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Research Article

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AS A DETERMINANT OF TEACHERS' JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE WOURI DIVISION, LITTORAL REGION OF CAMEROON

Submission Date: August 20, 2023, Accepted Date: August 25, 2023,

Published Date: August 30, 2023 |

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajir/Volume05Issue08-04>

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ABSTRACT

This study, examined school principals' conflict management strategies as a determinant of teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic Secondary Schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon. It adopted the exploratory sequential mixed method research design/ approach. The targeted population of the study comprised the 744 teachers and 13 school principals in 13 Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division. Eight (08) principals were purposefully sampled and three hundred (300) teachers were randomly sampled from eight (08) Catholic Secondary Schools. An interview guide and questionnaires were the tools adopted for the study administered to school principals and teachers/principals. The overall reliability analysis of the tools was 0.757. Generally, when the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient value is above 0.5 especially in a context where the test items to some extent are directly related to one another as it was the case in the context of this study, the instrument is considered to be valid and reliable for analysis. Findings showed, in aggregate, that most school principals used preferred strategies in managing conflicts that affect teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools such as confrontation (52.1%), awareness raising (47.9%), recollection/moral instructions/mass (41.7%) and dialogue (35.4%). On the part of teachers' the most common strategy that principals use in managing conflicts that affect teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools is the organization of recollections/masses with a proportion of 41.3%, followed by confrontation at 40.1%, awareness raising 38.0% and dialogue 32.9%. Statistically, findings revealed that there is a significant effect of school principals' conflict management strategies on teachers' job effectiveness (calculated r-value=0.339**, P-value =0.000, < 0.05). Based on

the findings, it was recommended among other things that conflict management should be introduced in the citizenship syllables for secondary and higher learning institutions to educate learners about the adverse effect of conflicts and how conflicts can be positively managed.

KEYWORDS

Catholic schools, Principals, Teachers, Conflict Management, Strategies, Job Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

A Catholic school is primarily the place where learning is valued, excellent teaching encouraged and where high expectations are rewarded. Teachers in the Catholic Schools are more than employees. It is expected that they perform conscientiously and competently as they exercise their teaching duties, both formally and informally. They are under the auspices of the principal in accordance with normal practice in Catholic schools. Specifically, educators have a responsibility “to prepare their students for professional life, and to encourage the friendly interchange among students of diverse cultures and backgrounds that will lead to mutual understanding” (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2007). The fact that the standard and quality of education of a given nation depends on the standard of its teachers, teachers are regarded as major determinants of the societal values, intellectual and moral development. This implies that, at every level of education, teachers must strive towards effectiveness since they are the building blocks of any society. They are further regarded as parents ‘in loco parentis’.

Arop, Owan and Ekpang (2020) describes teachers’ job effectiveness as the degree to which teachers carry out their primary duties of teaching as well as their attitude towards the teaching profession and other activities. It relates to teaching effectiveness, the appropriate use of pedagogy, acquisition of professional knowledge, evaluation techniques and effective interaction with

students (Alves et al., 2021). Teachers’ job effectiveness in light of government expenditure on education, international ratifications and the importance of education for overall growth has been a major cause for concern to all stakeholders of education. Eric (2019) submits that teachers’ job effectiveness is the ability for teachers to organise their job and professionalism in a manner that enables them to perform more work and adequately produce expected results in terms of classroom teaching, maintenance of classroom discipline and supervision of students’ academic activities. Effective teachers are expected to communicate well in the classroom and encourage students’ contributions to the learning process. They enforce classroom discipline by daily monitoring and taking of roll-call, are punctual and give adequate corrective measures to students who may exhibit anti-social/learning behaviour. In carrying out their job, they may be conflict and conflict management remains a factor that influences teachers’ job effectiveness.

Conflicts are intrinsic to humans and an everyday present event in the school system. It can come as a result of misinformation, less regards for values, interest, relationship and structural organisations. Management of conflicts is therefore extremely important for the efficient and effective functioning of schools and for personal, cultural and social development of humans. The educational system is

seemingly a conflict brewing industry because of the complexity of its composition. Conflict is a disagreement or opposition between two or more parties. According to Ughamadu in Olubor et al. (2017), conflict is a disagreement over an issue that sometimes may be positive or negative. Conflict has its advantages and disadvantages in organisations including educational institutions, for instance, Ajai (2017) opined that conflict is neither good nor bad because it helps to raise and address problems, energizes work to be on the most appropriate issues, motivates people to participate in school activities and also helps people learn how to recognise and benefit from their differences. Therefore, conflict can be destructive or constructive in schools.

Historically, the roots of conflicts go as far back as the origin of the human race. For instance, the book of Genesis chapter four (4) narrates one of the first documented conflicts that existed in the history of mankind. This is the conflict between two brothers from the same womb. Cain, whose sacrifice was rejected by God became envious of his brother, Abel and killed him. From that day onward, conflict has been a natural and unavoidable phenomenon in society giving rise to grave consequences. Subsequently, the school system, as a miniature of the society, has been saturated with series of conflicts with consequent adverse effects on the advancement of knowledge. It has been observed that Cameroon schools are faced with many crises for decades, such as conflict between staff and school administrators, students versus staff, staff versus staff, students versus students, and students versus administrators. Conflicts have given rise to distrust and hostility among principals and teachers, thus contributing in hampering smooth, effective and efficient administration in the schools. With such conflicts, teachers cannot contribute meaningfully to the teaching-learning process which is

central to the provision and actualization of quality education and goals of education. Usually, conflicts result into activities such as disruption of programs, boycott of classes, loss of lives and properties and closing down of institutions. These activities have culminated into truncated academic programs leading to elongated schools' calendars. Much has been written about the management of conflict.

Conflict management is primarily concerned with controlling conflict in human relations. In the 1940s, Mary Follett was the first person to suggest various styles of behaviour by which interpersonal conflict can be handled. In order to manage conflict effectively, one strategy may be more suitable than the other depending upon the situation. Follett (1940) discovered three main ways to handle conflict: domination, compromise and integration. She also found others such as avoidance and suppression. Blake and Mouton (1964) later modified Follett model with their dual concern model that conflict is managed in different ways (namely, withdrawing, smoothing, forcing, problem solving, compromising) based on high/low concern for production and high/low concern for people. These strategies were based on two dimensions in relation to the attitudes of the manager; concern for production and for people. They drew up these dimensions on nine-point scales to form the grid. The horizontal axis represents concern for production while the vertical axis represents concern for people.

Theoretically, the implication of theory of conflict management by Max Weber (1906) to the study is very obvious because in the secondary school system, there is a hierarchy in which authority flows. Members of the secondary school system, just like every other organization can engage in conflicting situations either because of their ethnic differences, perception, or in their struggle for power and aspirations. Most often,

teachers conflict amongst themselves, students and their leadership when they are not satisfied with their behaviour. As earlier established, their sudden engagement in conflict with others will lead to low morale, hampered harmony and poor work motivation.

Over the years, scholars throughout the world have linked principals' conflict management to teachers' job effectiveness (Edem, 2016; Arop, Owan and Ekpang, 2018; Alves, Lopes and Precioso, 2021). Observation shows that there are conflicts in the schools today and Catholic schools, in the Wouri Division, are not an exception. In Cameroon, the educational policy (Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998) stipulates that: principals have delegated powers to organise, manage and control effective teaching and learning in their schools. However, many principals have found themselves occupying challenging positions and assuming a number of managerial roles. Not only are they expected to lead curricular changes but they are also required to be decisive change managers. As managers, they directly influence the workers' attitude, interest, and change their behaviour towards commitment to work and objectives. As leaders, principals need to guide their followers as they minimize conflict, fear and resistance to change.

Statement of the Problem

Catholic school teachers are more than employees; they are poised with the responsibility of enhancing teaching and learning as well as performing conscientiously and competently their duties, both teaching and non-teaching. They are supposed to carry out their duties and responsibilities effectively in order to achieve those educationally stated goals. The effectiveness of all teachers determines how well the student will perform academically and be productive to

his society. Unfortunately, many teachers of today even in Catholic schools are found wanting in carrying out their primary responsibilities in the school. Many of them often display unfavourable behaviours such as discrimination, gossip, jealousy, absenteeism, laziness, poor mastery of subjects, poor lesson preparation and presentation, poor note writing, late coming, and indecent dressing. These bad behaviours of teachers may have contributed to the poor academic performance of students in both their internal and external examinations as well as the overall poor quality of students produced by secondary schools who in turn, transit to higher institutions. Valuable interviews into a few teachers have revealed that many are unable to perform effectively as a result of the low salary structure, poor condition of work and others indicators. In order to tackle some of these problems, the Catholic Education secretariat has set out improvement in early payment of staff salaries. In spite of this, the issue of job dissatisfaction and low productivity still persist. Regardless of this, there remains incessant complains and comments from parents and stakeholders that the standard of education is falling in Catholic secondary schools especially in the Wouri Division of the Littoral Region. Due to the outlined problems, one may begin to wonder what really the reason for teachers' ineffectiveness in Catholic secondary schools. Could it be that the teachers have not been upgrading their classroom management skills in line with modern day school requirements or the principals' are not using appropriate strategies to manage emanating conflict in school? It is on account of this, that the study is directed at ascertaining the influence of principals' conflict management strategies affect teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon.

Purpose of the Study

This study has as major objective to evaluate the strategies used by principals in managing conflicts in schools and how they affect teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon. Specifically, the purpose of the study sought to:

- i) Determine the relationship between the dialogue strategy used by the principals and teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri division, Littoral Region of Cameroon.
- ii) Assess the relationship between confrontation strategy used by the principals and teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri division, Littoral Region of Cameroon.
- iii) iii.) Investigate the relationship between recollections/Mass strategy used by the principals and teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri division, Littoral Region of Cameroon.
- iv) iv. Evaluate the relationship between awareness raising strategy used by the principals and teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri division, Littoral Region of Cameroon.

Based on the above objectives, one general research hypotheses was postulated to guide the study.

Ho: There is no significant effect of Principals Conflict Management Strategies on Teachers' Job Effectiveness

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Principals' Conflict Management Strategies and Teachers' Job Effectiveness

The strategies for managing conflict have remained topical issues in every organisation. Conflict management strategies used by principals refer,) to those techniques or approaches that can be used to prevent, control or manage conflicts. Adeyemi and Ademilua (2018) state that conflict management strategies stand for internal mechanisms that enable authorities to get to the root of problems to resolve conflict in a manner that is acceptable to the conflicting parties. If conflict is well managed, it brings about harmonious working relationship. If not, it leads to disunity among teachers and other staff. Principals' conflict management strategies are techniques that facilitate and enable principals to manage conflicts by involving teachers affected by the conflict to change their view, gain from the conflict and be effective in their job performance. Conflict management strategies such as the dialogue strategy, confrontation strategy, recollections/mass strategy and awareness raising strategy are very important to any school because it is through these strategies that negative effects resulting from conflicts can be minimised or controlled.

Many researchers have carried out studies related to this study. For instance, Edet, Benson and Williams (2020) investigated the relationship between principals' conflict resolution strategies and teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools. Results of the findings revealed that causes of identification and integration strategies had significant relationship with teachers' job effectiveness in terms of classroom teaching, maintenance of classroom discipline and supervision of students' academic activities. Thote and Gowri (2020) investigated school principal conflict management strategies and its impact on job effectiveness on senior secondary school teachers. The result of the study shows that senior secondary school teachers' job effectiveness level is very high. The

application of conflict strategies by school principal has positive impact on senior secondary school teachers. Okoye and Okeke-Onkonkwo (2020) focused on influence of head-teachers conflict management style on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Awka education zone of Anambra State, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that respondents disagreed that head teachers use integrating conflict management style while they agreed in using obliging conflict management style for their job satisfaction. The study revealed that head teachers' years of teaching experience does not affect the uses of integrating and obliging conflict management style in their job satisfaction. It was concluded that integrating conflict management style are rarely used by the head teacher.

Khan, Atta and Gul (2020) determined the conflict management styles on the administrative experience of principals in higher secondary schools. It was concluded that most of the principals compromised the conflict management style of overcoming conflict in schools. Similarly collaborating conflict management style was also used for removal of conflict and smooth running of schools. Manafa (2019) investigated the extent of the effectiveness of conflict management strategies used by secondary school principals' in Anambra State. The result of data analysis revealed that strategies like forcing, avoidance and silence are used by secondary school principals' in managing conflict and that they are ineffective. Arop, Owan and Ekpang (2018) investigated administrators' conflict management strategies utilization and job effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. The findings also revealed among others that; the utilization of the three conflict management strategies of arbitration, dialogue, and effective communication, had a joint significant influence on secondary school

teachers' job effectiveness. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that; secondary school principals should not rely wholly on one conflict management strategy, but, should learn how to use various conflict management strategies and apply them based on the nature of conflict. All these are relevant to this study, but none of them examined principals' conflict management strategies affect teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon. Hence, this is the gap this study has filled.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The exploratory sequential mixed method was used for the study because the researcher intends to analyze one form of data collected (qualitatively) and then rely on its findings to guide the collection of the other data (quantitatively). The exploratory sequential mixed methods design/approach is characterized by an initial qualitative phase of data collection and analysis, followed by a phase of quantitative data collection and analysis, with a final phase of integration or linking of data from the separate strands of data. This design is suitable for our study because it would help for a better understanding of the phenomenon or key themes. The general population under consideration in this study comprised of principals and teachers of catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon. Eight schools were selected by convenience sampling from 13 schools or 61.53% of the total number of schools. They were: 1) Collège Libermann, 2) Collège De La Salle, 3) Sacred Heart College, 4) Collège Saint Michel, 5) Collège Notre Dame des Nations, 6) Collège Chevreul, 7) Collège Saint Charles Borromée, and 8) Collège Saint Esprit. The sample for this study consisted of eight (8) principals purposefully sampled and 300 teachers simple randomly sampled from Collège Libermann, Collège De

La Salle, Sacred Heart College, Collège Saint Michel, Collège Notre Dame Des Nations, Collège Chevreuil, Collège Saint Charles Borromée and Collège Saint Esprit. The purposive and simple random sampling technique was adopted for the study. An interview guide for principals and questionnaires were used for data collection. Data from the close ended questions was analysed using SPSS 23.0, with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistical tools while interviews were analysed thematically. The hypothesis of the study was tested using a non-parametric test (Spearman's Rho test) presented at 95% level of confidence interval with alpha set at 0.05 levels accepting 5% margin of error.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study will be presented and supported by literature and the works of other researchers. Qualitative data will be presented first, followed by Quantitative data. Principals and teachers were asked to rate the conflict management strategies used by principals in their school. Principals' findings were presented first and corroborated with those of teachers. Table 1 presents qualitative responses of principals on their strategies in managing conflict.

Table 1: Qualitative Display of Principals' Conflict Management Strategies

Themes	Quotations
Dialogue	<p>"When dealing with conflict between teachers, I always ask each party how I can help."</p> <p>"My job is to listen and not to discredit the individual or add fuel to the flame."</p> <p>"In my opinion, the best way to solve the conflict is to listen, seek to understand and engage constructive dialogue"</p> <p>"In my school, I encourage Staffs' mutual insurance association for fraternal love and mutual assistance."</p> <p>"My teachers and I, we live like brothers and sisters and we dialogue together both in moments of joy and sorrow."</p>
Recollections and community Masses	<p>"One of the strategies used in managing conflict in my school is through monthly Recollections and daily Masses that bring positive school climate and harmony, reconciliation and peace."</p> <p>"As Catholics, in my College, recollections are moments to share our feelings as colleagues belonging to one family"</p> <p>"To prevent conflict in my school, I encourage my staff members to attend daily Masses that promote reconciliation"</p> <p>"To bring harmony among staff members, it is good to have effective communication in school."</p> <p>"Where there are conflicting situations, effective communication is the key in managing them."</p> <p>"In our school whereby we have two sub-systems, I always try to maintain good communication."</p>
Raising Awareness	<p>"Raising awareness usually makes new or old teachers aware of a new dispositions of the hierarchy"</p>

	<p>“I usually make sure to disseminate information about school goals and objectives to my staff members.”</p> <p>“In my College, I frequently hold meetings and convene conferences for my teachers”</p>
Confrontation that leads to requests for explanations	<p>“In the case of gossip, I used confrontation strategy in order to discover the truth and to manage its effects effectively.” “When there is indiscipline, I gradually talk with parties and request for explanations.</p> <p>“I usually appreciate cooperative efforts in managing conflicts.”</p>

(Principals, n=8)

As presented on the table above, an analysis of principals' interviews revealed four (4) major conflict management strategies used by principals in conflicts management in Catholic secondary schools. The most highlighted were dialogue with the staff concern and recollections and community Masses. These are followed by raising awareness on the effect of conflicts, and making sure there is frequent communication between and among staff members. The least highlighted conflict management strategies used by principals was confrontation that leads to requests for explanations. It was found that when conflict comes up, the principal listens and dialogues with the staff members concerned. In this light, if principals do not listen to teachers' grievances, they might escalate and hamper schools' goals. Listening helps build positive relationships among teachers and have a positive effect on academic success as well as social and emotional learning. This is in line with Oshionebo and Ashang (2017), who examined the administrative strategies for the resolution of principal-teacher conflicts among secondary school teachers in Lagos, Nigeria. The study favoured the use of dialogue for principal-teacher conflict resolution among other administrative strategies like dominance, compromise, smoothing, and synergy, culture of civility, mediation, negotiation, and communication. Given that in most of our secondary schools, conflict occurs frequently, it, therefore, implies that principals are expected to

communicate well, should have the ability to successfully plan, organise, co-ordinate, control, make decisions and initiate actions to aid the effective management of schools necessary for a healthy school climate.

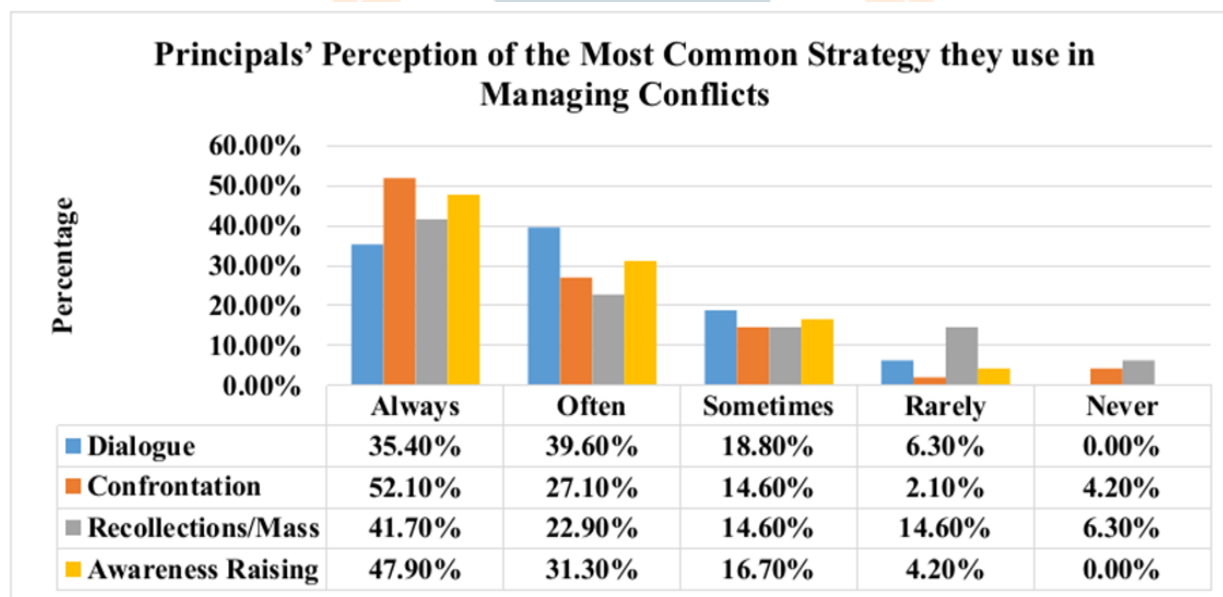
Similarly, findings further revealed all the principals said confrontation, and awareness are strategies that they always used in managing conflicts in schools. This goes with the literature Morili et al. (2021) who revealed that confrontation; arbitration strategy, dialogue strategy, and effective communication strategy were among the significant principals' conflict management strategies adopted for business studies teachers' job effectiveness in public secondary schools. It was also revealed that about 84% of the variance in teachers' job effectiveness was accounted for by the linear combination of (confrontation, dialogue strategy, and effective communication strategy). Owan (2018) revealed that arbitration, dialogue, and effective communication strategies, had a significant impact on secondary school teachers' job effectiveness. The findings also revealed, among others, that four conflict management strategies, that is, arbitration, dialogue, effective communication and smoothing) had a joint significant influence on secondary school teachers' job effectiveness. In this vein, Mbua (2003) says administration and management are mutually inclusive and can rightly be considered as resource management per se. That the

principal who is the chief executive of the school is expected to judiciously manage the human, material and financial resources placed at his/her disposal to avoid conflict among his or her staff members. The principal needs specialized skills, to efficiently and effectively manage resources and personnel.

Findings shows that, confrontation that leads to requests for explanations “In the case of gossip, I used confrontation strategy in order to discover the truth and to manage its effects effectively.” “When there is indiscipline, I gradually talk with parties and request for explanations. In a study by Griffin (2002) on teachers’ perception of the effectiveness of principals’ CMS,

confrontation was mentioned as the best strategy to use in conflict resolution by principals. Some people have given credence to confrontational conflict resolution as the most effective stratagem for conflict management to boost effectiveness. When handled appropriately, the confrontational approach can help people to carefully examine the consequences of their behavior with remorse rather than being arrogant and defensive (Humara, Ashraf & Ziam, 2013). This may be the best strategy because the definition of conflict specifically means confrontation between two or more parties seeking incompatible or competitive means or ends.

Figure 1: Principals’ conflict management strategies



In summary, all the principals said dialogue, confrontation, recollection/mass and awareness are strategies that they always used in managing conflicts in schools. They said the common strategy they always use in managing conflicts that affect teachers’ job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools is

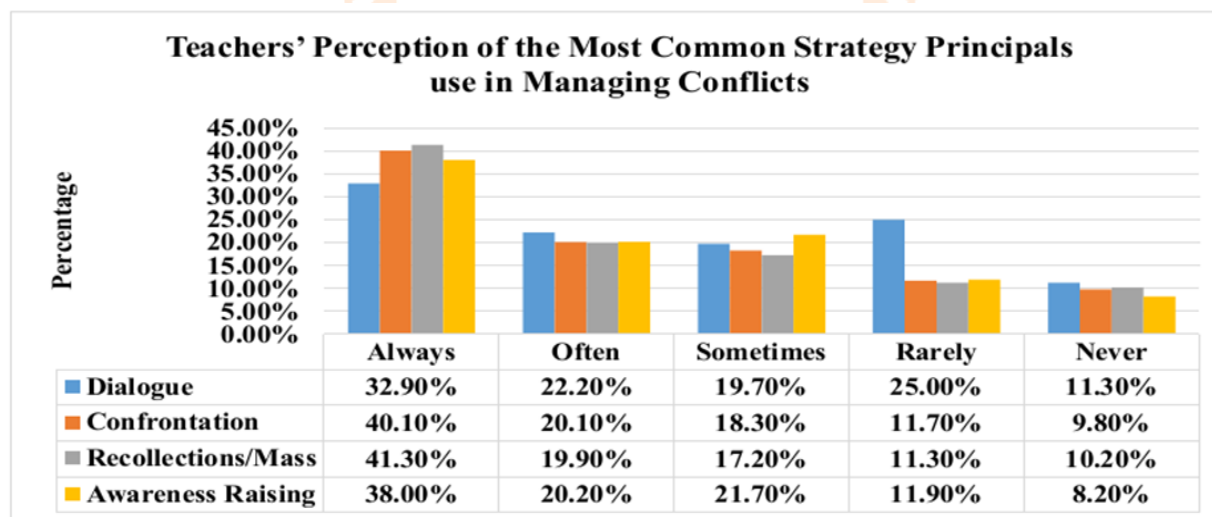
confrontation with a proportion (52.1%), followed by awareness with proportion of (47.9%), recollection/mass (41.7%), and dialogue (35.4%). In addition, the study found that when conflict occurs in cat recollections and community Masses, raising awareness on the effect of conflicts, and making sure there is frequent communication between and among

staff members. As a process of managing a dispute or conflict in the school the principal offers monthly recollections and daily Masses to bring and harmony, positive school climate, reconciliation and peace. This means that when staff members have a dispute, the principal does not only talk but involves God in addressing their needs and interests without taking sides so that they are satisfied with the outcome. Scholars in the field of conflict have proposed many conflict management strategies that can be used in handling conflicts in an organisation. From the above, it can be considered as a process of finding a long-lasting solution to a conflict or problem, by using the situation to address each party's interests to the extent where both sides are satisfied with the outcome. Using recollections and community Masses means principals stand for internal mechanisms that enable various authorities to get to the root of

problems in order to resolve conflict in a manner that is acceptable to the conflicting parties (Adeyemi & Ademilua, 2018).

It has been observed that the school system in Cameroon has experienced conflicts of diverse kinds for a long time. It is important to identify the types of conflict; to investigate the causes of conflict in the school system and to determine new strategies, which could be used to manage these conflicts in schools. An investigation of this kind can pave that way for improved understanding and management of conflict by school administrators and among the various actors (stakeholders) in education (Tigma, 2019). A scientific study of conflict management strategies in the school system can provide a data which can be used to make constructive recommendation towards the management of conflicts.

Figure 2: Teachers' Perception of Principals' Conflict Management Strategies



In aggregate, all the teachers said dialogue, confrontation, recollection/mass and awareness are strategies that principals always used in managing conflicts in schools but the most common strategy that

principals use in managing conflicts that affect teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools is recollection/mass with proportion of (41.3%), followed by confrontation (40.1%), awareness (38.0%) and dialogue (32.9%). Tuji (2014) indicated that

principals should be accommodating, and collaborative in matters of conflict in their schools. Principal should mediate solutions that satisfy parties involved in conflict by communicating with his/her staff members to enhance harmony. Christian, Lucy and Jonathan (2016) states that, no matter how experienced principals are, they receive complaints from time to time. These can range from informal, verbal comments up to formal, written complaints from minor to major concerns.

In matters of confrontation, it was observed that principals in Catholic secondary schools lead their teachers to see their mistakes when managing conflicts. In this regard, the school principal does not promote unfair confrontation but allows each party to express their feelings and their way of seeing a disagreement when it happens. Principals who are managers of the school should manage conflict by involving teachers affected by the conflict to change their view, gain from the conflict and be effective in their job performance in terms of their classroom communication, maintenance of classroom discipline and supervision of students' academic activities.

Conflict management strategies are very important to any school because it is through these strategies that negative effects resulting from conflicts can be minimized or controlled. The findings agree with the findings of Covey (2002) who says teachers' preserve conflict emanates when one person decides that things are not moving in the way they feel or think they should and therefore seeks change which may not be agreeable by the other parties and the root causes of conflict may lie within the human nature and behaviour regardless of their environment or background making conflict inevitable. There is great need for Principals to improve their administration roles in order to minimize conflict associated with managerial and leadership roles which may pay so much on the job effectiveness of teachers. As some managers do not have the prerequisite training and competence to manage conflict in schools and as such their administrative style always brings them into conflict with other members of the staff.

Verification of Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant effect of Principals Conflict Management Strategies on Teachers' Job Effectiveness

Table 2: Effects of Principals' Conflict Management Strategies on Teachers' Job Effectiveness

	Statistical Parameters	Principals conflict management strategies in Catholic secondary schools	Teachers' Job Effectiveness
Spearman's rho	R-value	1.000	.339**
	P-value	.	.000
	N	300	300

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, findings revealed that there was a significant effect of principals' conflict management strategies on teachers' job effectiveness (P-value = 0.000, < 0.05). However, with the positive sign of the correlation coefficient value (R= 0.339**) implied that

to improve teachers job effectiveness, principals' conflict management strategies should be well implemented when conflict arises. In a study by Griffin (2002) on teachers' perception of the effectiveness of principals' conflict management strategies, confrontation was mentioned as the best strategy to

use in conflict resolution by principals. Some people have given credence to confrontational conflict resolution as the most effective stratagem for conflict management to boost effectiveness. When handled appropriately, the confrontational approach can help people to carefully examine the consequences of their behavior with remorse rather than being arrogant and defensive (Humara, Ashraf & Ziam, 2013). This may be the best strategy because the definition of conflict specifically means confrontation between two or more parties seeking incompatible or competitive means or ends.

CONCLUSION

Having examined conflict management strategies as a determinant of teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon, the following conclusions were drawn. The conclusions are based on the findings that confrontation strategy, dialogue strategy, recollection/Mass strategy and awareness raising strategy were among the significant principals' conflict management strategies adopted for teachers' job effectiveness in Catholic secondary schools in the Wouri Division, Littoral Region of Cameroon. The findings therefore revealed that there was a significant effect of principals' conflict management strategies on teachers' job effectiveness indicating that to improve teachers' job effectiveness; principals' conflict management strategies should be well implemented. As such, both school principals and teachers have a similar perceptions of the effectiveness of the strategies used by principals in managing conflicts. From their declarations, when principals use the right strategy in managing conflict, it leads to high academic results, forging a positive school climate and harmony, fraternal relations, commitment, consolidation of a

close-knit family, discipline, rigour and team spirit, thus reinforcing teachers' job effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it was recommended that:

- i. Government and the Catholic Education Secretariat should ensure that principals are regularly and constantly trained and retrained through conferences, seminars and workshops on effective conflict management strategies. This will improve the rapport between principals and their staff and build good working relations between them.
- ii. The Catholic Education Secretary should encourage principals and teachers to collaborate more and to create a more congenial and motivating work environment for improved, effective and work-efficient effectiveness in schools. This will enable them manage their issues amicably through proper dialogue.
- iii. Teachers in conflict should always be brought to interact face to face and explain their feelings to ensure that their differences, disparities, and positions are well understood. They should be adequately trained on conflict issues in order to instill in them the right behavioural orientation toward conflict handling.
- iv. Conflict management should be introduced in secondary and higher schools to educate students about the adverse effect of conflicts and how conflicts can be managed between students and teachers.

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