CONFLICT MANAGEMENT METHODS USED BY SECONDARY SCHOOLS HEAD TEACHERS; 
CASE OF NANDI CENTRAL DISTRICT, NANDI COUNTY, KENYA”

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A great number of schools in Kenya have been experiencing a general wave of conflicts and have affected public schools. The purpose of this study was to investigate conflict management methods used by secondary school head teachers in Nandi Central District. The objectives of the study were to identify the causes of conflicts, establish the type of conflicts, find out how conflicts are managed, identify conflict management methods and determine techniques for conflict resolution in schools. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was 36 public secondary schools in the district with a population of 456 teachers. Stratified sampling techniques were used to select a study sample of 14 schools. The sampled schools provided the 14 head teachers and purposive sampling was used to select 90 teachers from the sampled schools. Three sets of questionnaire were used as the key data collection tool; one for the head teachers, one for teachers, and an interview schedule for B.O.G and D.E.O. The instruments were piloted in two schools which were not part of the randomly selected schools in the district. Reliability of the Pearson’s product moment formula for the test-retest was employed to compute the correlation coefficient. A correlation coefficient of 0.5 was considered high enough to judge the instruments as reliable for the study. The study used content validity to measure the relevance of the research instrument. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to all the groups. Data collected from the field were coded and entered into the computer for analysis using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data obtained. The result of the data analysis was presented using frequency tables, bar graphs, pie charts and percentages. The findings indicated that the major causes of conflicts in secondary schools in Nandi central district includes; unimpressive conditions of service, administrative incompetencies of the head teacher, misappropriation/ embezzlement of funds, indiscipline in the parts of students, teachers or administrators, poor academic performance and inadequate resources. Notwithstanding, the major types of conflicts mostly experienced in Nandi Central District secondary schools include; conflict over image perceptions, role conflicts, conflict over basic values, interpersonal conflicts, structural conflicts and political conflicts. Political interference and patronage in the appointment of head teachers fueled conflicts in
secondary schools and therefore in a school where there is no political interference and patronage in the management of schools, there are reduced conflicts in the school. Further majority of the respondents frequently have stakeholder meetings and consultations in their schools as a way of resolving conflicts. It was recommended that there is need to have trainings on conflict resolution strategies in schools to assist in management of conflicts. The study findings will be significant in that the findings may be useful to education researchers, educational planners and other scholars of educational administration as it will hopefully increase their awareness of the values of conflict as well as conflict management methods which are constructive and benefit the school. The findings will help head teachers of public secondary schools and other education stakeholders to adopt measures to minimize conflicts. The results of the study will help policy makers and educational planners to make adequate adjustments that enhance performance in management and administration of public secondary schools.