

**INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP ON CONFLICT
RESOLUTION STRATEGIES USED IN SECONDARY
SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN
KITUI CENTRAL DISTRICT,
KITUI COUNTY, KENYA**

By

MBITI, ISAAC MWAMBU

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DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has never been presented for an award in any other university.

Mbiti, IsaacMwambu

L50/83801/2012

Date

This research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Dr. KyaloNdunge

Senior Lecturer

University of Nairobi

Date

DEDICATION

The study is dedicated to my wife, CastyMuthoniMwambu and children Sharon Mwambuand Lilian Mwambu.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BOG	Board of Governors
BOM	Board of Managers
DEO	District Education Officer
GOK	Government of Kenya
MOE	Ministry of Education
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
TSC	Teacher Service Commission
USA	United States of America

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District, Kitui County, Kenya. The study focused on the influence of leadership functions, leadership skills, leadership power and leadership styles on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in the district. A descriptive survey research design utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data analysis approaches was adopted. The study targeted population of 482 who have some role to play in the secondary school infrastructure building projects. Some were internal school staff and the stakeholders from outside the school setup. The internal target population comprised of: 81 school administrators, 158 heads of departments (HODs). The external school target population comprised of the 81 BOM members and 81 Parents Teachers Association (PTA). Purposive sampling method was used to select 30 percent of the 27 secondary schools in the district with some on-going building projects. Simple random sampling method was used to select 30 percent of the external and internal administrators to give sample size of 144. The questionnaires were used as the main research instruments. Data were analyzed by both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of this study were that there was a strong significant relationship between leadership functions, skills, power and styles. From the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations; there is need for the ministry of education to increase the school management training on conflict management functions, the principals should benchmark with the schools which are doing well to know how they resolve their conflicts, the parents' days should be increased in schools so that parents can discuss on issues pertaining the school so as to reduce conflicts in schools. Further study can be done to establish why infrastructural projects are not completed in good time in secondary schools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Actions of human beings in society are determined by their eminent interactions as they seek mutual benefits from their association. Organizations that are formal or informal are established for a particular purpose. Cooperative efforts of individuals in an organization through interactions between the leader, followers and other interested stakeholders enable these organizations to achieve their goals (Ikoya and Akinseinde, (2009). However, the cooperative efforts of individuals in an organization may not always take place without disagreement. According to Sagimo(2002), conflict is inevitable in any organization and it is often good. Conflict connotes a stressful, unhappy, distressing, depressing, annoying and frustrating state of affairs in any organization (Sagimo, 2002).

Sagimo(2002) defines conflict as disagreement between interested parties seeking to achieve a common target. Rue and Byarrrs(1992) concur with Sagimo(2002), that conflict occurs because individuals have different perceptions, beliefs and goals while Bateman and Zeithaml (1993) argue that conflict is inevitable when managers are making important decisions as they would face opposing pressures from different sources.

Conflict grows from simple to complex, from non-violent to violent depending on the gravity. For example, good teams always go through a "form, storm, norm and perform" periods. Getting the most out of diversity is an indication that often contradictory values, perspectives and opinions have successfully been managed (McNamara, (2007).

Determinants of conflicts in most of the education sector's projects are traced in various leadership styles, variation in school organizational structure, workers unions and a host of other forces causing negative interactions between the leader-follower and the school project management process (McNamara, (2007). Conflict resolution strategies in secondary schools entail assembling, coordinating, planning and monitoring all the organizational activities within a school set-up, especially in the sense of a conflict resolution process (McNamara, (2007).

Successful conflict resolution occurs through listening to and providing opportunities to meet the needs of all parties and to adequately address varied parties' interests, so that, each party is satisfied with the outcome of their dispute (Lawal(2006). Conflict resolution strategies that involve finding a win-win outcome among two or more parties are successful. However, win-lose dynamic conflict resolution strategies are also suitable in peculiar disagreement cases (Eregha, (2006).

Conflicts have negative influence on employees' job performance and achievement of preset project objectives. For instance in 2004, above 76% of the United States (US) high school administrators who responded to a survey on influence of conflicts in schools on students' academic achievement had reported that students who were low-achievers were the most likely perpetrators of conflicts in their schools (Foster and Hilaire, (2004). Mills (2001) concurs with Foster and Hilaire, (2004) when he noted that the rate of conflicting Chicago high schools rose to an average of 90% per week by the year 2001 leading to further low students' academic performance.

Educational institutions in Africa have occasionally experienced conflict of varied nature between varied stakeholders in provision of education, due to different reasons (Mills, 2001). In Kenya most conflicts among partners in secondary school education sector end up being destructive and lead to loss of public resources (Ageng'a, and Simatwa, (2011). For example the students' violence waves against the school leadership, which occurred between (2001 and 2008) across the country were due to either delay in resolving conflict/unresolved conflict or use of inappropriate conflict resolution strategies (Ageng'a, and Simatwa, (2011).

Dissonance among leadership could retard effective conflict resolution in secondary school infrastructural project management. The project management conflict may result due to negative interactions among various stakeholders like Board of Management (BOM) executive officials, Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) executive officials, the Principal and Support Staff with common interest of achieving the project goal (McNamara, (2007). Such conflict might lead to anarchy and overall poor performance in management and completion rate of the project (Onsarigo, (2007).

Undue delay in resolving project management conflicts may lead to untimely completion rate as well as unimaginable loss of public resources. However, previous studies on effects of delaying conflict resolution among secondary school project management partners in Kenya, and Kitui County in particular, have not been adequately conclusive (Onoyume, (2007). It is against this background that this study will investigate influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county, Kitui County.

1.2 Problem Statement.

In Kitui County, about 97 per cent of primary school children aged 6-13 year old are still attending pre-schools, with only 37 per cent of them actually enrolled for primary school education (Vasudevan and Gichohi,(2008).The transition rate from primary to secondary schools is low, standing at 27 percent in Kitui County compared to the national transition rate of 70 percent. This transition scenario might have been occasioned by inadequate infrastructure at secondary schools (Vasudevan and Gichohi, (2008). The existing studies on school conflict management in Kenya have focused on extrinsic conflict resolution strategies, but they have accorded less attention on leadership functions, skills, power and styles between the external and internal administrators in the school system. However, this study will focus on the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used at the secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county of Kitui County, Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county of Kitui County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To establish the extent to which leadership functions influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.
- ii. To establish the extent to which leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.
- iii. To establish the extent to which leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.
- iv. To establish how leadership styles do influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.

1.5 Research Questions

To achieve the study objectives the following research questions guided the study:

- i. To what extent do leadership functions influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county?
- ii. To what extent do leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county?

- iii. To what extent does leadership power influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county?
- iv. How do leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county?

1.6 Hypothesis of the Study

This study was guided by the following hypothesis.

- i. H₀: There is no significant relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.
- ii. H₀: There is no significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.
- iii. H₀: There is no significant relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.
- iv. H₀: There is no significant relationship between leadership style and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between leadership style and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings and recommendations of this study may be important to several people and stakeholders in the following ways. The school administration, Board of Management(BOM) and Ministry of Education (MOE) officials, may use the findings in further understanding the impact of leadership on conflict resolution strategies and the associated effects on employees' performance and work output productivity as well as academic performance among public secondary schools. The Ministry of Education (MOE) may use the findings to determine how to improve its supervisory work in schools to enhance conflict resolution strategies programs and school leaders' accountability for harmonious relationships among various categories of school employees.

The principals could learn how to enhance professionalism in dealing with causes of conflict. Head teachers should enhance effective communication with all stakeholders in the school to minimize conflicts. They could learn how to adopt and effectively apply the following conflict resolution strategies namely: avoidance, bargaining, smoothing, coercion and problem-solving social skills. However, they also learn that arbitration, reconciliation, climate of trust, collaboration, negotiations and effective communication are indicators of effective conflict resolution strategies. From the findings principals could enhance effective leadership of conflict resolution strategies through delegation to the Heads of departments to enable them to effectively manage teams in their departments. To the MOE the findings could help them to enhance capacity building for stakeholders in education to equip them with necessary conflict resolution strategies to overcome conflicts in schools by problem solving strategies. To teaching/support staff and students: Effective conflict resolution strategies in secondary school leadership may ensure minimum-to-no time wastage in settling teachers/students and support staff-head teacher's disputes to ensure better working relationships. This may lead to a conducive school climate and improvement in productivity.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study was confined to selected public secondary schools in Kitui Central Sub-county, Kitui County, Kenya. Thus the study findings will only be generalizable to other areas with considerations of conditional similarities between other study areas and those of Kitui Central Sub-county. The study was confined to the selected respondents, including: principals, teachers and non-teaching staff secondary school employees' membership. The data collected from these respondents was beneficial to the study in gathering relevant data on which study conclusion and recommendations was made.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Scarcity of literature on conflict resolution strategies among public secondary schools in the district was a limitation of this study. Characteristics of secondary school head teachers also called (Principals) may be heterogeneous in Kitui County compared to other Counties nationally. This may lead to problems like: lack of appropriate control groups and failure to control for pretreatment differences, thus ignoring possible placebo effects. Some conflict resolution strategies may be similar but the terms used for them might be different. For instance to various participants; dialogue is similar to effective communication and negotiation. Isolating the influence of extraneous variables from the influence of the preferred study variables appearing in the research questions will also be a major limitation in this study.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The assumption of the study was that principals are in charge of the leadership roles in their particular schools. Conflict resolution process is part of the school leadership functions. Therefore, this study considered the influence of principals' conflict resolution strategies between parents, teachers, support staff, Board of Management (BOM), Parents Teachers Association (PTA) officials over the school infrastructural project management.

1.11 Definition of Significant Terms

Conflict is a dispute between two or more individuals whose values, perspectives and opinions are contradictory in nature and are yet to be aligned.

Conflict resolution involves the application of knowledge, skills, tools, techniques and systems that define, visualize, measure, control, report and improve processes with the goal of achieving harmonious environment of co-existence in an organization.

Leadership functions involve developing and clarifying mission, policies, and objectives of the organization; establishing formal and informal organizational structures as a means of delegating authority and sharing responsibilities.

Leadership power is power that resides in the position of a leader, regardless of who holds leadership position.

Leadership skills as used in this context refer to abilities which can be developed and which are manifested in performance of certain leadership tasks.

Leadership styles are various patterns of behavior exhibited by leaders during the process of directing and influencing workers in an organization towards achievement of preset goals.

Infrastructure projects are the construction which goes on in the school.

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one consisted of introduction, background to the study; statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study, research questions; significance, delimitations, limitations and assumptions of the study and definition of significant terms. Chapter two presented reviewed literature according to objectives of the study. Chapter three presented the research methodology. Chapter four presented data analysis, interpretation and presentation and Chapter five presented a summary, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of review of related literature to leadership functions, leadership skills, leadership power, and leadership styles with their influence on conflict resolution strategies used in the implementation of secondary school infrastructural projects. The sub-headings are arranged according to the objectives of the study. It starts with the concept of leadership and ends with a theoretical framework and conceptual framework, finalizing with a summary of literature review and the identified research gaps.

2.2 Leadership Functions and Conflict Resolution Strategies

Leadership functions are based on a common philosophical leadership approach and they centre on the following as noted by Dee and Henkin (2001): Developing and clarifying mission, policies, and objectives of the organization; establishing formal and informal organizational structures as a means of delegating authority and sharing responsibilities; setting priorities and reviewing and revising objectives in terms of changing demands; maintaining effective communications within the working group, with other groups, and with the larger community; selecting, motivating, training, and appraising staff; securing funds and managing budgets; evaluating accomplishments and being accountable to staff, the larger enterprise, and to the community at large (Dee and Henkin, 2001).

The essential function of a leader is to work towards unity and cohesiveness in the organisation and to see that members have a pleasant satisfying experience. In this regard, Manz and Sims (2002) quoted (Krech and Crutchfield (1962)) who had pointed out that all leaders must perform the following functions: as an executive, as a planner, as a policy maker, as an expert, as a group representative as an arbitrator and as a model of behaviour. According to Manz and Sims (2002) as cited from the study by (Killan, (1952) in the American leadership association journal, the following are the five functions of leadership:

According to Moshal (1998) the more common functions of leadership may be enumerated as under: Motivating members, morale boosting, supportive functions, satisfying needs of members, accomplishing common goals, representing members, creating confidence implementing change and resolving conflicts. Gross and Herriott (1965) as cited in Manz and Sims (2002) suggest that influence based on personal power is associated with greater effectiveness. They identified six important leadership functions: Develop goals, policies, and directions. Organize the school and design programmes to accomplish the goals. Monitor progress, solve problems, and maintain order. Procure, manage, and allocate resources. Create a climate for the personal and professional growth and development. Represent the school to the district office and the outside world.

There is no denying the fact that a school is essentially a co-operative enterprise, in which every member big or small, high or low has a vital role to play (Bryman, (1992). Leadership comprises of four functions that constitute the administrative process namely planning, organizing, commanding or leading, and controlling. Planning sets the direction and objectives; organizing brings the resources together to turn plans into action; commanding or leading builds the commitments and enthusiasm needed for people to apply their talents fully to help accomplish plans; and controlling makes sure things turn out right (Conger and Kanungo, (1987).

According to Eregha(2006) the primary function of a leader is to identify the essential purpose or mission of an organization and the strategy for attaining it. By contrast, the job of the leader is to implement that vision. The overriding function of leadership is to provide order and consistency to organisations, whereas the primary function of leadership is to produce change and development(Eregha,(2006). Leaders are charged with the responsibility of taking actions that will make it possible for individuals to make their best contributions to group objectives(Deutsch and Coleman 2000). Thus, leadership applies to small and large organizations, to profit and not for-profit enterprises, to manufacturing as well as service industries. However, a given situation may differ considerably among various levels in an organization or various types of enterprises. The scope of authority held may vary and the types of problems dealt with may be considerably different. All leaders obtain results by establishing an environment for effective group endeavor(Devereaux, (2003).

The leader is, therefore, the dynamic, life-giving element in every organization. Without the leadership of the leader, resources of production remain mere resources and never become production(Ramani and Zhimin,(2010). According to Ramani and Zhimin (2010)in a competitive economy, the quality and performance of the leaders determine the success of an organization; indeed, they determine its survival. Broadly, in secondary schools in Kenya, the leader is the head teacher (also called the Principal).

The Principal makes the group march towards the achievement of school objectives. To perform in a better way the Principal maintains high morale among the teachers, support staff, and students who are the members of the group that he or she leads (Ramani and Zhimin,(2010). This study focuses on influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county, Kenya.

2.3 Leadership Skills and Conflict Resolution Strategies

Besides personality traits, it has been assumed that the acquisition of certain leadership skills has almost become a necessity for successful performance of the leadership tasks (Northouse, (2001). The leader would, of course, be successful only to the extent that he/she has certain leadership skills in getting things done through other people in an organization(VasuthevonandHee, (2004). Leadership skills as used in this context refer to an ability which can be developed and which is manifested in performance of certain leadership tasks.

According to Wolfgang (2007) managers require four main kinds of skills, namely: technical skill, human skill, conceptual skill and design skill. Technical skill is knowledge of and

proficiency in activities involving methods, processes, and procedures. Thus, it involves working with tools and specific techniques. Human skill is the ability to work with people; it is cooperative effort; it is teamwork; it is the creation of an environment in which people feel secure and free to express their opinions (Wolfgang, (2007).

Conceptual skill is the ability to serve the “big picture”. It is also about recognizing significant elements in a situation, and to understand the relationships among the elements. The design skill is the ability to solve problems in ways that benefit the enterprise. To be effective, particularly at upper organizational levels, leaders must be able to do more than see a problem(Wolfgang, (2007).

Weaver, (2003) argues that in addition, leaders must have the skill of a good design engineer in working out a practical solution to a problem. Leaders must also have that valuable skill of being able to design a workable solution to the problem in the light of the realities they face. It has, however, got to be mentioned that the relative importance of these skills may differ at various levels in the organization hierarchy (Weaver, (2003).

For purposes of elaboration, technical skills are of greatest importance at the supervisory level and less at the middle-leadership level, human skills in the frequent interactions with subordinates at all levels, conceptual skills not critical for lower-level supervisors but gain in importance at the middle-leadership level(Weaver, (2003).Keys and Case (1990) argue thatat the top leadership level, conceptual and design abilities and human skills are especially valuable, but there is relatively little need for technical abilities. The assumption, especially in large companies, those chief executives can utilize the technical abilities of their subordinates. In smaller firms, however, technical experience may still be quite important(Keys and Case, (1990).

According to Kirkwood (2002) an effective leader appears to rest on three personal and basic developable skills: Technical skill, which is used to refer to proficiency and understanding of a specific kind of activity involving, process, procedure or technique. This skill is primarily concerned with working with things. Human skill, which is the leader’s ability to work with others and build a cooperative effort with the group he manages. This skill is primarily concerned with working with people(Kirkwood, (2002).

Conceptual skill implies the ability to visualize the organization as a whole. This skill enables the leader to perceive and recognize the interrelationships of various factors operating within the total organization. The relative importance of these skills varies with the organizational levels. At lower levels, technical and human skills are required more than the conceptual skills. At higher levels, the leader’s effectiveness depends more upon conceptual and human skills (Kirkwood,

2002). The fourth design skill involves the ability to solve problems of the organization(Koontz and Weihrich, 1998).

Kirkpatrick and Locke(1991) classified the abilities required to be possessed by the leaders under five skills as: Conceptual skill: it is the ability to visualize the organization as a whole system and form image and develop vision in the context of future environment. Analytical skills: these skills are more related with scientific attitude and thinking on the part of leader for solving different problems and making decisions(Kirkpatrick and Locke, (1991). Human relations or behavioral skills: the basic responsibility of every leader is to get things done by and through others. These skills refer to the ability, needed by the leader to deal with subordinates effectively (Kirkwood, 2002). Administrative skills refer to the ability for coordinating various activities, seeking effective utilization of allotted resources and getting things done by subordinates(Manz and Sims, (2002). This study focused on influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District.

2.4 Leadership Power and Conflict Resolution Strategies

The concept of leadership relates strongly to power. As cited in Manz and Sims (2002) Weber as a socialist (1947) classified three different forms of power as charisma, tradition and legal/rational. The most widely used and recognized analysis of the bases of power is the framework developed by French and Raven (1959) as cited in Manz and Sims (2002). They identified five general basis of power in organizational settings: legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, and referent power. Another approach categorizes power in organizations in terms of position and personal power (Northouse, 2001).

According to Okotoni and Okotoni(2003) position power is power that resides in the position, regardless of who holds it. Thus, legitimate, reward, and some aspects of coercive and expert power can all contribute to position power. Position power is thus similar to authority. In creating a position, the organization simultaneously establishes a sphere of power for the person filling that position. He or she will generally have the power to direct the activities of subordinates in performing their jobs, to control some of their potential rewards, and to have a say in their punishment and discipline(Okotoni and Okotoni, 2003). There are, however, limits to a leader's position power. A leader cannot order or control activities that fall outside his or her sphere of power, for instance, directing a subordinate to commit crimes, to perform personal services, or to take on tasks that clearly are not part of the subordinate's job (Ngare, (2008).

Personal power is power that resides with an individual, regardless of his or her position in the organization. Thus, the primary bases of personal power are referent with some traces of expert,

coercive, and reward power. Charisma may also contribute to personal power. Someone usually exercises personal power through rational persuasion or by playing on followers' identification with him or her (Deutsch and Coleman, (2000).

An individual with personal power can often inspire greater loyalty and dedication among followers than someone who has only position power(Bennis, (1984). The stronger influence stems from the fact that the followers are acting due to necessity and thus will respond more readily to requests and appeals. Of course, the influence of a leader who relies only on personal power is limited, because followers may freely decide not to accept his or her directives or orders.Deutsch and Coleman (2000), maintains that the Principal's key function is establishing goal consensus among staff and developing an institutional identity, and he cited classical studies on organizational leadership that support this view Bennis (1984) as quoted by Manz and Sims (2002).

Some recent studies have focused on the Principal as a leader in high school administration (Deutsch and Coleman,(2000). The emphasis on the Principal as a leader has added a new dimension to the traditional distinctive dual roles of the Principal as an educator and administrator. Therefore, the Principal is expected to act as a leader in non-profit making public secondary school or learning organization. The success of a school in accomplishing its preset goals depends upon the ability of the Principal in leading the other school staff members. The school staff members include: teaching staff, non-teaching staff or subordinate staff/support staff as well as the secondary school student staff (Ngare, (2008).

In the distinction between organizational leadership and leadership, it is clear that whereas a leader can be appointed to a leadership position, leadership must be earned, even after appointment to a leadership position (Okumbe, (2001). Leadership is not a position, but an active influencing force on the followers towards achievement of the organizational objectives. Leadership is not based on status, but on authority and prestige. Leadership may come from personal enthusiasm, personal authority, credibility, knowledge, skills and/or charisma. This means that leadership is derived from the influence that the leader has on the entire staff in the school community (Darling, (1992).

Accordingly, the Principal holds the highest position in school organizational leadership and in his/her role as a school leader the Principal has an active influencing force towards achievement of preset school objectives. Yuki and Van Fleet, (1989) noted that the tone of the school is mainly influenced by the behavior and personality of the Principal, which also affects the attitude, climate, progress, co-operation and direction of specific staff efforts towards attainment of

school objectives. Hersey and Blanchard (1988) conclude that the Principal is the hub around which educational activities revolve within a secondary school organization.

Although there are clear differences between leadership and leadership, there is also a considerable amount of overlap (Yuki and Van Fleet, (1989). Leadership is about seeking order and stability; leadership is about seeking adaptive and constructive change. When Principals act as leaders by being involved in influencing a group of employees to meet the school goals, they are involved in leadership. However, both processes involve influencing a group of individuals towards goal attainment (Yuki and Van Fleet, (1989). Therefore, this study focused on influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county, Kitui County, Kenya.

2.5 Leadership Styles and Conflict Resolution Strategies

Personal qualities of individuals tend to differentiate them with respect to their leadership behavior. According to Hersey and Blanchard (1988), the leadership style of an individual is the behavior pattern that the leader as a person exhibits while attempting to influence the work activities of others in the group he or she leads. Subordinates of the leader can perceive the leader's behavior pattern. As Onsarigo (2007) mentioned, leadership styles are various patterns of behavior exhibited by leaders during the process of directing and influencing other workers in an organization towards achieving the preset goals.

In a classic study of leadership, as cited in Manz and Sims (2002), Lewin et al. (1939) had proposed to find out whether different group behaviors resulted from different styles of leader behavior. They began the task by defining behaviors that appeared to characterize three known styles namely: Authoritarian leadership styles; Democratic leadership styles and Laissez-Faire leadership styles (Manz and Sims, (2002).

According to Okumbe (2001) although, laissez-faire leadership style is in essence internally inconsistent, it has nevertheless been used to characterize the behavior of persons in leadership positions who often take a passive stance towards social conflict resolutions in of group members in an organization (Okumbe, (2001).

A recent conception of leadership categorizes the styles as: Nomothetic, Ideographic and Personal or Transactional leadership styles (Manz and Sims, (2002). This categorization of leadership styles can best be understood in reference to Getzels and Guba's (1957) social system leadership model as quoted in (Manz and Sims, (2002). Getzels and Guba (1957) model includes: an organizational dimension, which concerns: Nomothetic or legislative leader's actions; and ideographic or official decision-making leader's actions, and individual dimension which concerns

the leader as an individual person and the personality aspects in an organization (Onsarigo, (2007).

Therefore, based on Getzels and Guba(1957) leadership model, the following leadership styles have also been developed: Task-oriented leadership, technique-oriented leadership, people-oriented leadership. Nevertheless, the earlier differentiation of leadership styles is still useful for some purposes. As noted by Onsarigo (2007) broadly perceived the actual leadership styles never purely exist as autocratic leadership styles, democratic leadership styles or laissez-fair leadership styles but to some extent the three styles are combined with some degree of application of each in various situations.

Undoubtedly, however, some styles of leadership are best characterized by better being involved in conflict resolution strategies more than other leadership styles (Fisher and Keashly, 1988). The different leadership styles may be useful as a means of conceptualizing the application of leadership in conflict leadership(Onsarigo, (2007). This study focuses on how leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District, Kitui County, Kenya.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the contingency theory of strategic conflict management as pioneered by Fisher and Keashly(1988). Contingency theory argues that the complexity in strategic communication is best represented by a continuum of stance, not by a limited set of models of excellence (Fisher and Keashly, (1988). In brief the contingency theory, postulates that, at different points during conflict different types of third party intervention are more or less effective based on the assessment that social conflict involves a dynamic process in which objective and subjective elements interact over time as the conflict escalates and de-escalates.

According to Pang, Jin, and Cameron, (2007) research from organizational psychology analogously applied to deep-rooted conflicts suggests moments at which substantive issues (interests) are most salient whereas at other times miscommunication and misperceptions block attempts to resolve. The assumption is that subjective elements get worse as conflict escalates(Pang, et al., (2007). Depending on the objective-subjective mix, different intervention was appropriate at different states of a conflict to be resolved(Fisher, (1993).

Although, Fisher (1993) he did, in a later article, consider human needs approach as the basis of analytical problemsolving, this seems to have been a brief foray – and later work discusses a contingency approach without reference to basic human needs (Pang, Jin, and Cameron, (2007). Where Fisher (2000) seems to view needs-based problem-solving as part of a broader peace-

building process and separates conflict resolution from a needs approach (Pang, et al., (2007). Fisher (2000) places needs-based 'peace-building' within a contingency framework as, activities designed to improve the relationship and meet the basic needs of the parties, in order to de-escalate the conflict and render it amenable to peacemaking. Peace building can then take its place as the essential bridge between peacekeeping and peacemaking.

Conflict resolution in an organization practiced depends on a circumstance, that is, a contingency (Pang, et al., (2007). Contingency theory recognizes the influence of given solution on organizational behavior patterns. However, there is no one best way to do things. It is difficult to determine all relevant contingency factors and showing the relationship can be very complex (Pang, et al., (2007). This theory was applicable, because it focused on the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in school infrastructural projects.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a research tool intended to develop awareness and understanding of the situation under study and it communicates how of the enquiry as shown in Figure 2.1.

Independent Variables

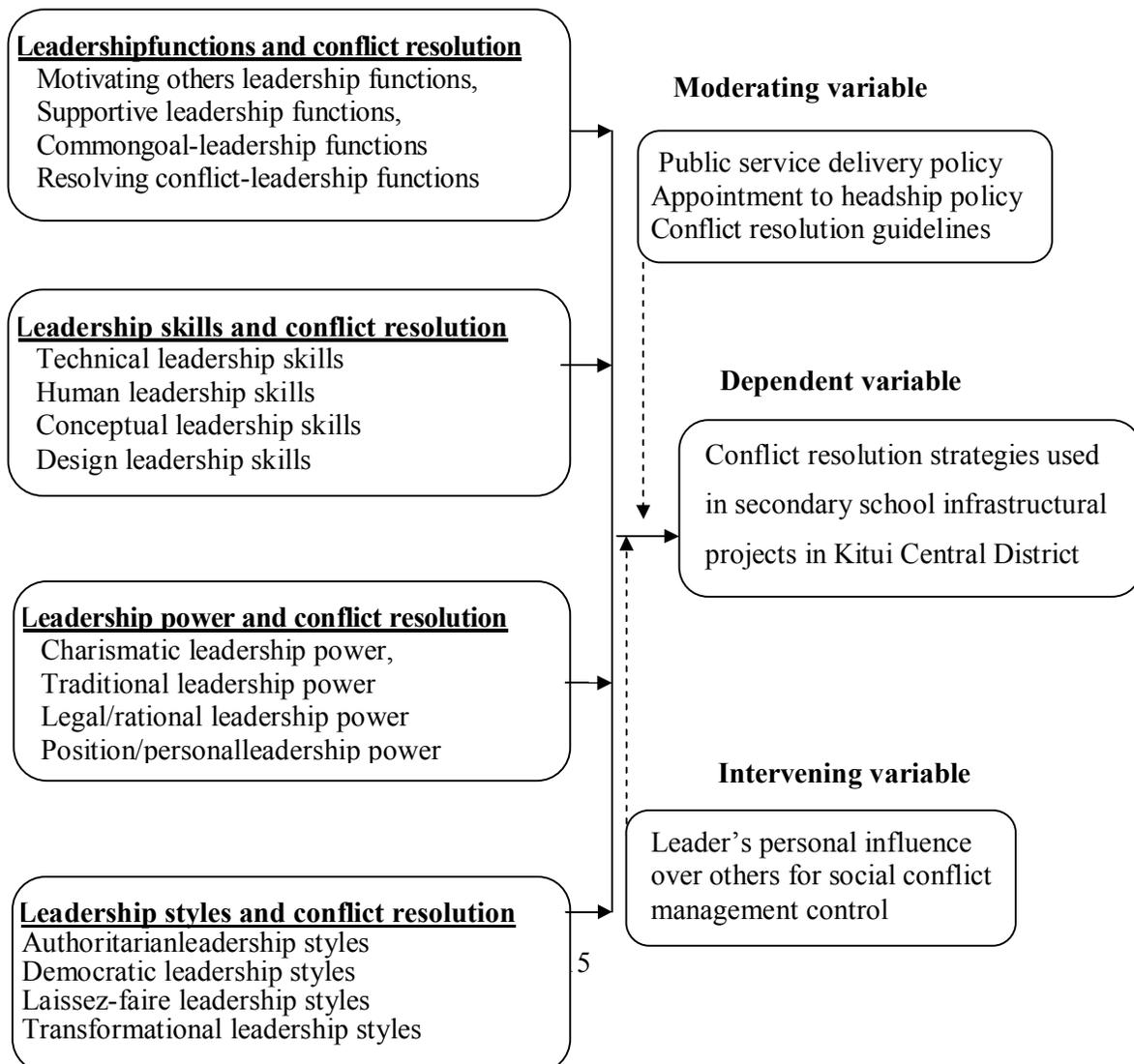


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

As shown in Figure 1, the independent variable of the study was: leadership functions influence on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects. These leadership functions are: Motivating leadership functions, Supportive leadership functions, Accomplishing common goals leadership functions and Resolving conflicts leadership functions used for conflict resolution strategies in school infrastructural project management.

Leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies in public secondary school employees. Principals are involved with the technical, human conceptual and design leadership skills used for conflict resolution strategies in school infrastructural project management.

Leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects. The proposed leadership powers among the school leaders are: Charismatic leadership power, traditional leadership power, legalized or rational leadership power and position or personal leadership power used for conflict resolution strategies in school infrastructural project management.

How leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies in school infrastructural project management. How authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles influence choice of conflict resolution strategies used in school infrastructural project management. The principals execute their administrative duties and conflict resolution strategies among staff, BOM and PTA executive officials in school infrastructural project management. The moderating variable was: The government policy on appointment to headship and conflict resolution MOE guidelines and TSC code of ethics. The dependent variable of the study was: Conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural project management. The intervening variable of the study was: Leader's individual personalized socialization status on socially influencing others in conflict resolution strategies resolution and practices.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents: research design and location of the study, target population, sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability of research tools, data collection procedures and data analysis, ethical issues and operationalization of the study variables.

3.2 Research Design

The study focused on influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county, Kitui County, Kenya. Survey research design was adopted in conducting this study. A survey was conducted to describe phenomena as they exist. A descriptive design was undertaken to ascertain and describe the characteristics of pertinent issues assumed to influence of the outcome of a process or a continuum of processes. A descriptive survey research design can be used to further examine a problem than exploratory research design can do. A questionnaire and an interview guide were used to collect data, where both qualitative and quantitative data was collected.

3.3 Target Population

The study targeted a population of 482 potential respondents who have specific role to play in secondary school infrastructure projects. Some of the targeted population was from the internal school staff members and the others were the stakeholders from outside the school setup. Internally there were 81 school administrators who comprised of 27 principals, 27 deputy principals and 27 senior teachers; the 158 heads of departments (HODs) either appointed by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) or internally appointed and acting as school tender committee members; 81 subordinate staff (Bursar and store keeper appointed to the tender committee and one watchman serving as security for the building materials). The external school target population comprised of

81, that is 3Board of Board of Management (BOM) executive officials from each of the 27 secondary schools and 81that is 3Parents Teachers Association (PTA) executive officials from each of the 27 secondary schools in Kitui CentralDistrict(EMIS-DEO-Kitui Central (2014).

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

Simple random sampling method was used to select 30 percent of the 27 secondary schools in the sub-county with some on-going building projects as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1, Principals/Deputy/Senior Teachers, HODsSubordinate Staff, BOM and PTA

Category	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Percentage (%)
Secondary Schools	27	8	30
Principal/deputy/senior teacher	81	24	30
Teachers (Appointed HODs)	158	48	30
Support Staff	81	24	30
PTA Executive official	81	24	30
BOM Executive official	81	24	30
Total	Population N= 482	Sample n = 144	30

Source: GOK: EMIS Data Report, Kitui Central District (2014).

As shown in Table 3.1, simple random sampling method was used to select 30 percent of the 81 secondary school administrators. This was according to Mugenda and Mungenda (2003) who argued that a sample size of 30% is sufficient. The sample will constitute of all of the principals, deputy principals and the senior teachers in each of the 8 selected schools. In each selected school 6 HODs was selected to give a sample of 48 as 30 percent of the 158 target population. In each selected school 3 subordinate staff membersthe (bursar or accounts clerk/store keeper/ground man or watchman),was selected to give a sample of 24 as 30 percent of the targeted subordinate staffpopulation. In each selected school 3 BOM executive officials was selected to give a sample of 24 as 30 percent of the BOM executive officials target population and in each selected school 3 PTA executive official was selected to give a sample of 24, as 30 percent of PTA executive officials'target population. This will give a sample size of 144 respondents, whichwas 30 percent of 482, the study target population. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a sample of 30percent is adequately representative of the entire study population if it is less than 1000 participants, like it is with the target population of 482 forthe current study.

3.5 Research Instruments

Data was collected using a questionnaire for Principals/Deputies/Senior teachers, HODs and Support Staff and interview guide for Board of Governors and PTA executive officials.

3.5.1 Questionnaire for Principals/Deputies/Senior teachers HODs and Support Staff

The questionnaire consisted of structured closed and open-ended items. Likert type of questions using a scale (1-5) will also be used. The rating value was as follows: 1- strongly disagrees, 2- disagree, 3-not sure, 4- agree and 5- strongly agree. Not sure was used to provide an alternative answer by the participants who will not be willing to commit themselves of any of the statements provided. There was a section of (open-ended items) where respondents will have the freedom to write their views regarding the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central Sub-county, Kitui County, Kenya.

3.5.2 Interview Guide for Board of Governors and PTA executive officials

An Interview Guide was structured with open-ended items. The open-ended items gave freedom of response to the respondents regarding their views on how leadership influences conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in the district.

3.6 Pilot Study

This section consists of validity and reliability of the research tools. Validity is the degree to which the results obtained actually represents the phenomenon under study (Orodho, 2005). Reliability is "repeatability" or "consistency" of measures (Kothari, 2006).

3.6.1 Validity

The open-ended items were validated depending on how the data collected was related in terms of how effective the items would sample significant aspects for the purpose of this study (Orodho, 2005). Content validity of the instrument was used to measure the degree to which the items will represent specific areas covered in this study. Therefore, content validity of the instrument was determined by colleagues and experts in research who looked at the measuring technique and coverage of specific areas (objectives of the study). The experts advised the researcher on the items to be corrected. The corrections on the identified questions were incorporated in the instrument to increase its validity.

3.6.2 Reliability

To establish reliability of the instrument, a split-half method was used by a means of a pilot study. During the pretest the questionnaire was administered on a random sample of one principal, 5 teachers and 5 support staff members from one public secondary school in Kitui central sub-county. The participants in the pilot study were not included in the actual study sample.

To predict the reliability of a test, the researcher used Spearman Brown Prophecy formula given below.

Predicted reliability, $\rho_{xx'}^*$, is estimated as:

$$\rho_{xx'}^* = \frac{N\rho_{xx'}}{1 + (N - 1)\rho_{xx'}}$$

Where N is the number of "tests" combined and $\rho_{xx'}$ is the reliability of the current "test".

This formula is commonly used predict the reliability of a test after changing the test length. This relationship is particularly vital to the split-half and related methods of estimating reliability. The formula is also helpful in understanding the nonlinear relationship between test reliability and test length. Test length must grow by increasingly larger values as the desired reliability approaches 1.0. The researcher obtained a reliability of 0.85 which was sufficient.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought permission from the District Education officer Kitui Central District to collect data from schools. Data collection took place over a two months period tentatively in March–April 2014. The questionnaire was personally administered to selected respondents. The researcher made prior arrangements with the heads of the selected schools so that he can interview them face-to-face as the research assistants administer the questionnaire to the selected teachers and support staff. After the filling in of the questionnaire, the research assistants collected them.

3.8 Data Analysis

Frequencies, percentages and mean values. A theoretical mean value of 3.0 was determined as a criterion to judge the average = \bar{Y} values of the 5-point rated items, using the formula with $\bar{Y} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^5 Y_i}{5}$; for the 5-points like $(1+2 +3+ 4+ 5)/5 = 15/5= 3.0$. Mean values between 1.0 and less than 2.4999 will represent to agree. Mean values between 2.5 but less than 3.4999 represented undecided or neutral and mean value between 3.5 and

5.0represented disagree. Qualitative data was thematically categorized according to objectives of the study; it was coded and operationalized to allowutilization of descriptive data analysisprocess. Inferential statistics using Spearman’s correlation was usedto test the study hypothesis. All findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data was presented in frequency distribution tables, percentages and mean values.

3.9 Ethical Issues

The researcher obtained a research authorization permit from the ministry of science and technology. A copy of the permit was submitted to the District Education Officer-Kitui Central. The study area was pre-visited to establish rapport and with respondents. Informed consent by seeking permission to participate in the study was sought. Confidentiality andanonymitywas assured to respondents.

3.10 Operationalization of the Study Variables

This study is on influence of leadershipon conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects. Operationalization of study variables is as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Operationalization of the Study Variables

Objectives	Variables		Indicator(s)	Level of scale	Tools of analysis
	Independent	Dependent			
To establish how leadership functions influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Leadership functions	Conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Motivating Supportive Common goal Solve conflicts	Nominal Interval Ordinal	-Frequency distributions -Mean values -Correlation
To establish how leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Leadership skills	Conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Technical skills Human skills Conceptual skills Design skills	Nominal Interval Ordinal	-Frequency distributions -Mean values -Correlation
To establish how leadership power influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Leadership power	Conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Charismatic power Traditional power Legal power Position/personal	Nominal Interval Ordinal	Frequency distributions -Mean values -Correlation
To establish how leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Leadership styles	Conflict resolution strategies in secondary school projects	Authoritarian Democratic Laissez-faire Transformational	Nominal Interval Ordinal	Frequency distributions -Mean values -Correlation

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction.

This chapter presents data analysis, presentation, and interpretation following the study objectives.

4.2: Questionnaire return rate.

Questionnaire return rate is the proportion of the sample that participated in the survey and returned their questionnaires as intended by the researcher. The questionnaires were administered to 96 respondents composed of 24 principals, 48 teachers and 24 staffs. The other information was obtained from interview schedule administered to 24 BOM and 24 PTA executive members. The results on questionnaire return rate are presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Questionnaire return rate

Response rate	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned	96	100
Not returned	0	0
Total	96	100

Table 4.1 shows that all (100%) of the questionnaires were returned by the respondents under this study. This shows that the researcher had good rapport with the respondents and that the respondents were taking the research seriously. Also the researcher seemed to have made a good follow up of the distributed questionnaires which enabled him to get back all the questionnaires. The participants also seemed to have an interest with the study.

4.3: Distribution of respondents by gender

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender with the aim of establishing whether the study was gender sensitive and to establish if gender influenced conflict resolution strategies. The results are shown in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	29	31.0
Male	70	69.0
Total	96	100

Table 4.2 shows majority (69%) of the respondents were male while (31.0%) were female. This indicates that the number of male respondents were more than the female respondents.

4.4: Age Distribution of respondents

The researcher sought to establish the age distribution for the respondents.

Table 4.3: Age distribution of principals

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 30	0	0.0
30 – 34	0	0.0
35 – 39	0	0.0
40 – 45	15	63
Above 45	9	37
Total	24	100

Table 4.3 revealed that majority of the school principals (63%) were 40 – 45 years of age while those above 45 years of age were 37 percent. This age indicates that the principals were not young and therefore were in a better position to resolve conflicts. However there seems to be an age bias in the promotion of teachers which should be avoided so as to get different leadership skills.

4.4: Academic qualification for the principals

The researcher sought to investigate the academic qualification for principals and departmental heads.

Table 4.4: Principals academic qualification

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
-----------------	------------------	-----------------------

PhD	0	0.0
M.ED	7	30.0
B.ED	15	62.0
DIP. Education	2	8.0
TOTAL	24	100

Table 4.4 revealed that majority of the principals (62%) had a bachelor of education as their highest academic qualification and 30 percent with masters of education degree. This shows that the principals had acquired academic qualification which could enable them to resolve conflicts effectively. The 30 percent with masters shows that the principals were interested in pursuing further education and this is an indication of a great desire for academic advancement. This is likely to influence the principals' conflict resolution strategies. It was however revealed that 8 percent of the principals had a diploma in education.

4.5 Leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary schools.

The first objective for this study was to establish the extent to which leadership functions influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District. To achieve this objective, the respondents were asked to respond to the question, the respondents were to show their rating choice using a 5-point likert rating scale as from: (1-2-3-4-5) given as: 1-Strongly Agree (SA), 2- Agree (A), 3-Not sure (N), 4- Disagree (D) 5-Strongly Disagree (SD) to indicate their level of agreement and/or disagreement with the statements. The results were shown in the Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total
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Motivating others functions	leadership	72 (75%)	12(12.5%)	12 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	96(100%)
Supportive leadership functions		48 (50%)	48 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	96(100%)
Common functions	goal-leadership	48 (50%)	12 (12.5%)	12 (12.5%)	24(25%)	0 (0%)	96(100%)
Resolving functions	conflict-leadership	72(75%)	12 (12.5%)	12 (12.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	96(100%)
Mean		60(63%)	27 (28%)	9 (9%)	4 (3%)	0(0%)	96(100%)

According to Table 4.5, majority of the respondents (63%) strongly agreed with the given statements about leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies, 28% agreed, 3 percent were undecided, 3% Disagree, and 0% Strongly Disagreed. However there was a significant difference ($P \leq 0.05$) among those who strongly agreed with motivating others leadership functions leading and resolving conflict-leadership functions leading with 75%. Also among those who agreed supportive leadership functions was significantly high with 50%.

Further the researcher tested a hypothesis to establish the strength of the relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies. This was done by testing the hypothesis below.

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies.

H_1 : There is significant relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies.

The results were presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies.

	Leadership	Leadership
--	------------	------------

		functions	functions
Leadership functions	Pearson Correlation	1	0.65
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.055
	N	12	12
Leadership functions	Pearson Correlation	0.65	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.055	
	N	12	12

The correlation coefficient between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies is +0.65, implying that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies. We therefore reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies in public secondary schools.

These results agree with Moshal (1998) who argued that the more common functions of leadership may be enumerated as under: Motivating members, morale boosting, supportive functions, satisfying needs of members, accomplishing common goals, representing members, creating confidence implementing change and resolving conflicts. Gross and Herriott (1965) as cited in Manz and Sims (2002) suggest that influence based on personal power is associated with greater effectiveness. They identified six important leadership functions: Develop goals, policies, and directions. Organize the

school and design programs to accomplish the goals. Monitor progress, solve problems, and maintain order. Procure, manage, and allocate resources. Create a climate for the personal and professional growth and development. Represent the school to the district office and the outside world.

4.6 Leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies

The second objective for this was to establish the extent to which leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District.

To achieve this objective, The respondents were to show their rating choice using a 5-point likert rating scale as from: (1-2-3-4-5) given as: 1-Strongly Agree (SA), 2- Agree (A), 3-Not sure (N), 4- Disagree (D) 5-Strongly Disagree (SD) to indicate their level of agreement and/or disagreement with the statements. The results were shown in the Table 4.6.

Table 4.7: Leadership skills and conflict resolution

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
a) Technical leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies	54(56%)	24(25%)	18(19%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
b) Human leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies	48(50%)	24(25%)	24(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
c) Conceptual leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies	72(75%)	24(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
d) Design leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies	84(88%)	12(12%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
Mean responses	65(67%)	21(22%)	10(11%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100)

Table 4.7 revealed that majority (67%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given in Table 4.7. At the same time 22% agreed while 11% were undecided. It was however noticed that there was a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in those who strongly agreed with design leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies leading (88%) followed by Conceptual leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies (75%).

Next the researcher tested the hypothesis to establish whether there is significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies. There hypothesis was as stated below.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies

H₁: There is significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies

The results were presented in table 4.8

Table 4.8 Relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies.

		leadership skills	conflict resolution strategies
Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	0.8
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.084
	N	96	96
Conflict resolution strategies	Pearson Correlation	0.8	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.084	
	N	96	96

The correlation coefficient for the relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies is +0.80. This correlation coefficient is very high implying that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies.

We therefore reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies. . This agrees Wolfgang (2007) who argued that managers require four main kinds of skills, namely: technical skill, human skill, conceptual skill and design skill. Technical skill is knowledge of and proficiency in activities involving methods, processes, and procedures. Thus, it involves working with tools and specific techniques. Human skill is the ability to work with people; it is cooperative effort; it is teamwork; it is the creation of an environment in which people feel secure and free to express their opinions (Wolfgang, 2007).

4.6 Leadership power and conflict resolution strategies

The third objective for this study was to establish the extent to which leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District. To achieve this objective, respondents were required to show their rating choice using a 5-point likert rating scale as from: (1-2-3-4-5) given as: 1-Strongly Agree (SA), 2- Agree (A), 3-Not sure (N), 4- Disagree (D) 5-Strongly Disagree (SD) to indicate their level of agreement and/or disagreement with the statements. The results were shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Leadership power and conflict resolution

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total
a) Charismatic leadership power influence conflict resolution strategies	90(94%)	6(6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
b) Traditional leadership power influence conflict resolution strategies	88(92%)	8(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
c) Legal/rational leadership power influence conflict resolution strategies	72(75%)	24(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
d) Position/personal leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies	80(83%)	16(17%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
Mean responses	83(86%)	17(14%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100)

Table 4.9 revealed that majority (86%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given in Table 4.7. At the same time 17% agreed. It was however noticed that there was a no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in those who strongly agreed with the given statements; that charismatic leadership power, Traditional leadership power, Legal/rational leadership power, and Position/personal leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies.

Next the researcher tested the hypothesis to establish whether there is significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies. There hypothesis was as stated below.

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies H_1 : There is significant relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution. The results were presented in table 4.10

Table 4.10 Relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies.

		leadership power	conflict resolution strategies
Leadership power	Pearson Correlation	1	0.85
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.084
	N	96	96
Conflict resolution strategies	Pearson Correlation	0.85	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.084	
	N	96	96

The correlation coefficient for the relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies is +0.85. This correlation coefficient is very high implying that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies.

This agrees with Bennis (1984) who argued that an individual with personal power can often inspire greater loyalty and dedication among followers than someone who has only position power. The stronger influence stems from the fact that the followers are acting due to necessity and thus will respond more readily to requests and appeals. Of course, the influence of a leader who relies only on personal power is limited, because followers may freely decide not to accept his or her directives or orders. Deutsch and Coleman (2000), maintains that the Principal's key function is establishing goal consensus among staff and developing an institutional identity, and he cited classical studies on organizational leadership that support this view Bennis (1984) as quoted by Manz and Sims (2002).

4.7 Leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies

The last objective for this study was to establish how leadership styles do influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District. To achieve this objective, respondents were required to show their rating choice using a 5-point likert rating scale as from: (1-2-3-4-5) given as: 1-Strongly Agree (SA), 2- Agree (A), 3-Not sure (N), 4- Disagree (D) 5-Strongly Disagree (SD) to indicate their level of agreement and/or disagreement with the statements. The results were shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Leadership styles and conflict resolution

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total
a) Authoritarian leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies	75(78%)	21(22%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
b) Democratic leadership styles	80(83%)	16(17%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)

influence conflict resolution						
c) Laissez-faire leadership styles	72(75%)	24(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100%)
influence conflict resolution strategies						
Mean responses	75(78%)	20(22%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	96(100)

Table 4.11 revealed that majority (78%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given in Table 4.11 while 22% agreed. It was however noticed that there was a no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in those who strongly agreed and those who only agreed with the statement that; Authoritarian leadership styles, democratic leadership styles, and Laissez-faire leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies.

Further the researcher tested the hypothesis to establish whether there is significant relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies. There hypothesis was as stated below.

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies

H_1 : There is significant relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution. The results were presented in table 4.12.

Table 4.12 Relationship between leadership style and conflict resolution strategies.

		leadership styles	conflict resolution Conflict strategies
Leadership styles	Pearson Correlation	1	0.76
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.06
	N	96	96
Conflict resolution	Pearson Correlation	0.76	1

strategies

Sig. (2-tailed)	0.06	
N	96	96

The correlation coefficient for the relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies is +0.76. This correlation coefficient is very high implying that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies.

We therefore reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies. This agrees with Onsarigo (2007) who argued that mentioned, leadership styles are various patterns of behavior exhibited by leaders during the process of directing and influencing other workers in an organization towards achieving the preset goals.

In a classic study of leadership, as cited in Manz and Sims (2002), Lewin et al. (1939) had proposed to find out whether different group behaviors resulted from different styles of leader behavior. They began the task by defining behaviors that appeared to characterize three known styles namely: Authoritarian leadership styles; Democratic leadership styles and Laissez-Faire leadership styles (Manz and Sims, 2002).

According to Okumbe (2001) although, laissez-faire leadership style is in essence internally inconsistent, it has nevertheless been used to characterize the behavior of persons in leadership

positions who often take a passive stance towards social conflict resolutions in of group members in an organization (Okumbe, 2001).

A recent conception of leadership categorizes the styles as: Nomothetic, Ideographic and Personal or Transactional leadership styles (Manz and Sims, 2002). This categorization of leadership styles can best be understood in reference to Getzels and Guba's (1957) social system leadership model as quoted in (Manz and Sims, 2002). Getzels and Guba (1957) model includes: an organizational dimension, which concerns: Nomothetic or legislative leader's actions; and ideographic or official decision-making leader's actions, and individual dimension which concerns the leader as an individual person and the personality aspects in an organization (Onsarigo, 2007).

4.8: Qualitative data analysis

The researcher finally analyzed the qualitative data which included the respondent's responses to the open ended questions and interview schedules. It was revealed that the leadership functions of the school principals in conflict resolution includes motivating others leadershipfunctions, Supportive leadershipfunctions, Common goal-leadershipfunctions, and resolving conflict leadership functions. These would go long way in resolving conflicts. The leadership skills applied by most of the principals include technical leadership skills, human leadershipskills, conceptual leadershipskills and design leadershipskills among others. Concerning leadership power, it was revealed that most of the principals applied charismatic leadership power, traditional leadership power, and legal/rationalleadership power.It was also revealed that the leadership styles applied by the principals are; authoritarian leadership styles, democratic leadership styles, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research following research objectives.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central sub-county of Kitui County, Kenya. Data were collected using the questionnaires as the main research instruments. The collected data was coded and analyzed using statistical package for social scientists using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The first objective for this study was to establish the extent to which leadership functions influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District. It was established that (63%) strongly agreed with the given statements about leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies, 28% agreed, 12.5 percent were undecided, 3% Disagree, and 0% Strongly Disagreed with the statements that Motivating others leadership functions, Supportive leadership functions, Supportive leadership functions and Common goal-leadership functions influences leadership strategies. It was also established that there was a significant relationship ($r = 0.65$) between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies in public secondary schools.

The second objective for the study was to establish the extent to which leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District. The findings revealed that majority (67%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given in that; Technical leadership skills, human leadership skills, conceptual leadership skills, and design leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies. At the same time 22% agreed while 11% were undecided. It was however noticed that there was a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in those who strongly agreed with design leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies leading (88%) followed by Conceptual leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies (75%).

The third objective for this study was to establish the extent to which leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central

District. It was established that majority (86%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements that; charismatic leadership power, Traditional leadership power, Legal/rational leadership power, and Position/personal leadership power influences conflict resolution strategies and that there was a high correlation coefficient ($r = 0.85$) implying that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies.

The last objective for this study was to establish how leadership styles do influence conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District.

5.3: Discussion from the Study

It was revealed that majority (78%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements given in Table 4.11 while 22% agreed. It was however noticed that there was a no significant difference

($P < 0.05$) in those who strongly agreed and those who only agreed with the statement that; Authoritarian leadership styles, democratic leadership styles, and Laissez-faire leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies.

5.4 Conclusions from the study

From the findings of this study the research made some conclusions; that there is a strong a significant relationship between leadership functions and conflict resolution strategies in public secondary schools. The more the leadership functions the better the conflict resolution.

Secondly, there is a strong positive relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies and that there is a significant relationship between leadership skills and conflict resolution strategies.

Thirdly, the researcher has concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership power and conflict resolution strategies implying the more the power the better the conflict resolution and vice versa.

Finally the researcher concluded that there was a strong positive relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects.

5.5 Recommendations from the study

From the findings of this study, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations;

- i) There is need for the ministry of education increase the school management training on conflict management functions.
- ii) The principals should bench mark with the schools which are doing well to know how they resolve their conflicts.
- iii) The parents' days should be increased in schools so that parents can discuss on issues pertaining the school so as to reduce conflicts in schools. This would enhance smooth running of the schools leading to good performance.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

There is need to carryout a study to establish why most of the infrastructural projects in secondary schools are not completed in good time.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Transmittal Letter

Isaac MwambuMbiti

P.O Box 35-90200-Kitui

To All Respondents,

Kitui Central District

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: Transmittal Letter

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a Masters Degree in Project Planning and management. As part of the requirements for this award, I am supposed to submit a research project report about the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in Kitui Central District, Kitui County, Kenya.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about the influence of leadership on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary school infrastructural projects in the district. Your

school has been sampled together with others from the district to participate in this study. Therefore, I request you to complete this questionnaire.

Your responses were accorded great confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Your identity was anonymous, therefore I request you not to write down your name anywhere on this questionnaire. I am very grateful for your cooperation.

Thank you for your concern,

Yours faithfully,

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Isaac MwambuMbiti

APPENDIX II: Questionnaire for Principals and other School Staff

Instructions to the Respondent

Use a tick () against one of the given multiple choice. For the questions that require your opinion use the provided space below the question to write down your views.

SECTION I: Personal Data of the Respondents

1. Gender

- a) Male () b) Female ()

2. What is your highest professional qualification?

- a) Dip. ED ()
b) B.ED ()
c) BA/B.SC with (PGDE)()
d) M.ED ()
e) Others specify-----

3. State your teaching experience.

- a) Less than 5 years ()
b) Between 6 - 10 years ()
c) Between 11-15 years ()
d) Over 16 years ()

5. How many years have you been solving conflicts in your school?

Thank you for your cooperation

Isaac MwambuMbiti

APPENDIX III: Interview Guide for BOM/PTA Executive Officials

This study is on Influence of Leadership on Conflict resolution strategies in Secondary Schools Projects in Kitui central sub-county, Kitui County, Kenya.

1. Leadership Functions on Conflict Resolution Strategies in Secondary School Projects

- a. Does the principal motivate the teachers and support them properly in conflict resolution among parties in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Yes/No responses
- b. Give reasons for your answer above
- c. How does principal's application of motivation and support influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for positively or Negatively responses. Give reasons for your answer above

2. Leadership Skills on Conflict Resolution Strategies in Secondary School Projects

- a. Does the principal apply leadership skills like charismatic, traditional, legal and positioning properly in conflict resolution among parties in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Yes/No responses
- b. Give reasons for your answer above
- c. How does principal's application of leadership skills influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Positively or Negatively responses. Give reasons for your answer above

3. Leadership Power on Conflict Resolution Strategies in Secondary School Projects

- a. How does principal's application of authoritative power influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Positively/Negatively responses. Give reasons for your answer above

4. Leadership Styles on Conflict Resolution Strategies in Secondary School Projects

- a. Does the principal apply all democratic leadership in conflict resolution among parties in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Yes/No responses

- b. How does principal's application of authoritative leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Positively/Negatively responses Give reasons for your answer above
- c. How does principal's application of democratic leadership styles influence conflict resolution strategies in secondary school infrastructural projects? Prompt for Positively/Negatively responses. Give reasons for your answer above.