

## ABSTRACT OF POST GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Master of Arts in Leadership Project

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
BOARDING SCHOOLS IN EAST ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE

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The research dealt with the causes of conflict in Adventist boarding schools in East Zimbabwe Conference and how it could be managed. The data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire on the causes of conflicts and conflict resolution methods as well as an interview schedule. The questionnaire which was of the five point Likert scale of Always to Never was used for data collection. The questionnaire was both face and content validated and a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.783 was obtained following a pilot study.

The questionnaire was administered to 75 respondents made up of administrators and staff. The data collected were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. The questionnaire was analysed using the quantitative method. The data collected were coded and analysed using the descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. Graphical representation of data such as pie chart

and bar graphs were also used. The descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were used. The results were presented in tables and graphs.

The study revealed that poor communication, leadership style and poor conditions of work were often causes of conflict in Adventist boarding schools while the conflict resolution methods often used were consultations and dialogue. As a way of addressing the problem, a fellowship program was carried out in one of the boarding schools. After the seminar presentation an evaluation form was issued out to assess the effectiveness of the program and the responses indicated that such a seminar on conflict management in Seventh-day Adventist boarding schools would reduce conflicts.

Based on the findings it was recommended that workshops and seminars on conflict management be conducted periodically for administrators and staff in Seventh-day Adventist institutions.

Adventist University of Africa

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A project  
presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Arts in Leadership

by  
Godfrey Musara

July 2013

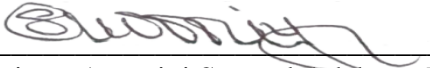


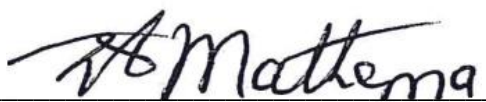
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	x
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	xi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	xii

### CHAPTER

1.INTRODUCTION .....	1
Background to the Problem .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	3
Statement of Purpose .....	3
The Significance of Research .....	3
Delimitations .....	4
Research Methodology .....	4
Research Design .....	4
Population .....	5
Sample and Sampling Technique .....	6
Instrumentation .....	6
Method of Data Collection .....	7
Method of Data Analysis .....	7
2. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT AND ITS MANAGEMENT .....	9
Biblical Perspective of Conflict .....	9
EG White Perspective on Conflict .....	12
Some Causes of Conflict in Schools .....	15

Leadership Style.....	15
Poor Communication .....	17
Stress level .....	19
Needs Scarcity.....	20
Poor Relationships .....	21
Kinds of Conflict .....	22
Intrapersonal Conflict .....	22
Interpersonal Conflict .....	23
Substantive Conflict.....	23
Conflict Stages .....	23
Conflict Management.....	25
Competition:Win-Lose .....	27
Avoidance, Lose-Lose .....	28
Accommodation/ Lose-Win.....	31
Compromising/Sharing .....	32
Problem Solving.....	36
Forgiveness .....	37
Job Descriptions.....	37
Dealing with People in a Conflict .....	38
Mediation .....	38
The Mediator as a Formulator.....	40
Building Trust .....	41
The Diplomatic Intervention.....	41
Bargaining.....	42
Seventh-day Adventist Overview of Conflict Handling .....	42
<b>3. DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING .....</b>	<b>44</b>
The Country of Zimbabwe .....	44
Religion.....	44
Population .....	45
Education in the East Zimbabwe Conference .....	46
Location .....	47
The Population of the Study.....	47

Data Gathering and Analysis .....	48
Research Findings on the Causes of Conflict.....	51
Research Findings on Conflict Resolution Strategies .....	54
Interview Findings .....	56
Interview Findings on Conflict Management .....	58
4. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION ..	60
Program Objectives .....	60
Program Content.....	61
Leadership Training .....	62
Visitation.....	63
The Staff Members' Motivation .....	64
Seminar .....	65
Program Schedule .....	65
Program Materials .....	67
Program Summary.....	68
Program Evaluation .....	68
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	71
Summary.....	71
Conclusion.....	72
Recommendations .....	72
The Leadership Training.....	72
Communication Seminars.....	73
Shortage of Resources and Management .....	73
Clear Roles and Job Description.....	74
Other Recommendations to the School Administration.....	75
APPENDICES.....	76
A.LETTER.....	76



B.RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE.....	78
C.INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	83
D.SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....	84
E.PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE .....	85
F.CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SEMINAR MATERIAL .....	86
G.LEADERSHIP TRAINING MATERIAL .....	89
H.ANALYSED DATA .....	96
I.RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE .....	111
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	112

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Growth in Schools in EZC.....	47
2. Staff members in EZC boarding schools.....	48
3. Status of respondents.....	50
4. Gender of respondents.....	51
5. Causes of conflict.....	57
6. Conflict resolution strategies.....	58

## LIST OF TABLES

1. Distribution of Adventist Schools in East Zimbabwe Conference.....	6
2. Status of respondents.....	50
3. Gender of respondents.....	51
4. Causes of conflict.....	53
5. Conflict management in school.....	55
6. Leadership training schedule.....	66
7. Motivating staff members.....	67
8. Seminar schedule.....	67

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CZC	Central Zimbabwe Conference
EZC	East Zimbabwe Conference
Mash Central	Mashonaland Central
Mash East	Mashonaland East
Mash West	Mashonaland West
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist Church
WZC	West Zimbabwe Conference
ZimStat	The Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, statement of purpose, significance of the study and delimitation of the study

#### **Background to the Problem**

In order to understand the problem of conflict in the Seventh-day Adventist boarding schools it is important first of all to define conflict.

Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of English Vol.1 defines conflict as “a struggle to resist or overcome; contest of opposing forces or powers; strife; battle. A state or condition of opposition; antagonism.”<sup>1</sup>

Conflict is a global challenge that needs to be addressed in all organisations. Mandaza Ibbo in the book *Peace and Security in Southern Africa* asserts that, “In peace and conflict research, International relations strategic studies and related subfields in the social sciences a number of key concepts appear regularly. Central are peace, conflict, conflict resolution and security.”<sup>2</sup> Even the countries in the Southern African territory, conflict still remains a major challenge that need special attention,

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<sup>1</sup>Funk&Wagnalls, *Standard Dictionary of the English Language International Edition*, (NewYork: Funk and Wagnalls, 1974).

<sup>2</sup>Ibbo Mandaza, ed. *Peace and Security in Southern Africa* (Harare: Sapas Books, 1996), 1.

Mandaza concurs that “Southern African states must resolve new conflict issues and the conflict legacies of the distant and more recent past.”<sup>1</sup>

The country of Zimbabwe and all its churches are not exempted from this challenge of conflict management. Randolph Lowry L J D and Richard W Meyers (1991) confirms that “people, institutions, and communities around us are filled with conflict that ranges from subtle to extreme ... .The evidence of conflicts is everywhere.”<sup>2</sup>In Zimbabwe, of particular interest to our study is the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In Zimbabwe, the Seventh - day Adventist Church is organised into one Union comprised of three Conferences namely East, Central and West has grown tremendously in membership. However, this has resulted in the increase in the number of Adventist schools in this part of Zimbabwe which currently stand at a total of “47 schools that is 28 primary schools and 19 secondary schools.”<sup>3</sup>These schools cater for Adventists and non Adventists children.

The East Zimbabwe Conference five year report affirms that “more and more parents and guardians are also seeking vacancies at our schools because generally our teachers and staff refrain from industrial action.”<sup>4</sup>This demand has resulted in the increase of people who are employed to meet this demand. As communities grow bigger the management also become very challenging in many areas including

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<sup>1</sup>Ibbo Mandaza, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Lowryl J. D. Randolph and Richard W. Meyers, *Conflict Management and Counseling*, (Washinton, DC: Library of Congress, 1991), 5.

<sup>3</sup>East Zimbabwe Conference 6<sup>th</sup> Constituency Meeting Triennial Report, Revival and Reformation Nyazura Mission, 11-13 December 2011, 82.

<sup>4</sup>East Zimbabwe Conference 6<sup>th</sup> Constituency Meeting Triennial Report, Revival and Reformation Nyazura Mission 11-13 December 2011, 103.

conflict management. The school community is comprised of teachers, supporting staff and their families and also parents who are also involved in the operations of the school. Of the various challenges that the Adventist schools encounter, conflict is the foremost as it affects the main operations of the schools.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In many Adventist schools in Zimbabwe there are conflicts. Conflict are mostly prevalent among staff that is, administrators, teachers and workers. These conflicts spill over to the next higher office or stifle the progress at the school. Conflict affects interpersonal relationships, individual devotional life, worker performances, families and development. Boarding schools are closed communities which makes conflict prevalent.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this research is to determine the type and extent of conflict in the church schools then provide a program that may equip leadership with skills on managing conflicts in schools. The program will deal with conflict issues in schools. This program will target the school administrators, teachers and school workers.

### **The Significance of Research**

The results of this research may enhance better relationships in schools. The research may be used as a source of information in conducting conflict management programs in schools in the conference. Moreover the research can assist the administration to enumerate the causes of conflict and how to address them. The program can facilitate team spirit, corporate planning and implementation of

programs. The program can help the administrators to have close interaction with their school communities which will enable a positive handling of conflict issues in the Adventist schools.

### **Delimitations**

The research was limited to the Seventh - day Adventist boarding schools of the East Zimbabwe Conference. The reason of limiting to SDA boarding schools was due to the fact that conflict was more prevalent in the SDA boarding schools than in the day schools. The targeted respondents were staff members of the SDA boarding schools. A seminar and Leadership training was conducted in one of the boarding schools.

### **Research Methodology**

The library and internet were used to obtain information on conflict management. An analysis of Biblical foundations on conflict was done. Ellen G White writings were of great use to establish information on conflict process. A wide range of books were used in this research. This section deals with the methodology that was used in conducting the research. The section included the research type, population, sample and sampling technique, pilot study, research instruments, validation of instruments for data collection, methods of data collection and the procedures that were followed in data analysis.

### **Research Design**

There are various types of research used by researchers, depending on the type of research. The research design used was the descriptive survey for which the researcher adopted both the quantitative and the qualitative descriptive method.



According to Cohen and Manion, “the descriptive research design requires the collection of a very extensive data in order to arrive at an in depth understanding of the entity studied. Descriptive research obtains information from representative sample of the population.”<sup>1</sup> In the same vein, Awoniyi and Alege state that “the descriptive survey generally tries to collect information from representative group and based on such information inferences are drawn about the behaviour of the entire population.”<sup>2</sup> The descriptive Survey method is appropriate and effective for this study as it involves the use of questionnaires and interviews.

### Population

The population is defined, according to Gay, “as a group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the researcher would like results of the study to be generalized.”<sup>3</sup> The population for the study constituted of all the five boarding schools in East Zimbabwe Conference and all the 216 workers in these schools. Of the schools, three were secondary and two of them were primary. The boarding schools were chosen for the study because most of the workers live on the school compound and as a result there was more likelihood of the existence of conflict situations.

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<sup>1</sup>L Cohen & L Manion, *Research Methods in Education*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 2005), 21

<sup>2</sup>Samuel. Awoniyi A & B.A Alege, *General Education Studies for Prospective Teachers*, Series 5, (Ilorin, Nigeria: Fatyusuf Press, 2007), 28.

<sup>3</sup>L. R. A. Gay, *Guide to Research Methodology in Education and Humanities*, (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1981), 86.

## Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample is a portion of a population and sampling means selecting some members of the entire population for use in the study. It is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. Gay says that “the individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population.”<sup>1</sup>

A sample percentage of thirty-four (34) was adopted for the study and hence a total of seventy-five respondents were used for the study. The respondents consisted of five (5) administrators (one from each school) twenty (20) staff members from each of the secondary schools and five staff members from each of the primary schools. The five administrators were purposively selected. “The purposive sampling is used when there are specific members of the population with certain crucial traits to the study whom the researcher must include.” The workers were selected using the simple random sampling technique. The simple random sampling “is a technique in which all members of the population have equal chance of being included in the sample.” In addition to the administration of the questionnaire, three staff members (the Headmaster, one teacher and one worker) in three boarding secondary schools were interviewed. In the same manner two staff members (the Headmaster and one teacher) were interviewed in each of the two boarding Primary schools. Thus there were a total of thirteen (13) interviewees. The teachers and workers interviewed in each of the schools were selected randomly.

## Instrumentation

Two instruments were designed and used for data collection. These are questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire which was made up of 33 items

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<sup>1</sup>L. R. A. Gay, 86.

consisted of both structured (close ended) and unstructured (open ended) questions. The research instruments were both face and content validated by giving it to experts. Based on their advice necessary modifications and adjustments were effected. Vyhmeister alludes that “since some of the techniques of descriptive research are foreign to theological education, students should look for professor in education, sociology, or psychology to assist in the process.”<sup>1</sup>In order to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was administered to 24 respondents from four of the boarding schools. These respondents were not part of the main study. The Alpha reliability method was used to determine the reliability and the Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.783 was obtained.

#### Method of Data Collection

The researcher obtained letter of authorization from the Executive Secretary of the East Zimbabwe Conference to enable him visit the Boarding schools for data collection. The researcher visited the schools personally for the administration of both the questionnaire and the interviews. During the course of administration of both instruments, respondents were assured that their responses were meant for research purposes only and would be treated confidentially.

#### Method of Data Analysis

Two methods of data analysis were used in this research; these are the quantitative and the qualitative methods. The questionnaire was analysed using the quantitative method. The data collected were coded and analysed using the descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. Graphical representation of data such as pie chart and bar graphs were also used. Responses

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<sup>1</sup>Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, *Your Guide To Writing Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion And Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 154.

from the interviews were analysed using the descriptive interpretive method in which responses on the interviewees were categorized into themes and then followed by interpretations. The descriptive interpretive is a qualitative method of data analysis.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT AND ITS MANAGEMENT

Conflict management is a subject that is covered by many books including the Bible. This section focused on information on conflict from the Bible, EG White writings and other sources. The information from this section provided a wide base and insights that influenced the research with clues and examples on how conflict could be dealt with.

#### **Biblical Perspective of Conflict**

Since the schools under consideration are run by the Seventh Day Adventist church which emphasizes the importance of studying the word of God, the anticipation would be that the Bible is used as a guideline even in conflict management. There are several instances in the Bible where conflict is highlighted. Starting from the book of Genesis (Gen 3:6-11), the story of the fall indicates a conflict emerging between God and man. God took the initiative of trying to resolve the conflict by intervening through dialogue first of all. God further more performed as the mediator. This is revealed in His action of moving towards man when man was hiding and providing a solution to the dilemma of man (Gen 3:1-24). The Bible has many stories on conflict management but for the purpose of this study, only two models from the Holy Scriptures will be considered.

The first model is from the Old Testament passage (2 Sam 13:1-29). This is a story of Amnon and Absalom the sons of David. Amnon had taken Tamar the sister of Absalom to bed by force and chased her afterwards. When Absalom heard about it, he pretended as if the issue had been resolved but after two years he launched an attack.

2 Sam 13:19-22

19 And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying.20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

This is a bad model to be used in handling conflicts in the schools. In our educational institutions, there are times when people pretend as if all is well but later the conflict would explode. The other model that might be ideal is (Matt 18:15-18). This passage affirms the presence of conflict as well as skills of conflict management. Our next text of consideration will be

(Matt 18:15-18)

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.  
16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.  
17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.  
18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.  
KJV

These scriptural passages bring to our attention the presence of conflict, and that there should be a way to reduce conflict. As conflict surfaces at a school, according to this passage there are channels that needs to be followed. The conflict process prescribed by these texts is a good model on how to handle conflict in our

schools. The model assists all parties involved to take their time to look through their differences. Matt 18:15-18 presents the best model for handling conflict in schools because it reduces spilling over of conflicts to other people before the parties concerned thoroughly go through their differences. In conflict, it is not always the case that people will agree but sometimes conflict may result in the breaking down of the strong existing relationship bonds. An example of such a scenario is the story of Paul and Barnabas who had been very close work mates but who because of a disagreement they parted ways.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. 38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. 39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; 40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. (Acts 15:37-41KJV)

At times the parties involved may stick to their views and ideologies which may make it very difficult for them to come to a consensus. Scripture is highly conscious of the presence of conflict among the people of God. Willimon alludes to the same idea that “even though we know that the Hebrew prophets of old were centres of controversy, even though the Lord himself died amidst struggle and pain, we still hope that there is some way to accomplish significant ministry without risk of conflict.”<sup>1</sup> Conflict management is a life time ministry because as long as people live they will face conflict along the way.

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<sup>1</sup>William, H. Willimon, *Preaching about Conflict in the Local Church*, (Philadelphia: West Minister Press, 1986), 9.

## **E.G. White Perspective on Conflict**

In her writings, Ellen G. White constantly alluded to harmony among God's people. As a way of archiving unity, she encourages that people should aim to settle differences peacefully and that love should be the focal point of every Christian. In the book *Testimonies* volume 5 she asserts that:

Character is being weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and it should be the earnest desire of all to walk humbly and carefully, lest, neglecting to let their light shine forth to the world, they fail of the grace of God and lose everything that is valuable. All dissension, all differences and faultfinding, should be put away, with all evil speaking and bitterness; kindness, love, and compassion for one another should be cherished, that the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He is one with the Father may be answered. The harmony and unity of the church are the credentials that they present to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. Genuine conversion will ever lead to genuine love for Jesus and for all those for whom He died.<sup>1</sup>

E. G. White writings acknowledge the existence of conflict amongst the people of God and that conflict should not be magnified but kept at minimal levels. She insists that conflict in schools like all settings should be dealt with exhaustively, examining all areas.

If you differ with your brethren as to your understanding of the grace of Christ and the operations of His Spirit, you should not make these differences prominent. You view the matter from one point; another, just as devoted to God, views the same question from another point, and speaks of the things that make the deepest impression on his mind; another viewing it from a still different point, presents another phase; and how foolish it is to get into contention over these things, when there is really nothing to contend about. Let God work on the mind and impress the heart.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E.G. White. *Testimonies for the Church vol. 5. 1855-1909*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 243.

<sup>2</sup>E.G. White. *Selected Messages, Book 1*, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 183.



Both the Bible and White, confirm the existence of conflict. Willimon asserts that “conflict is inevitable...” The Bible and E.G. White writings guided on a spiritual approach to conflict matters in our schools.

### **Conflict**

The Wood House.English-Greek Dictionary defines conflict as “being opposed.”<sup>1</sup> Coser (1986) in Himes defines conflict as “a struggle over values or claims to status power and scarce resources in which the aims of the controlling parties that are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals.”<sup>2</sup>In trying to be more specific as to what conflict is Larry and William defined it as “those experiences of individuals and groups trying to achieve goals which are either incompatible or appear to be so.”<sup>3</sup>Conflict is also defined as “a situation when interests, needs, goals or values of involved parties interfere with one another.”<sup>4</sup>

From the definitions of conflict above, we can deduce the broadness in meaning of the term conflict which reflects the idea that it may be almost impossible for a person to live a full life without been involved in conflict. However taking a closer look we can discover that people can oppose each other but in essence not

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<sup>1</sup>S.C. WoodHouse, “Conflict”. *English-Greek Dictionary- A Vocabulary of the Attic Language* ,(London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd,1932), 159.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Himes, *Conflict and Conflict Management*, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1980 quoted in Coser), 12.

<sup>3</sup>Larry L, Mcswain and Treadwell William C Jr, *Conflict Ministry in the Church*, (Atlanta, Georgia:Thomas and Associates, 1997), 17.

<sup>4</sup>“Conflict,”  
[http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/buihlding/conflict.html\(30/04/2012\)](http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/buihlding/conflict.html(30/04/2012)).

being in a conflict stalemate. These definitions portrays a picture that conflicts sometimes occur as people view important issues but differently. From the analysis of the definitions we also get an impression of the importance of separating between issues and personal interests, this suggests that being different does not mean to be somebody's enemy.

Here we can begin to see the results of unmanaged conflict. It is important to have it in mind that conflict has negative results, therefore the need for it to be resolved. Conflict is also defined as “the conscious intermittent personal struggle for status.” What is important in this subject is to realize that every individual goal should be treated as important, because conflict may be a way of showing commitment to their passions and goals.

As a way of summarizing and understanding what conflict is, Himes highlights properties that constitutes the concept of conflict. He alleges that conflict arises from scarcity of positions and resources; involves at least two parties; the parties are engaged in interactions composed of opposing actions and counteractions; their behaviour is intended to thwart, injure, annihilate or otherwise control the opposition thus enabling the contending parties to gain at each other's expense; conflict involves the acquisition or exercise of power; conflict has important social consequences.

In a school community there are situations which promote conflict to flourish and affect the mission of a school. The operations of a school on a day to day basis impacts positively or negatively on conflict ministry. As a way of emphasis, Baer Mimi establishes that “issues between the board and head of school, between faculty and administration, and among parents and faculty and administrators are all too familiar to those who work in schools. Some of these issues are transitory, but others

can lead to years of disruption in school communities.”<sup>1</sup>It is important to explore the sources of conflict that are most prevalent in school communities.

### Some Causes of Conflict in Schools

For us to be able to deal with conflict, it is important to understand the causes or the sources of conflict. We will begin by defining what a cause or a source is. Standard Dictionary defines a cause as “the power or efficient agent producing anything or event.”<sup>2</sup> Cambridge International Dictionary of English defines a source as “the place something comes from or starts at, or the cause of something.”<sup>3</sup>The following are some of the causes of conflict in schools.

#### **Leadership Style**

The leadership approach at an institution affect the institution positively or negatively. If the leader strategically positions himself or herself better results will be achieved. The people in leadership positions should work towards improving their leadership skills to become what Schoemaker et al calls “strategic leadership.” A strategic leader is defined as “someone who is both resolute and flexible, persistent in the face of setbacks.”<sup>4</sup>From the definition a remarkable distinction is observed between a strategic leader and a non strategic leader who is rigid and easily put off by

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<sup>1</sup>Conflict in Schools. *Independent School Periodical*. Winter 2009, 69 no.2, 82-89, 19 July 2011.

<sup>2</sup>Funk &Wagnalls. “Conflict” *Standard Dictionary of the English Language International Edition* (New York: Funk &Wagnalls Standard Dictionary, 1974).

<sup>3</sup>Paul Procter, “Conflict” *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1995).

<sup>4</sup>Paul J.H. Schoemaker, Steve and Samantha Krupp, “Strategic Leadership:The Essential Skills” *Harvard Business Review*, January–February 2013, 131.

challenges. A strategic leader always look for better ways of doing things.

Schoemaker et al., concurs that, “strategic leaders must be adept at finding common ground and achieving buy-in among stakeholders who have disparate views and agendas. This requires active outreach. Success depends on proactive communication, trust building, and frequent engagement.”<sup>1</sup> If the school leaders fail in this regard this may result in a state of confusion and conflict, this means that the way leaders conduct their daily duties influences conflict management in a certain way.

The leadership style is also directly correlated to a certain conflict management style. Limbare Sameer (Leadership Styles & Conflict Management Styles of Executives) presents different leadership styles and how such styles deal with conflict.

There is a deserter type of a leader, the one who is uninvolved and passive would use resignation as a way of resolving conflict. This type of a leader does help in some situations which may be disruptive in nature. On the other side a deserter type of a leader is not good in situations which in order to improve requires the intervention of a leader. Another type of leader is called the missionary type, who is described as someone interested in harmony who would use withdrawal as a way of resolving conflict. This type of a leader tend to withdraw thereby losing opportunities of resolving conflict.

We then move to an autocratic type of leader, who has no confidence in others and would use diffusion as a way of resolving conflict. This type of a leader may fail to get support from the parties involved, the leader works better in situations which require little consultation. A bureaucratic type of leader would use confrontation method of resolving conflict. This type of leader may beneficial in situations where

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<sup>1</sup>Paul J.H. Schoemaker, Steve and Samantha Krupp, 133.

best results come from the leader's initiative. Finally we have an executive type of leader who use the negotiation method of handling conflict.<sup>1</sup> It is the best type of leadership in that it brings outcomes from both parties by making them participate in the process.

### **Poor Communication**

Olsen contributes that "we should watch how people exchange ideas." The key point is to focus on how people communicate. It makes it easier to understand how people handle disputes and challenges. This is an indication that conflict handling is centred on the communication pattern of that community. According to Olsen "failure in communication leads to community disintegration through failure to bring pertinent information."<sup>2</sup> Communication skills should be promoted to community members in order to create a free environment that help to boost confidence in members. If neglected, deficiency in communication may result in misinformation and consequently leading to community disintegration.

In a boarding school, everything revolves around communication and healthy interpersonal relationships. Due to the fundamentality of communication, special attention should be given to this area. Riley Elizabeth and Patrick Wale argue that "communication is stressed as central to authentic partnerships because processes of communication are essential to the building of trust, mutualism, capacity."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sameer Limbare, Leadership and Conflict Management Styles of Executives. *The Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 48, No. 1, July 2012.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Himes, 65.

<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth, Riley and Patrick, Wakey. *Communities and Communication: Building Urban Partnerships*, (Yorkshire: ITDG Publishing, 2005), 30.

For the school to function efficiently, a strong bond should be built between the administration and workers; also among the workers themselves. Where communication lines are not observed, distrust, factionalism and hate may result in the school. The school administration should initiate programs that establish sound communication among community members by deliberately making sure that information is disseminated through the proper channels. Patience is required in handling people. Relay and Patrick assert that “the building of authentic partnerships will almost certainly be a painstaking and length process rather than a finite initiative with deadlines and preset objectives.”<sup>1</sup>

Conflict intensifies when there is lack of communication, usually the tendency is to evade where possible. Sandia Touval and William Zartman purport that “conflicts implies the breakdown in communication so that parties often become locked in a situation from which they cannot extricate themselves simply because they cannot contact each other directly.”<sup>2</sup> In trying to create a mutual relationship among workers at a school, a social activity which enhances interaction helps to cement relationships.

Failure to notice verbal and non verbal communication leads to misunderstandings. The school community has people of diverse levels in education which requires a dynamic approach in handling them. Sprudley and Mcurdy assert that “all people communicate at several different levels at the same time, but are

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth and Patrick, 30.

<sup>2</sup>Sandia Touval, 11.

usually aware of only the verbal dialogue and don't realize that they respond to non verbal messages.”<sup>1</sup>

Communication plays a critical role in relationships building, hence having a problem in communication results in negative results. Richmond and Mccroskey concur that “a reduced level of communication appears to be interpreted by most people as a sign of unfriendliness.”<sup>2</sup> There are chances for an administrative board to be perceived as ill-treating employees because of their shortcomings in communication. Workers prefer to be supervised by people who listen to them and whose communication lines are clear. There may be situations where workers of a particular institution would transfer to another institution because of communication challenges. This would mean that workers feel very much insecure in the hands of uncommunicating leaders. More to it, even employees prefer workers who communicate in a certain way. Richmond and Mccroskey asserts that “work environment requires effective communication to obtain and retain employment. Quiet people tend to fall into a last to be hired, last to be promoted and first to be fired. The talkative person is more likely to be successful in the world of work.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Stress levels**

While it is true that an organisation can not completely avoid stress at work but to assist employees through teaching them different ways of coping with stress. Larry L Mcswain and William C Treadwell assert that “the pressures of competition

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<sup>1</sup>James, Sprudley P and MCurdy W David. *Conformity and Conflict*, (Boston: MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), 87.

<sup>2</sup>James, Mccroskey. C, Richmond and P, Virginia. *Communication Apprehension, Avoidance and Effectiveness* (Toronto: Allyn and Bacon, 1998), 71.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 76.

at school, work and social circle create external demands upon us that shape the decision we must make.”<sup>1</sup> However when decisions made under the influence of stress may cause a lot of frictions among workers because usually they may be hurried before adequate consultations are made. Stress can be a result of many factors, for example in Zimbabwe due to harsh economic conditions in the recent years. It is true that people were living a stressful life that also impacted on interpersonal relationships and conflict. In addition, other social challenges such as HIV and AIDS, worsened the situation in the country.

The Adventist schools were not spared from those upheavals. Stress can bring changes in a person’s behaviour. Due to these circumstances people who cannot cope tend to be negatively charged emotionally in their approach to people and to different situations and challenges. Efforts should be made by the administration to make sure that people are well equipped through stress management seminars. Stress produces conflict. Larry and William assert that “when stress becomes dysfunctional for a person, it has effects upon other persons. The pressure of life spills from the lives of those stressed to others closest to them.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Needs Scarcity**

Olsen brings physical needs to our attention as one of the important areas to be addressed to minimize conflicts. On the list is ‘food, clothing, goods and services and shelter’. He argues that “communities where there are different categories of workers such as skilled, semi skilled or unskilled there is need to make sure that workers are

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<sup>1</sup>Larry L Mcswain and William C.Treadwel, 37.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 43.



adequately rewarded.”<sup>1</sup> There should be no situations where a worker is underpaid to the extent that they cannot survive. Transparency on how people are paid at a school or any where is important, this assists people to have an understanding of the disparities in wages. Where possible in other matters a balance should be struck to a fair treatment of workers. Olsen adds to this effect that “people’s religious needs must be met.” Any dissatisfaction is a potential danger that may ignite confusion in school community.

The workers should be well cared for as a way of enhancing unity and good relationships. Olsen purports that “malfunctioning with respect to making a living brings social problems such as gross inequality in the distribution of wealth cause apathy, disgruntledness and unsatisfactory employer and employee relationships.”<sup>2</sup> The leadership should try as much as possible to strike a balance when addressing workers needs rather than giving preference to certain individuals. “conflict regarding whose needs one should respond to in the event that different people’s needs arise at the same time may create conflict in those responsible for distributing the needs to those different people.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Poor Relationships**

Relationships are critical in a community for it to be habitable. William alludes to different relationships as “communal relationships and exchange relationships”. The communal relationship is “characterized by members’ obligation and usually by their desire to be especially responsive to each other’s needs. These

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<sup>1</sup>Olsen, 65.

<sup>2</sup>Olsen, 70.

<sup>3</sup>Ickes William, 121.

communal relationships can be with kin, romantic partners and friends.”<sup>1</sup> The interactions among the above group could create deep relationships such that it is not easy to break such relationships.

There is a type of relationship that is called ‘exchange type of relationship’ where people, “give benefits with the expectation of receiving comparable benefits in turn. These exchange relationships are exemplified with strangers acquaintances and people whom we do business.”<sup>2</sup> There is no bond among that group; they have nothing that brings them together except business. The quality of relationship existing between two individuals may contribute to their willingness to reconcile after a conflict. Communal relationships are likely to be affected more than exchange relationships when conflict arises. That is because, “exchange relationships are less intimate and can be ended relatively easily.” Factors that affects relationships should be identified and be dealt with, and on the other hand relationships should be cultivated to be strong and long lasting bonds.

### Kinds of Conflict

There are different kinds of conflicts which needs to be understood in conflict management. These include intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict, and substantive conflict.

#### **Intrapersonal Conflict**

Firstly we have ‘intrapersonal conflict’. Larry and Willimon describe it as “the contest that one has when different parts of the self compete with one another.” It has to do with the person specifically. This suggests that individuals have conflicts

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 120.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 120.

within themselves before they are even confronted by other people. If intrapersonal conflict is managed it decreases hindrances of managing other conflicts.

### **Interpersonal Conflict**

Larry and Willimon define interpersonal conflict as “personality differences between people that are not related primarily to issues.” This may be due to the way they view themselves as compared to the way other people view that person or treat that person. People may look down upon a person in his or her performance at work when inwardly that person feels that he/she is doing the best. There are other factors that contribute to this type of conflict. Larry and William asserts that, ‘stress is one such contributor’. This conflict can be destructive because it takes place between different individuals.

### **Substantive Conflict**

Larry and Willimon define substantive conflict as, “disputes over facts, values goals and beliefs.” The school community is made up of people of diverse expertise. There are electrical technicians, plumbers and highly qualified educators. These may have conflict in their areas of work. Ideas may differ resulting in tensions. In this conflict, people have facts that support their goals but those facts may be different from that of the other person or group.

### **Conflict Stages**

Conflict emerges when there is divergence in opinions that is not properly handled. Conflict usually has some developmental stages as discussed by Tyson Shawn and Tony Jackson. There is a developmental stage that is known as ‘the disagreement stage’. This is where there is a belief that the issue being dealt with is important and that it needs to be resolved.

The other stage is known as ‘the Confrontation stage’, where people become committed to their respective points of view, at this stage a tension can be observed. Tyson and Tony express that “real differences exist between the two. In the early stages of confrontation the parties become committed to their own views. They strengthen their positions through words.”<sup>1</sup> There is a conflict stage known as the ‘escalation stage’. At this stage conflict is now deepening because the parties are more into their way of thinking than seeking a common ground. Tyson and Tony purport that “the group unity is shattered at this stage as exchanges become increasingly hostile and emotional. Coercion rather than persuasion becomes the order of the day, promises are replaced by threats.”

After a certain time, conflicts may start to become mild due to different factors, that stage is known as de-escalation stage. In a school setting, conflict last longer due to the fact that these people stay together in the same place. In other work places, conflicting partners stay in different localities giving more space for recovery. Time factor usually will push for a positive development causing de-escalation. Tyson and Tony argue that “de-escalation occurs when people recognise that time and energy are wasted by continuing debate. High level tension and emotional frustrations cannot be maintained indefinitely”. Those who lead in negotiations can facilitate a reconciliation process though it may be difficult.

The last stage of conflict is called the ‘resolution stage’. It is very challenging for a person to stay in a certain conflict forever at a school setup as it causes one to lose friends, resulting in loneliness. Tyson and Tony assert that “conflict can be

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<sup>1</sup>Shaun Tyson and Tony Jackson, *The Essence of Organizational Behaviour*, (Hemel Hempstead, OH: Prentice Hall, 1992), 50.

resolved by group unity, or interest of saving time that one of the participants withdraws from the conflict arena. The group leader or other authority figure takes one side and then mandate decision... ”<sup>1</sup>The school community is diverse in its composition. It can have people who live there with varied qualifications. They are people in schools who are highly skilled such as the teaching staff then the non teaching staff who comprise mainly semi skilled and non skilled workers. Due to such discrepancies, people may resultantly form groups according to their qualifications. Such anomalies are very common but bring about differences. Robert Perlman and Anold Gurin assert that “groups in society differ in their values and interests and so perceive problems and their accusations in different ways. Differences in values and goals often lead to political conflicts between groups, with some promoting particular changes and others resisting them.”<sup>2</sup>Any change in the school community needs to be tactically presented and not imposed. Any changes being brought should be communicated clearly.

### **Conflict Management**

Having discussed the causes of conflicts; kinds of conflicts and the stages of conflicts, it is important to now discuss conflict management. Conflicts will always be there in school communities so it is important to find ways of managing them. To begin with, it is important to define what conflict management is. Keith Huttenlocker describes conflict management as an “attempt to coexist with the problem or with persons through intentional devices that maintain the conflict within acceptable

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<sup>1</sup>Tony and Tyson, 53.

<sup>2</sup>Robert, Perlman and Anold Gurin, *Community Organisation and Planning*, (New York:John Wiley and Sons, 1972), 13.

limits.”<sup>1</sup> From this definition we are reminded that at a school, it’s not all situations where the conflicts can be completely dealt with but a common position in which the concerned parties find a common understanding. Keith elaborates further that “conflict management usually involves coming to an understanding of the problem and to some agreement about how parties are going to relate to one another”<sup>2</sup>.

There are many ways through which parties involved in a conflict could manage the conflict. For example, James Bugental suggests “resolving conflicts by finding alternatives that are creative solutions rather than compromises.”<sup>3</sup> One should venture into conflict resolution with courage and determination to try and make the parties work on a possible solution. Conflict should not be handled indifferently because it is an obstacle to progress in school. Every member of the school community should be vigilant, be part and parcel of the unity of the school. This means that when a conflict erupts, the community should be trained on how to handle it before it spills over. Stephen P Robbins lists five different methods of managing conflict which are “competition, collaboration, avoidance, accommodation, and sharing”<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Keith Huttenlocker, *Conflict and Caring, Preventing, Managing and Resolving Conflict in the Church*, (Newburg, GA: Trinity Press,1988), 31.

<sup>2</sup>Stephen, 343.

<sup>3</sup>James, Bugental FT, *Challenges of Humanistic Psychology*, (San Francisco, CA: McGraw Hill, 1967), 169.

<sup>4</sup>Stephen, Robbins P. *Organisational Behaviour Concepts, Controversies and Concepts*, (Upper Saddle River,NJ: Prentice Hall, 1983), 343.

## Competition: Win-Lose

This outcome shows that there is no consensus. “This is also known as forcing, where an individual firmly pursues his or her own concerns despite the resistance of the other.”<sup>1</sup> In this scenario one party pushes for his interest without considering the impact of conflict. Stephen Robbins argues that “when person dominates and goes for win-lose outcome, that person uses the formal authority to achieve that dominating stance by the use of power to ensure victory.”<sup>2</sup> It is a situation that reflects a more volatile kind of conflict.

In a school setting we find such situations especially when there are misunderstandings between people who are on different levels. For example an administrator who is having a conflict with one of the workers. Here the administrator uses the authority vested in him/her as a way of getting away with it. Keith describe this kind of handling conflict as ‘malignant conflict resolution’.<sup>3</sup> She goes on to clarify it as “an attempt at conflict resolution invariably focusing on the problem makers rather than the problem. This attempt seeks to bring the opposing faction into voluntary compliance or, failing that involuntary submission.”<sup>4</sup> This method does not fully engage the parties involved. If there are discussions, they are not meant to create a favourable condition for both parties but just formality sake. Douglas A Benton

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<sup>1</sup>“Conflict management Techniques”  
FREE resources/ConflictManagementTechniques.aspx(30/04/2012),  
<http://www.personalityexplorer.com/> 1,18/11/ 2012, 1.

<sup>2</sup>Stephen Robbins, 343.

<sup>3</sup>Keith, 34.

<sup>4</sup>Keith, 35

asserts that “It implies go broke, discourages the possibility of free expression and change of ideas.”<sup>1</sup>

Competition may be a better option, “in certain situations when all other, less forceful methods don’t work or are ineffective. When you need to stand up for your own rights, resist aggression and pressure. When a quick resolution is required and using force is justified. As a last resort to resolve a long- lasting conflict.”<sup>2</sup>Competition can only be effective when the decision is in line with the one in position in a school set up.

Having looked at possible situations where competition can be used the following are some of its detriments as a technique. “It may negatively affect one’s relationship with the opponent in the long run. It may cause the opponent to react in the same way, even if the opponent did not intend to be forceful originally. Taking competition as a method of conflict management may require a lot of energy and exhausting to some individuals.”<sup>3</sup>

#### Avoidance, Lose-Lose

This conflict management technique is also known as withdrawing. “This is a situation where a person does not pursue his or her own concerns or those of the opponent. He or she does not address the conflict, sidesteps it, postpones or simply withdraws.”<sup>4</sup>In avoidance the parties concerned do not want to face each other

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<sup>1</sup>Douglas, Benton A. *Applied Human Relations, an Organisational Approach, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*, (Upper Saddle River,NJ: Prentice Hall, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>"Conflict managent Techniques"  
[http://www.personalityexplorer.com/FREEResources/.aspx\(30/04/2012\),1](http://www.personalityexplorer.com/FREEResources/.aspx(30/04/2012),1).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>4</sup>" Conflict managent Techniques"  
[http://www.personalityexplorer.com/FREEResources/.aspx\(30/04/2012\),1](http://www.personalityexplorer.com/FREEResources/.aspx(30/04/2012),1).



because of the differences they have. Stephen Robbins contends that “a party may recognise that a conflict exists but react by withdrawing or suppressing the conflict.”<sup>1</sup> Keith underscores the following as reasons why people opt for avoidance. Avoidance is an option when ‘a conflict is of a low priority withdrawal or avoidance is better option’. She elaborate further that “situations that are only slightly bothersome usually do not motivate us to do much about them. Unless they grow worse, we may ignore them indefinitely.”<sup>2</sup> Circumstances that do not attract much attention in a school for example teachers suspecting one another over a missing book. Chances are that parties concerned will not bother themselves to sit down over such a small issue.

People choose to avoid may be because of the perceived duration of the conflict. If it lasts a short time then people concerned may choose to ignore it. Keith posits that “a problem of brief duration may well be left alone unless there will be long term consequences in doing so.”<sup>3</sup> In a school setup the administration may avoid conflict by letting minor issues just die a natural death than giving a special attention or doing everything to a small matter which may become complicated. The avoidance may be option when there are fears of the forseen risks. Keith underscores that “those with whom we are in conflict may retaliate with an instant rebuke, gossip or other response.”<sup>4</sup> Such situations do happen for instance where people stay close to each other one may decide to let go than facing their opponents.

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen, 343.

<sup>2</sup>Keith,29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>4</sup>Keith, 30.

People may also choose avoidance because of pain. Keith reveals that “it is not easy to tell others especially those who are dear, how they are offending us.”<sup>1</sup> An administrator may offend a worker openly and that worker may not come forth to talk about the issue with the administrator although it pains him/her. People who fail to deal with the conflict may choose to avoid it, because they think that they will never resolve the conflict at all. This may be due to the time they have spent trying to deal with the conflict or the behaviour being presented by the other party. People may also choose avoidance as a result of some guilty feelings. After a person has been wronged the first reaction is anger. As the person think deeper about the other concerned party’s reaction, guilty feelings sometimes come even though the person may have been right in the first place. After such a guilty feelings one may decide to ignore the issue because the provoker may already have feelings of being on the wrong. Usually after exploding emotionally one may no longer be willing to talk about the issue.

Avoidance is only a temporary solution to conflict resolution. It works best for those people who are meeting for the first time who may never meet again. For example, schools go for different levels of sport competitions such as district, provincial and national level. A conflict may arise between teachers in charge of sport from different schools as a result of a disagreement. These two teachers may never meet again due to many factors such as time and distance. Avoidance will be the best method for resolving that conflict.

Keith underscores that “conflict avoidance is usually not an acceptable approach to conflict if the problems are of significant magnitude or continuing duration. Beside the problems it do not get solved but it creates its own problems.”<sup>2</sup>A

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<sup>1</sup>Keith, 30.

<sup>2</sup>Keith, 31.

person will not lose anything by avoidance when involved in a conflict with a stranger. Furthermore it is alleged that “avoidance can be a good method in situations where the opponent is forcing or in situations where the conflict is short. It gives the ability or time to focus on more important or more urgent issues instead.”<sup>1</sup>

Although avoidance has some advantages it has disadvantages also. The disadvantage is that, “it leads to weakening or losing one’s positions; by not pursuing it further which may be interpreted as an agreement. When multiple parties are involved, withdrawing may affect one’s relationship with a party that expects an action.”<sup>2</sup>

#### Accommodation/ Lose-Win

This technique is also known as smoothing. “It is accommodating the concerns of other people first of all, rather than one’s own concerns.”<sup>3</sup>The parties concerned understand the effect of the conflict, they see life beyond the conflict. Stephen P Robbins says that “when the parties seek to appease their opponent, they may be willing to place their opponent’s interest above their own.”The reason they take this position may be to save their relationship. There situations where accommodating is possible. “When it is important to provide a temporary relief from the conflict or buy time until one is in a better position to respond or push back. When the issue is not as important to you as it is to the other person. When you accept you

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<sup>1</sup>“Conflict”

[http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/building/conflict.html\(30/04/2012\),3](http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/building/conflict.html(30/04/2012),3).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 4.

are wrong. When you have no choice or when continued competition would be detrimental.”<sup>1</sup>

Accommodation can be a better method that can be used which allows working to proceed without hindrances from the prevailing conflict environment. Although this is a method that can be used in resolving a conflict in a school setting, conflicting individuals may not take this route for fear of being labelled or perceived as have been wrong in the first place. This makes an individual’s reputation to be negatively affected. Accommodation negatively affects one’s confidence and the ability to respond to an aggressive opponent and a possibility of a win-win solution in the future.”<sup>2</sup>

#### Compromising/Sharing

Compromising is a balanced way of resolving a conflict. Stephen states that “when each party in the conflict gives up something, sharing occurs which results in a compromised outcome.”The parties are more interested in settling the differences rather than coming up with a winner or loser. At a school setting, there are situations where workers are appealing for a salary increment, when the institution has no money. That can create a conflict. In trying to resolve the conflict the institution may turn down the request for now till a later date.

Compromising conflict management strategy is appropriate in the following situations.

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<sup>1</sup>"Conflict  
'FREEresources/ConflictManagementTechniques.aspx(30/04/2012),  
<http://www.personalityexplorer.com/> 1,18/11/ 2012, 4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.,4.

“When the goals are moderately important and not worth the use of more assertive or more involving approaches, such as forcing or collaborating. It can be used when trying to reach temporary settlement on complex issues. It can be used to reach expedient solutions on important issues. It works as a first step when the involved parties do not know each other well or haven’t yet developed a high level of mutual trust. Compromising can be used when collaboration or forcing do not work.”<sup>1</sup>

This kind of settlement saves the employer and the employee relationship.

It appears compromise is good for temporary situations or in bringing down the tempers of the parties involved. This method is suitable in resolving workers grievances. Larry and William concur that “Compromise is most effective as a style of ministry where the differences are attitudinal or feeling differences.”<sup>2</sup>

Although compromise is a better option to conflict resolution, it also poses some challenges to conflict resolution process. Some of the disadvantages are “it may result in a situation when both parties are not satisfied with outcome. It does not contribute to building trust in the long run. Compromise may require close monitoring and control to ensure the agreements are met.”<sup>3</sup> People should not compromise in order to merely accommodate each other; there should be valid reasons of doing so. This means that an assessment has to be made before taking it as an option. Of the two parties involved, the other one may not have a valid reason then the outcome may turn out to be a Win- lose solution.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 10.

<sup>3</sup>“Conflict management Techniques”  
FREEresources/ConflictManagementTechniques.aspx(30/04/2012),  
<http://www.personalityexplorer.com/> 1,18November 2012, 3.

## Collaboration / Win -Win

Win-win scenario is when conflicting individuals are working towards satisfying the conflicting parties concerned. It is also known as problem confronting or problem solving. While there are several techniques to resolve conflicts collaboration is an approach that brings a different picture in conflict resolution in that “collaboration involves an attempt to work with each person to find a win-win solution to the problem at hand. This appears to be the one that most satisfies the concerns of both parties.”<sup>1</sup> There is pulling together of ideas and sharpening them to come to a consensus. Stephen Robbins states that “in collaboration the behaviour of the parties is aimed at solving the problems, at clarifying the difference rather than accommodating various points of view.”<sup>2</sup> A win -win situation can only be achieved when members involved in a conflict spend more time in looking at the causes of the conflict. As they do that, they begin to lose focus of individual point of view and look on ways they can go around the challenge.

Although different strategies can be used in trying to manage conflicts in schools, not all methods work for the best results in all situations. We should try to use methods that minimize the possible damage. Keith argues that “creative conflict resolution produces a new beginning... . It seeks negotiations rather than preconceived solutions. It is characterised by objectivity, charity, trust, honesty, amenability and openness.”<sup>3</sup> Although it needs a lot of effort to come to a win-win situation, it offers

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<sup>1</sup>“Conflict management Techniques”  
FREEsources/ConflictManagementTechniques.aspx(30/04/2012),<http://www.personalityexplorer.com/> 1, 18November 2012, 1.

<sup>2</sup>Stephen, 343.

<sup>3</sup>Keith, 35.

the best results. Keith goes on to say that “a conflict that is resolved creatively is followed by a deepened intimacy and goodwill.”<sup>1</sup>

For an Adventist institution we should aim at the win- win solution because it satisfies both parties. The advantages it has are that “It leads to solving the actual problem. It leads to a win-win outcome. It reinforces mutual trust and respect. It builds a foundation for effective collaboration in the future. It shares responsibility of the outcome. Win-win strategy has less stressful outcome.”<sup>2</sup>This is a method that brings a more lasting solution to conflicts in the Adventist institutions.

Although collaboration is the best outcome to be aimed at, there are situations where it may not be achieved. It is a time consuming technique. When a quick response is needed it may not yield the needed results. The technique negative results “when one or more parties lose their trust in an opponent, the relationship falls back to other methods of conflict resolution. There is need for all involved to continue collaborative efforts to maintain a collaborative relationship.”<sup>3</sup>

It is important when dealing with conflicts for one to be flexible, be ready to accept any outcome that brings the people in conflict together. There is need to continue looking for a lasting solution although it may take a longer time than expected.

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<sup>1</sup>Keith, 35.

<sup>2</sup>(Conflict management Techniques)  
FREEsources/ConflictManagementTechniques.aspx(30/04/2012),<http://www.personalityexplorer.com/> 1,18November 2012, 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 2.

## Problem Solving

Problems that are not solved contribute to conflicts in the Adventist boarding schools. Solving problems is also managing conflicts. Maria TM Dijkstra et al establish that “within the conflict literature, problem solving is generally seen as the most constructive conflict management strategy because of its focus on outcomes while at the same time respecting social relationships.”<sup>1</sup> Problem solving has advantages when it is used to manage conflicts because it brings the two parties together.

Maria MT Dijkstra et al presents problem solving as having an advantage of “high concern for others’ outcomes” by this she means that “when people engage in problem solving, their attitude is oriented towards the attainment of desired outcomes: they keep their eyes on the ball and behave in an assertive way; they are in control of their own actions and partially their outcomes. ... when a person takes control over conflict by reacting actively, the chances are that he or she will experience less frustration and helplessness than acting passively... .”<sup>2</sup> Problem solving is identified as having “high concern for others’ outcomes” by this she means that “when choosing a problem- solving strategy, together with high concern for their own outcomes people also show a high concern for the outcomes of the other party. By exchanging

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<sup>1</sup>Maria, Dijkstra MT ,Beersma Bianca, Evers Arne. Reducing Conflict-Related Employee Strain: The Benefits of an Internal locus of Control and a Problem-Solving Management Strategy. (*Work and Stress* vol. 25, No2, April-June 2011,170) Department of Work and Organizational Psychology, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup>Maria MT Dijkstra, Beersma Bianca, Evers Arne, 170.



information about priorities and preferences... people are taking control over the conflict situation while at the same time respecting the social relationships.”<sup>1</sup>

### Forgiveness

At a Church institution, forgiveness may be an easier way to conflict management because it is most likely that the conflicting parties believe in the Bible.(Mark 11:25) encourages us to forgive one another. Deborah S Butler and Fran Mullis assert that “forgiveness is a strategy that may moderate workplace conflict and stimulate cooperation. Using forgiveness as a problem- solving strategy can reduce feelings of anger, resentment, and negative judgement regarding the offender.”<sup>2</sup> A problem that is being looked at after people have forgiven each other will likely yield positive results. It gives a shift to what a person may be pointing to as an obstacle. Deborah and Fran say that “forgiving the offender allows a person to ‘focus on the adversity than the adversary.’”<sup>3</sup>

### Job Descriptions

Failing to know the specifics of a job hinders that person’s performance and increases chances of getting clashes and conflicts. It is important for the organization to have Job descriptions. Laurence J Stybel defines job description as “documents containing job title, reporting relationship, summary of responsibilities; decision-

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<sup>1</sup>Maria MT Dijkstra, Beersma Bianca, Evers Arne, 170.

<sup>2</sup>Deborah Butler S, Mullis Fran, (2001) *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, Vol.57, No 3, University of Texas Press, 259.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 260.

making authority; and hiring requirements.”<sup>1</sup> It is this document that sets boundaries in a working environment, which helps in protecting workers from outside interference. Laurence J Stybel highlights the importance of the use of Job description in conflict management “... this technique helps to advance the goal of making these conflicts discussable and provides a practical way of dealing with them.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Dealing with People in a Conflict**

Conflict management is a complex process that needs the person interacting with the conflicting parties to be endowed with relevant skills to perform such a task. In this section, the focus is on how a person can function as a mediator.

#### Mediation

As we move to the area of mediation it is important to define what is to mediate. Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary defines it as “middle: intervening indirect; related or acting through something intervening.”<sup>3</sup> At an institution level, there is always a trusted person whom people confide in, and is generally acceptable. This person can work better in the capacity of a mediator than a person who may be coming from outside. Conflict issues accumulate over years and become very much deep seated in the school community.

Sandia Touval and I William Zartman in the book *International Mediation Theory and Practice* argue that “we also assume that beyond their specific

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<sup>1</sup>Laurence Stybel J. (2010) Managing the inner Contradictions of Job Descriptions: A Technique for use in Recruitment. *The Psychologist- Manager Journal*, 13: 105.

<sup>2</sup>Laurence Stybel J, 110.

<sup>3</sup>A M Macdonald. Ed. *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*, (Great Britain: The Pitman Press, 1981), 272.

contributions to the negotiating process, mediators affect negotiations and alter the structure of the conflict.”<sup>1</sup> Douglas posits that “a neutral outsider should be brought in to assist as mediator who should talk to both sides in a conciliatory point of view. The mediator should work with the one who is not emotionally charged.”<sup>2</sup>In mediation great care should be taken to keep the parties concerned closer to the mediator. The mediator should keep a close watch and make sure that the conflicting parties continue to trust him. There should be no spilling of words. In mediation one should share information with the concerned parties only. Efforts should be made to keep emotions low.

The mediator should not show any form of favour to any of the parties but should get all the information that is necessary. There are instances where the conflict is much heated up due to closeness in distance of the conflicting parties, the mediator may be tempted to make temporary solutions. These may come when the mediator tries to cover the cracks by constantly reminding the parties that they are Christians. It is important to let people be themselves and consensus should come out of the two parties. Douglass asserts that “humiliating the opponent may only give a temporary victory, ...to allow the opponent to save face may be the best interest of the company, the union or the nation.”<sup>3</sup>

Tempers should be kept low to allow continuity of discussions. This can be achieved by not focusing on the conflict, but outcome. There are activities which

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<sup>1</sup>Sandia Touval Sandia and I William Zartman (Eds) *International Mediation in Theory and Practice*, (Washington, DC:West Press ,Foreign Policy Institute School of Advanced International Studies,1985), 1.

<sup>2</sup>Douglass, 424.

<sup>3</sup>Douglass, 424.

necessitate a good environment for a favourable outcome such as spiritual outings or campouts. Douglass further elaborates on how good communication skills can help in dealing with people in a conflict and that “through listening and attending to communication technique can create an understanding in which, despite ongoing disagreement over details, the total process of decision making can continue.”<sup>1</sup>

### **The Mediator as a Formulator**

The mediator should be a very creative person who should not run out of ideas. In to mediate between the conflicting parties Sandia Touval and I William Zartman advocates that “the mediator should help the parties by tactful, sympathetic accurate straight forward prodding and suggestion.”<sup>2</sup>This means that the mediator should be the one initiating the process. The mediator’s role is of making sure that the parties concerned have been assisted to continue negotiating. The mediator should not be tied in between or implicated in the process. Sandia Touval and I William Zartman states that, “roles of the mediator as a formulator consensus lays on a continuum ranging from passive facilitation to active formulation of an agreement often without a clear distinction between them”.<sup>3</sup>

There are situations where the parties negotiating may have serious problems the mediator should assist in breaking such deadlocks. In the process of negotiating, the mediator should not change the nature of the problem. Conflict needs to be dealt with in its original state rather than when there are other issues that are surrounding the conflict. Though the mediator does not need to decide for the parties concerned or

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<sup>1</sup>Douglass, 425.

<sup>2</sup>Sandia Touval and I William Zartman,12.

<sup>3</sup>Sandia Touval and I William Zartman,13.

put his personal views in the subject under discussion. Great effort is needed from the mediator to resolve the conflict. Sandia Touval and I William Zartman assert that “position and communication is not enough to bring the conflict to a minimum level. The mediator may use position or other available resources to manipulate the parties into agreement.”<sup>1</sup>

In a school setup a conflict may arise due to scarcity of resources for example shortage of textbooks, tools for agriculture and furniture. Teachers may end up in conflict when they fail to realise the need to share the little resources with others. In such circumstances the mediator who may be the administration, should distribute the needed resources.

### **Building Trust**

The mediator should try to address all the questions being raised in some way. One should make a careful study on the history of the conflict and other background studies. Elizabeth Riley concurs that “in order to avoid conflict and manage conflict, it is necessary to understand pre-existing conflicts and tensions between and within the groups of potential partners.”<sup>2</sup> Ignoring people’s feelings and needs may result in conflict. The mediator should always stay away from potential sources of conflict. The person in the role of a mediator should live and behave in a respected manner.

### **The Diplomatic Intervention**

There are issues that are sensitive and very destructive to the school community. We have a situation in the Bible (1Kings3:16-27) where two women fought over ownership of a baby because the other mother’s baby had died. Both

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<sup>1</sup>Sandia Touval and I William Zartman, 16.

<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth Riley, 58.

claimed to be the real mother of the living baby. When they came to King Solomon, he acted as if he wanted to cut the baby which was alive into two helped in solving the problem. Through conflicting parties' reactions he managed to identify the real mother of the live baby. In mediation, rushing to show who may be right or wrong should by all means be avoided. Sandia and I William Zartman asserts that "the mediator interest is to keep the parties locked in a stalemate so that neither of them prevails, the mediator moves parties to an agreement rather than creating victory for one side."<sup>1</sup> To achieve this, the mediator may even support the weak party conditionally.

### **Bargaining**

It is important to note that in bargaining people should be left to think as individuals without any manipulation. The mediators should always bear in mind that every point they make is important and should not be looked down upon. Thomas Schelling stresses that "each party is guided by expectations" he goes on to say that "bargaining is the ability to set the best price for yourself and foot the other man into thinking this was your maximum offer."<sup>2</sup>

### **Seventh – day Adventist Overview of Conflict Handling**

The Seventh- day Adventist working policy has a clearly laid plan as to how the differences should be worked out in our Church institutions "when a grievance procedure is initiated by an employee, he/she is recognizing the authority of the Church and is voluntarily submitting himself/herself to Church channels and authority

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<sup>1</sup>Sandia Touval and I William Zartman (Eds), 10.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Schelling C. *The Strategy of Conflict*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University,1980), 21.

in the search for a solution to his/her grievance. The procedure shall be as follows:

When an employee has a grievance he/she should discuss the problem with his/her immediate supervisor.”<sup>1</sup>This plan works very well in situations where the complainant is working well with the supervisor. Workers should not be restricted to have other people whom they are free to discuss their challenges with who may not be part of the administrative lines. On this issue of Conflict management the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual purports that “every effort should be made to settle differences among church members and contain the controversy within the smallest possible sphere.”<sup>2</sup>

The Church manual does not prescribe who should be directly involved in terms of position in a school environment. Both the the Working policy and the Church Manual tend to be prescriptive only when the conflict arises. When dealing with conflict it is also important to address factors that causes conflict and how it can be minimised before it is fully developed which will be discussed later in this study.

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<sup>1</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Working Policy of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division*, 2010 ed. (Rietvalleirand Centurion: Print Factory, 2010), 53.

<sup>2</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual 18<sup>th</sup> edition*, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2010), 59.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING

This section deals with the location of East Zimbabwe Conference as well as the provinces where the boarding schools are located. In order to find out the conflict issues in schools there is need to do a descriptive type of research. Vyhmeister underscores the importance of this type of research that “the descriptive research is to make reality known”<sup>1</sup> This section will provide information on the causes of conflict in SDA boarding schools in EZC.

#### **The Country of Zimbabwe**

The country of Zimbabwe is located in Southern Africa area of 392 757 square kilometers. It lies between the rivers Zambezi in the north bordering with Zambia and the Limpopo River in the south, bordering with South Africa. Mozambique lies to the east and to the west lies Botswana. Zimbabwe has a mixed economy of agriculture and mining. There are basically five (5) regions across the country’s nine (9) provinces.

#### Religion

Zimbabwe is generally a Christian country. Beginning 1859 when the first missionaries came into this country, many denominations were established namely, Salvation Army church, Anglican church, Methodist church, Pentecostal churches, Roman Catholics and the Seventh-day Adventist Church to mention a few.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 151.



The SDA church came to Zimbabwe in 1894 and established mission stations at Solusi to begin with. It has three conferences a membership of about 715090 as at 30 June 2012 from its conferences CZC (240,387); EZC (263,980) and WZC (210,723).”<sup>1</sup>

### Population

According to the statistics released by The Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency (ZimStat) in 2012, it was reported that “the population of Zimbabwe was 12 973 808. According to the report, “the average annual inter-censal population growth rate between 2002 and 2012 was nearly 1.1% and with such a growth rate, the population would double roughly in 70 years.”<sup>2</sup> It was also reported that there were 95 males for every 100 females and that, of the total population 6 234 931 were males and 6 738 877 were females. Zimbabwe has nine provinces. Of the nine (9) provinces of Zimbabwe, East Zimbabwe conference covers the following provinces:Harare, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central and Manicaland provinces.

In each of these provinces the Adventist church had at least one school with Manicaland having the greatest number of primary schools. The distribution of Adventist Primary Schools in the provinces were Manicaland, nineteen (19); Mash west, five (5); Mash East two (2) and Harare two (2) primary school. In the same vein, Manicaland had twelve (12) secondary schools, Mashonaland Central, three (3); Mashonaland East two (2) while Harare and Mashonaland West have one (1) secondary school each. Details of the distribution are as shown on Table 1 below.

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<sup>1</sup>Zimbabwe Union Conference 4<sup>th</sup> Constituency Meeting 2012 November 14-18, Revived by His Word, 2012, 23.

<sup>2</sup>News Day December 18, 2012.

Table1.Distribution of Adventist schools in East Zimbabwe conference

Province	Number of Primary Schools	Number of Secondary Schools
Manicaland	19	12
Mashonaland West	5	1
Mashonaland Central	-	3
Mashonaland East	2	2
Harare	2	1
Total	28	19

### **Education in the East Zimbabwe Conference**

The number of Adventist schools in the East Zimbabwe Conference had increased in recent years. Up to the year 2002, the conference had a total of thirty-four (34) schools. Five new schools were established in 2003 thus bringing the total to Thirty-nine (39). Four (4) of the five were secondary and one (1) primary. By the year 2008, “the Conference had a total of forty-five (45) schools of which five (5) were high schools.”<sup>1</sup> Between year 2003 and year 2008 there was a six percent (6%) growth in the number of schools. During the same period 229 workers were added to the EZC boarding schools which was a fifty- one percent (51%) growth. The growth pattern in that period is an indication that the schools would be more susceptible to conflict

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<sup>1</sup>Zimbabwe Union Conference 4<sup>th</sup> Constituency Meeting 2012 November 14-18, Revived by His Word, 2012, 103.

because, generally conflict arise more often in densely populated communities than communities with fewer people.

Figure 1 below show the growth of schools in East Zimbabwe Conference in recent years.

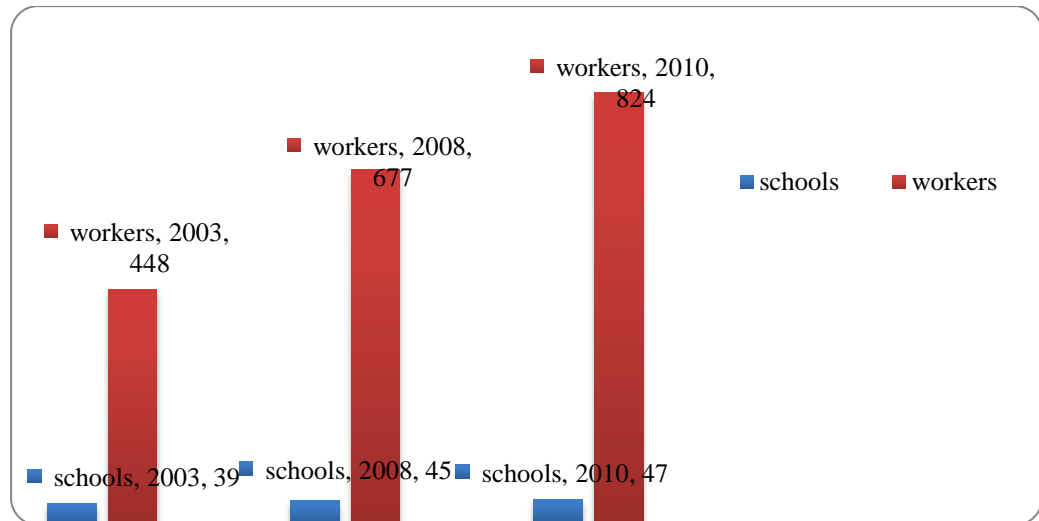


Figure 1. Growth of schools in EZC

#### Location

This study focused on the five (5) boarding schools of the East Zimbabwe conference namely Makunde Primary School, Nyahuni High School, Nyazura High School, Nyazura Primary School and Ruya High school. These were located in different provinces, Nyazura Primary and Secondary in Manicaland, Nyahuni and Makunde in Mash east and Ruya High school in Mash central.

#### The Population of the Study

The population for the study constituted of all the five boarding schools in East Zimbabwe Conference and all the 226 workers in these schools. As alluded earlier, of the five (5) schools, three (3) were secondary and two (2) of them were primary. The boarding schools were chosen for the study because most of the workers

leaved on the school compound and as a result there was more likelihood of the existence of conflict. Eight-four percent (84 %) of total population was from the secondary schools. The percentages were as follows twenty-three percent (23%) from Ruya High school, Nyazura High school had twenty-nine percent (29%) and Nyahuni High school had thirty-two (32%). For the Primary schools, ten percent (10%) were from Nyazura while six percent (6%) were from Makunde primary. Figure 2 show the population of staff members according to schools.

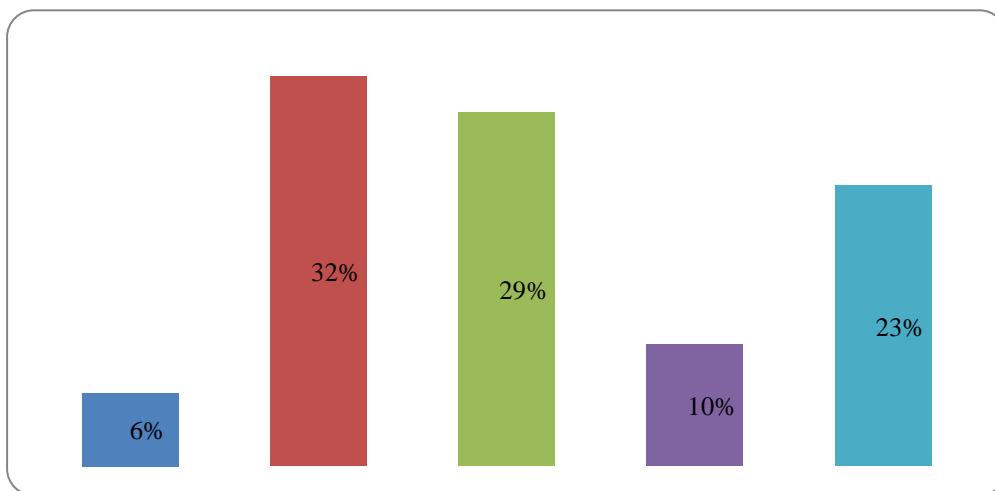


Figure 2: Staff members in EZC boarding schools

It was observed that eight-four percent (84%) of the total population were secondary staff members while only sixteen percent (16%) were primary staff members. Due to such a variation the researcher concluded that conflict was more likely to be prevalent in secondary boarding schools than in primary boarding schools. It was from such a premise that the researcher chose to do a program at a boarding secondary school.

### Data Gathering and Analysis

This section deals with the way data were gathered and analyzed on the causes of conflict in Adventist boarding schools of the East Zimbabwe Conference. The data

were collected from a sample of 75 staff members. The data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire on the causes of conflicts and conflict resolution methods as well as an interview schedule. In order to build up the final questionnaire for the research, an open ended questionnaire was administered to twenty-four (24) respondents from four schools (Appendix D). The final questionnaire of the five point Likert scale of Always to Never consisted of thirty-two (32) items in three sections A, B and C. Section A solicit information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, Section B was on the causes of conflict while Section C was on conflict resolution methods (Appendix B).

The data collected were analysed using the descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were employed. The questionnaire was administered to seventy-five (75) respondents. The analysis revealed that the majority of the respondents were teachers with a frequency of forty-nine (49) which is sixty-five (65%), followed by workers with a frequency of twenty-one (21) constituting twenty-eight percent (28%) and then administrators with a frequency of five (5) which is seven percent(7%). That analysis made the researcher to assume that the most likely group to be affected by conflict are the teachers because of their large number. In order to reduce conflict, there was a need to design a program that would target the most affected group in terms of number.

Table 2 and Figure 3 below show the distribution of respondents according to status.

Table 2. Status of respondents

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Administrators	5	6.7	6.7	6.7
Teachers	49	65.3	65.3	72.0
Workers	21	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

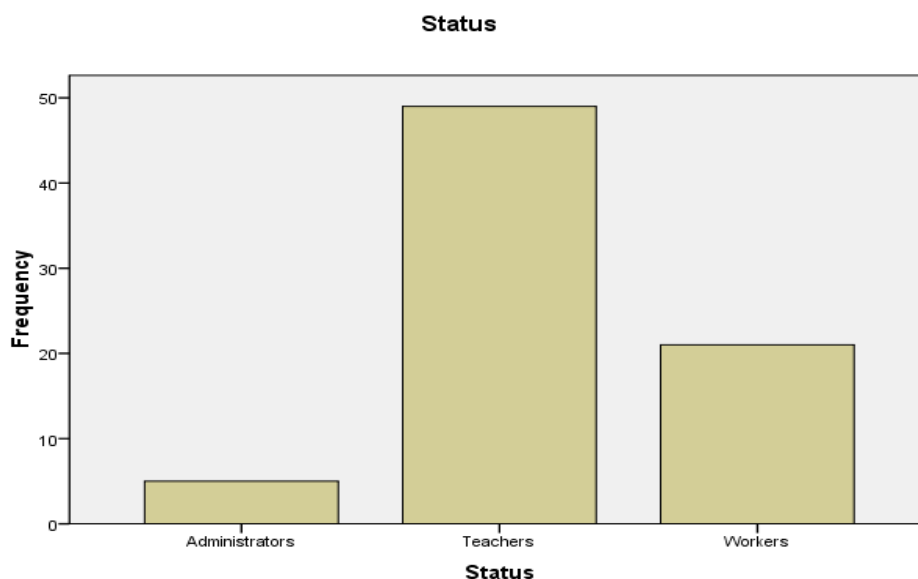


Figure 3. Bar chart showing status of respondents

From the questionnaires, the researcher observed that, forty-two (42) of the respondents were males while thirty-three (33) were females. This indicates that the majority of the respondents used in the study were males.

Table 3 and figure 4 below show the distribution of respondents according to gender.

Table 3. Gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	42	56.0	56.0	56.0
Female	33	44.0	44.0	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

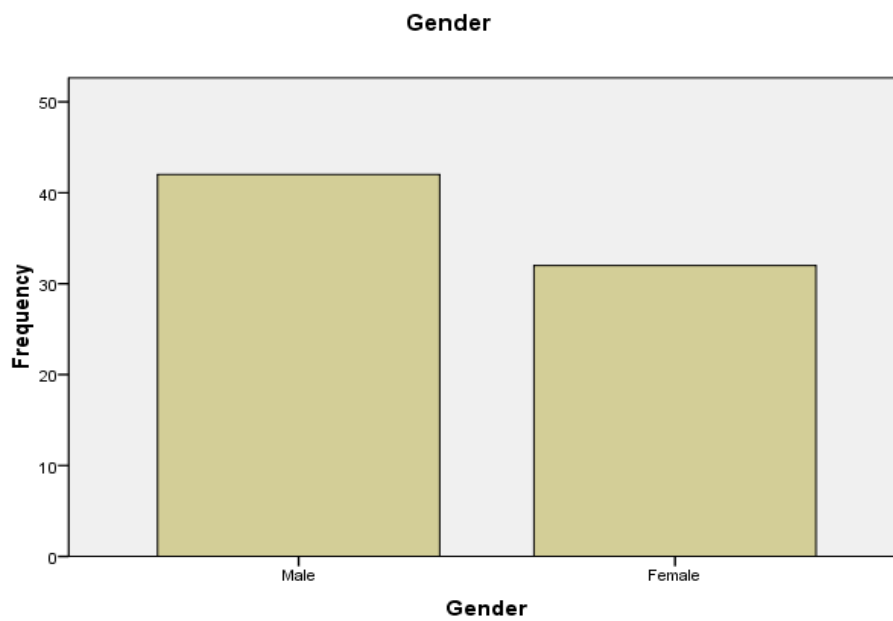


Figure 4. Gender distribution

### **Research Findings on the Causes of Conflict**

The respondents had varied opinion on the causes of conflict. The analysis revealed that poor communication was always a cause of conflict in SDA boarding schools with thirty- six percent (36%) of the respondents in the always category and twenty-five percent (25%) in the sometimes category. This shows that communication needs to be improved in SDA Schools in order to reduce conflict. The analysis also revealed that leadership style was also a major cause of conflict with about thirty-one percent (30.7%) in the often category and twenty-eight percent (28%) in the always category. This means that leadership style had over fifty-eight percent (58%) of the respondents who are of the opinion that it is often or always a cause of conflict in schools. The above result is an indication of the need of a program to assist both current and prospective leaders on how to reduce conflicts in schools. The frequency and percentage distribution of respondents also revealed that inequitable treatment, shortage of resources, and unclear job descriptions all of which were work related in their nature were also major causes of conflict. In order to reduce conflict there was a need to come up with a program that would address the workers' plight.

Other causes of conflicts such as policy implementation, underperformance by pupils, role conflict, cultural differences, unrealistic expectations and lack of trust were sometimes causes of conflict. From the percentage distribution of respondents on the extent to which the listed items are causes of conflict, it could be deduced that all the identified causes needed to be looked into and be addressed with an emphasis being put on those the majority of the respondents categorized as often and always.



The results indicate that conflicts are inevitable in any organisation such as the school institutions.

Table 4 shows the frequencies and percentages of respondents on the causes of conflict.

Table 4. Causes of conflicts in schools							
Causes of conflict	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Missing	Total
	1	2	3	4	5		
Poor communication	3	8	18	19	27		75
	4.0%	10.7%	24%	25%	36%		100%
Policy Implementation	13	11	25	14	11	1	75
	17.3%	14.7%	33.3%	18.7%	14.7%	1.3%	100%
Underperformance by pupils	12	24	26	3	7	3	75
	16%	32%	34.7%	4%	9.3%	4%	100%
Leadership style	6	5	16	23	21	4	75
	8%	6.7%	21.3%	30.7%	28%	5.3%	100%
Personal Chemistry/Clashes	8	12	14	27	10	4	75
	10.7%	16%	18.7%	36%	13.3%	5.3%	100%
Shortage of resources	7	11	18	28	10	1	75
	9.3%	14.7%	24%	37.3%	13.3%	1.3%	100%
Role Conflict	6	12	22	18	14	3	75
	8%	16%	29.3%	24%	18.7%	4%	100%
Inequitable treatment	8	8	22	15	19	3	75
	10.7%	10.7%	29.3%	20%	25.3%	4%	100%
Unclear Job Description	13	7	19	20	14	2	75
	17.3%	9.3%	25.3%	26.7%	18.7%	2.7%	100%
Cultural Difference	21	13	23	8	9	1	75
	28%	17.3%	30.7%	10.7%	12%	1.3%	100%

**Table 4 Causes of conflicts in schools***continued*

Cause of conflict	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Missing	Total
	1	2	3	4	5		
Late Payment	16	14	16	12	13	4	75
	21.3%	18.7%	21.3%	16%	17.3%	5.3%	100%
Unrealistic Expectations	11	11	28	13	11	1	75
	14.7%	14.7%	37.3%	17.3%	14.7%	1.3%	100%
Lack of Trust	13	11	22	13	15	1	75
	17.3%	14.7%	29.3%	17.3%	20%	1.3%	100%
Disagreement about needs, Goal and Priorities	6	14	20	23	12	0	75
	8%	18.7%	26.7%	30.7%	16%	0	100%
Attendance at Work	17	17	14	13	14	0	75
	22.7%	22.7%	18.7%	17.3%	18.7%	0	100%

**Research Findings on Conflict Resolution Strategies**

Having discussed the causes of conflict, researcher then focused on conflict resolution methods. Based on simple majority, consultation, transparency and counselling were always used with frequencies and percentages of 24 (32%), 28 (37.3%) and 23 (30.7%) respectively. Dialogue is often used with a frequency of 22 which is 29.3%. The table also revealed that mediation, avoidance, accommodation and compromise were sometimes used while competition, withdrawal and forcing were never used with frequencies and percentages of 19 (23.5%), 22 (29.3%) and 25 (33.3%) respectively.

The fact that respondents were distributed across all conflict management strategies was an indication that, to a certain extent the listed conflict management strategies were to some extent used in Adventist schools. The spread is also a clear indication that the SDA schools did not have specific method(s) for the management of conflict. The results suggest the need for a program that would assist members in handling conflicts. Table 5 below shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on their perception on conflict management strategies used in SDA boarding schools in EZC.

Table 5. Conflict management in schools							
Resolution Strategy	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Missing	Total
	1	2	3	4	5		
Consultation	6	10	21	12	24	2	75
	8%	13.30%	28%	16%	32%	2.70%	100%
Competition	19	16	17	10	8	5	75
	25.30%	21.30%	22.70%	13.30%	10.70%	6.70%	100%
Mediation	5	14	30	7	14	5	75
	6.70%	18.70%	40%	9.30%	18.70%	6.70%	100%
Avoidance	11	13	22	13	13	3	75
	14.70%	17.30%	29.30%	17.30%	17.30%	4%	100%
Withdrawal	22	19	16	9	5	4	75
	29.30%	25.30%	21.3%	12%	6.70%	5.30%	100%
Forcing	25	19	13	2	12	4	75
	33.30%	25.30%	17.30%	2.70%	16%	5.30%	100%
Accommodation	7	11	21	12	21	3	75
	9.30%	14.70%	28%	16%	28%	4%	100%

Table 5. Conflict management in schools. *Continued*

Resolution Strategy	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Missing	Total
Dialogue	7	9	16	22	19	2	75
	9.30%	12%	21.30%	29.30%	25.30%	2.70%	100%
Compromise	9	14	25	18	5	4	75
	12%	18.70%	33.30%	24%	6.70%	5.30%	100%
Transparency	9	13	15	8	28	2	75
	12%	17.30%	20%	10.70%	37.30%	2.70%	100%
Counselling	9	13	17	11	23	2	75
	12%	17.30%	22.70%	14.70%	30.70%	2.70%	100%

### Interview Findings

In addition to the administration of the questionnaire, three staff members (the Headmaster, one teacher and one worker) in each of the three boarding secondary schools were interviewed. In the same manner two staff members (the Headmaster and one teacher) were interviewed in each of the two boarding Primary schools. Thus a total of 13 respondents were interviewed.

The common causes of conflict as expressed by the interviewees were role conflict, leadership style, poor communication, poor conditions of work and shortage of resources.

Figure 5 below shows bar chart on the causes of conflict as expressed by the interviewees.

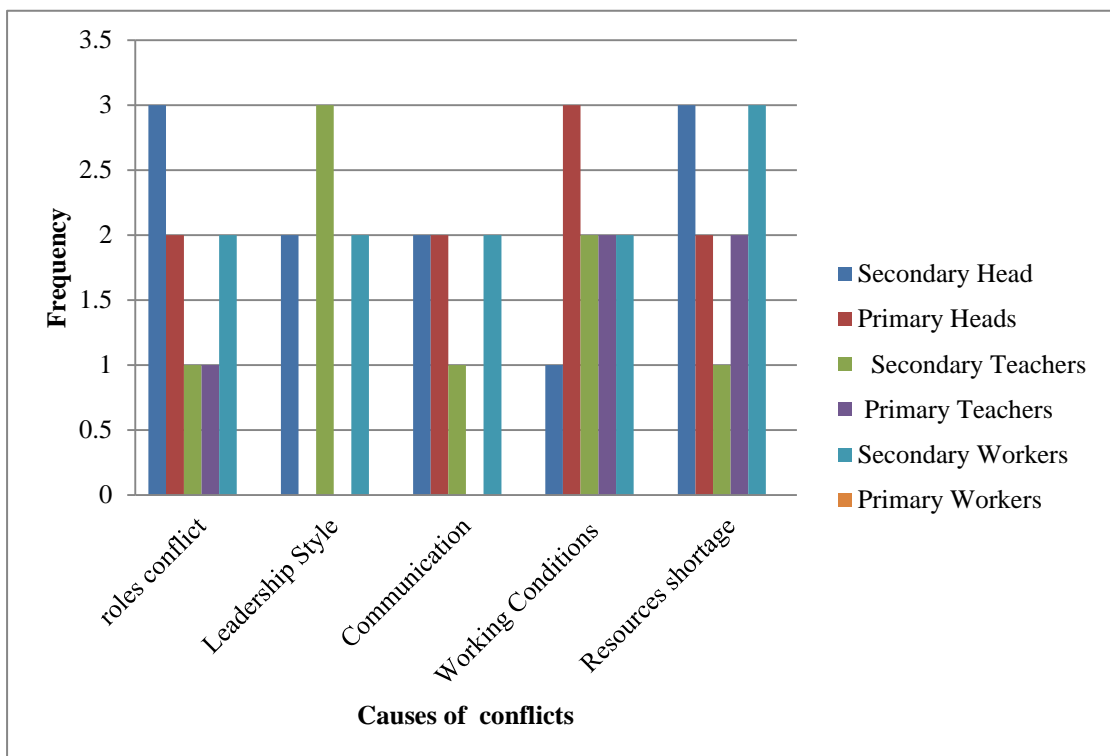


Figure 5 . Interview causes of conflict

Figure 5 above reflects the causes of conflict in Adventist boarding schools. Among the staff members (school heads, teachers and workers) it was echoed that role conflict, leadership style, communication, working conditions, shortage of resources were causes of conflict in schools. There were variances in their perceptions according to schools and status on each cause of conflict. Among the heads, the secondary school heads highlighted role conflict and resource shortage as major causes of conflict while their primary counterparts highlighted working conditions as the major cause of conflict. The secondary school workers indicated shortage of

resource as a major cause of conflict. The findings suggest that in order to reduce conflict in schools different groups should be taken into consideration.

### Interview Findings on Conflict Management

The interviewees also revealed consultation and transparency as the dominant conflict resolution methods. Consultation had twenty-three percent (23%) and transparency thirty-one (31%) from the interviews forty-six percent (46%) while the other conflict resolution methods like forcing, withdrawal, mediation, compromise, avoidance and competition had eight percent (8%) each, these were presented as other in figure 6 below.

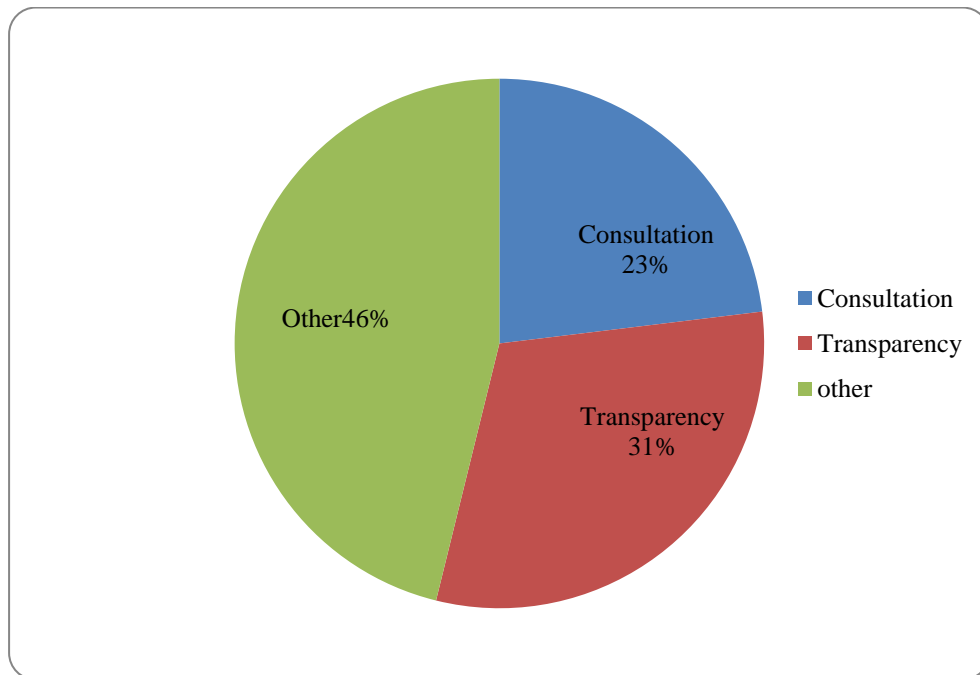


Figure 6: Interviews on Conflict resolution strategies

Although consultation and transparency were the dominant conflict management strategies, there appear to be other strategies which would be used like

accommodating and mediation. From such findings, there was a need to educate the schools on other conflict resolution methods.

Based on the above findings from the questionnaires and interviews, a program was designed for conflict management and promotion of reconciliation among staff members in Adventist boarding schools in East Zimbabwe Conference as contained in the next chapter

## CHAPTER 4

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

This section of the study forms a practical approach to conflict management in Adventist mission boarding schools in the East Zimbabwe Conference.

The researcher was given permission to conduct the research by the executive committee of the East Zimbabwe Conference (see appendix A). Appointments with schools, for the purpose of this research were made through phone calls or direct contact with the school administration. The researcher administered questionnaires to seventy-five respondents which were selected from the population of staff members in the five boarding schools and interviewed the school heads, one worker and one teacher in each school. The information in the literature review and data which were gathered on the causes of conflict and conflict management strategies was then used in preparation of the program. The program was conducted at Ruya Adventist high school one of the boarding schools on four different dates. The researcher led out in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the program.

#### **Program Objectives**

The objectives of the program were to ensure a greater understanding of conflict in Adventist boarding schools. To address the major causes of conflicts, as contained in the questionnaire. The major causes of conflict identified were poor communication, shortage of resources, leadership style and poor conditions of work.



The other objectives of the program were to encourage personal experience with God the Sustainer of all relationships; to teach the school community members about conflict; to inform the staff members about conflict related issues; to emphasize the beauty of a peaceful community; to encourage members of staff of the need to engage in conflict management, to instill in staff members the importance of conflict management and to present ways that may help cultivates friendship, fellowship and relationship building as a way of reducing conflict.

The program also aimed at enhancing team building and collaborative planning among the staff members. The program availed members of the school community an opportunity to echo their grievances without any fear of victimization. The program created a friendly environment and openness, enabling open communication. The program established a platform where people could discuss more freely as prescribed by (Matt 18:15-18), which instructs people in conflict to “begin by discussing conflicting issues among themselves”. It offered a platform for staff members to share ideas together. During the seminar, teachers and workers who had achieved in their areas of work shared their success story, there by destroying spirit of jealousy and competition. The program set a stage where challenges could be discussed and solutions sought from among staff members.

### **Program Content**

The program was divided into five segments (1) Training staff members in Leadership and Communication. (2) Visitation. (3) Motivating staff members. (4) Seminar on conflict management (5) Evaluation.

An arrangement of the venue for the program was done through the administration. The leadership training and motivation were done in two venues, that

is the staff room was for the lessons and the Ruya School hall for the sermon. The seminar on conflict management was done in the Ruya school library. The sitting arrangement for the attendees at the seminar and leadership training was a U-shaped set up. U-shaped setup allows attendees to see all other participants for face to face interaction.

### Leadership Training

Poor communication was highlighted as a major cause of conflict; the researcher to a certain extent addressed that area by conducting leadership training program. The leadership and communication training was done on a Sabbath on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2012. The training on leadership and communication was done for a full day on a Sabbath. Leadership and Communication are key areas that needed to be attended to in order to reduce conflicts in schools. Those who attended the morning session were Twenty-six (26) of the Ruya's fifty-three (53) staff members while the rest joined in as from divine service.

The training was run from 0830 hrs to 1700hrs. An arrangement had been made through the school administration. To begin with, a song was given (He leadeth me) and a prayer was offered by a volunteer. The researcher gave devotion from a Biblical passage (Psalm 133:1). The main focus was on the importance of unity. An analysis was given comparing unity; peace with conflict situations like those David got involved with King Saul. A prayer for unity was offered by a chosen person. Areas which were covered on that day were, (1) the definitions of a leader and leadership (2) Biblical examples of leadership. (3) Styles of leadership (4) leadership role in conflict management. Question time was given and the morning session ended.

As from 1100hrs to 1200hrs the time was set aside for the divine service and a sermon was delivered by the researcher. The sermon was entitled "The Relationship

Issues in the Story of Abraham”. The main focus was on how Abraham developed a relationship with God and how his relationship with God influenced the latter part of Abraham’s life. Abraham showed concern on interpersonal relationship with other people even when there was conflict (Gen 13:8; 21:25-30). The theme that was emphasized was that, “our relationship with God should impact all other relationships.”

As from 1400hrs to 1700hrs, presentations on communication were given by the researcher. The areas of focus were definition of communication, types of communication and the roles of communication in conflict management.

### Visitation

During the research there were causes of conflict that needed to be addressed to at individual or personal level like personal chemistry, lack of trust and cultural differences. The researcher addresses these through visitation program. The schools visited were, all the five boarding schools. It was a good experience and occasion interacting with staff members in SDA schools. During this visit the researcher emphasized the need for unity and love amongst people who stay together. Visitation was chosen as one of the ways the researcher could meet the staff members in an informal setting and discuss subject of conflict in a different setting at individual level.

The visitations created a conducive environment for interaction to both the researcher and the staff members. It gave the researcher an opportunity to share some spiritual aspects like prayer and forgiveness as basics in handling conflicts. Emphasis was made on other spiritual programs like, good family life and the importance of personal Bible study (Psalm 119:11). A lot of emphasis was given on the “Revived by His Word daily study”. Families were encouraged to have time to study and share

insights together as families. It was alluded by the researcher that, the Bible was foundational in all areas of life as presented in (2Tim3:16-17). The Bible was upheld as an important book that teaches about good behaviour and also assists in conflict management.

### The Staff Members' Motivation

As a way of trying to address one of the major causes of conflict identified by the research findings as “shortage of resources” which affected the majority of respondents (teachers), the researcher made progress in that regard.

The researcher was invited to lead out at a prize giving day ceremony and annual general meeting for parents at Ruya Adventist boarding school. These two events were done on the same day. The researcher represented the Responsible authority of the school, which is the East Zimbabwe Conference. “The responsible authority is the owner of an educational institution.” The researcher had different segments of presentations. To begin with, the researcher gave a motivational speech. The speech focused on the importance of the Adventist education.

The researcher took time to appreciate the role parents were playing in the school. It was stressed that parents were stake holders in ensuring that the staff members' needs were met through the payment of fees. It was highlighted that “when needs are met there are less conflicts but happiness at the school”

The other tasks for the researcher were to (1) assist in the issuing of prizes to teachers and students. (2) Assisting in the setting up of the new fees structure that could run the school. There were little objections raised when an appeal to raise the fees from \$350 United States dollars to USD \$550. This was done in order to raise the salaries for church employees and incentives for the government paid teachers which would help reduce the causes of conflicts. Part of the money was going to assist in

completing the two teachers' houses as well as assist in the provision of other needs which would improve working conditions. The increase of fees also helped in addressing part of the shortage of resources which was a cause of conflict in SDA boarding schools.

After that meeting, all the staff members were served with food and drinks. The researcher had an opportunity of fellowshiping with the staff members and witnesses the joy that was among the staff members.

### Seminar

As a way of consolidating the program together, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2013 the researcher organized a seminar at Ruya High school from 1400hrs to 1700hrs. The seminar was well promoted through the previous meetings that had been done at that school.

Ruya High school was conveniently selected because they were found to be ready for the seminar. The meeting had been pre-arranged through the school administration at the beginning of the term. The researcher gave the devotion from the book of (John 17:21 and 1 Cor 1:12), emphasizing on the importance of love and unity. It was emphasized that "through unity, the church would accomplish the gospel commission". Christ alluded to that in (John 13:34-35)

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, ye also love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

The researcher handed evaluation papers to the participants after the seminar.

### Program Schedule

This section deals with the schedule for the program which comprise of leadership training, visitation, motivation and conflict management seminar as presented in tables 6-8

Table 6 below show the schedule for Leadership training Sabbath at Ruya

Table 6. Leadership training 9 September 2012

Time	Topic	Facilitator
0800hrs- 0815hrs	Devotion	Godfrey Musara
0815hrs-830hrs	Definitions of a Leader and Leadership.	Godfrey Musara
0830hrs- 0930hrs	Biblical Examples of Leadership	Godfrey Musara
0935hrs-0940hrs	Questions and Discussions	Godfrey Musara
0940hrs-0950hrs	Break	Godfrey Musara
0950hrs-1030hrs	Leadership and Conflict Management	Godfrey Musara
1030hrs-1050hrs	Leadership and Conflict Management	Godfrey Musara
1100hrs-1200hrs	Sermon: God's emphasis Relationships	Godfrey Musara
1200hrs-1400hrs	Lunch	All
1400hrs-1430hrs	Definitions of communication	Godfrey Musara
1430hrs-1500hrs	Types of Communication	Godfrey Musara
1500hrs-1510hrs	Question and Discussion	Godfrey Musara
1510hrs-1545hrs	Personality Types	Godfrey Musara
1545hrs-1630hrs	Communication and Conflict Management	Godfrey Musara

Table 7. Motivating staff members on prize giving day

Time	Event	Facilitator
10:00- 12:00	School tour of staff houses, classrooms, Garden	Godfrey Musara and School Committee
1200-12:10	Devotion	School chaplain
12:10- 12:30	Speeches	School Committee
1230- 14:00	Motivational talk and presentation of gifts to staff members	Godfrey Musara

14:00-15:00	Elections and funds mobilization	Godfrey Musara
15:00-1700	Food, Socializing with staff	Godfrey Musara and Staff members

Table 8. Seminar schedule 28 March 2013

Time	Event	Facilitator
5 mins	Welcome and introductions	Mr Ndlovu
20mins	Devotion	Godfrey Musara
45mins	Presentation on Conflict	Godfrey Musara
10mins	Achievements (Individual, Department or School)	Mr Chapepa
50mins	Food or refreshments	All
20mins	Group discussion on conflict	All
25mins	Discussions and brainstorming	Godfrey Musara
5mins	Closing remarks	Mr Manyadza

### **Program Materials**

Materials in form of handout were made to address the problem of conflict. Information on conflict management was taken from various sources Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, text books and AUA class notes which became seminar material and training resources. Handouts were given to the staff members on the leadership training and conflict management after the program. (See appendix F)

## **Program Summary**

The attendees seemed to have benefited from the components of the program which comprised of leadership training, visitation, motivation and the conflict management seminar. The individual participation by the attendees during the leadership training was commendable. The leadership training helped in addressing some of the areas that would trigger conflict. Causes of conflicts like, poor communication, personality clashes and leadership style were addressed through the program. The program was an educating experience to the researcher.

The visitation program seemed to be very helpful according to feed back during and after visitations. The conflict management seminar was well attended with a lot of participation.

## **Program Evaluation**

In as much as conflict management has to do with behaviour change in a human being. Behaviour change is never instant but a gradual process, which can be achieved through an ongoing program and God's power.

Ellen White alludes that "Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness."<sup>1</sup>

It was the purpose of the program to establish a program sustainable for the schools on conflict management. At the end of the leadership training program the administration made some remarks that, the training was enlightening to both administration and staff members. The twenty-five members of staff and

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G White, *Steps to Christ*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1956), 19.



administrators who attended the fellowship program at Ruya Adventist boarding school were given questionnaire at the end of the program.

The questionnaire was administered to find out the effectiveness of the program in managing conflicts. The evaluation questionnaires were administered to all the attendees (see Appendix E). It addressed the challenges surrounding conflict management in schools. Below are selected responses:

One of the respondents highlighted that “the program came at an opportune time when there was a need to resolve some conflict issues in the school. Some of the resolution methods discussed were sensible and attractive such that there are worth adopting.” On the question on specific areas to be adjusted as a result of conflict management seminar, the respondent indicated that she was now equipped with correct methods of handling conflict.

Another respondent indicated that she appreciated the program because it helped her in understanding conflict as a common challenge that needs to be addressed. In the same vein, another respondent highlighted that she was helped by the program on conflict resolution; she went on to say “I will adjust the talking or labelling of people as enemies”. She also commended on the handouts that were given to participants. The information provided were of great importance in the management of conflicts.

The other respondent indicated that he was helped most by the program on how conflicts could be resolved. The same respondent while responding to the question on areas where he would improve highlighted “areas of personalizing conflicts and solving them.” The same respondent suggested the program be conducted to many people and not only in her schools.

The respondent went on to comment on the program that “the program had not remained purely academic, but in a practical way had addressed the challenges”. The researcher had bridged gaps in a certain way. Another respondent answering the question, “what did you like most in the program? Indicated that the program helped with sustainable ways of solving conflicts, providing practical solutions to practical situations. Answering the question “which part of the program helped you most?” The respondent indicated that “It broadened my understanding of conflicts and create a better relationship than destroy.” Responding to the question give suggestions on how this program could be improved’ he indicated that “it was good, nothing was lacking as yet.”

Yet another respondent indicated that “he liked the ways of resolving conflicts highlighted in the seminar”. He also indicated that the program had helped him adjust in his conflict resolution approach and that he would improve on interpersonal relationships. As a way of improving the program he advised that a seminar on conflict management be conducted at the beginning of every year.

Another respondent indicated that “the program should be continuously in leadership trainings.” The responses showed that the program was a success. The effectiveness of the program could be seen by the results. It revealed the willingness to turn around, positive attitude towards conflict as well as positive contributions from the program attendees.

When asked to comment about the program the administrators, indicated that there was significant rise in members of staff who were attending devotional meetings and a reduction of the number who came late for work or leave earlier before check out. This they indicated might have resulted from the emphasis which was made during the visit by the researcher.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Summary**

The research dealt with the causes of conflict in Adventist boarding schools in East Zimbabwe Conference and how it could be managed. The data for the study was collected through a structured questionnaire on the causes of conflicts and conflict resolution methods as well as an interview schedule. In order to build up the final questionnaire for the research, an open ended questionnaire was administered to twenty-four (24) respondents from four schools. The final questionnaire of the five point Likert scale of Always to Never consisted of 32 items in three sections. Section A solicit information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, Section B was on the causes of conflict while Section C was on conflict resolution methods

The questionnaire was administered to seventy-five (75) respondents made up of administrators and staff from five Seventh – day Adventist boarding schools in East Zimbabwe Conference. The data collected was analysed using the descriptive statics. The descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and mean and were employed for the questionnaire and the descriptive interpretive method for the interviews. The results of the analysis were presented in tables and graphs.

The study revealed that poor communication, leadership style and poor conditions of work were major causes of conflict in Adventist boarding schools while

the conflict resolution methods often used are consultations and dialogue. As a way of addressing the problem, a fellowship program was carried out in one of the boarding school which was purposively selected because of her readiness to host the program. After the seminar presentation an evaluation form was issued out to assess the effectiveness of the program and the responses indicated that such a seminar on conflict management in Seventh-day Adventist boarding schools came at the right time and should be an ongoing process.

### **Conclusion**

This study revealed that poor communication, leadership style, poor conditions of work and shortage of resources are the common causes of conflict in Adventist schools in East Zimbabwe Conference while consultations and dialogue are often used as conflict resolution methods. It was also revealed that withdrawal and forcing are rarely used as conflict resolution methods. Based on these recommendations were made.

### **Recommendations**

The following are recommendations to the School Administration and East Zimbabwe Conference as the Responsible authority for enhancing unity in Adventist boarding schools.

#### **The Leadership Training**

1. The school administration should receive on job training in conflict management. Due to the challenges faced as a result of conflicts, these trainings should be done twice every year. The trainings on conflicts will enable the administrators to be well versed with conflict issues and how to deal with them.

2. The administration should be exposed to every new information on conflict management. Leadership training equips leaders with skill of handling challenging conflict situations in a professional way.
3. The Conference should conduct orientation program for the new school administrators as periodic seminars for teachers and administrators on conflict management in schools.

### Communication Seminars

The school administration should conduct communication seminars every term. The seminar will become avenues of bringing changes in the area of communication. Most of the challenges that are communication related could easily be dealt with through those seminars. Harris asserts that “strengthen communication can reduce chances of conflict.”<sup>1</sup>

### Shortage of Resources and Management

1. One central payment system in all Adventist schools.
- Inequitable remuneration is one of the major causes of conflicts in institutions as revealed through interviews; noteworthy are the discrepancies in the wages and salaries between church workers and government workers. It was established that government paid workers with degree qualifications were earning the same amount with a church worker who did not have any qualification, which do result in conflicts in schools. In that instance it meant that a supervisor earned less than a junior worker. As a way of managing this type of conflict, the Conference should pay all teacher and workers in her schools.

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<sup>1</sup>Lee, Harris W. *Effective Church Leadership* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 2003), 153.

2. Salaries for staff members to be continuously reviewed at the beginning of the year.
3. The other concern in the area of resource management the issue of budgeting. The greatest challenge indicated was the ignorance that the staff members had on their budgets. Through interview the researcher got the impression that members of staff in all levels were not informed as to what their departmental budget allocations were. The researcher recommends that school administration put in place a budget committee that looks at the requests that comes from the departments before allocations are made. After the budgets are done, the committee should give feedback to the concerned departments. This would reduce conflicts between departments and administration.
4. Regular audits of school finances be carried out in order to cultivate a spirit transparency and trust.

#### Clear Roles and Job Description

Responses from the interviews conducted highlighted role conflict as one of the major causes of conflicts. These encompassed areas like job descriptions, unclear roles and work related clashes. These conflicts impacted negatively on the school activities. Roles conflict was most prevalent among the administrators. The roles should be well clarified, it should clearly state who does what, who report to who, who decide what. It was a challenge especially on the head of institutions who usually were government workers but making decisions for the church workers by virtue of their position. It was recommended that:

5. The East Zimbabwe Conference to take an action to employ all head of schools as a starting point.

6. The East Zimbabwe Conference to see to it that every worker in Adventist school has a clear job description.
7. The EZC to put a resident chaplain in all the boarding schools who will continue to visit the members encouraging them and presenting spiritual program that helps the school community.

**Other Recommendations to the School Administration:**

8. To conduct conflict management seminars and workshops for the staff members every term.
9. The school administration to order books, materials and handout on conflict management.
10. To give orientation programs to new staff members.
11. To conduct regular meetings updating and informing members on the progress in the school.
12. To give awards to staff members, for example the best communicator of the year.
13. To have performance evaluation for every worker and have the best performing person rewarded.

The program was a step toward unity in diversity. It promoted friendliness and togetherness in institutions. The program should be ongoing.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A:**

LETTER





## **EAST ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE**

*Secretariat*

P.O. BOX W19, Waterfalls, Harare, Zimbabwe  
Tel: (263 772)124 941-4 Fax: (263 772)124 945  
Email: ezsecretariat@gmail.com

10<sup>th</sup> December 2012

Pastor Godfrey Musara  
East Zimbabwe Conference  
P O Box W19  
Waterfalls  
**HARARE**

Dear Pastor Musara

**RE: RESEARCH TIME EXTENSION: GODFREY MUSARA**

During the East Zimbabwe Conference Executive Committee which sat on 4-5 December 2012, the following action was taken

**VOTED** to approve the request from Pastor Godfrey Musara to extent his Research time to June 2013.

Wish you God's blessings in your studies.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Muzira".

Pastor Robert Muzira  
**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

RM/fc

cc: EZC Officers

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*"Then Jeremiah called Baruck the son of Neriah: and Baruck wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book." Jeremiah 36:4*

## APPENDIX B

### RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Questionnaire

I am Godfrey Musara a Master in Leadership student at the Adventist University of Africa. I am currently carrying out a study on Conflict Management in SDA Boarding Schools in East Zimbabwe Conference. Help ensure that this study will be a success by providing honestly to the content of the questionnaire. All the information provided will be used confidentially.

Do not write your name.

INSTRUCTION: Fill in or Tick as Appropriate.

#### Section A: Demographic

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Status: Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Worker                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. School: Primary       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Secondary                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Gender: Male          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Female                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### Section B: Cause of Conflict

State the extent to which the following are Causes of Conflict in Mission Schools in East Zimbabwe Conference on a 5 Point Scale of Always to Never.

Always=5

Often=4

Sometimes = 3

Rarely =2

Never= 1

Serial Number	Causes of Conflict	5	4	3	2	1
4	Poor Communication between administrator and staff					
5	Policy Implementation and adherence to policy by staff					
6	Underperformance by pupils taught by teachers teaching Form 4 and A Level/Grade 6					
7	Leadership style of administrator/departmental heads					
8	Personal Chemistry/ personality clashes between staff members					
9	Shortage of resources for the performance of work by staff					
10	Role Conflict between individuals/departments/groups					
11	Inequitable Treatment of staff by administrators					
12	Unclear Job Description for workers					
13	Cultural Differences among workers					
14	Late Payment of salary by proprietors					

- 15 Unrealistic expectations from school administrator by workers
- 16 Poor Working Conditions in the school
- 17 Lack of Trust of administrator by workers
- 18 Disagreements about Needs, Goals & Priorities
- 19 Attendance at Work

20. State any other causes of conflicts in your school-----  
 -----  
 -----  
 -----

**SECTION C: Conflict Resolution Strategies**

State the extent to which the following conflict resolution strategies are used in your school on a 5 Point Scale of Always to Never.

Always=5

Often=4

Sometimes = 3

Rarely =2

Never= 1

Serial Number	Conflict Resolution Strategy	5	4	3	2	1
21	<b>Consultation</b> (Looking for information that					

may assist in resolving conflict either from  
others or conflicting parties)

22      **Competition**(Where individual firmly pursues  
his or her own concerns despite the resistance  
from the other)

23      **Mediation** (The use of a third party or neutral  
outsider to talk to both sides in a conciliatory  
point of view)

24      **Avoidance** (Not pursuing your own concern  
or that of the opponent)

25      **Withdrawal** (Giving up on a conflict situation  
for the sake of peace)

26      **Forcing** (The act of using administrative  
power to stop conflict situation)

27      **Accommodating** (Seeking to appraise the  
concern of others first rather than one's own  
concern)

28      **Dialogue** (Formal discussion between parties  
in order to resolve conflict or disagreement)

29      **Compromise** (When conflicting parties gives  
up something in order to arrive at a  
compromised outcome)

30        **Transparency** (Honesty in dealing with all matters)

31        **Counselling** (Provision of professional advice which could help avoid or resolve conflict situations)

32. State any other conflict resolution strategies being used in your school-----

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-----  
-----

**APPENDIX C**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What do you think are the causes of conflict in a school?-----

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-----  
-----  
-----

2. What are the consequences of conflicts on school activities?-----

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

3. Suggest what you would do be in resolving conflict between two people? ---

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

4. Outline the methods that could be used to resolve conflict?-----

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

APPENDIX D

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondents

This questionnaire requests you to provide your knowledge of cause of conflict and methods of resolving conflict in Adventist schools. Help ensure that this study is a success by responding honestly to the content of the questionnaire. All responses will be treated confidentially.

Please fill in as appropriate

**SECTION A: Causes of Conflict in Schools**

1. -----  
-----
2. -----  
-----
3. -----  
-----
4. -----  
-----
5. -----  
-----

**SECTION B: Conflict resolution methods**

1. -----  
-----
2. -----  
-----
3. -----  
-----
4. -----  
-----
5. -----  
-----



APPENDIX E

PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Evaluation Questionnaire

1. The person responding a) support staff  Administrator  Teacher

Gender: Female married-  Male single  Male married  Male Single

2. What do you like most in the program:

Quality of food: Good  Poor

Presentation : Good  Poor

Time keeping : Good  Poor

3. Have you ever been involved in a conflict at school? Never  Sometimes

frequently

4. Program helped me to: a) openly discuss conflict issues  b) manage conflict in a less destructive manner  c) all the above

5. What have you learnt on how to resolve conflict as a result of this program? -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

6. What needs to be improved in this program is -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

## APPENDIX F

### CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SEMINAR MATERIAL

#### CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

##### 1. Conflict Definitions

“Conflict is a struggle to resist or overcome; contest of opposing forces or powers; strife; battle. A state or condition of opposition; antagonism.”<sup>1</sup>

“Those experiences of individuals and groups trying to achieve goals which are either incompatible or appear to be so.”<sup>2</sup>

Conflict is also defined as “a situation when interests, needs, goals or values of involved parties interfere with one another.”<sup>3</sup>

##### 2. Conflict and reality

Conflicts in the Bible.

a) Jacob and Esau’s mother started the conflict between the two brothers and suggested the strategy on how the conflict was going to be managed (Genesis 27:6-45)

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<sup>1</sup>Funk&Wagnalls, “Conflict.” *Standard Dictionary of the English Language International Edition*. New York: Funk &Wagnalls Standard Dictionary, 1974.

<sup>2</sup>Meswain Larry L, Treadwell William C Jr, *Conflict Ministry in the Church*. (Atlanta: J.A Thomas and Associates, Inc, 1997), 17.

<sup>3</sup>Conflict Resolution skills and strategies  
<http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/building/conflict.html.pdf> (1 June 2011)

b) Conflict between Abraham's servants and Lot's Servants Abraham resolving the conflict (Genesis 13:5-18)

The world is full of conflicts even among Christians.

Lowry RANDOLPH I, Meyers Richard W, Conflict Management and Counseling, United States of America: Library of Congress, 1991.

3. Causes of conflict

- Leadership style
- Poor Communication
- Stress level
- Needs scarcity
- Poor Relationships
- Power
- Job Description
- Performances at work
- Inequitable treatment by administrators
- Lack of trust
- Attendance at work
- Disagreements about needs and goals
- Role conflict
- Underperformance by pupils

4. How to deal with conflict situation in Schools

a) Competition: Win-Lose

- Appropriate situation for win lose
- disadvantages

b) Avoidance, lose-lose

-disadvantages

c) Accommodation/lose-win

-disadvantages

d) Compromising/Sharing

-appropriate

-disadvantages

e) Collaboration / Win –Win

-disadvantages

### **Other conflict management strategies**

-Problem solving

-Forgiveness

-Job Descriptions

### **DEALING WITH PEOPLE IN A CONFLICT**

-mediation

#### **What should a mediator do?**

1. Building trust
2. The diplomatic intervention
1. The mediator as a formulator.
2. Bargaining

## APPENDIX G

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING MATERIAL

#### Definitions

-Leadership is doing the right things (Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus)

-Leadership is mobilizing others toward a goal shared by the leader and followers

(Garry Willis)

Leadership is when a person with certain motive and purposes mobilize, in competition or in conflict with other, institutional, political, psychological and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers (James

McGregor Burns)

What makes a leader

A Christian leader is called by God, a person of Christ like character who possesses competencies.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Biblical examples of leadership by Robert H Pierson**

Jesus is our example in human behaviour

-Jesus identified Himself closely with the interest and the need of others

-Jesus felt for the people in their physical frailty

-Jesus drew men to Himself because He took a personal interest in them.

#### Leadership and conflict

-Biblical leaders who were involved in conflict. What could have happen if they had not face the conflict- Moses facing Pharaoh, Nehemiah, Joshua facing Jericho. Rahab hiding spies Gideon, Samson, Samuel and David.

---

<sup>1</sup>Gorge Barna, (ed) Leaders on Leadership (Ventura, CA: Regal books,1997), 20.

-to define leadership we must first understand conflict.

### **What a leader need to do in conflict**

**Focus on patterns not events**-See the big picture. if a leader is caught in events by reacting to events, emotions and behaviours, instead of looking for underlying truths, the ploy succeeds and the crisis deepens.

-unresolved conflict does not go away. It becomes more divisive and authoritarian.

Barna 240

### **Confront power with truth, not power**

Power can cause emotions to rise, feeding a cycle of insecurity and growing distrust which is called dynamic of escalation. Barna,245

Members accuse the leadership of not listening. Leaders accuse members of gossip.

Leaders will become secretive, giving out less information and members will think leadership is covering up.

**Affirm truth in community**- resolution comes by affirming in the Body as the spirit reveals truth, exposes sin and convicts hearts. Resolving conflict is about discernment and obedience.

### **Point to Christ and get out of the way**

1. Conflict is ultimately a choice to follow or reject God's sovereignty.
2. A leader who demands sympathy or loyalty to himself rather than the lordship of Jesus Christ is rebelling, not leading. A resolution that comes by a leader's charisma, not God's charismata (spirit gifting) does not resolve the real conflict.
3. Conflict by nature concern the unseen, often involving spiritual blindness and deception, dimensions no leader can fully understand alone. Leadership is not

knowing the right answers. It is divine enabling to ask the right questions.

Barna p 245-250

### **What is about me?**

1. Most conflict arise not because people disagree but because they feel left out of the decision making process.

### **Eliminate blaming**

2. Assuming that you are part of the problem has another benefit. It eliminates blaming.
3. The goal of confrontation is always gentle restoration, always for health not for harm.

### **Ask why ?**

### **Dig for the theological root.**

1. It helps reveals that theology drive relationship and relationship drive behaviour Barna 253

### **Think in wholes not in parts**

2. Your conflict problem will become a community problem than individual

### **Stand firm in faith**

3. Some conflicts cannot be solved. When honesty difference exist after the process has been clarified issues, a leader must make the call by faith. This may result in one of the positive outcomes-
  1. The two side may separate peaceably, as did Paul and Banabas

2. The two sides may reach a compromise, agreeing to disagree on nonessential matters, or each giving up some area of concern for the sake of unity while respecting the other convictions.
3. One side may voluntarily remove its protest, allowing the other to move ahead.

### **How to disagree without being Disagreeable**

1. One good trait of a good leader is the extent to which his people feel free to question his point of view. Letting people express their opinion doesn't make the boss's authority any less.
2. Disagreement on a high level of Christian understanding can be a healthy exercise in discovering the most effective way to accomplish the task at hand.
3. The lord places one or two of the loyal oppositions in a leader's camp.
4. It is important that the administrator be able to demonstrate disapproval without demonstrating hostility.
5. What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, our relationship to our Lord, our spiritual experience is a vital factor in this area of our leadership.
6. Seek as many areas of agreement as possible that minimize the areas of disagreements.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Pierson. H. *How to Become a Successful Christian Leader*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1978).



## Communication

### Definition

1. According to the Oxford dictionary, communication is defined as "...a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior..."

### Models of Communication

2. Basic communication models propose four foundational components for any successful completion of transmitting information (in a human context); the sender (or encoder), the message, the medium by which the message/information is sent (e.g., written, oral, audio, visual), and the receiver or objective of the communication information (decoder). Any interruption, break down, etc. at any point of that communication process could result in the failure of a successful communication (Hesselgrave, 1991).

### SIX TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal communication is a daily venture, despite the complex process that makes it hard to define. However communication scholars have identified other forms of human communication exists within this subject matter: Intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, organizational, mass, and public.

1. **Intrapersonal Communication:** This is communication within ourselves. One may find himself/herself day dreaming or engaging in internal dialogue alone or in the presence of other people. These are considered intrapersonal processes. Intrapersonal communication includes imagining, perceiving, or solving problems in one's head. Intrapersonal takes place when one debates with one's self, mentally considering the pros and cons of a decision before taking a final action.

2. **Interpersonal Communication:** The process of message transaction between two people who work towards creating and sustaining shared meaning.
3. **Organizational Communication:** Communication with and among large, extended groups. Organizational communication may involve other communication types, such as interpersonal communication, for instance, (supervisor, and subordinate relationships), small group communication, (for example, a group assigned to work on some report within a given window of time), and intrapersonal communication, (example is brainstorming at workplace individually and corporately).
4. **Small group communication:** Communication between and among members of a team who meet for a common purpose or goal. Small group communications takes place for example in classroom setting, workplace, and other social environments like sports etc.
5. **Mass communication:** Communication to a large audience through some mediated channels, like televisions, radio, the internet, or newspapers. At times people seek others through newspapers, or magazines, or internet. This is an example of intersection of mass communication and interpersonal communication.
6. **Public Communication:** Communication in which one person gives a speech to a fairly large audience in person. It is also known as public speaking. Such people have predetermined goals in mind, such as informing, persuading, or entertaining (Turner, 2006).(AUA Class notes)

#### VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1. Speaking – Oral presentations, Business meetings
2. Writing – Email and Social Media

3. Reading – Reports, messages

#### NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1. Body movement, physical appearance, touch.

#### Verbal Communication

A verbal message is a message that is **written** or **spoken**.

Examples: E-mail, website, letters, memos, reports, newsletters, bulletin board notices, brochures

Oral presentations, meetings, face to face communication.

How to be a good listener

-others like to be heard too.

-if you want to be an effective leader, improve listening skills (L Injerty class notes)

### **Personality types and conflict management**

Myers- Briggs Type indicator (Carl Jung) method of understanding personality types.(Effective Church Leadership Harris W Lee)

#### **The sensing-perspective SP**

The leader is able to negotiate with ease and has a high sense of reality. Often know as a diplomat or trouble shooter. Is good at helping people work as a team.

#### **The sensing –Judging SJ**

The leader Tend to focus on organization as a body. He or she is an organisation person, preserves the tradition of the organisation, works for its stability, abides carefully by the established policies and operating procedures.

#### **The Intuitive-Thinking (NT)**

The leader is called the visionary leader and may find satisfaction in doing some kind of architectural or engineering job. Pride themselves on their intellectual capacities, to solve complex problems.

**The Intuitive- Feeling NF**

Leader is called the catalyst because of his or her personable qualities. Have the ability to bring out the best in people, possibly because they tend to focus not on the organization but on the individuals within the organization.<sup>1</sup>

APPENDIX H

ANALYSED DATA

**Status**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Administrators	5	6.7	6.7	6.7
Teachers	49	65.3	65.3	72.0
Workers	21	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

**School**

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<sup>1</sup>Harrid W. Lee, *Effective Church Leadership* (Silver Spring, MD : Library of Congress, 2003), 61.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary	15	20.0	22.4	22.4
	Secondary	52	69.3	77.6	100.0
	Total	67	89.3	100.0	
Missing	System	8	10.7		
Total		75	100.0		

### Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	42	56.0	56.0	56.0
	Female	33	44.0	44.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

### Poor Communication

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	3	4.0	4.0	4.0
	2	8	10.7	10.7	14.7
	3	18	24.0	24.0	38.7
	4	19	25.3	25.3	64.0
	5	27	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

### Policy Implementation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	13	17.3	17.6	17.6
	2	11	14.7	14.9	32.4
	3	25	33.3	33.8	66.2
	4	14	18.7	18.9	85.1
	5	11	14.7	14.9	100.0
	Total	74	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Underperformance by pupils

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	16.0	16.7	16.7
	2	24	32.0	33.3	50.0
	3	26	34.7	36.1	86.1
	4	3	4.0	4.2	90.3
	5	7	9.3	9.7	100.0
	Total	72	96.0	100.0	
Missing	System	3	4.0		
Total		75	100.0		

### Leadership style

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	8.0	8.5	8.5
	2	5	6.7	7.0	15.5
	3	16	21.3	22.5	38.0
	4	23	30.7	32.4	70.4
	5	21	28.0	29.6	100.0
	Total	71	94.7	100.0	
Missing	System	4	5.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Personal Chemistry/Personal clashes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	10.7	11.3	11.3
	2	12	16.0	16.9	28.2
	3	14	18.7	19.7	47.9
	4	27	36.0	38.0	85.9
	5	10	13.3	14.1	100.0
	Total	71	94.7	100.0	
Missing	System	4	5.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Shortage of Resources

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	7	9.3	9.5	9.5
	2	11	14.7	14.9	24.3
	3	18	24.0	24.3	48.6
	4	28	37.3	37.8	86.5
	5	10	13.3	13.5	100.0
	Total	74	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Role Conflict

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	8.0	8.3	8.3
	2	12	16.0	16.7	25.0
	3	22	29.3	30.6	55.6
	4	18	24.0	25.0	80.6
	5	14	18.7	19.4	100.0
	Total	72	96.0	100.0	
Missing	System	3	4.0		
Total		75	100.0		



**Inequitable treatment**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	10.7	11.1	11.1
	2	8	10.7	11.1	22.2
	3	22	29.3	30.6	52.8
	4	15	20.0	20.8	73.6
	5	19	25.3	26.4	100.0
	Total	72	96.0	100.0	
Missing	System	3	4.0		
Total		75	100.0		

**Unclear Job Description**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	13	17.3	17.8	17.8
	2	7	9.3	9.6	27.4
	3	19	25.3	26.0	53.4
	4	20	26.7	27.4	80.8
	5	14	18.7	19.2	100.0
	Total	73	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		75	100.0		

### Cultural Differences

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	21	28.0	28.4	28.4
	2	13	17.3	17.6	45.9
	3	23	30.7	31.1	77.0
	4	8	10.7	10.8	87.8
	5	9	12.0	12.2	100.0
	Total	74	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Late payment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	16	21.3	22.5	22.5
	2	14	18.7	19.7	42.3
	3	16	21.3	22.5	64.8
	4	12	16.0	16.9	81.7
	5	13	17.3	18.3	100.0
	Total	71	94.7	100.0	
Missing	System	4	5.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Unrealistic Expectations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	11	14.7	14.9	14.9
	2	11	14.7	14.9	29.7
	3	28	37.3	37.8	67.6
	4	13	17.3	17.6	85.1
	5	11	14.7	14.9	100.0
	Total	74	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Lack of Trust

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	13	17.3	17.6	17.6
	2	11	14.7	14.9	32.4
	3	22	29.3	29.7	62.2
	4	13	17.3	17.6	79.7
	5	15	20.0	20.3	100.0
	Total	74	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.3		
Total		75	100.0		

### Dissagreement about needs, Goals and Priorities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	8.0	8.0	8.0
	2	14	18.7	18.7	26.7
	3	20	26.7	26.7	53.3
	4	23	30.7	30.7	84.0
	5	12	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

### Attendance at work

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	17	22.7	22.7	22.7
2	17	22.7	22.7	45.3
3	14	18.7	18.7	64.0
4	13	17.3	17.3	81.3
5	14	18.7	18.7	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

### Consultation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	6	8.0	8.2	8.2
2	10	13.3	13.7	21.9
3	21	28.0	28.8	50.7
4	12	16.0	16.4	67.1
5	24	32.0	32.9	100.0
Total	73	97.3	100.0	
Missing System	2	2.7		
Total	75	100.0		

### Competition

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	19	25.3	27.1	27.1
2	16	21.3	22.9	50.0
3	17	22.7	24.3	74.3
4	10	13.3	14.3	88.6
5	8	10.7	11.4	100.0
Total	70	93.3	100.0	
Missing System	5	6.7		
Total	75	100.0		

**Mediation**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	5	6.7	7.1	7.1
2	14	18.7	20.0	27.1
3	30	40.0	42.9	70.0
4	7	9.3	10.0	80.0
5	14	18.7	20.0	100.0
Total	70	93.3	100.0	
Missing System	5	6.7		
Total	75	100.0		

**Avoidance**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	11	14.7	15.3	15.3
2	13	17.3	18.1	33.3
3	22	29.3	30.6	63.9
4	13	17.3	18.1	81.9
5	13	17.3	18.1	100.0
Total	72	96.0	100.0	
Missing System	3	4.0		
Total	75	100.0		

**Withdrawal**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	22	29.3	31.0	31.0
2	19	25.3	26.8	57.7
3	16	21.3	22.5	80.3
4	9	12.0	12.7	93.0
5	5	6.7	7.0	100.0
Total	71	94.7	100.0	
Missing System	4	5.3		
Total	75	100.0		

**Forcing**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	25	33.3	35.2	35.2
2	19	25.3	26.8	62.0
3	13	17.3	18.3	80.3
4	2	2.7	2.8	83.1
5	12	16.0	16.9	100.0
Total	71	94.7	100.0	
Missing System	4	5.3		
Total	75	100.0		

**Accommodation**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	7	9.3	9.7	9.7
2	11	14.7	15.3	25.0
3	21	28.0	29.2	54.2
4	12	16.0	16.7	70.8
5	21	28.0	29.2	100.0
Total	72	96.0	100.0	
Missing System	3	4.0		
Total	75	100.0		

**Dialogue**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	7	9.3	9.6	9.6
2	9	12.0	12.3	21.9
3	16	21.3	21.9	43.8
4	22	29.3	30.1	74.0
5	19	25.3	26.0	100.0
Total	73	97.3	100.0	
Missing System	2	2.7		
Total	75	100.0		

**Compromise**

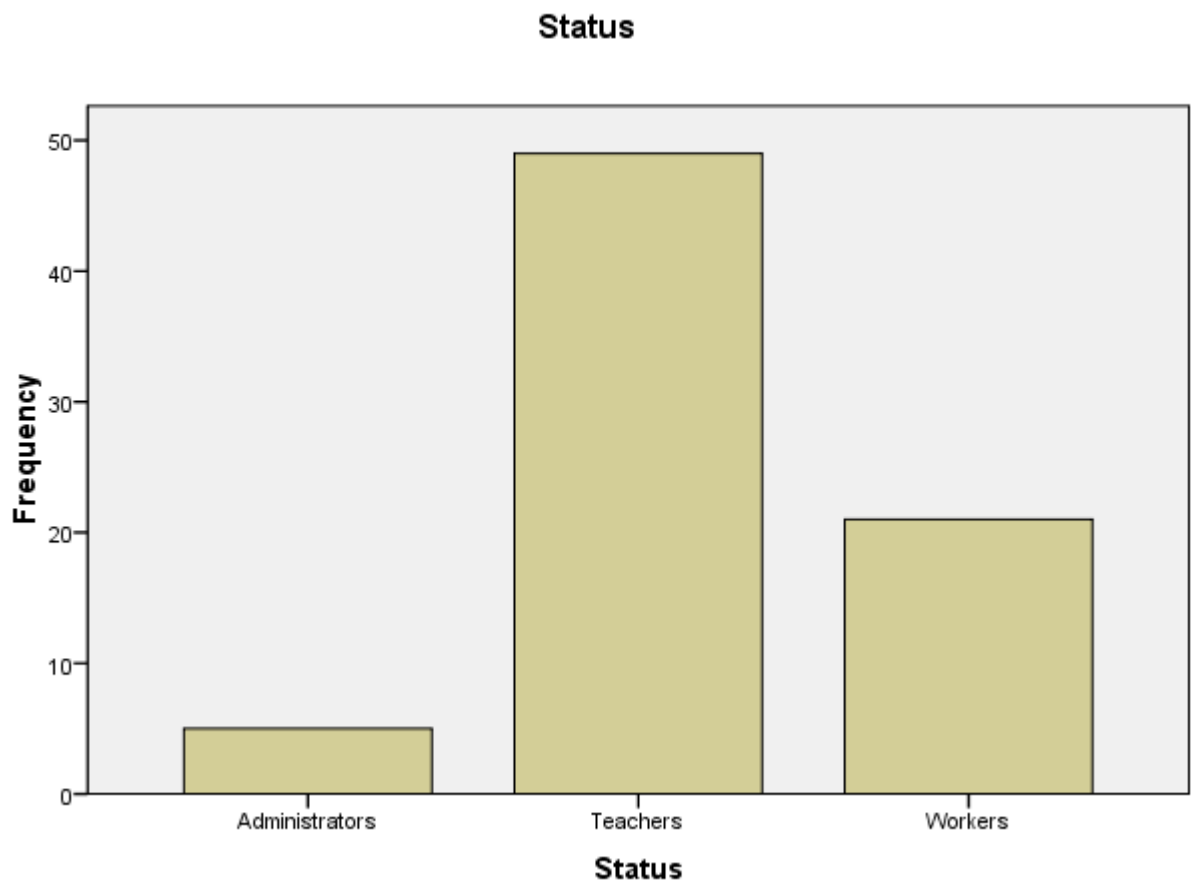
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	9	12.0	12.7	12.7
2	14	18.7	19.7	32.4
3	25	33.3	35.2	67.6
4	18	24.0	25.4	93.0
5	5	6.7	7.0	100.0
Total	71	94.7	100.0	
Missing System	4	5.3		
Total	75	100.0		

**Transparency**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	9	12.0	12.3	12.3
2	13	17.3	17.8	30.1
3	15	20.0	20.5	50.7
4	8	10.7	11.0	61.6
5	28	37.3	38.4	100.0
Total	73	97.3	100.0	
Missing System	2	2.7		
Total	75	100.0		

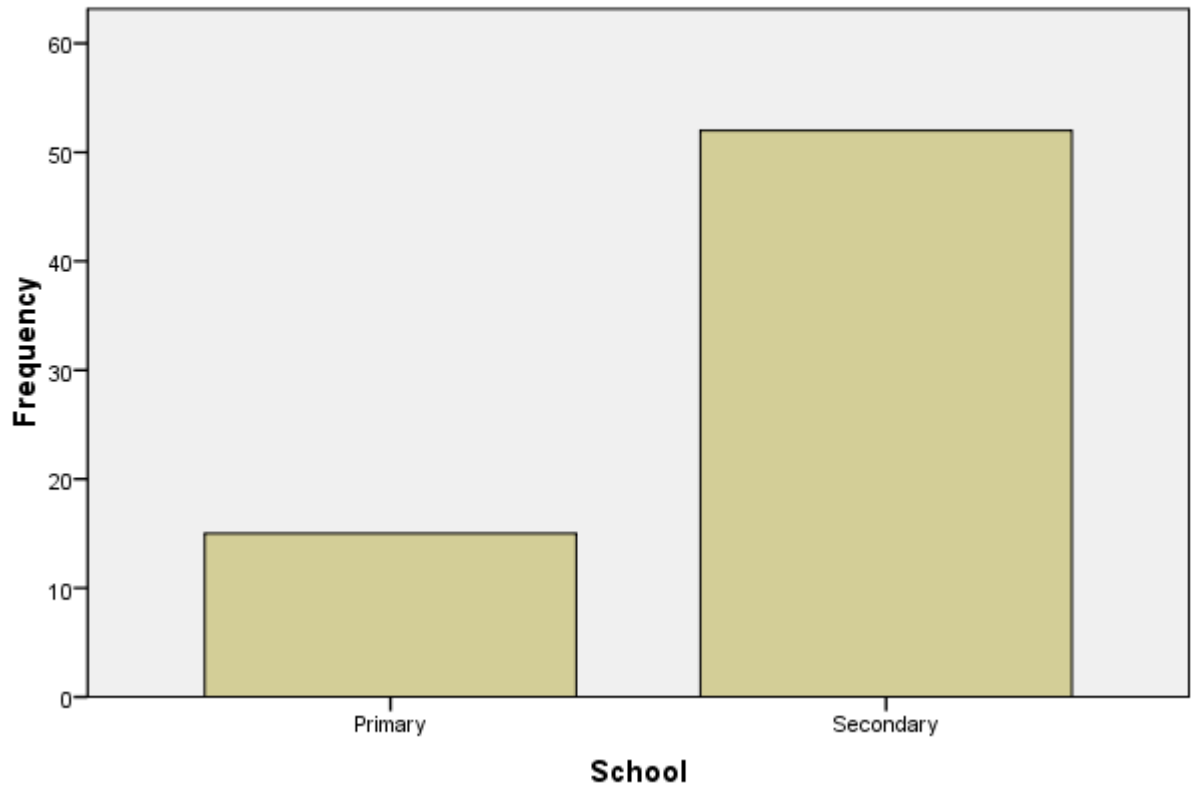
**Counselling**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	9	12.0	12.3	12.3
2	13	17.3	17.8	30.1
3	17	22.7	23.3	53.4
4	11	14.7	15.1	68.5
5	23	30.7	31.5	100.0
Total	73	97.3	100.0	
Missing System	2	2.7		
Total	75	100.0		

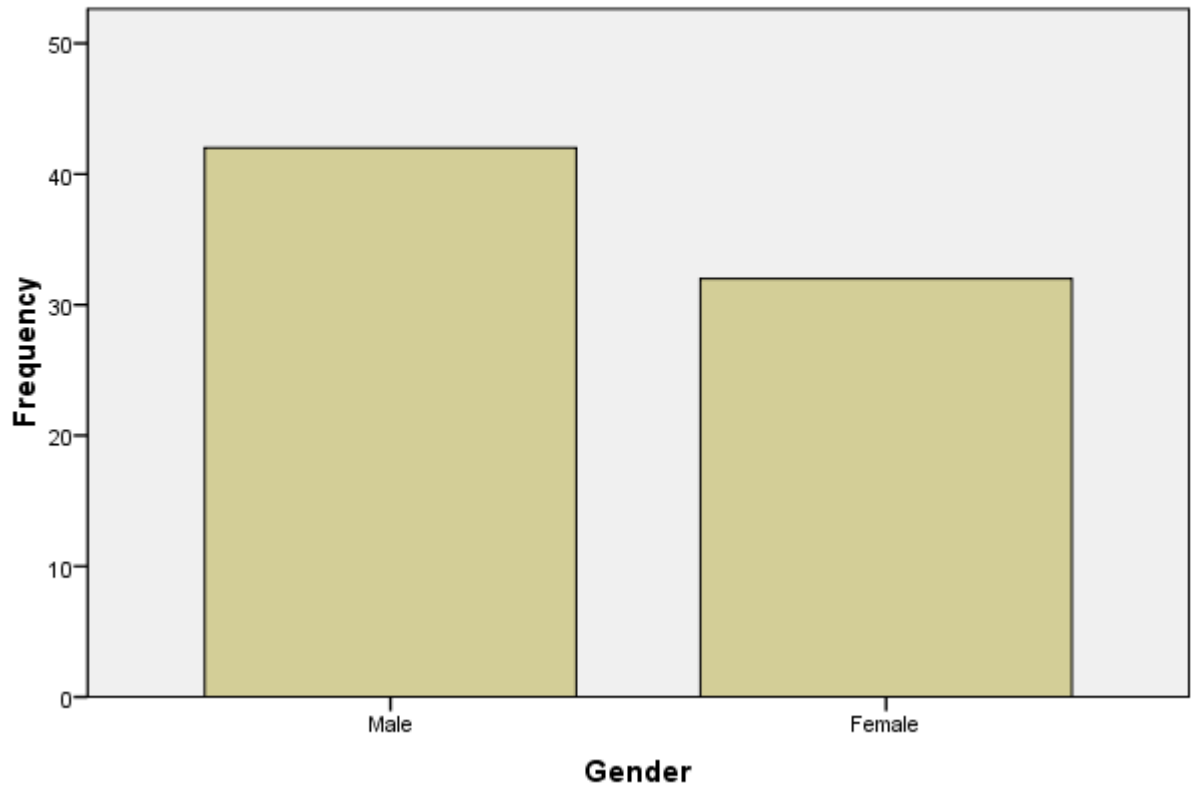




### School



### Gender



## APPENDIX I

### RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	18	75.0
	Excluded	6	25.0
	Total	24	100.0

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.783	27

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