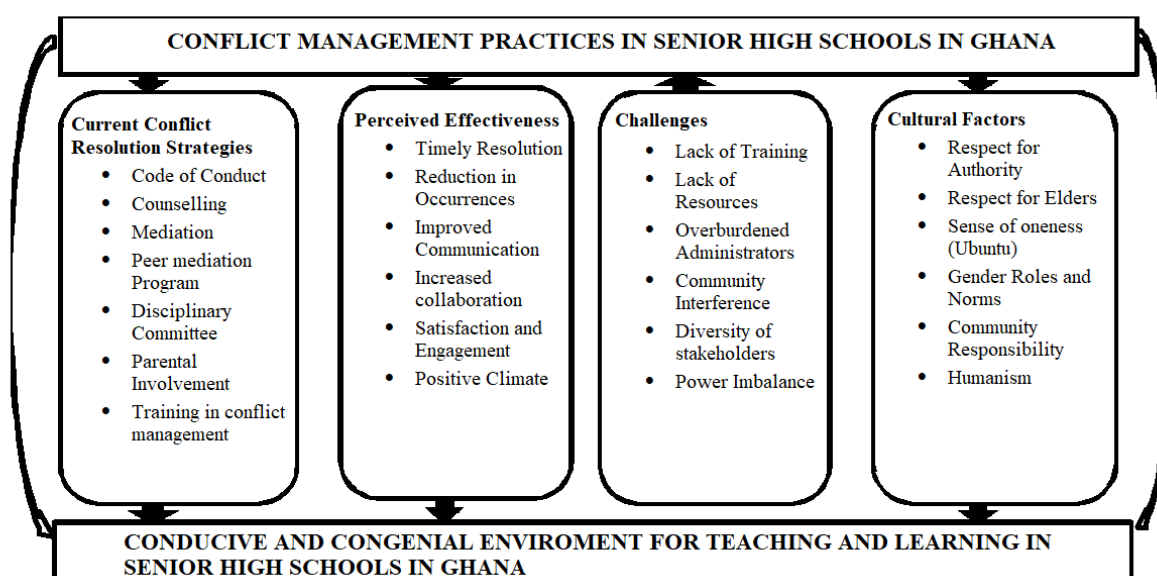


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's Construct, 2023

As indicated in Figure 1, the conceptual framework for this study has six major components. These are explained as follows:

School Conflict Management Practices: This component represents the various approaches, policies, and procedures implemented by schools to address conflicts among students, teachers, and other stakeholders.

Strategies Employed: Within the realm of school conflict management practices, this component focuses on the specific strategies employed by schools to manage conflicts. These strategies can include mediation, negotiation, restorative practices, peer mediation programs, disciplinary measures, counselling services, and community involvement.

Perceived Effectiveness: This component assesses the perceived effectiveness of the conflict management strategies employed by schools. It examines the perspectives and feedback of students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders regarding the impact and success of the implemented strategies in resolving conflicts and promoting a positive school environment.

Challenges in Deploying Strategies: This component explores the challenges and barriers faced by schools in deploying effective conflict management strategies. These challenges can include a lack of training in school management in conflict management strategies, limited resources, overburdened administrators, community interference, diversity of stakeholders, and power dynamics. Understanding these challenges helps identify areas for improvement and informs the development of more effective conflict management practices.

Impact of Cultural Factors: This component delves into the influence of cultural factors on school conflict management practices. It examines how cultural values like respect for authority, respect for elders, spirit of oneness, gender norms, community responsibility, and spirit of humanism are perceived, addressed, and managed in the school setting.





Congenial and Conducive Environment for Teaching and Learning: This component highlights the ultimate goal of effective conflict management practices in schools. It emphasizes that when conflicts are successfully managed, a congenial and conducive environment is created for teaching and learning to thrive. Such an environment promotes positive relationships, student engagement, well-being, and academic achievement.

By integrating these components, the conceptual framework provides a holistic perspective on school conflict management practices. It highlights the relationship between strategies, perceived effectiveness, challenges, and the impact of cultural factors. Ultimately, the framework recognizes the importance of effective conflict management in fostering a positive school climate that supports optimal teaching and learning outcomes.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the existing literature on the concept of school conflicts, the causes of school conflicts, school conflict management strategies, current practices of school conflict management in senior high schools, and the influence of cultural practices on school conflict management. The first section explores the concept of school conflicts, highlighting their multidimensional nature and the various forms they can take, such as student-student conflicts, teacher-student conflicts, and conflicts between different stakeholders. The review emphasizes the importance of understanding the underlying causes and dynamics of these conflicts to effectively manage them. The second section delves into the causes of school conflicts, identifying a range of factors that contribute to their emergence. These include interpersonal issues, power dynamics, intersectionality, cultural differences, disciplinary problems, and lack of communication and conflict resolution skills. The review emphasizes the complex interplay of these factors and their impact on conflict escalation. Next, the chapter examines different school conflict management strategies. It explores a variety of approaches,

such as mediation, negotiation, restorative practices, peer mediation programs, disciplinary measures, counselling services, and parental involvement. Furthermore, the chapter examines the current practices of school conflict management in senior high schools. It analyses empirical studies that have investigated the implementation and effectiveness of conflict management practices in these settings. The review highlights the importance of comprehensive conflict management policies, trained staff, and student involvement in fostering a positive and inclusive school environment. Lastly, the chapter explores the influence of cultural practices on school conflict management. It examines how cultural values, communication styles, hierarchical structures, community dynamics, and gender norms shape the way conflicts are perceived, addressed, and managed in senior high schools. The review emphasizes the need for cultural sensitivity and the integration of culturally appropriate conflict management practices.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive exposition of the underlying research philosophy and the various methods that were employed to conduct the entire study. Commencing with an elucidation of the research philosophy that was deemed most appropriate and relevant for the study, the chapter subsequently proceeds to delineate the approach that was undertaken to collect, analyze, and interpret the data that form the foundation of the research. The target population and sample size determination formula are also presented in this chapter. The techniques that have been used in selecting the samples, the data sources, data collection tools, data analysis, validity and reliability, and the ethical considerations that have been made during the study are all presented in this chapter.

3.1 Research Philosophy

A researcher's ontological convictions can be represented by a research philosophy, as stated by Guha Thakurta and Chetty in 2015. Researchers hold diverse perspectives on the nature of the world, leading to the emergence of various research philosophies. These philosophies include realism, idealism, positivism, social constructivism, pragmatism, and postmodernism, among others, as outlined by Birks in 2014. Realism posits the philosophical standpoint that our world exists independently from our perception of it and can therefore be explored through empirical investigation and scientific methods. On the other hand, Idealism contends that the fundamental nature of our world is rooted in ideas, asserting that what we perceive as reality is merely a reflection of these ideas that have been translated into concrete manifestations that can be studied. Consequently, for adherents of Idealism, the examination of physical realities alone is insufficient to gain a comprehensive understanding of the essence of phenomena. Positivism, a





philosophical perspective, posits the notion that the existence of the world is characterized by objectivity, measurability, and quantifiability. According to this school of thought, the reality of the world remains unaffected by any subjective factors and is instead determined by external and observable phenomena. The individual's knowledge, in this context, is considered to be inconsequential and insignificant in shaping the nature of reality (Cazeaux, 2017). Conversely, Social Constructivism, another philosophical stance, contends that the reality of the world is subjectively constructed by individuals based on their knowledge and understanding. Unlike Positivism, Social Constructivism emphasizes the role of the individual's knowledge in shaping their perception and interpretation of reality. It suggests that the nature of reality is not fixed, but rather dependent on the subjective experiences and interpretations of individuals. Therefore, it can be argued that the reality of the world is not an objective entity, but rather a subjective and socially constructed phenomenon. Individuals construct knowledge within a particular context by drawing upon their personal experiences. The philosophical concept of pragmatism, as stated by Saunders and Townsend (2018), serves as a fusion of both positivism and social constructivism. This philosophical stance postulates that the reality of the world is not limited to being solely subjective or objective, but rather encompasses both aspects. Furthermore, it asserts that reality is both constructible and measurable, while simultaneously existing as dependent and independent of an individual's acquired knowledge. The ultimate concern lies in the fact that the acquisition of knowledge must effectively tackle the multifarious issues confronting a given society. Conversely, post-modernism, as a philosophical school of thought, posits the notion that certainty is an elusive concept, thereby positing the idea that one's perception of reality undergoes continual moderation and complication. This implies that the certainties or truths that one might ascertain at a given point in time are inherently fluid, subject to change. It is important to recognize that research endeavors, while capable of providing a snapshot of reality at the precise moment in which the research was conducted, cannot be universally generalized or



fixated upon due to the ever-evolving nature of reality itself. This assertion is supported by various scholarly sources, including Lee and Saunders (2017), Saunders and Townsend (2018), as well as Saunders and Bradbury (2006).

In this particular study, the adoption of the pragmatist philosophy was deemed necessary and appropriate. The decision to adopt this philosophy is based solely on the fact that the researcher firmly believes that knowledge possesses certain characteristics that make it measurable, objective, and independent of the knowledge possessed by any one individual. Additionally, it is acknowledged that knowledge is not a static entity, but rather a construct that is shaped and developed by individuals during their social interactions. While it is true that knowledge can be objectively and quantifiably measured, it is also important to recognize that the understanding of knowledge is greatly influenced by the specific context in which it is being examined.

3.2 Research Approach

There are three main research approaches; quantitative approach, qualitative approach, and mixed methods approach. The quantitative approach collects numeric data and measures it to find patterns, relationships, associations, and correlations using tools like chi-square and various models of regression (Wiener et al., 2020). The qualitative approach gathers open-ended data and analyses using thematic or content analysis to identify emerging themes and patterns (Yeomans, 2017). For this particular investigation, which is driven by the pragmatic research philosophy, the chosen methodology is the mixed methods approach. This selection was made due to the researcher's intention to comprehensively assess and evaluate the various factors that have an impact on the academic performance of students in the field of mathematics. To achieve a more holistic understanding of this complex phenomenon, the researcher has decided to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative approaches into the research design.



3.3 Research Design

A research design is an outline of how data for research is collected, measured, analysed and interpreted to answer research questions and achieve research objectives (Coburn et al., 2021). According to Creswell (2015) a research design serves as a blueprint within which research is carried out. Lee and Saunders (2017) identify three main types of mixed methods research designs: convergent parallel mixed methods design (one-phase design), explanatory sequential mixed methods design (two-phase design) and exploratory sequential mixed methods design (three-phase design). For this study, informed by the pragmatist research philosophy, the convergent parallel mixed method design was adopted. This design was adopted because it allowed the researcher to gather both quantitative and qualitative data at almost the same period and integrate it at the interpretation of the results. This provided a means of cross-validating the data. The results of both the quantitative and qualitative data corroborated each other without significant incongruities. A questionnaire for students and a questionnaire for academic staff (mathematics teachers and key management staff who had some background in mathematics) were used to collect the quantitative data. This permitted the researcher to gather data from a larger number of students and teachers and also gave the study greater statistical power. It also provided the researcher with the opportunity to use validated models of data analysis. Key Informant Interviews for management staff members were conducted to gather the qualitative data. This made room for the collection of detailed information about the conflict management practices in the selected schools.

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study was all students and academic staff of the four public senior high schools within the western part of the Savannah Region namely: Tuna Senior High Technical School (TUSEC), Sawla Senior High School (SAWSEC), Damango Senior High



School (DASS) and Bole Senior High School (BOSEC). The academic staff consists of the teachers and the management staff. The students, teachers, and management staff were targeted because they are key stakeholders of the schools and have relevant information as regards conflicts within the school and how these conflicts are managed. Their experiences would have provided them with in-depth knowledge about the current strategies of managing conflicts, their effectiveness, the challenges associated with managing conflicts, and the cultural factors that exert influence on conflict management practices within senior high schools in western Savannah. Three thousand four hundred and ninety-five (3,495) students attend Tuna Senior High Technical School, and there are 150 academic staff members. Three thousand, three hundred and twenty-seven (3,327) students attend Sawla Senior High School, and there are eleven academic staff members (121). The student population of Bole Senior High School is two thousand, five hundred and ninety-three (2,593), while the student population of Damango Senior High School is two thousand, nine hundred and fifty-six (2,956), with an academic staff strength of one hundred and twenty (120). The head teacher, assistant head teacher for academics, assistant head teacher for administration, assistant head teacher for domestic, senior house master, and senior house mistress make up the six management personnel in each of the four schools. The distribution of the target population is shown in Table 1 below

Table 1: Distribution of target population

School Name	Student Population			Staff Population		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
TUSEC	2,428	1,067	3,495	105	45	150
SAWSEC	2,370	957	3,327	77	44	121
DASS	1,831	1,125	2,956	74	46	120
BOSEC	1,531	1,062	2,593	70	48	118
TOTAL	8,160	4,211	12,371	326	183	509

Source: Field Data, 2021

Table 1 show that, there are 8,160 male students and 4,211 female students in all four schools. All four schools have a total student population of 12,371. The total population of male academic staff is 326 compared to the female academic staff population of 183 in all four schools. The total number of academic staff members across all four institutions is 509. The 12,880 academic staff members and students make up the study's target population overall.

3.5. Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Yin (2019), a sample size should neither be too small nor too large. The Cochran's Formula for sample size determination for a known population was used to select 372 respondents as follows;

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{(n_0 - 1)}{N}}$$



Where:

n = (sample size)

n_0 = Cochran's recommended sample size = 384

N = Target Population = 12,880

$$n = \frac{384}{1 + \frac{(384-1)}{12880}} = 372$$

3.6 Sampling Techniques

According to Lee and Saunders (2017), sampling techniques are the various methods used by researchers to select final respondents. We have probability and non-probability sampling techniques (Sounders and Thornhill, 2019). The techniques that give every member of the target population a chance of being selected are referred to as probability sampling techniques; the techniques that purposively target specific participants are referred to as non-probability sampling techniques. Cochran's technique was again used to determine the proportion of students and teachers and the proportion of the numbers that were selected from the various schools.

The Simple Random Sampling technique was used to select three hundred and thirty (330) students (218 males and 112 females) from a target population of 12, 371. Ninety-three (93) students were selected from TUSEC, eighty-nine (89) students from SAWSEC, seventy-nine (79) students from DASS and sixty-nine (69) students from BOSEC. First of all, a list of all students was compiled using the Nominal Rolls of each school. Each was given a unique identifier and a random table was used to randomly select a total of three hundred and thirty (330) students from the constructed list. This number was arrived at by taking the percentage of



students' contribution to the target population. Since the students constituted ninety percent (90%) of the target population, they were given ninety percent (90%) representation in the final sample.

Simple Random Sampling technique was also used to select forty-two (42) staff to participate in the survey and twelve (12) management staff were selected for key informant interviews bringing the total sample size to 372. The summary of the sample for the study is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of sampled population

School Name	Student Population			Staff Population			Management Staff		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
TUSEC	65	28	93	7	2	9	2	1	3
SAWSEC	63	26	89	6	2	8	2	1	3
DASS	49	30	79	5	2	7	2	1	3
BOSEC	41	28	69	4	2	6	2	1	3
TOTAL	218	112	330	22	8	30	8	4	12

Source: Field Data, 2021

3.7 Research Instruments

Two research instruments: Questionnaire and interview guides were employed to gather data for the study. There was questionnaire for students and questionnaire for staff. A 23 test items questionnaire for the staff was adapted from Sengul et al. (2019) and Plana et al. (2018) to solicit information from staff members for the study. The researcher changed some of the test items in their questionnaire to suit this study since these items were measuring variables not exactly the same as those in the present study. The questionnaire for the staff was in three sections labelled A-E. Section A (8 items) gathered data on the demographic characteristics of respondents such as age, gender, rank, years of professional experience, number of years of teaching in the municipality, academic qualification, professional qualification, and teaching philosophy.





Section B (8 items) solicited data on the current conflict management strategies used by the various schools in resolving conflicts. Section C (7 items) solicited data on the perceived effectiveness of the strategies used in managing conflicts by the various schools. Section D gathered data on the challenges of managing school conflicts and section E solicited data on the cultural factors influencing conflict management in the various schools.

A 21 test items questionnaire for students was adapted from Sengul et al. (2019) and Schukajlow et al. (2018) to solicit information from students. The researcher changed some of the test items in their questionnaire to suit this study since these items were measuring variables not exactly the same as those in the present study. The students' questionnaire was structured in five sections labelled A-E. Section A (6 items) asked for demographic characteristics such as age, gender, year/form, department, intended course of study and favourite core subject. Section B (8 items) solicited data on the conflict management strategies used in school. Section C (7 items) of the students' questionnaire solicited data on students' perception of the effectiveness of the conflict management strategies used. Section D gathered data from students about the challenges of conflict management. The last section which was labelled E solicited data on the cultural factors that influence conflict management practices in the selected schools.

A self-designed semi-structured interview was used to collect information from the key management employees in the sample. According to Creswell (2015), an interview schedule is a procedure wherein a participant responds to a question posed for recording by the researcher. The key management staff members who had some experience with conflict resolution techniques in senior high schools provided the interview data for this study. These participants' qualitative information supplemented the quantitative information gathered from survey questions. Parts A and B comprised the interview guide for top management personnel. In Section A, respondents were asked to provide information about their gender, position within the



school, number of years spent as a teacher, number of years in their present role, educational background and level, and professional and academic credentials. Regarding the research objectives, Section B gathered data on the study's variables. The duration of each interview was thirty to sixty minutes. The interviews generated high and rich qualitative data which was authentic, trustworthy, credible and balanced due to the systematic nature of the process (Lee and Saunders (2017).

3.8 Validity and Reliability

According to Lee and Saunders (2017), validity indicates if an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. The investigator made certain that every research tool utilized measured precisely and accurately what it was intended to assess. The researcher ensured that the test items in the instruments were exactly on the various constructs of the study such as the current strategies of managing conflicts in schools, their perceived effectiveness, and challenges of managing school conflicts and the influence of cultural factors on school conflict management in the western part of the Savannah Region. The questionnaire and interview guide were adapted from previous studies and were peer-reviewed by colleagues before they were presented to the supervisor for validation and approval before data collection. A pre-test was carried out in Wa Municipal which has similar characteristics to the study area. These were done to ensure clarity, adequacy, relevance, breadth, applicability, and lack of ambiguity to see if they were appropriate in achieving the research objectives. After their feedback, the necessary changes to the content of the questionnaire and interview schedule were made.

According to Lee and Saunders (2017), an instrument's reliability is its ability to yield consistent findings when used by various users at various periods. The study was reliable because it was carried out in a way that was planned and arranged by accepted research protocols, guaranteeing that the results would remain the same if they were reproduced by a new researcher with a



different sample of respondents and under other circumstances. Additionally, the devices were used in a pilot test by the researcher. Because of this, the researcher was able to fix any anomalies on the instruments before gathering the majority of the data. The investigator made certain that the test items comprehensively addressed every aspect of the research topic. The multiple-choice Likert scale questions used in the study necessitated that the researcher ascertain the scale's internal consistency or reliability.

The Cronbach's alpha (α) was run to assess the consistency of items used in the questionnaire. Those that fell below the threshold of 0.5 were removed. According to George and Mallery (2010), the dependability coefficients for exceptional, adequate, poor, and unacceptable are, respectively, approximately 0.9 to 0.8, 0.7 to 0.6, and smaller than 0.5. Each construct's Cronbach Alpha scale showed that it was more than 0.8, meaning that the test items tested the intended constructs with accuracy.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure.

Primary data refers to the first-hand data that is collected directly from the main sources in the field through interviews, surveys and experiments (Creswell, 2015). For this study, primary data was gathered from students and staff of TUSEC, SAWSEC, DASS, and BOSEC. The researcher, first of all, obtained clearance from the Research and Ethics Committee of the University of Development Studies. This was distributed to all stakeholders especially the Head Masters/Head Mistresses in the schools where the research was conducted and other stakeholders to seek permission for data gathering with the respondents and Key Informants. The researcher engaged the respondents before the distribution of the questionnaires to establish a good rapport with them, and inform them of the purpose of the research and why their response was necessary for the success of the research. The researcher further assured them of the confidentiality of the

information they may be providing and also sought their informed consent before they were given the questionnaires.

The researcher carefully chosen and qualified research assistants to assist with data collection in order to guarantee the acquisition of high-quality data. Since the researcher collected the data at four different schools, at least eight (8) research assistants were chosen and trained. While the researcher performed Key Informant Interviews with the management staff, the research assistants collected data in the schools using a questionnaire. To guarantee the highest possible response rate, the researcher and his assistants went to each school at prearranged intervals following the questionnaire's distribution to gather completed forms and remind those who hadn't finished them of the importance of doing so. For ten (10) days, research assistants were required to distribute and retrieve a minimum of five (5) surveys daily, while the researcher conducted a minimum of two (2) Key Informant Interviews daily. Two days were dedicated for identifying and correcting missing responses before vacating the field. After the exercise, the researcher sent an appreciation letter to the schools including other stakeholders who helped to make the data collection process successful.

3.10 Ethical Issues

Several ethical issues have been taken into account in this study. For instance, the researcher adhered to all the ethical issues laid down in the Graduate Students' Handbook of the University of Development Studies. Before the commencement of the study, the respondents were duly informed about the aims and objectives of the study. It was made very clear to them, that, they could decide not to carry on with the process should they become uncomfortable with it. The respondents were further assured of the fact that; their responses will be kept confidential. Indeed, what their responses were to be used for was also made much known to them. All of these gave them the confidence and security needed to willingly and happily take part in the data



collection process as all their doubts and fears were cleared. All materials and text used in the study were also properly and adequately referenced, just to ensure that plagiarism issues were avoided.

3.11 Data Analysis Techniques

Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered around all the objectives. The quantitative data for all research questions were analysed using simple quantitative tools with the help of Microsoft Excel. The analyses were largely descriptive and descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, minimum and maximum values and these were presented in tables and charts. Qualitative data for all four research questions were analysed using inductive thematic analysis where codes were generated and transformed into themes and the themes were interpreted in to answer the research questions. The process of editing and coding will be taken into consideration to make sure that all responses are rationally and cogently recorded to provide consistent information, aid in the comprehension of phenomena, and cross-check the data gathered. The questionnaire results were descriptively analysed, reported as percentages and frequency of responses, and tabulated data was used for interpretation.

The editing made it easier for the researcher to review the data, find any mistakes or omissions, and, if necessary, fix them. To ensure the completeness, accuracy, consistency, and comprehensiveness of the data, it was necessary to verify, inspect, correct, and alter the acquired information. Data in the form of percentages and frequencies were presented using tabular presentations. The graphs show the statistical frequency of answers to specific questions. Visual aids such as graphics make it easier and clearer to understand the research interpretations and the phenomenon under study.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the primary data that was collected to address the research questions. The data is organized by the research objectives of the study. It commences with an overview of the respondents' demographic characteristics, followed by an exploration of the existing conflict management strategies employed in schools, their effectiveness, and the challenges encountered in managing conflicts within educational institutions. Furthermore, this chapter delves into the cultural factors that influence the successful implementation of conflict management strategies in selected senior high schools located in the western part of the Savannah Region.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

4.2.1 Gender

In this study, the term "gender" refers specifically to sex of an individual. The survey comprised two hundred and eighteen 218(59%) male student respondents and one hundred and twelve 112(30%) female student respondents. Among the teacher respondents, there were thirty 30(8%) male teachers and twelve 12(3%) female teachers. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of these gender distributions.



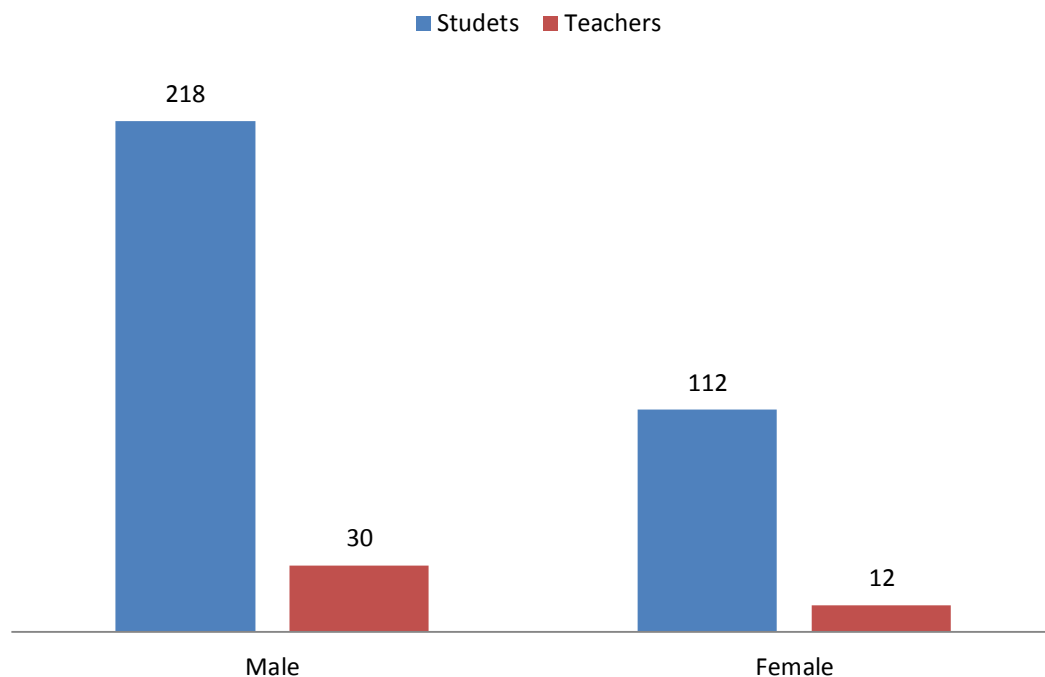


Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Source: Field Data, 2022

4.2.2 Age

The respondents were distributed across various age ranges. Among the students, two hundred and thirty-three (233) individuals were between the ages of 16 and 18. Additionally, there were forty-five (45) students below the age of sixteen, thirty (30) students aged between 19 and 21, and twenty-two (22) students fell within the age range of 22-24. As for the teachers, the majority fell within the age range of 34 and 36. Seven (7) of the teachers were between the ages of 43 and 45, while five (5) fell within the age bracket of 28-38. Figure 3 visually presents the distribution of respondents across these age groups.

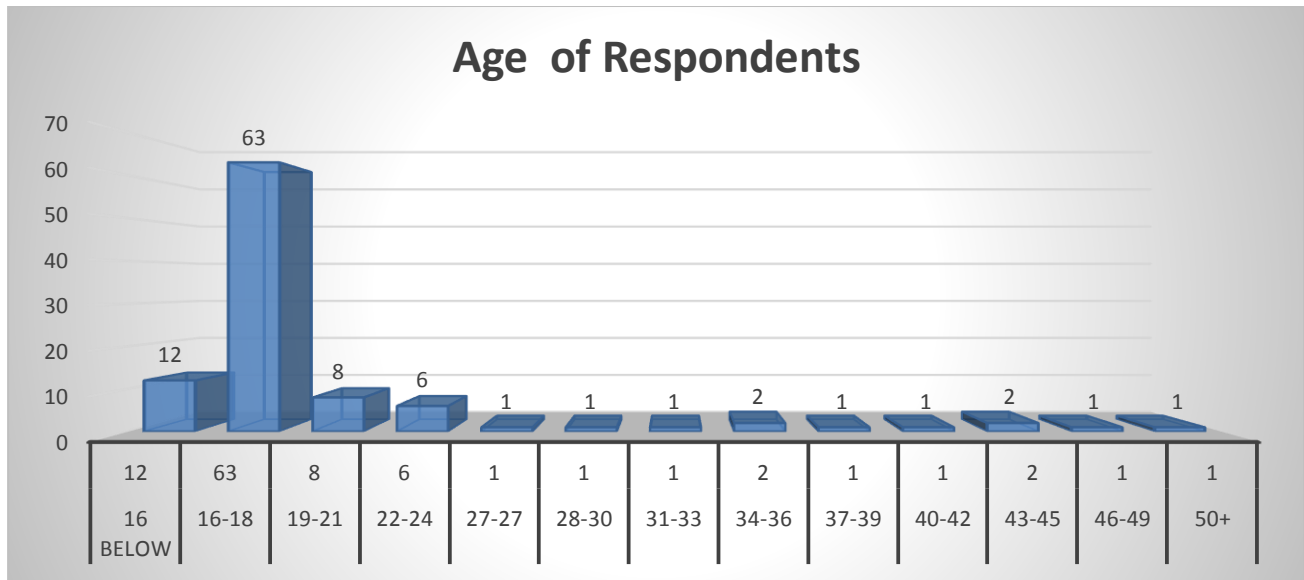


Figure 3: Distributions of Respondents According to Age

Source: Field Data, 2022

4.2.3 Teachers' Academic Qualification

In terms of academic qualifications, the majority of the teachers held first degrees in various subjects. Specifically, twenty (20) teachers, comprising approximately 48% of the total teacher respondents, possessed a B.Sc. Sixteen (16) of the teachers, accounting for around 40% of the teacher respondents, had an M.Sc. or M.Phil. Only six (6) teachers, representing approximately 12% of the teacher respondents, held a Diploma certificate. Figure 4 visually illustrates the distribution of teachers based on their academic qualifications.

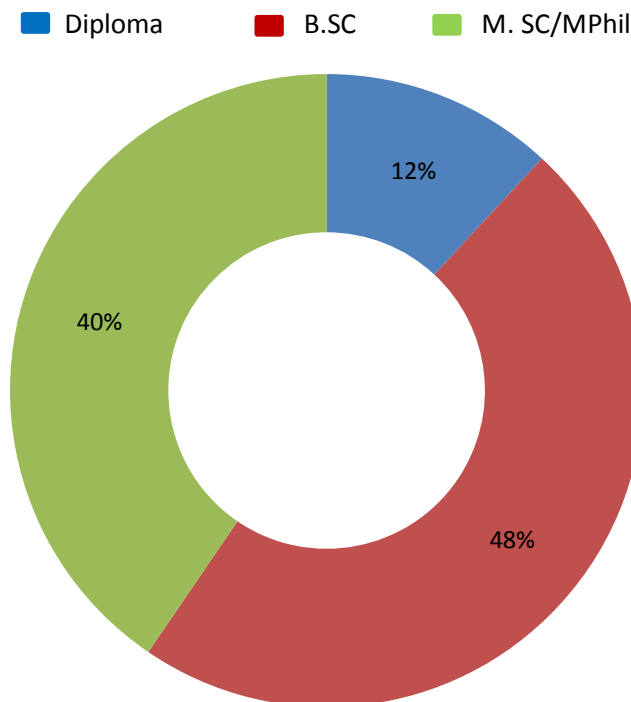


Figure 4: Teachers' Academic Qualification

Source: Field Data, 2022

4.2.4 Teachers' Professional Qualification

Academic qualifications and professional certifications differ, as one may have high academic qualifications but lack the necessary certification to teach. During the study, it was found that all the teachers held teaching licenses, and a majority of them also possessed professional certificates. Specifically, fifteen (15) teachers, constituting approximately 36% of the teacher respondents, held Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) certificates. Ten (10) of them, accounting for around 24% of the total respondents, had Masters in Education (M.Ed) degrees, while five (5) teachers, representing about 12% of the teacher respondents, had Diploma in Education (Dip. Ed) certificates. Additionally, twelve (12) teachers, making up approximately 28% of the teachers, were non-professional (Non. Prof). Figure 5 provides a detailed overview of the distribution of teachers based on their academic and professional qualifications.

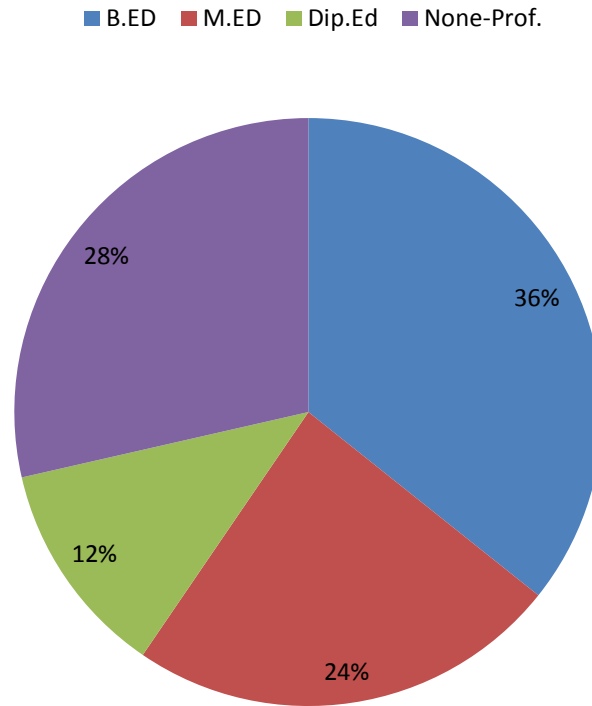


Figure 5: Teachers' Professional Qualification

Source: Field Data, 2022

4.2.5 Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience

Many of the teachers possessed extensive teaching experience. Among the teacher respondents, twelve (12) of them, representing 28.6%, had a teaching tenure ranging from 13 to 15 years. Eight (8) teachers, comprising 19% of the teacher respondents, had taught for a period between 7 and 10 years. Additionally, six (6) teachers, making up 14.2% of the teacher respondents, had teaching experience of at least 4 to 7 years, while five (5) teachers, accounting for 12% of the teacher respondents, had taught for a duration between 14 and 17 years. Furthermore, four (4) teachers each had taught for periods between 17 to 20 years and 21+ years, respectively. Figure 6 visually presents the distribution of teachers based on their years of teaching experience.

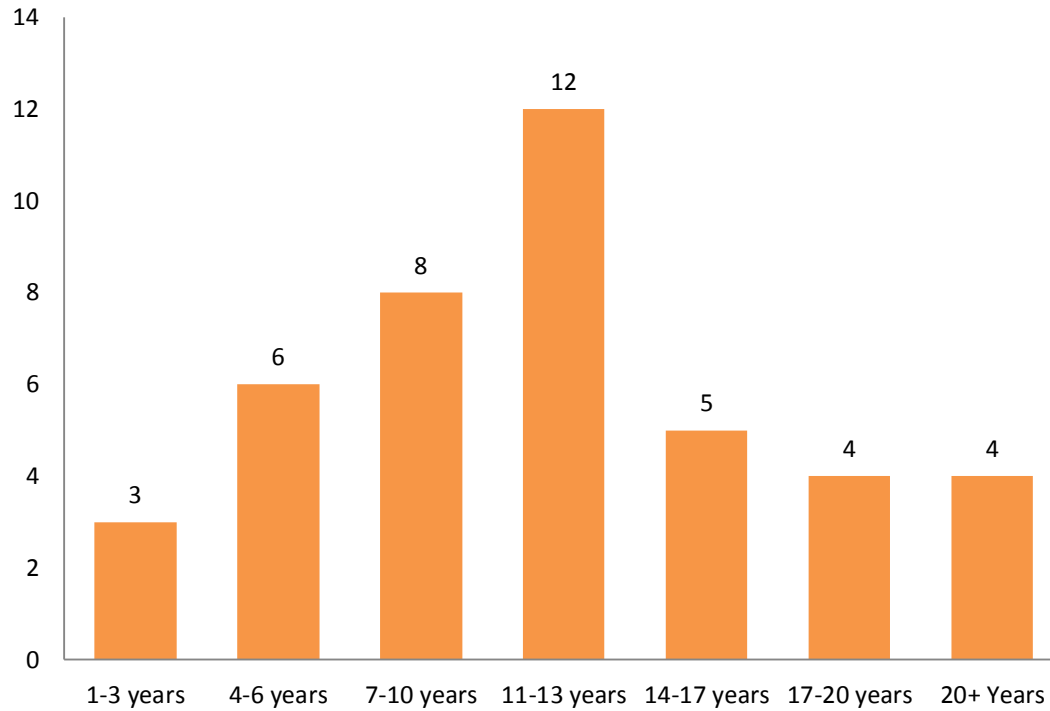


Figure 6: Years of Teaching Experiences

Source: Field Data, 2022

4.3 Objective I: Conflict Management Strategies in Senior High Schools Located in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The analysis of the data collected around this objective revealed several strategies used in managing school conflicts in the study region. These are summarised in Figure 7.

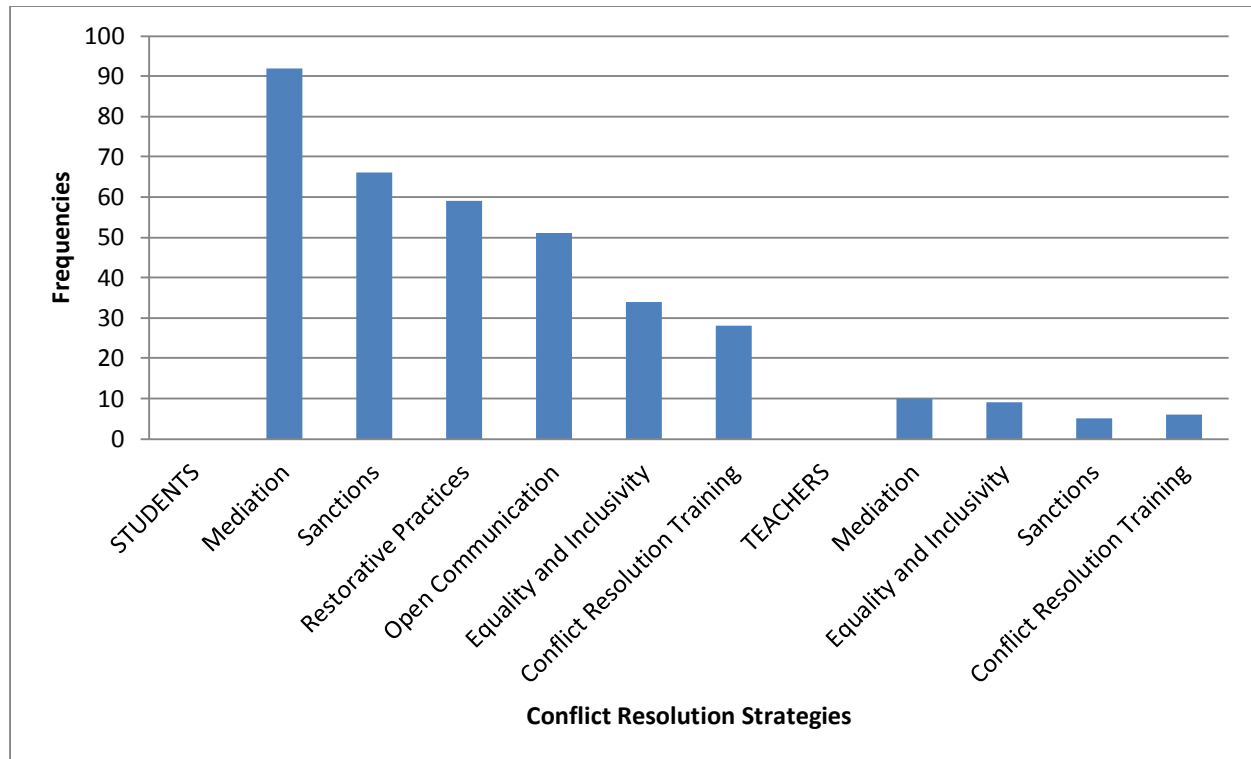


Figure 7: Survey Responses on School Conflict Resolution Strategies in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

Source: Field Data, 2023



The analysis revealed that mediation was the most commonly used strategy for managing school conflicts as this was indicated by 92 student-participants (25.6%) and 10 (2.8%) teacher-participants. Additionally, 66 student's participants (18.3%) mentioned the use of sanctions, such as withdrawal of students involved in fights or riots, teacher transfers to undesirable locations, and deboardisation of students causing conflicts or violence. The study found that, 5 (1.4 %) teacher-respondents also mentioned this strategy. Restorative practices, involving conflicting parties meeting to address issues, were reported by 59 student-participants (14.4%). Open communication was identified as a strong strategy by 51 students participants (14.2%) for resolving conflicts. Equality and inclusivity were highlighted by 34 student-participants (9.4%) who responded to the questionnaire, with similar indications from the teacher-participants

9(2.5%). Additionally, 28 student's participants (7.8%) mentioned that some teachers and prefects receive conflict resolution training to facilitate conflict resolution among students and staff. This strategy was also indicated by 6(1.7%) of the teacher participants. These findings were corroborated by the key informants who took part in the personal interviews. One of them explained to the researcher this:

“We mediate; facilitate communication, sometimes we spell out expected behaviors for both teachers and students and those who may go against this are administered appropriate sanctions and this serve as deterrence to others”

Another also explained:

“We do take conflict management training and we do get some of the teachers and students to be part of it”

These findings shed light on the common conflict management strategies implemented in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region. They indicate that schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region employ various conflict management strategies, with mediation being the most common approach. This collaborative method fosters open dialogue and mutual understanding among conflicting parties. Additionally, schools use sanctions to enforce discipline, and restorative practices to repair harm, and emphasize open communication for early conflict identification. The presence of conflict resolution training for teachers and prefects enhances conflict resolution capabilities. Overall, the schools are taking positive steps to create a supportive and conducive learning environment by addressing conflicts proactively and collaboratively. Continuous evaluation and improvement of these strategies will be essential for their effectiveness and adaptability to changing conflict situations.

4.4 Perceptions of Effectiveness of School Conflict Resolution Strategies used in Managing Conflict in Western Part Savannah

The analysis of the quantitative data collected regarding this objective revealed diverse perceptions among the participants. As indicated in Table 3, out of the 360 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 81 (22.5%) student-participants indicated that the conflict management strategies were effective in resolving conflicts in their schools. Similarly, 8 (2.2%) teacher-participants expressed a similar view. On the other hand, 62 (17.2%) student participants mentioned that the strategies were transparent, instilling trust among the involved parties. However, 51 (14.2%) student respondents believed that the strategies were exclusive and did not involve all parties in a conflict. Interestingly, 6 (1.7%) teacher participants perceived the strategies as inclusive, giving everyone a chance to be heard.

Moreover, 36 (10.0%) student participants felt that the strategies employed unfair processes, particularly in student-teacher conflicts. In contrast, 7 (1.9%) teacher participants believed the strategies to be fair and just, adhering to established conflict management procedures in line with standard practices. Both student and teacher participants agreed that the strategies were sustainable, with 30 (8.3%) students and 5 (1.4%) teachers expressing this view. The student-participants acknowledged that the strategies efficiently resolved conflicts within a reasonable timeframe (41, 11.4%) and also indicated that the strategies were culturally sensitive (29, 8.1%). However, the teacher participants held a different perception of the strategies' cultural sensitivity, with 5 of them (1.4%) expressing that the strategies lacked consideration for the cultural variability of students and staff.



Table 3: Perceptions of Participants on the Effectiveness of Conflict Resolution Strategies Adopted for Conflict Resolution in Selected Senior High Schools Located in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

Perceptions	Frequencies	Percentages
STUDENTS		
Able to resolve conflicts	81	22.5
Are transparent	62	17.2
Are exclusive	51	14.2
Are unfair	36	10.0
Are timely	41	11.4
Are culturally sensitive	29	8.1
are sustainable	30	8.3
TEACHERS		0.0
Are efficient	8	2.2
Are fair	7	1.9
Are inclusive	6	1.7
Are sustainable	4	1.1
Are not culturally sensitive	5	1.4

Source: Field Data, 2023

These findings indicate a range of perceptions regarding the effectiveness and attributes of conflict management strategies in schools. While a significant proportion of student participants believed that the strategies employed were able to resolve conflicts and foster trust through transparency, a notable portion expressed concerns about the exclusivity of the approaches. The differing perceptions between students and teachers regarding the fairness of the strategies in student-teacher conflicts suggest a need for clearer communication and understanding between



these groups. On a positive note, both students and teachers agreed on the sustainability of the strategies. However, the study also revealed a potential cultural sensitivity issue, with some teachers feeling that the strategies did not consider their cultural backgrounds. These findings highlight the importance of continually evaluating and adapting conflict management approaches to ensure inclusivity, fairness, and cultural sensitivity in addressing conflicts within educational settings.

4.5 Challenges of Managing School Conflicts in Schools Located in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The analysis revealed several challenges of managing school conflicts in this part of the region. Table 4 provides a summary of the findings. As in Table 5, seventy-one students-participants (19.7%) indicated that the major challenge in managing conflicts in their school is the involvement of multiple stakeholders. They indicated that Schools are diverse communities with students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders, each having their unique perspectives and interests. Managing conflicts effectively requires understanding and addressing the diverse needs and concerns of these stakeholders. Teacher-Respondents did not see this as a challenge. The student-respondents also identified power imbalances as a challenge especially when it involved students against staff members 56 (15.6%). This means that Hierarchical power structures within schools, such as the authority of administrators and teachers over students create imbalances that affect conflict resolution. Students may feel disempowered, and conflicts can arise when power is disproportionately held and exercised. This challenge was also indicated by the teacher-participants 5 (1.4%).

Table 4: Challenges of Managing School Conflicts in Selected Senior High Schools Located in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

Challenges	Frequencies	Percentages
STUDENTS		
Multiple Stakeholders	71	19.7
Power Imbalances	56	15.6
Expertism	51	14.2
Emotionality	47	13.1
Poor Communication	54	15.0
Lack of consistent Policies	51	14.2
Total	330	91.7
TEACHERS		
Training	7	1.9
Resources	8	2.2
Confidentiality and Privacy	6	1.7
Power Imbalances	5	1.4
Emotional Intensity	4	1.1
Total	30	8.3

Source: Field Data, 2023

Forty-seven of the student-participants also indicated that lack of conflict management experts was a challenge. This was also softly expressed by the teacher-participants when they indicated lack of training as a challenge to managing school conflicts 7(1.9%). The student-participants indicated other challenges such as poor communication 54 (15.0%), emotionality 47 (13.1%), and lack of consistent conflict resolution policies in schools 51 (14.2%). The teacher-respondents indicated that sometimes the emotions that come with certain conflicts make it challenging for



such conflicts to be resolved 4(1.1%). Teacher-respondents also mentioned other challenges as lack of resources 8(2.2%) and issues of confidentiality and privacy. These findings were corroborated by the responses of the key informants who took part in the personal interviews.

One of them explained the situation to the researcher as this:

“We face numerous challenges, we are not conflict experts, we receive some training but this is not enough. We have no resources; we are dealing with different group of people from different cultural backgrounds. Ensuring fairness and satisfying all parties in conflict resolution is not an easy task”

Another also explains

“Sometimes the power structure makes it difficult, especially when it involves students and staff. Additionally, there are issues that border on the privacy of individuals, handling these require a certain level of carefulness”

These findings highlight a range of challenges faced in managing conflicts within schools in the western part of the savannah region. It is evident that one of the major obstacles is the involvement of multiple stakeholders, each with their unique perspectives and interests. This complexity requires careful consideration of diverse needs to effectively and efficiently address and resolve conflicts amicably. The presence of power imbalances, particularly when conflicts arise between students and staff members, is also a significant challenge. These imbalances can create feelings of disempowerment among students and hinder conflict resolution efforts. Another critical issue is the lack of conflict management experts, as identified by both students and teachers. This scarcity of trained professionals may hinder schools' ability to handle conflicts effectively and could benefit from additional resources or training opportunities. Moreover, challenges like poor communication, emotionality, and inconsistent conflict resolution policies



within schools add to the complexities of managing conflicts. Addressing these challenges will require comprehensive strategies that promote open communication, empower stakeholders, and establish clear and consistent conflict resolution policies to create a more harmonious school environment.

4.6 Influence of Cultural Factors on Conflict Resolution in Selected Senior High Schools in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The analysis of the data concerning this objective revealed several influences of cultural factors on conflict resolution in the study schools. As summarized in Table 5, a majority of the student participants (111 students, 30.8%) indicated that the culture emphasizing respect for constituted authorities often influenced conflict resolution in a negative direction. The teacher respondents (5 teachers, 1.4%) also acknowledged that the cultural norm of younger individuals always respecting older ones had a negative impact on conflict resolution. This indicates that the culture in the study area values respect for authority figures, including teachers and school administrators, leading to students hesitating to openly challenge authority or express grievances, thus affecting how conflicts are communicated and resolved within the school. On the positive side, the student respondents (78 students, 21.7%) highlighted that traditional peace practice of reconciliation, forgiveness, and restorative justice, which are practiced in the study region, had a significant impact on resolving school conflicts. This finding was supported by the teacher participants, who indicated that the culture of collectivism and communalism shaped how people express grievances, as they consider themselves as brothers and sisters within the same community, fostering school conflict resolution. Moreover, sixty-nine student participants (19.2%) mentioned that the perception of womanhood also affected conflict resolution, as societal norms expect women to respect and honor men, which discourages female students or staff from openly challenging men and this influences conflict resolution. The teacher



respondents also pointed out that gender norms and ideologies promoted in the study region often affected how conflicts involving men and women were handled.

Table 5 Table 6: Influence of Cultural Factors on Conflict Resolution in Selected Senior High Schools in the Western Part of the Savannah Region.

Cultural Factors	Frequencies	Percentages
STUDENTS		
Respect for Authority	111	30.8
Traditional Peace Practices	78	21.7
Emphasis on Reconciliation	72	20.0
Perceptions of Femininity and Womanhood	69	19.2
Total	330	91.7
TEACHERS		0.0
Communication Styles	8	2.2
Collectivism	4	1.1
Gender Norms	7	1.9
Respect for Authority	6	1.7
Respect for the Elderly	5	1.4
Total	30	8.3

Source: Field Data, 2023

Responses from the participants who took part in the interviews also corroborated these findings. One of the participants expresses the influence of cultural practices on school conflict resolution as this:

“Schools are situated within social and physical environments and these definitely will influence school activities including conflict management. Over here we have great



respect authorities a lot so in this sense conflict involving those in authority and their subordinate will be addressed within these contexts”

Another also explained:

“We understand that women are subordinated to men, so conflicts involving these two would be affected by this beliefs and practices. On the positive side practices of communalism, reconciliation, forgiveness and restoration positively influence school conflict management”

These findings indicate the significant influence of contextual cultural factors on conflict resolution in the study schools. The culture of respect for authority figures and the expectation of younger individuals to respect their elders can hinder open communication and expression of grievances, impacting the resolution of conflicts. On the other hand, the traditional peace practices of reconciliation, forgiveness, and restorative justice have a positive impact on resolving school conflicts, promoting a sense of collectivism and communalism among students and staff. However, gender norms and ideologies can also play a role, as the perception of womanhood may affect how female students and staff express their grievances and influence the handling of conflicts involving men and women. Understanding and addressing these cultural influences are crucial for developing effective conflict resolution strategies that are sensitive to the cultural context and promote a harmonious school environment in the selected senior high schools in the western part of the Savannah Region.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings that were made during the analysis and related them to the theories that were adopted to provide an analytical framework for the study as well as existing empirical studies that were conducted on similar or related topics.

5.2 Conflict Management Strategies in Senior High Schools

The study found that mediation is the most commonly employed strategy for managing school conflicts in Senior High Schools in the Western Part of the Savannah Region. Both student and teacher participants acknowledged the use of mediation as an effective means of resolving conflicts. Additionally, sanctions were mentioned by both student and teacher respondents as a strategy to address conflicts, involving actions such as withdrawal of students involved in fights or riots, teacher transfers to less desirable locations, and deboardisation of students causing conflicts or violence. Restorative practices, where conflicting parties come together to address issues, were also reported as a significant strategy. Open communication was highlighted as a strong approach for conflict resolution, emphasizing the importance of fostering effective dialogue between stakeholders. Equality and inclusivity were considered essential in managing conflicts, ensuring that all parties involved were heard and considered. The involvement of some teachers and prefects in conflict resolution training was mentioned as a positive step to facilitate effective resolution of conflicts among students and staff. These findings were supported by key informant interviews, which revealed the use of mediation, communication facilitation, and conflict management training for teachers and students. Overall, the study indicates a comprehensive approach to conflict management in the school setting, utilizing various strategies to create a harmonious and inclusive environment for conflict resolution.





The findings are consistent with existing literature on school conflict resolution, which often emphasizes the importance of employing multiple strategies to effectively manage conflicts within educational settings. Mediation, which emerged as the most commonly used strategy in this study, aligns with previous research that highlights its effectiveness in facilitating constructive dialogue between conflicting parties. Mediation encourages open communication, active listening, and compromise, allowing individuals to find mutually agreeable solutions to their conflicts. For example, research by Shanka and Thuo (2017) showed that peer mediation programs in schools promote positive relationships and reduce aggressive behavior among students.

The mention of restorative practices in conflict resolution is also in line with existing literature. Restorative practices focus on repairing harm caused by conflicts and restoring relationships within the school community. By providing a safe space for individuals to express their grievances and engage in constructive dialogue, restorative practices contribute to creating a supportive and inclusive school environment. This finding resonates with research that has highlighted the positive impact of restorative justice approaches on reducing disciplinary issues and fostering a sense of belonging among students (Afful-Broni, 2012; Antwi, 2013; Kaluma, 2017; Kesse, 2019).

The emphasis on open communication as a strong strategy is consistent with literature emphasizing the importance of fostering a culture of open dialogue in schools. Effective communication enables individuals to express their concerns and perspectives, leading to better understanding and collaborative conflict resolution (Danso, 2018). For instance, research by Marfo et al. (2019) highlights the role of open communication in resolving conflicts between teachers and administrators. This finding underscores the significance of promoting transparent and open channels of communication to address conflicts promptly and constructively.

The focus on equality and inclusivity in managing conflicts aligns with the literature advocating for fair and participatory conflict resolution processes. Recognizing and valuing the perspectives of all stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the resolution outcomes. For example, a study by Opoku-Asare et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of inclusive approaches in addressing conflicts related to diversity and cultural differences in schools. By involving all relevant parties in the conflict resolution process, schools can create a more equitable and empowering environment, promoting positive relationships and fostering a sense of belonging for all members of the school community.

Generally, the findings of this study align with established literature, indicating that successful school conflict resolution involves a combination of strategies that promote effective communication, inclusivity, and restorative practices. These approaches are intended to create a supportive and respectful environment conducive to conflict resolution and positive relationships within the school community. By acknowledging and addressing conflicts promptly and fairly, schools can cultivate a harmonious and conducive learning environment that nurtures the well-being and academic success of all students and staff.

The findings also align strongly with the integrative bargaining theory of conflict resolution in several ways. Integrative bargaining focuses on finding mutually beneficial solutions to conflicts by identifying common interests and maximizing joint gains. In the context of school conflict resolution, integrative bargaining emphasizes the importance of collaborative problem-solving and open communication to address conflicts effectively (Thakore, 2013).

The use of mediation as the most commonly employed strategy in the study reflects the principles of integrative bargaining. Mediation involves a neutral third-party facilitating communication and negotiation between conflicting parties to help them identify shared interests and work towards a resolution that meets everyone's needs. This process encourages a



cooperative approach, allowing individuals to move beyond their positions and explore underlying interests, which can lead to creative and mutually beneficial solutions (Cross & Rosenthal, 1999; Thakore, 2013). Similarly, restorative practices, such as reconciliation and forgiveness, resonate with the integrative bargaining theory. Restorative practices aim to repair the harm caused by conflicts and restore relationships within the school community. By encouraging individuals to acknowledge the impact of their actions on others and take responsibility for their behavior, restorative practices promote empathy and understanding, fostering a sense of community and cooperation (Cross & Rosenthal, 1999). This aligns with the integrative bargaining principle of seeking win-win solutions that address the concerns of all parties involved.

The emphasis on open communication and inclusivity in the conflict resolution strategies identified in the study also aligns with integrative bargaining. Integrative bargaining encourages transparent communication and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991). By valuing the perspectives of all students and staff, schools can create an environment that promotes trust and collaboration, making it easier to address conflicts constructively and reach mutually acceptable resolutions. Furthermore, the focus on equality and fairness in the conflict resolution strategies is consistent with integrative bargaining. Integrative bargaining seeks to create equitable outcomes that consider the interests and needs of all parties involved (Sanson & Bretherton, 2001). By recognizing the importance of fairness and inclusivity in managing conflicts, schools align with the integrative bargaining approach, which aims to build positive and sustainable relationships based on mutual respect and consideration.

Generally, the findings of the study demonstrate a strong alignment with the principles of integrative bargaining theory in conflict resolution. The strategies employed in the school setting

emphasize collaboration, open communication, and inclusivity, all of which are central tenets of the integrative bargaining approach. By adopting integrative bargaining principles in conflict resolution, schools can foster a positive and cooperative environment that supports the well-being and success of students and staff.

5.3 Perceptions of the Effectiveness of School conflict resolution Strategies

The study discovered various perceptions about the effectiveness of adopted school conflict resolution strategies. This finding indicates that there are diverse perceptions among both students and teachers regarding the effectiveness of conflict management strategies in the school setting. The positive perceptions expressed by some student-participants regarding the transparency of the strategies and the trust they instil among the parties involved suggest that open and honest communication is valued as an essential aspect of resolving conflicts. On the other hand, the view of certain student-participants that the strategies are exclusive implies that there might be concerns about certain stakeholders feeling left out or unheard during conflict resolution processes. This finding underscores the importance of involving all relevant parties to achieve a more inclusive and effective conflict management approach.

The discrepancy between some student and teacher perceptions of fairness in the strategies regarding student-teacher conflicts suggests that there might be differing expectations and power dynamics between these two groups. It highlights the need for a balanced and unbiased approach to conflict resolution that takes into account the perspectives of both students and teachers. The consensus among both students and teachers on the sustainability of the strategies indicates that these approaches are viewed as enduring and capable of providing ongoing support in handling conflicts over time. This recognition of sustainability is encouraging, as it suggests that the strategies have the potential to be consistently applied and adapted to different conflict situations. However, the differing perceptions on the cultural sensitivity of the strategies raise concerns





about whether the approaches are fully attuned to the cultural context of the Northern Region. This finding suggests that cultural factors might influence how conflicts are perceived and managed in this specific context. It underscores the importance of tailoring conflict resolution strategies to consider the unique cultural norms and practices of the region to enhance their overall effectiveness.

The findings from this study are consistent with existing literature on conflict resolution in educational settings. Research in the field of conflict management has often highlighted the significance of diverse perceptions among stakeholders involved in conflict resolution processes. Studies have shown that students and teachers may hold different views on the effectiveness of various strategies, which aligns with the current finding indicating varying perceptions between student-participants and teacher-participants regarding the impact of conflict management strategies in resolving conflicts in schools. For example, a study Oboegbulem and Alfa (2013) found that teachers and students often have different preferences for conflict resolution approaches, with teachers tending to favor authority-based methods, while students prefer more collaborative and participatory approaches. Moreover, the positive perceptions expressed by some student-participants about the transparency and trustworthiness of the strategies resonate with research emphasizing the importance of open communication and trust-building in effective conflict resolution (Gyan, 2014). This highlights the relevance of promoting transparent and inclusive conflict resolution processes that involve all parties concerned, which is supported by scholars like Syabwanta (2022) and Abudu (2020).

The discrepancy in perceptions between students and teachers regarding fairness in handling conflicts involving students and teachers is also consistent with prior studies exploring power dynamics in educational institutions. Educational researchers have often discussed the unequal power relationships between students and teachers, which can influence their views on fairness



in conflict resolution (Kaluma, 2017). This finding aligns with the work of Kesse (2019), who highlighted the importance of recognizing and addressing power imbalances to ensure fairness in conflict resolution processes. The agreement among both students and teachers on the sustainability of the strategies is congruent with research emphasizing the need for long-term and durable conflict resolution practices in educational settings (Marfo et al., 2019). Sustainable conflict management approaches are regarded as essential for preventing the re-emergence of conflicts and promoting a harmonious school environment.

The finding about differing perceptions on cultural sensitivity in conflict resolution strategies is also consistent with literature emphasizing the impact of cultural factors on conflict resolution processes. Researchers like Oduor (2015) and Kaluma (2017) have explored how cultural norms and values influence conflict behaviours and resolution approaches. In this context, the finding highlights the importance of cultural competency in designing conflict management strategies that align with the values and practices of the Northern Region's cultural context.

The findings from this study further align with the power and conflict theory of conflict in several ways. The power and conflict theory posits that conflicts arise due to the unequal distribution of power and resources among individuals or groups (Danso, 2018). In the context of the study's findings, the discrepancies between student-participants and teacher-participants regarding the effectiveness and fairness of conflict management strategies can be linked to power dynamics within the school setting. The finding that a significant proportion of student-participants perceived the conflict management strategies positively, while only a small percentage of teacher-participants shared a similar view, suggests the presence of power differentials between students and teachers. Teachers, as authority figures, hold a position of power in the school hierarchy, which may influence their perspectives on conflict resolution. On the other hand, students, who often have less power and agency in the school system, may view



conflict management strategies differently, considering their experiences and positions within the power structure.

Similarly, the perception of some student-participants that the strategies were exclusive and did not involve all parties in a conflict might be indicative of power imbalances within the school setting. When certain stakeholders are not adequately represented or feel unheard during conflict resolution processes, it can signal a lack of empowerment and involvement in decision-making, reinforcing power differentials. Moreover, the discrepancy between student and teacher perceptions of fairness in handling conflicts involving students and teachers further reflects power dynamics. Teachers, being in positions of authority, may perceive their actions as fair, while students, who may feel disempowered in comparison, might perceive them differently. This highlights how power relations between teachers and students can influence their views on the fairness of conflict resolution outcomes (Gyan, 2014; Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013).

Furthermore, the finding that some students mentioned the culture of respecting constituted authorities as a negative influence on conflict resolution aligns with power and conflict theory. Cultural norms that emphasize deference to authority figures can reinforce power asymmetries, making it challenging for students to openly challenge or express grievances against teachers or administrators. This can contribute to conflicts going unaddressed or unresolved (Derluguian & Earle, 2010).

In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate the significance of considering diverse perceptions and cultural factors in conflict management strategies within senior high schools, which aligns with existing literature in the field. By acknowledging these differences and tailoring conflict resolution approaches accordingly, educators and policymakers can create more effective and culturally sensitive strategies for managing conflicts in school settings. This can

ultimately contribute to a more harmonious and conducive learning environment for students and teachers alike.

5.4 Challenges of Managing Conflicts in Senior High School in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The study identified various challenges that are associated with managing school conflicts. The diverse range of challenges identified by both students and teachers underscores the complexity of conflict resolution in educational settings. It is clear that conflicts in schools involve multiple stakeholders with different perspectives and interests, and managing these diverse needs requires a nuanced and inclusive approach. The identification of power imbalances as a challenge is particularly noteworthy, as it highlights the significance of hierarchical structures within schools. The findings also shed light on the need for specialized conflict management expertise and training for teachers. As a researcher, I would recognize the potential benefits of implementing comprehensive training programs for educators to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to handle conflicts effectively. Moreover, the recognition of emotional elements in conflicts emphasizes the importance of addressing not only the surface issues but also the underlying emotions that can fuel disputes. Again, the lack of resources, consistent conflict resolution policies, and issues of confidentiality and privacy indicate areas where schools may require additional support and guidance.

The findings align with existing critical literature on school conflict management, which emphasizes the importance of addressing power imbalances, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity in conflict resolution processes within educational settings (Afful-Broni, 2012; Antwi, 2013; Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013; Oduor, 2015; Opoku-Asare et al., 2015; Shanka & Thuo, 2017). Critical literature often examines how social structures and power dynamics can influence conflict resolution outcomes, and the present study's identification of power imbalances as a





challenge in managing conflicts in schools is consistent with this perspective. For example, critical scholars have highlighted how hierarchical power structures within educational institutions can impact the way conflicts are handled, with certain groups feeling disempowered and marginalized in the resolution process. The finding that students perceived power imbalances when conflicts involved students against staff members reflects the critical literature's focus on power differentials within the school environment (Afful-Broni, 2012; Opoku-Asare et al., 2015; Shanka & Thuo, 2017).

The emphasis on inclusivity and addressing the diverse needs and concerns of multiple stakeholders in conflict resolution aligns with critical perspectives that advocate for participatory and democratic approaches to decision-making. Critical literature often critiques traditional top-down and authoritarian conflict management practices, calling for more inclusive and collaborative processes. The finding that students perceived challenges related to lack of involvement of all parties and the teacher participants' view on the importance of inclusive strategies aligns with this critical perspective (Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013; Oduor, 2015; Shanka & Thuo, 2017).

Furthermore, the recognition of cultural sensitivity as a critical aspect of conflict management aligns with the existing literature that highlights the influence of cultural norms, values, and practices on conflict resolution. Critical scholars emphasize the need to understand cultural contexts and adopt culturally sensitive approaches to ensure fairness and effectiveness in conflict resolution. The finding that students and teachers perceived differences in the cultural sensitivity of the strategies used in conflict resolution supports this critical perspective (Afful-Broni, 2012; Danso, 2018; Kaluma, 2017; Shanka & Thuo, 2017).

In addition, the identification of resource constraints, lack of consistent policies, and issues of confidentiality and privacy as challenges in school conflict management resonates with critical



literature that critiques structural limitations and systemic barriers in resolving conflicts in educational settings. Critical scholars often emphasize the need to address systemic inequities and advocate for adequate resources and policies that prioritize fairness and justice in conflict resolution. The findings that highlight these challenges in the context of school conflict management are consistent with this critical perspective (Example 4)

The findings also resonate strongly with the conflict and power theory of conflict, which posits that conflicts are often driven by power imbalances and struggles for control and resources within social systems. This theory views conflicts as a natural and inevitable outcome of societal and organizational interactions, where individuals or groups with differing interests and power positions compete for their goals and interests to be prioritized (Gaski, 1984). In the context of the study's findings, the identification of power imbalances as a significant challenge in managing conflicts in schools directly aligns with the conflict and power theory. The hierarchical power structures within educational institutions, where administrators and teachers hold authority over students, create imbalances that can influence the way conflicts are approached and resolved. Students' perceptions of feeling disempowered in conflicts involving staff members are consistent with the theory's premise of power struggles within the school environment (Kühne et al., 2019).

Again, the emphasis on inclusivity and involving all parties in conflict resolution aligns with the conflict and power theory's recognition of diverse stakeholders with competing interests. Conflicts often arise when different groups within a system have conflicting needs or demands. In the context of schools, conflicts may involve students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders, each with unique perspectives and interests. Not considering the perspectives of all parties involved can exacerbate power imbalances and lead to unresolved conflicts. The findings also resonate with the theory's emphasis on cultural sensitivity. The study highlights that

cultural factors influence how conflicts are perceived and managed in the Western Part of the Savannah Region, and adopting culturally sensitive conflict resolution approaches is essential to ensure fairness and effectiveness. The conflict and power theory acknowledges that cultural norms, values, and practices shape power dynamics and influence how conflicts are handled within social systems (Kühne et al., 2019). Additionally, the identification of resource constraints and lack of consistent policies as challenges in school conflict management aligns with the conflict and power theory's consideration of structural barriers and systemic inequities. Limited resources can exacerbate power imbalances and hinder effective conflict resolution, while consistent policies can provide a framework for addressing conflicts in a fair and just manner.

In general, the findings resonate strongly with the conflict and power theory of conflict by highlighting the role of power imbalances, inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and structural constraints in shaping conflict dynamics within the school setting. Understanding these aspects is crucial for developing conflict resolution strategies that address underlying power struggles and promote positive and constructive resolution outcomes.

5.5 Influence of Cultural Factors on conflict Resolution in School

The study found that cultural factors such as respect for authority, communalism, reconciliation, forgiveness, gender norms and respect for the elderly influence conflict management practices in schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region. This underscores the fact that schools do not exist in isolation but are deeply embedded in the larger social and cultural context. In cultures that place a strong emphasis on respecting authorities, conflicts involving those in positions of power and their subordinates may be influenced by the prevailing norms of deference and respect. This can impact how conflicts are addressed, with subordinates potentially being hesitant to openly challenge authority figures, which could affect the resolution process. The observation that cultural beliefs regarding gender roles also play a role in conflict

management is noteworthy. In societies where women are considered subordinate to men, conflicts involving individuals of different genders may be shaped by these gender norms and power dynamics. Women may feel constrained in expressing their grievances openly, and this could impact the effectiveness of conflict resolution efforts. Recognizing these cultural beliefs is crucial in designing conflict management strategies that are sensitive to gender dynamics and promote inclusivity and fair treatment of all parties involved.

On a positive note, the mention of communalism, reconciliation, forgiveness, and restoration as practices that positively influence conflict management highlights the potential for cultural factors to contribute to constructive conflict resolution approaches. Cultural practices that emphasize reconciliation and forgiveness can foster an environment where conflicts are addressed with a focus on restoring relationships and maintaining harmony within the school community. By understanding and leveraging such cultural strengths, schools can develop conflict management strategies that align with the values and norms of the community, leading to more effective and sustainable resolution outcomes.

These findings align with existing literature on the influence of cultural factors on conflict management practices in schools. The identification of respect for authority as a significant cultural factor influencing conflict management resonates with existing research on power dynamics in educational settings (Abudu, 2020; Danso, 2018; Gyan & Tandoh-Offin, 2014; Marfo et al., 2019). In many cultures, including those in various African regions, authority figures such as teachers and administrators are highly regarded, and challenging their decisions or expressing grievances openly may be discouraged (Abudu, 2020). This can impact how conflicts involving authority figures and students are addressed, with some students feeling hesitant to raise their concerns. Existing literature has shown that respecting authority is deeply ingrained in many societies, and this can affect communication and resolution processes in

schools (Afful-Broni, 2012; Gyan, 2014; Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013; Shanka & Thuo, 2017). Acknowledging this cultural aspect is essential for developing conflict management strategies that account for power dynamics within the school community.

Furthermore, the finding that communalism, reconciliation, and forgiveness positively influence conflict management aligns with existing literature on restorative practices and traditional conflict resolution approaches. In many cultural contexts, communal values emphasize the importance of restoring harmony within the community after conflicts occur. Restorative justice practices, which prioritize healing and repairing relationships, have gained recognition and have been studied extensively in diverse cultural settings (Danso, 2018). These approaches focus on addressing the harm caused by conflicts and promoting understanding between conflicting parties, fostering a sense of community and togetherness. The study's observation that communal practices have an impact on conflict resolution practices in schools underscores the value of integrating culturally appropriate restorative strategies into conflict management initiatives.

Additionally, the study's acknowledgment of gender norms influencing conflict management practices in schools is consistent with existing literature on gender and conflict. In many societies, including African cultures, traditional gender roles and expectations can impact how conflicts involving men and women are perceived and addressed (Kesse, 2019). The finding underscores the need for gender-sensitive conflict resolution strategies that consider the unique experiences and perspectives of male and female students and staff. By recognizing the influence of gender norms, educational institutions can develop more inclusive and equitable conflict management practices that address the specific challenges and dynamics experienced by both genders.

Lastly, the finding that respects for the elderly influences conflict management practices reflects the significance of intergenerational dynamics in conflict resolution. In many cultures, elders are



considered repositories of wisdom and are accorded respect and authority. Their involvement in conflict resolution processes can be valued for their experience and guidance (Antwi, 2013; Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013; Syabwanta, 2022). Recognizing the influence of generational respect can inform conflict resolution strategies that incorporate the perspectives and contributions of older individuals in the school community. Understanding how cultural factors shape conflict management practices is vital for educators and policymakers to develop culturally sensitive and effective approaches to resolve conflicts in schools. The alignment of these findings with existing literature highlights the importance of context-specific conflict resolution strategies that embrace cultural values and promote a sense of community and inclusivity within educational settings.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the entire study and highlights the finding of that were made. It draws a conclusion based on the findings of the study. The chapter ends by offering policy recommendations that would inform the development of smart strategies for addressing school conflicts in senior high schools in the western part of the Savannah Region, the Savannah Region and the whole of Ghana.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The study aimed to investigate school conflict resolution practices in the Western part of the Savannah Region. Specifically, the study investigated the strategies of school conflict management, perceptions of their effectiveness, the challenges and the cultural influencing factors of conflict resolution in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region. A mixed method approach was adopted within the analytical frameworks of the integrative bargaining and conflict and power theories. Data was collected through questionnaire administration and key informant interviews using questionnaires and interview guides respectively. The study made the following findings:

6.2.1 Strategies of Conflict Resolution in Senior High Schools in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The study found that mediation was the most commonly used conflict management strategy in schools, with 92 student-participants (25.6%) and 10 teacher participants (2.8%) indicating its usage. Sanctions, such as student withdrawal, teacher transfers, and deboardisation, were mentioned by 66 student-participants (18.3%) and 5 teacher-respondents (1.4%). Restorative practices, involving conflict parties meeting to address issues, were reported by 59 student-





participants (14.4%). Open communication was identified as a strong strategy by 51 student-participants (14.2%), and 34 student-participants (9.4%) highlighted equality and inclusivity. Additionally, 28 student-participants (7.8%) mentioned teacher and prefect conflict resolution training, corroborated by 6 teacher participants (1.7%). These findings were supported by key informant interviews.

6.2.2 Perceptions of the Effectiveness of conflict Resolution Strategies Used by Senior High Schools in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The study revealed varied perceptions about the effectiveness of the conflict resolution strategies adopted by their schools in managing conflicts. Approximately 22.5% of students (81) found the strategies effective, compared to 2.2% of teachers (8). While 17.2% of students (62) perceived transparency and trust, 14.2% (51) believed the strategies were exclusive. Surprisingly, 1.7% of teachers (6) considered them inclusive. Additionally, 10.0% of students (36) felt the strategies led to unfair processes, while 1.9% of teachers (7) saw them as fair. Both students (8.3% or 30) and teachers (1.4% or 5) agreed on the strategies' sustainability. Students appreciated their efficient conflict resolution (11.4% or 41) and cultural sensitivity (8.1% or 29), but 1.4% of teachers (5) were concerned about neglecting cultural variability.

6.2.3 Challenges of Managing School Conflicts in the Western Part of the Savannah Region

The study revealed several challenges in managing conflicts in schools. Around 19.7% of student participants highlighted the involvement of multiple stakeholders as a major challenge, acknowledging the diverse perspectives and interests of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and others. Power imbalances were identified by 15.6% of students, arising from hierarchical structures within schools, where administrators and teachers hold authority over students, leading to potential disempowerment of students and conflicts. Similarly, 1.4% of teacher participants also recognized this challenge. Lack of conflict management experts and



training were mentioned by 15.0% and 1.9% of students, respectively, while teacher participants softly expressed these concerns. Other challenges reported by students included poor communication (15.0%), emotionality (13.1%), and inconsistent conflict resolution policies (14.2%). Teacher respondents also acknowledged the difficulty of resolving emotionally charged conflicts (1.1%) and mentioned additional challenges related to lack of resources (2.2%) and issues of confidentiality and privacy.

6.2.4 Influence of Cultural Factors on Conflict Resolution Practices in Senior High Schools in the Savannah Region

The study revealed that cultural factors significantly influence conflict management in schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region. A majority of student participants (30.8%) indicated that the culture emphasizing respect for constituted authorities negatively influenced conflict resolution, while teacher respondents (1.4%) acknowledged that the cultural norm of younger individuals always respecting older ones had a similar negative impact. This cultural emphasis on respecting authority figures, such as teachers and administrators, led to students hesitating to openly challenge authority, impacting how conflicts are communicated and resolved within the school. On a positive note, students (21.7%) highlighted that traditional peace practices of reconciliation, forgiveness, and restorative justice, which are ingrained in the study region's culture, had a significant positive impact on resolving school conflicts. This finding was supported by teachers who emphasized the culture of collectivism and communalism, where individuals consider themselves as part of a larger community, fostering school conflict resolution. Moreover, the perception of womanhood was found to affect conflict resolution, as societal norms expect women to respect and honour men, which may discourage female students or staff from openly challenging men, thereby influencing how involving gender dynamics conflicts are handled. The findings highlight the profound influence of cultural factors on

conflict management approaches in schools and underscore the need to consider cultural norms, values and practices when designing effective conflict resolution strategies.

6.3 Conclusion

This study sheds light on the conflict management practices and perceptions in senior high schools within the Western part of the Savannah Region. Mediation emerged as the most commonly used strategy, demonstrating its prominence in addressing conflicts among students and teachers. The findings reveal diverse perceptions regarding the effectiveness of these strategies, with students generally holding more positive views than teachers. Open communication and inclusivity were identified as crucial elements in conflict resolution, highlighting the need for transparent and inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders. However, concerns about fairness and cultural sensitivity were raised, indicating the importance of tailoring conflict resolution strategies to the unique cultural context of the selected senior high schools in the western part of savannah region.

The study also unveiled various challenges faced by schools in managing conflicts, such as navigating power imbalances and involving multiple stakeholders with different perspectives. Lack of specialized conflict management expertise and training was another significant challenge identified. Additionally, emotional aspects of conflicts and issues of resources, confidentiality, and privacy were highlighted as hindrances to effective resolution. These challenges underscore the complexity of conflict management in schools and call for comprehensive strategies that address these diverse factors.

Furthermore, the influence of cultural factors on conflict resolution practices in schools was evident, particularly regarding respect for authority, traditional peace practices, and gender norms. Cultural norms emphasizing respect for authority figures impact the communication and resolution of conflicts, whereas traditional practices of reconciliation and forgiveness contribute



positively to conflict resolution. However, gender norms may hinder open expression of grievances among female students or staff, necessitating sensitivity and understanding in conflict resolution approaches.

These findings provide valuable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers in the Western part of the Savannah Region to enhance conflict management practices in schools. Recognizing the significance of cultural factors and addressing challenges in a culturally sensitive manner can foster more effective conflict resolution and create conducive learning environments for students and teachers alike. Further research in this area could delve deeper into the specific cultural aspects influencing conflict resolution to refine and tailor strategies for even greater effectiveness in school settings.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following key recommendations are proposed to enhance conflict management practices in senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region:

Strengthen Conflict Resolution Training: The study recommends that schools should prioritise conflict resolution training for both students and teachers. This training should encompass effective communication techniques, mediation skills, and cultural sensitivity in conflict resolution. By equipping stakeholders with these essential tools, they will be better prepared to address conflicts constructively and promote a more inclusive and transparent conflict resolution process.

Promote Inclusive Conflict Resolution Policies: The study also recommends that school administrators should develop and implement conflict resolution policies that actively involve all relevant parties in the resolution process. Encouraging students, staffs, parents, the community



and other stakeholders to have a voice and be heard in conflict resolution can foster a sense of ownership and fairness, ultimately leading to more sustainable and acceptable conflict resolutions.

Integrate Traditional Peace Practices: Given the positive influence of traditional peace practices like reconciliation, forgiveness, and restorative justice, the study recommends that schools should consider incorporating these culturally significant approaches into their conflict management strategies. By recognizing and valuing local cultural norms, schools can create a more conducive environment for conflict resolution and strengthen overall peaceful community cohesion.

Establish Support Structures: The study finally recommends that schools should establish support structures that address specific challenges identified in conflict management, such as power imbalances and lack of specialized expertise. This may include setting up a dedicated conflict resolution team comprising trained personnel and fostering a supportive environment where students and staffs feel comfortable expressing their grievances. Additionally, addressing emotional aspects of conflicts and ensuring adequate resources for conflict resolution can further strengthen the effectiveness of conflict management practices in schools.

By implementing these recommendations, senior high schools in the Western part of the Savannah Region can enhance their conflict management approaches, foster a positive school climate, and create a more conducive learning environment for all stakeholders. These measures can contribute to reducing conflict-related disruptions, promoting mutual understanding, and ultimately enhancing the overall academic performance and social experiences of students and staffs alike.



Recommended topic for further studies ‘Evaluation of chieftaincy conflict management practices in the savannah region of Ghana’



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QUESTIONNAIR

Questionnaire Designed for School Authorities (Headmaster) and Staff on Conflict Management Practices in Senior High Schools in Western part of Savannah Region.

I am a graduate student of UDS researching into conflict management practices by school authorities. This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of MCOM (Human Resource Management). All responses will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. Where ever an issue is not applicable kindly say so. Your candid cooperation will therefore be duly appreciated.

SECTION A: BIODATA

Name of School.....

Respond by ticking the appropriate box.

1. Staff Status ☐ Headmaster ☐ Teaching Staff ☐ Non-Teaching Staff
2. Sex ☐ Male ☐ Female
3. Age ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-34
 ☐ 35-39 ☐ 40-44 ☐ 45-49
 ☐ 50-54 ☐ 55-59 ☐ 60+
4. Marital Status ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated
5. Qualification: ☐ M.S.L.C. ☐ B.E.C.E. ☐ GCE 'O' LEVEL ☐ GCE 'A' LEVEL
 ☐ SSCE ☐ First Degree ☐ Second Degree ☐ Other
6. Rank; ☐ Senior Superintendent ☐ Principal Superintendent Assistant
 ☐ Director II Assistant Director I ☐ Deputy Director Director II
 ☐ Director I ☐ Clerk Grade I/II ☐ Other
7. How long have you worked in your present school? (In years)
 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 4-6 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 10-12 ☐ 13-15 ☐ 16-18 ☐ 19-21 ☐ 22+
8. Post/Position in school;
 ☐ Headmaster ☐ Assistant Headmaster ☐ Senior House Master/House Mistress



☐ Head of Department ☐ Guidance and Counseling Coordinator

☐ Chaplain Form Master/Mistress ☐ Welfare Chairman ☐ Any other.....



SECTION B: COMMON TYPES OF CONFLICT IN THE SCHOOL.

Please tick the appropriate column to show the common types of conflict that occur in the school.

	Very Frequent	Frequent	Sometimes	Rare	Never
9. Conflict within oneself in making choices between school Demands					
10. Conflict due to scarcity of resources to satisfy school/work place conditions. E.g. What you wear to school etc.					
11. Conflict between the headmaster and the teaching staff					
12. Conflict between the headmaster and the non-teaching staff					
13. Conflict between the headmaster and the students					
14. Conflict among teachers on the staff					

15.Conflict among non-teaching staff members					
16.Conflict between teaching and non-teaching staff					
17.Conflict between the teaching staff and the students					
18.Conflict between non-teaching staff and students					
Other types of conflict in the school					

SECTION C:

CAUSES OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES (HEADMASTER) AND STAFF

Indicate by ticking the appropriate column the rate at which the factors stated below cause conflict in your school.

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
19. Conflict caused by communication barriers; insufficient exchange of information					
20. Conflict caused by use of intemperate language by the headmaster					
21. Conflict caused by conflicting goals of special interest groups on the staff.					
22. Conflict caused by dominance; the headmaster attempting to control the behaviour of subordinates					
23. Conflict caused by reward system provided by the headmaster for individuals or groups.					
24. Conflict caused by the headmaster promoting his personal interest at the expense of the school.					
25. Conflict caused by overloading subordinates with tasks.					
26. Conflict caused by strict supervision subordinates work.					
27. Conflict caused by headmaster's human					

relationship.					
28. Conflict caused by subordinates using school facilities to promote personal interest					
29. Conflict caused by subordinates shirking their responsibilities					
30. Conflict caused by subordinates flouting the code of ethics.					
31. Conflict caused by subordinates perceiving that the head does not appreciate their efforts.					
32. Conflict caused by teachers resenting to the head admission policy.					
33. Conflict caused by subordinates seeing the headmaster as submitting to the control of the bursar.					
OTHER CAUSES: Please list other causes of conflict and rate them					

SECTION D: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES OF THE HEADMASTER

Indicate by ticking the appropriate column the extent to which the headmaster employs the conflict resolution techniques listed below

	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
34. Co-operative approach: Headmaster tries to bring the parties involved to a compromise.					
35. Confirming approach: Headmaster engages staff members resolving conflict stressing mutual respect					
36. Competitive approach: Headmaster tries to persuade or coerce one party into submission.					
37. Non-response: Headmaster					

	leaves conflict to die out with time.					
38.	Domination: The Headmaster tries to settle the conflict without consulting the other party.					
39.	Win-lose: The headmaster resolves conflict in favour of one party.					
40.	Lose-Lose: The headmaster helps the parties to reach a compromise that is seldom acceptable to either party.					
41.	Win-Win: The headmaster focuses on solving the problem but not defeating each other. (Both parties are satisfied with the outcome).					
42.	Arbitration: The headmaster ensures that the disputants explain and support their claims before a third party from or outside the staff.					
	OTHER TECHNIQUES: Please list other conflict resolution techniques and					



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rate them.					
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SECTION E:

EFFECTIVENESS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES OF THE HEADMASTER

Tick the appropriate column below to indicate the effectiveness of the headmaster's conflict resolutions techniques.

	YES, OFTEN	YES, SOMETIMES	YES, BUT RARELY	NO
43. Do staff members adjust to good behaviour after conflict settlement by headmaster?				
44. Does conflict erupt between the headmaster and staff after previous cases that have been resolved?				
45. Do staff members tend to perform their duties so as to avoid conflict with the headmaster?				
	Headmaster	Some staff members	OTHER: Write to specify	
46. Who is likely to resolve staff conflict better in your school?				
	Increasing	Decreasing	Neither	
47. What is the trend of conflict occurrence over the year?				
	Headmaster	Some staff members	OTHER: Write to specify	
48. Who is responsible for the trend (Item 47 above)?				



Appendix B

Interview Schedule

Conflict Management Practices in Senior High Schools in the Western Part of Savannah Region

This interview is a follow-up to the Questionnaire on Conflict Management Practices in Senior High Schools in the Savannah Region.

School:.....

Date:.....

Describe the relationship between the headmaster and the teaching staff.

.....
.....
.....

Please give reasons and examples

.....
.....

Describe the relationship between the Headmaster and the non-teaching staff.....

.....

Please give reasons and examples

.....



.....

Does the Headmaster trust his subordinates? If Yes/No

.....

Give reasons.....

.....

.....

Does the Headmaster welcome suggestions from the staff? If Yes/No

.....

Give comment.....





How does the Headmaster make internal appointments in the school to fill vacant positions such as housemaster, heads of departments, etc?

.....

.....

.....

Does the Headmaster encourage those appointed to such positions to perform effectively? If Yes/No

.....

Give comment.....

Please, comment on how bungalows are allocated to staff.

.....

.....

How does the Headmaster deal with staff members who have personal problems e.g. seeking permission to attend to personal/family needs, sickness of spouse/children, bereavement, etc?

.....

.....

What disciplinary procedures does the headmaster adopt in dealing with staff members who are involved in such offences as absenteeism, lateness, laziness etc.

.....

.....

Within the last twelve months, has there been any conflict:

(i) Between you and the staff?.....

(ii) If Yes, what caused the conflict?

.....

.....

(iii) How was it managed?

.....

.....

(iv). What is your impression about the management techniques employed by the headmaster?

