

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES BY SCHOOL
MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

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ABSTRACT

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the conflict management styles that are used by School Management Teams in the Dzondo Circuit of the Limpopo Province.

Conflict is bound to occur whenever two or more people interact. In a school situation, when conflict occurs, it needs the intervention of a skilled school manager to resolve it, otherwise it may escalate into a crisis.

Different strategies can be used to resolve it. School managers need to undergo training to understand conflict and gain knowledge and skills of conflict management and resolution.

The empirical findings revealed that secondary school managers and heads of departments did not receive training in conflict management during their pre-service training. As a result, school management teams find it difficult to decide on how to handle a situation bedeviled with conflict. Therefore, training in conflict management is necessary for the School Management Team otherwise schools may find themselves experiencing crisis unnecessarily.

In this study questionnaires were asked to gather information from both the school manager, heads of departments, members of School Management Team and school governing body members. The purpose of the questionnaire was to indicate the cause, of conflict and how those conflicts were resolved.

The study recommends training of school managers and heads of departments in conflict management and resolution as a way of preventing crisis in schools. Training could equip school managers and heads of departments with techniques, skills and knowledge on how to handle conflict as constructively and assertively as possible. This would enhance a situation where problems are resolved in the best way as possible to ensure that the relationship between the conflicting parties is not damaged but strengthened.