

Effect of Conflict Management in Performance of Public Secondary Schools in Machakos County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of conflict management in performance of organizations with a view to solving the current phenomenon of conflicts being experienced in public secondary school organizations and make them more effective, efficient and conducive for the development of human resources. The specific objectives of the study were to: assess the effect of conflict in performance of public secondary schools, determine whether management being aware of conflict in the school organization help towards conflict resolution and management, establish management approaches used by the educational institutions managers in Kenya in conflict management and resolution, evaluate the role of environment in conflict resolutions and suggest recommendations for solving conflict in public secondary school organizations. Both qualitative and quantitative research was used. The research design used in this study was descriptive survey. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. The target population was 140 secondary school principals. Using stratified probability sampling based on different categories of schools and non- probability sampling, an optimum proportion of 30% was drawn from each category of the target population of schools to satisfy these requirements of optimality and representativeness. From each of the selected school, the principal that is the CEO was selected. Therefore, 43 principals were selected as the chief executive officers in-charge of management of the school organizations. Since the study was concerned with the relationships between identified dependent, intervening and independent variables, structural equation modeling and other multivariate statistical tools were used to analyze the data. The regression and ANOVA analysis were used to analyze the relationship between conflict management and performance in educational institutions. The correlation coefficients indicated a fairly positive strong relationship, $r = 0.69$. This indicates that the relationship is not weak and can be used to explain and predict the rate of performance. On the ANOVA, the beta coefficient of the resulting regression model $t=2.822$ indicates that the beta coefficient is significantly greater than 0, $p = 0.07$ which is less than $p = 0.05$ the test statistic. This further confirms that essentially there is a strong relationship between conflict resolution and performance in an educational institution. All the four null hypotheses of the study, which were analyzed using Chi and T-test, were rejected. Stepwise regression analysis showed zero significance between the role of environment in conflict management and performance of school organizations. These results were consistent with earlier empirical research on conflict management and organizational performance in organizations. In conclusion therefore, relationship between conflict management and the performance of school organizations seems to be clear. When the management is knowledgeable in conflict management and at the same time

putting this knowledge into practice, the schools will experience less conflict and do well in all activities and areas. The researcher recommends that conflict management systems should be integrated within the system of the organization and the integration should be at a higher level of the organization hierarchy rather than mere interconnection; conflict management is a human sub-system which is achieved through typical development process.

Keywords: Effect, Conflict Management, Performance, Public Secondary Schools, Machakos County, Kenya

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