

Full Length Research Paper

Management Strategies on Reducing Interpersonal Conflict in Public Secondary Schools in Tarime Urban, Mara, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this research was to assess the efficacy of managerial solutions in the resolution of interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools located in Tarime Urban. This research was driven by a single, overarching purpose, which was to identify the difficulties encountered by principals of public secondary schools in Tarime Urban when attempting to resolve interpersonal problems between students. In the study, mixed research methods and convergent parallel research designs were used. In the course of the research, a total of both probability and non-probability sampling methods were utilized, and the sample size ended up being 150 participants. Through the use of questionnaires and an interview guide, both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained. In order to conduct an analysis of the quantitative data using SPSS version 20, descriptive statistics were utilized. The results of the analysis were given in table form. Thematic analysis was used to make sense of the qualitative information that was gathered through the use of a field data note book and a smart phone. The content validity of the instrument was used to validate the quantitative instrument, and the split-half reliability was 0.85. Peer review was used to validate qualitative instruments, and dependability was used to ensure qualitative instrument reliability. According to the findings, different kinds of interpersonal conflicts can be seen in public secondary schools, including those that are affective, substantive, interest, value, and goal-oriented. According to the findings of the study, the challenges that principals of public secondary schools face when attempting to manage interpersonal conflict include the following: the conflict itself; a lack of support, security, and resources; and a lack of knowledge; the environment; communication; and cooperation. According to the findings of the study, heads of school in public secondary schools should resolve interpersonal problems by employing multiple tactics such as meetings, negotiations, communication, collaboration, scolding and warning, mediation, guidance and counselling, and instruction.

Keywords: Conflict resolution, managerial strategies, public secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

Conflict comprise a chain of negative states of a person or a group of people like nervousness, hate, disagreement, open violence, as well as all types of quarrel and incompatible interactions, including fight (Afful-Broni, 2012). Interpersonal conflict refers to the kind of misunderstanding that occurs between two or more people who has come together for any social activity like job (Ghaffar, 2019). Globally, literature shows that misunderstandings in any educational organization including secondary schools is inevitable; as the organizations comprise of people with different

behaviour, background, feelings, believes, opinions, and the other variation. In schools, conflict may involve students, heads of school, education administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, and other educational stakeholders (Ntide, 2015). The causes of conflicts in educational organizations are; lack of Emotional Intelligence (EI), personality traits, various aspects of the work environment, lack of clear boundaries of duties and responsibilities, poor communication, and lack of support from colleagues or management (Valente and Lourenço, 2020; Almost et al., 2016). Interpersonal

conflict in secondary schools is assumed to be a normal component of the institution's health, and it has serious consequences on teacher's job performance, schools' development and students' academic growth. Some of the negative consequences of conflicts in educational organizations are; interference of academic programs, aggression, uncomfortable working environment, as well as the departure from active participation in school activities. Indeed, there is a need for the strategies that will support effective interpersonal conflict management in schools for effective teaching and learning process (Crossfield and Bourne, 2018; Okwuchi, 2015).

In Tanzanian secondary schools, literature shows that conflicts occur almost every day because teachers, heads of schools and students spend much together in a day. Differences in background, character, morals, idea, attitudes and desires is always causing misunderstandings between teachers and heads of schools, teachers and students, teachers and parents, teachers and schools administrator, as well as teachers and government Kaluma (2017). ITV (2021) reported that at Mkuyuni primary school Morogoro Municipality, primary school head teacher beat a teacher and gnashed her teeth. This made head teacher to be arrested and detained by the police for trial; he was also fired from his job by the authority concerned. Such in disciplinary cases are overruled by the teachers' code of ethics in working area; so, this shows that interpersonal conflict is inevitable among in schools between heads of school and teachers, teachers and parents, education administrators and parents. ITV (2020) aired news on Kiagata secondary school where it was reported that a form three student cut his teacher's hand after being punished by a teacher due to absenteeism; and from this experience, interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools is inevitable among teachers and students, heads of school and teachers, amongst teachers themselves, education administrators and teachers. Another incident happened in Tarime at Nyamombara primary schools in Nyanungu Ward where it was reported that a teacher cut a standard three pupil on the head with a "panga", and the teacher was fired from his job (ITV, 2020; Jamii Forum, 2019). It is in this regard that the researcher selected Tarime urban as an area for the field of study due to such prevailing conflicts. Thus, the current study intended to investigate the management strategies on reducing interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools in Tarime Urban, Mara, Tanzania.

Statement of the problem

Interpersonal conflict is unavoidable in any human connections especially when people come together. Schools are not invulnerable to this and it can have harmful consequence on the climate of the school success. Therefore, conflicts may continue living among

teachers and heads of schools. Conflict involving heads of schools and teachers can strictly spoil school environment, erode a good school culture, and finally affect student's achievements. In relation to this, Jamii Forum (2019) reported that one of the Primary school teacher at Nyamombara primary school used a "panga" to cut the head of a standard three pupil at Tarime district. So, this led a teacher to be arrested by the police and got fired from the job by the authority. In addition, ITV (2020) claimed that one of the form three secondary school student cut the hand of the teacher at Kiagata secondary school in Butiama district while refusing the punishment for his absence from school. This made the student to be arrested by the police and sent to the court at Musoma district. These are some of the reported incidences that happened in various areas in Mara region. It is in this regard that the researcher was interested to find out the management strategies on reducing interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools in Tarime Urban, Mara, Tanzania.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical literature review

The study adopted group conflict process theory developed by Robbins (2003) which states that most organizational conflicts can be managed through stimulation, negotiations and resolutions. Again, Robbins (2003); Mwabungulu (2015), identified some more five ways of handling interpersonal conflict which are; collaboration, and accommodation, comprising, competing, and avoiding. The theory guided the current study because it directs the administrators and managers in public secondary schools on how to handle interpersonal conflicts in their schools.

The Empirical literature review

Types of Interpersonal conflicts

Literature shows that there are several types of interpersonal conflicts. Crossfield and Bourne (2018); Ramini and Zhimin (2010) as cited by Crossfield and Bourne (2018) mentioned affective interpersonal conflict as a kind of interpersonal conflict that is caused by differences in people's behaviour, differences in modes of communication, differences in understanding about a certain issue, or people's dislikes that might be caused by their negative attitudes toward their previous job stations or other experiences. Crossfield and Bourne (2018) described substantive conflict as a type of interpersonal conflict which occurs due to disagreements among group members about the task being performed. Crossfield and Bourne (2018) raised substantive interpersonal conflict

which occur due to the differences in thought and beliefs. Ghaffar (2019) brought up the goal conflict which occurs due to differences in plans and what to achieve.

Challenges faced by heads of school in handling interpersonal conflicts

Poor listening skills, poor knowledge in conflict management, inadequate resources, and an un conducive environment for working are some of the challenges that head of school face when resolving conflicts in their schools. This is due to the fact that conflicts require effective skill; listening skill, counseling skill, communication skill so managers must listen to understand their employees (Jubran, 2017; Murerwa and Guantai, 2019; Arop, Owan and Ekpang; 2018). Another challenge is lack of training for heads of schools and teacher on conflict management which make heads of schools to find very hard to handle conflicts (Atieno, Kiplagat and Yegoh, 2016). Again, heavy workload was stated as another challenge to the head of schools to effectively manage conflicts, which leads to poor performance of the school (Edwin, 2014).

Strategies applied by head of schools in handling interpersonal conflicts

Arop et al. (2018) explained that conflict management strategies are those that can be used to stop, control, or resolve conflicts. They are very essential to any school because it is through these methods that all problems resulting from conflicts can be reduced. Shahmohammadi (2014) showed that conflict supervision strategies are essential make use in handling conflicts in schools. The major conflicts strategies include the discussion, communication, competing, education, avoiding, leadership skill, collaborating, provide government policy, compromising, listening skill, cooperative, and reconciliation conciliation. Among all mentioned strategies, mediation approach was seen to be very helpful especially in schools. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for heads of school, to use the mediation strategy to resolve conflict in the school compound so that they can create a harmonious environment for the workers (Shahmohammadi, 2014; Isabu, 2017; Sompa, 2015). Again, guidance and counseling, understanding the needs of every individual in an organization was seen as other strategies used by heads of secondary schools to manage conflicts in their schools. Atieno et al. (2016); Kalagbor and Nnokam, (2015); Ghaffar, (2019) described that a good way to select an appropriate strategy is that heads of school should take into considerations the pros and cons of each conflict managing strategy to their school so that they can apply the most helpful one for better learning and teaching environment condition

among the teachers and students within the school's compound (Dady, 2015; Anashie and Kulo, 2014; Okwuchi, 2015).

Research gap

It was discovered that the topic is less documented in Tanzania, especially in public secondary school in Tarime district. More also, there have been overlapping methodological approaches used from one study to another whereby while some limited themselves in the qualitative approaches, others used quantitative only, thus the current study has adopted mixed research approaches so that they strengthen each other.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed methods research approach that comprises of elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study (Creswell, 2014; Morse and Niehaus, 2016; Creswell and Clark, 2011). Also, the study employed a convergent parallel design that involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously. This technique reduces weaknesses, makes comparison and saves time. (Kombo, Tromp, and Kothari, 2009; Creswell, 2014). Target population of this study were heads of schools, Ward Education Officer, the District Education Officer and the District Chief Schools quality assurance officer (Best and Kahn, 2006; Kothari, 2004). Teachers were sampled using simple random sampling, while purposive sampling was used to select heads of schools, Ward Education Officer, the District Education Officer and the District Chief Schools quality assurance officer (Shawkat, and Parveen, 2017; Creswell, 2012). The sample size of this study consisted of 150 participants who comprised of 133 teachers from 5 public secondary schools, 5 heads of secondary schools, 5 WEOs, 1 DEO and 1 DCSQAO (Kothari, 2009). The information for the study was gathered with the help of questionnaires and an interview guide, which is a list of questions designed to get specific information from the respondents (Farnsworth, 2021; Aryal, 2021). Teachers filled out questionnaires, and school heads, ward education officers, district education officer, and district chief schools' quality assurance officer were interviewed. Validity describes how well an instrument measures what it was made to measure. Experts in different fields of research were asked to check the content and appearance of the documents (Bolarinwa, 2015; Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Reliability is how often an instrument gives the same results when it is used more than once. The split-half method was used to test how reliable research tools were (Bolarinwa, 2015). The researcher gathered both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time.

With the help of SPSS version 20, quantitative data were analyzed, and frequency distribution tables and charts were used to show the results (Landau and Everitt, 2004). On the other hand, qualitative data was analyzed with thematic analysis, and the data are presented with explanations and direct quotes from the respondents (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The researcher adhered to several research ethical issues like seeking permission for data collection, presence of consent form, confidentiality of the information shared, anonymity, privacy and safety of respondents (Creswell, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools

The researcher distributed questionnaires to the teachers with questions that solicited the types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools. Teacher's responses on interpersonal conflicts are presented in (Table 1). However, 24.2 percent of the participants commended that affective interpersonal conflict are present in their schools, while 24.0 percent pointed out that substantive interpersonal conflicts are currently available in their secondary schools; also, 17.5 percent of respondents claimed that interest is a kind of interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools which existed in Tarime urban, 13.5 percent said goal interpersonal conflict as the least at 6.7 percent mentioned value interpersonal conflict.

From the findings, 24.2 percent of the respondents claimed that affective kind of interpersonal conflict is taking place in their schools and the teachers and school heads. This is due to the overload, overlapping and scarcity of resources among teachers and heads of school which automatically affect teaching and learning and consequently poor performance. The findings concurred with Ghaffar (2019) who commended that there are varieties of interpersonal conflict that happen in secondary schools. In support of the view, one of the interviewee was quoted saying:

In our school, we are not happy as always teachers are having conflicts between themselves and the school head. Sometimes, we have been spending much time solving endless problems of the kind without success; occasionally the school head has to report such incidences to the higher authority and this result to some teachers to be transferred to other schools (Interviewee Sun, 31-08-2021).

This imply that interpersonal conflict affects the teaching and learning to be poor due to the fact that engaging in conflict may cause the learning and teaching not to go smoothly. This directly affects education quality in public secondary schools.

Table 1 displays that 24.0 percent of respondents agreed that there are substantive interpersonal conflicts in their public secondary schools. Existence of this kind of interpersonal conflict in such context is supported by Crossfield and Bourne (2018) who explained that substantive interpersonal conflicts are instigated by different in thoughts, feeling, view, judgment and beliefs among the group of people about similar everyday responsibilities being performed. During of the interview one of the interviewee was quoted:

In this place here, teachers trigger interpersonal conflict due to failing to fulfill their responsibilities in school like preparing lesson notes, teaching aids or their absence from work which cause them fail to fulfill the duties given by the head of school hence conflict between them (Interviewee Elephant, 25-08-2021).

This narration implies that preparing lesson notes, teaching aids, delaying in schools, and absenteeism are the major causes that contribute to the interpersonal conflict in schools. When inspectors come to school to inspect teachers' teaching documents such as lesson notes, teaching aids, log books and attendance journals of the teachers in schools and find some out of that order, they always dispatch them the warning letters. This always brought up substantive conflict between teachers and heads of school.

Similarly, findings demonstrated that 17.5 percent of the teachers asserted that interest interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools because of the scarcity of the resource this lead to the conflict between teachers and heads of school in working area. In the line with the findings, Ghaffar (2019) elaborated conflict of interest as a contradiction among groups for the allocation of a scarce resource. This type of conflict occurs when each part, sharing the same thoughtful of the position, intend a dissimilar and somewhat contrary answer to a difficulty relating each a sharing of scarce resources between them or a decision to share the work of solving it when there is interest of the members. One interviewee claimed:

In school here, heads of school and teachers fall in conflict because of the resources in school being limited, that is, human, financial and teaching resources like books are very scarce. Meanwhile, teachers are always very overloaded by the work (Interviewee B, 24-08-2021).

This means that the issues of the scarcity of resources accelerated interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools because teaching and learning to be poor, the knowledge to be impacted by teachers. Table 2 indicates that 6.7 percent of the respondents decided to facilitate value interpersonal conflict exist in their schools due to the teacher having different in ideologies on the certain issues. Interpersonal conflicts in their schools are always

Table 1: Interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools(n=133).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Affective	133	24.2
Substantive	132	24.0
Interest	96	17.5
Value	37	6.7
Goal	74	13.5

Source: Field data (2021)

triggered by different in ideology for two parties in a certain area such as when heads of school do introduce remedial classes in evening that teachers must remain in schools teaching remedial classes without any overtime compensations would always bring conflicts because other teachers with their ideology may think this is punishment. They tend to refuse through demanding evening allowances; this is emphasized to interpersonal conflict to arise in public secondary schools. Ghaffar (2019) succinctly argued that conflict of values arises when two common parts disagree in their morals or ideology on positive actions; this is also called ideological conflict. In support of this, one of the interviewees was quoted saying:

In this place, due to teachers delaying to report at their working stations from 7:00 a.m. morning when it is time to sign in the teachers' attendance, some of them do pretend that morning time extends until 11:59 a.m. So, they always sign-in out of the allocated time as long as it is still morning; this was the typical example of difference in ideologies between us until I read them the standing order of the government. We differ in understanding things and guidance between us is highly needed (Interviewee C, 25-08-2021).

This means that value interpersonal conflicts are accelerated by difference in ideologies like ideologies in education, the way of thinking and the way of handling the issues in schools; so, heads of school must have enough experience to handle teachers in schools when conflict arises. They need to understand their teachers' cultures, background and education experience and other issues they experience in schools and the way of addressing them. Furthermore, on the issues of goal interpersonal conflict, a total number of 13.5 percent of the participants who answered the question agreed that goal interpersonal conflict exist in their schools because of impact of the two group are in contradictory. Similarly, Ghaffar (2019) argued that goal conflict occurs when a selected member is in contradictory. In uncommon gear, it may involve divergent preferences over all of the decision repercussion. One interviewee was quoted:

Conflict between teachers and heads of school causes teaching and learning to be poor in schools. Here, it

resulted to poor result; so heads of school and teachers must discuss their issues and resolve them before harmful institution ahead (Interviewee A, 27-08- 2021).

This imply that learning and teaching are affected by conflict between teachers and heads of school in public secondary schools; wherever there is conflict in certain schools, poor learning and teaching are experienced because teachers get frustrated by the situation.

Obstacles that school administrators face when attempting to manage interpersonal conflicts

In this study, the researcher intended to determine challenges faced by heads of school while handling interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools in Tarime Urban, and the researcher obtained information as presented in (Table 2). Table 2 shows that 10.5 percent of the teachers argued that conflict was the challenge in handling interpersonal conflict in the public secondary schools between teachers and heads of school. The mediator of the conflict can create conflict with one side, when one side couldn't accept the resolution thinking that the mediator relied on one side. It was discovered that this kind of conflict is a great challenge to and heads of school in public secondary schools. The findings concur with Nyasio, 2015; Kaluma, 2017; Msila, 2011) who argued that the head of schools can create a great conflict with the two people who are in conflict, when trying to solve it. One of the interviewee claimed:

It may happen sometimes when solving interpersonal conflict that sometimes the teachers who are in conflict may think that probably the head of school is relying on one party. These always cause eruption of abusive words from another side to the head of school. It becomes the conflict again between teachers and head of school (Interviewee E, 27-08-2021).

This implies that in resolving interpersonal conflict, you must have enough skills to avoid being part of the problem; the conflict mediator must be well trained and have enough skills for solving misunderstanding among teachers and heads of school in public secondary schools; the heads of school must be well-trained given

Table 2: Challenges Facing Heads of School while Handling Interpersonal Conflicts (n=133).

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Conflict	60	10.5
Lack of support	45	8.2
Security	30	5.5
Resource	56	10.2
Lack of knowledge	99	18.0
Communication	133	24.2
Environment	48	8.7
Cooperation	75	13.7

Source: Field data (2021)

seminar, concert, workshop, conference, and symposium have the enough knowledge and skill in handling interpersonal conflict when it arises in schools.

Table 2 depicts that lack of support is the challenge in handling interpersonal conflict. This argument is supported by 8.2 percent of the teachers who involved in the study. The findings depicted that lack of support from other teachers and other government officials is the challenge in handling interpersonal conflict. One of the interviewee stated:

Lack of support begins from the teachers; they are not giving support to the heads of school in handling interpersonal conflicts when they arise. School teachers pretend to stay behind and leave us as heads of school solve them. It is the same to the teachers who don't give out the support to the education administrator when conflict arises in school. For example, when the teacher cut standard three pupil on the head using a "panga", other teachers did not give support to education administrators as they never cooperated to provide evidence on the incidence to them; but also the communities did not provide support of evidence to the authority concerned when conflicts arise at schools (Interviewee Sun, 31-08-2021).

This means that teachers, heads of school, ward education officer, district education officer and district chief schools' quality assurance must be well organized to help each other in resolving issues of academics and teachers' problems so as the information can flow and the way of resolving conflict flourish in handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools.

More also, 5.5 percent of the respondents said that lack of security is the challenge of handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools in Tarime Urban. This is due to that, when heads of school act as a mediator of the conflict it may cause him to be unsafe from teachers who are in conflict as they may harm the heads of school reacting to the way they handled the conflict. In support of that, the interviewee had this to say:

As head of school, sometimes we meet insecurity challenges during handling interpersonal conflicts in

public secondary schools. You may handle a conflict safely between two parties but one may be discontented and assume that I am in favor of another side, this might cause head of school to be physically assaulted, hence awaken another interpersonal conflict in school environment (Interviewee C, 25-08-2021).

This implies that heads of school face the challenge of insecurity when they handle interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools. Sometimes, it may happen to them to be beaten by teachers because they handle conflict by relying on one side. This is due to heads of school lacking knowledge and skills in handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools. Heads of school must possess the knowledge and skill in resolving conflicts that arise in schools to avoid favoritism.

Again, 10.2 percent of the teachers indicated inadequate resources as the challenge facing the heads of school in handling conflicts. Resources like human resources and financial resources were said to face head of school in handling interpersonal conflict. The findings relate with the studies by Makaye and Ndofirepi (2012) in Zimbabwe, Msila (2012) in South Africa and Ramani and Zhimin (2010) in Kenya who also pointed out that one of the main sources of conflicts in schools is inadequate resources, and funds mainly when they are incorrectly in distributed between teachers by the heads of secondary schools. One interviewee was quoted saying:

In this schools, conflict between me as a heads of school and teachers sometimes is caused by inadequate resource in schools like learning resource. Sometimes conflict occurs due to the demand of teaching resources and funds but inadequate resources are an obstacle to solve interpersonal conflicts (Giraffe, 25-08-2021).

This means that conflict being instigated by scarcity of resources in school, heads of school are responsible in ensuring those resources are available for teachers so as to enhance teaching and learning to take place smoothly, but if teachers lack teaching apparatus, automatically lead to interpersonal conflict with their heads of school. Table 2 shows 18.0 percent of the participants mentioned

lack of knowledge on conflict management as among the challenges of handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools. Teachers and school heads lack knowledge in handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools in Tarime Urban. Notwithstanding, group conflict process theory developed by Robin, (2003) supports that heads of secondary schools and teachers need to have enough knowledge that enables them to resolve conflicts that may arise in schools. One of the interviewee claimed:

Here at school, heads of school and teachers are not well equipped with knowledge on handling interpersonal conflict in schools. So most of us rely on one way of handling interpersonal conflicts like giving a warning letter to the people who are in conflict. This is due to the lack of knowledge in handling interpersonal conflicts. Then, the government must provide seminars, concerts, workshops, conferences and symposium for gaining knowledge of handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools (Interviewee Moon, 27-08-2021).

This implies that since most of school heads lack conflict resolving skills, the government must employ someone with enough skills of handling conflicts. Guidance and counseling personnel ought to be employed to handle interpersonal conflicts in school. This means that government should hire counselors in schools who are well trained in issues of misunderstanding in public secondary schools in Tanzania. They must have full knowledge and skills of conflicts resolution in public secondary schools.

On the issues that communication is among the challenges facing heads of schools in handling interpersonal conflict, 24.2 percent of the teachers have maintained that communication is a great obstacle in handling conflicts in public secondary schools. It was discovered that when a conflict happens in schools, some of the peoples who are in conflict are not willing to communicate effectively the cause of the conflict to the head of school so that he/she can try to solve it. Therefore, it is obvious that poor communication of the problem is an obstacle to the heads of schools to manage the interpersonal conflicts in their schools. Iwuagwu (2011); Adeyemi and Ademilua (2012) have pointed out that heads of schools need to get deep information about the problem that caused the conflict; and when this is not achieved then the head of school can fail to solve the conflict in their schools. One interviewee claimed:

As the ward education officer here, I know the flow of information from the top to downward from the district education officer, ward education officers; heads of school and teachers is limited so even when conflict happens, it is difficult to get the deep information. Take an example of case X Primary school, where there was

an incidence of one of the teacher to cut a standard three pupils by using "panga", the information of the incidence came to be known by us while the charges were already in the court; this shows the broken flow of communication among teachers, head teachers, ward education officers, district education officer, district chief schools quality assurance officer, service commissioners and regional education officer. The information did not follow the proper chain of command, so all education administrators must be communicated with such crucial information on time in the district hierarchy of education administration rather than leaving some behind uninformed (Interviewee Ostrich, 25-08-2021).

This implies from the finding that communication must be maintained by both heads of school, teachers, ward education officers, district education officers and district chief schools' quality assurance so as avoid misunderstanding among them. Communication to them will bring good relationships. When something happens in schools' environment, for example, teachers' fight the head of school, the ward education officer must be informed properly, then the district education officer. But if head of school keeps silence, this will prolong the misunderstanding and hence irresolvable conflicts.

On the issue of the environment, 8.7 percent of the teachers accepted that environment is the challenge to heads of school in handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools in Tarime Urban. Teachers and administrators living in rural areas are not always getting exposure to the free seminars and workshops on leadership skills. Again, it is hard to solve a conflict with a teacher who have come late to school because they are living far from the school and the school has no houses for workers; so environment is a great challenge. One of the interviewee had this to admit:

From the experience of the environment of our school surroundings here, teachers are staying far from schools and no houses for teaching staff to make settlement; so, this is the barrier because teachers cover a long distance from home to working area. When they delay to arrive on time, quarrels start arising with the head of schools that they are not coming at work on time. So, this accelerates the challenge to us as heads of school in handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools (Interviewee Leopard, 25-08-2021).

This means that the study shows that in Tanzania context, some areas are located in the remote areas where basics services such as staff houses are hardly available. This makes the teachers to stay far from their working stations. Consequently, this instigates teachers delaying to arrive at working stations late in the morning hours. This leads to quarrels with their heads of school. Table 2 also shows that lack of cooperation, as one of the challenges in handling conflict in public secondary

schools; this statement was supported by 13.7 percent of the teachers participated in the study. Lack of cooperation was a mentioned challenge in handling conflict among teachers as well as heads of school in public secondary school. Lack of cooperation from both parties makes the exercise of solving conflict in schools to be rather difficulty to handle fairly. This similarly agrees with to Jubran (2016) who elucidated that lack of cooperation from people who are in conflict with the one who is trying to solve the conflict, has become a great challenge to the conflict management in schools. One interviewee supported the view as follows:

As education administrator in the district, we lack cooperation from teachers, heads of school, ward education officers. For instance, what happened when one of the primary teachers cut the head of the standard three pupil using "panga", there was no cooperation in the court that teachers did not provide evidence on that particular case; the same applies to the ward education officer and district education officer and communities where by they never showed up in court until the time when the court found the teacher innocent because of insufficient evidence (Interviewee Sun, 31-08-2021).

This means that cooperation is one of the barriers in handling interpersonal conflict in public secondary schools. When teachers fail to cooperate when the problem happens in schools, they become one of the causative of the prolonged conflict in schools.

Conclusion and recommendations

It was discovered that there are various types of interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools, that school administrators face challenges when dealing with interpersonal conflicts in public secondary schools, and that there are a variety of strategies for resolving these interpersonal conflicts. The report suggests that the government and educational stakeholders train experts in conflict management in secondary schools and employ them as special counsellors for resolving any conflict that arises in schools. Having a particular counsellor will aid in establishing a teaching and learning atmosphere conducive to good education providing. It is essential that teachers, principals, and ward educational officers receive training in conflict management so that they may effectively manage conflicts at their workplaces.

The responsibilities of heads of schools must also be reduced and delegated to their deputy, and also the government of Tanzania must provide on job trainings on handling conflict in public secondary schools through workshop and seminars to the heads of school and teachers. This will help to ensure good school culture for effective educational provision. In addition, the study suggests conducting additional research on the outcomes of strategies for managing interpersonal conflict in public

secondary schools.

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