Head Teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Gulu District

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Dissertation Submitted to the Institute of Research and Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment of the Requirement for the Award of Master of Education in Education Management of Gulu University

December 2023

Declaration

I, Francis Akera Otema, declare that this study titled "Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools" in Gulu District is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has never been submitted for any award in a University or other Institutions of higher learning.

Signature ..... Date 15/1/2024

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Approval

This dissertation by Francis Akera Otema titled "Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools" in Gulu District has been developed under my supervision and I certify that it is ready for submission.

Signature ..... Date 16/01/24

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family most especially my mother, wife, children, sisters and brothers for their support both moral and otherwise. They have been more than valuable towards completing this piece of work.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Ofoyuru Denis Thaddeus for his Academic and professional guidance, commitment and willingness to facilitate me to ensure I complete this dissertation. May God bless you abundantly.

I would also like to sincerely thank my lecturers at Gulu University in the Department of Education Management. These people have sufficiently guided me during my studies. I would also want to acknowledge the contribution of my classmates, especially my discussion groups for their various contributions during the study.

I would also like to thank my family and friends who supported me and offered deep insight into this study.

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between head teachers'conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District. The study specifically examined the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles operationalized as accommodation, collaboration, compromising, competition and avoidance and teachers' performance operationalized as scheming, lesson planning, lesson delivery and record keeping. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data was collected from 87 respondents using questionnaires in five schools. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The head teachers most commonly used collaborating style (79.5%), compromising (79.1%), competing (70.5%), accommodating (68.0%) and lastly avoidance (51.5%) style during conflict management. The level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District was however, found to be high (79.3%). The study further found that collaboration($r=0.503$, $p<0.05$), accommodation($r=0.638$, $p<0.05$) and compromising($r=0.501$, $p<0.05$) conflict management style were significantly related to teachers' performance. Competing ($r=-0.035$, $p>0.05$) and avoidance($r=0.379$, $p>0.05$) conflict management styles were not significantly related to teachers' performance. The study concluded that collaboration, accommodation and compromising conflict management styles enhance teachers' performance. The study also concluded that competition and avoidance conflict management styles could be detrimental to teachers' performance. Head teachers should desist from using such conflict management styles because they are likely to affect teachers' performance which at the end may affect the image and service delivery of the institution. The study also recommended that head teachers should believe in getting along with others, adjust their priorities to accommodate other people's needs and believe in keeping peace rather than getting what they want.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The importance of teachers' performance to educational growth and development cannot be underestimated. This perhaps accounts for why it has become an integral component of educational reform programmes of nations globally. However, among other factors, ineffective conflict management styles tend to be implicated for undesirable levels of teacher performance (Mohammed, 2016). Whereas the extent to which various conflict management styles employed by Head teachers in some contexts is known, there is no such data on Head teachers of public secondary schools in Gulu District. Given that the performance of teachers, learners, and other stakeholders in any school is directly linked to the managerial behavior of the school head (Mbon, 2017), the researcher set out to investigate conflict management styles of the Head teachers of public secondary schools in Gulu District so as to determine any possible linkages to teacher performance. This chapter presents the background, statement of the problem, purpose, specific objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope, assumptions, limitation and delimitations and the conceptual framework of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

This study section is divided in to four sub sections namely; historical perspective, theoretical perspective, conceptual perspective and contextual perspective.

1.1.1 *Historical perspective*

Historically, school education in Uganda was introduced by missionaries in 1877 and was modeled on the British system of education because Uganda was a British protectorate from 1894 until 1962 when it attained her independence. During that time, teachers were held in high esteem and their welfare included housing, medical care, bread and tea during break time and the school environment was largely conducive for teachers to perform their duties as educators. In this pre-independent period, teachers benefited a lot in terms of respect from the public and they had a reasonable salary and most teachers liked their profession. Thus, high level of teacher performance in schools (Ssekamwa & Lugumba, 1973). However, the political turmoil and economic mismanagement of the 1970s and early 1980s affected the education sector infrastructure, in that man power, infrastructure, scholastic materials were not available, and resources were diverted. Teachers were poorly trained or untrained at all and had neither career prospects nor incentives. When relative stability returned to Uganda in the late1980s,

revamping of the education sector became a priority. With a conducive policy enrolment and political will from the government re-form focused on a number of issues among which was teacher performance.

However, given these recent reforms and improvements by the Government and some Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to improve the standard of teaching profession as well as boost teachers' performance, one expects that every public secondary school teacher would exhibit superior performance in discharging their duties. Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case in Gulu District, where many secondary school teachers are seen displaying unprofessional and unethical attitudes towards work, and seemingly underperforming.

1.1.2 *Theoretical perspective*

This study was informed by the Group Conflict Process Theory developed by Robbins (2003). The theory addresses three dimensions of headtaechers' conflict management such as negotiations, resolution and stimulation. Robbins further identifies cooperativeness and assertiveness as the two dimensions in conflict handling intentions. From these two dimensions, he further generated and identified five conflict-management styles as (1) Competing, (2) Collaborating, (3) Accommodating, (4) Avoiding and (5) Compromising. These dimensions were therefore, used as conflict management styles in this study. The conflict management styles of head teachers explain how head teachers deal with subordinates to motivate their higher performance. The theory emphasizes the importance of the relationship between head teacher and the subordinates, focusing on the mutual benefits derived from that form of arrangement.

The theory rests on the assumption, advanced by Deutsch (1980), that individuals' perceptions about the ways their goals are related to those of their counterparts govern their approach and actual interactions in conflict situations. They communicate cooperative or competitive intentions to the other party accordingly. According to Deutsch's (1980) theory of cooperation and competition, team members can emphasize their cooperative interests; recognizing that the success of one promotes the success of the others, and they tend to view conflict as a mutual problem that needs common consideration and solution.

Unfortunately, still plenty of today's managers and employees view conflict as negative and something to abstain from at all costs or immediately resolved (Jehn, 1997; Darling &

Fogliasso, 1999). Beneficial conflict management means that the major players benefit from dealing with the incompatible activities in that they develop a quality solution and strengthen their relationship more than they incur costs (Chen & Tjosvold, 2002). Therefore, schools have increasingly moved from efforts to dispose off conflict to effectively managing conflict, accepting that conflict is simply an expected byproduct of organizational processes (Hignite et al., 2002, 316). This study will be reefed to this theory because it clearly identifies important conflict management styles which are accommodation, competition, collaboration, compromising and avoidance.

1.1.3 *Conceptual perspective*

According to Denisi and Griffin (2005), conflict is a process resulting in the perceptions of two parties that are working in opposition to each other in ways that result in feelings of discomfort and/or animosity. Conflict is a process not a singular event. It evolves over time and draws upon previous events. Parties involved in conflict may be individuals, groups and/or organization. However, behavioral scientists have studied and concluded that not all conflict is destructive and that a certain degree of conflict is essential (Cowling et al., 1988).

The concept of conflict management styles refers to the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations (Sandbakken, 2006). Conflict management produces change and includes establishing direction through visioning, aligning people with the vision, strategies, motivating and inspiring the people (Packard, 2009). Conflict management styles are patterned responses or clusters of behavior that people use in conflict through diverse communication tactics (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001). Copley (2008) defined conflict management style as behavioral orientation of how to approach and handle conflict, with individuals choosing a pattern of principles to guide them through the conflict process.

Conflict management styles in this aspect will be conceptualized as the practice of being able to identify and handle member's views sensibly, fairly, and efficiently. Since conflicts are a natural part of the workplace, it is important that people should understand conflicts and know how to resolve them. This is important in today's schools more than ever, because everyone in a school is striving to show how valuable they are to the school they work for and at times, this can lead to disputes with other members of the team. This study will be grounded on accommodation, compromising, competing, collaboration and avoidance as the conflict management styles deployed by head teachers in Gulu district.

Teachers' performance refers to the extent to which teachers carry out their instructional and pedagogical duties of teaching and behaviour modification as a means of making learners useful to themselves, and for the development of the society to which they belong (Namusoke, 2018). Teachers' performance is the pivot around which teaching and co-curricular activities of the school revolve. It offers learners the opportunity to get adapted to the school environment for improved academic performance (Owan, 2012). It refers to teachers using productive teaching techniques, enabling student achievement, organizing and structuring class management, exhibiting positive interpersonal relations and demonstrating employee responsibility (Taylor & Tyler, 2012). The parameters of teachers' performance considered in this study will include; timely scheming, timely lesson planning, keeping records of students' progress, management of records and routine assessment. The researcher believes that these are some of the core functions of teachers as educators. The level of teacher performance is expressed as low, moderate and high.Teachers' performance was conceptualized as scheming, lesson planning, lesson delivery and keeping records of learners' progress.

1.1.4 *Contextual perspective*

According to Cheng, Tam and Tsui (2002), reforms and initiatives in the last two decades aim to improve teacher performance. Teachers' performance is an important element in any school because it increases teacher's commitment towards their school. To the contrary, teachers who are not satisfied with their work environment have low commitment and considered as a loss to the school. Lai-Yeung (2014) related teachers' performance to their availability and ability to provide guidance and counseling to the students so as to form the students holistically and help them in problems concerning their academic and social life. In Nigeria there is lack of distributed support for teachers and the Head teachers are bitter and teachers are not adequately motivated and encouraged (Adegbesan, 2013). In East African schools, diverse levels of teacher performance have been reported. For instance teacher performance in some primary schools in Tanzania was reported to be poor and this has been related to poor Head teacher's conflict management styles United Republic of Tanzania (URT, 2012).

In Uganda there have been complaints of low teachers' performance in many public secondary schools. Indeed, even the traditional schools that were performing well in academics at national level are no longer doing well. Teachers' morale remained poor thus, many teachers

often absent themselves from classes or come late to school; leave the school unattended to; and exhibit symptoms of poor performance (Muwanguzi, 2009), lack of teamwork between teachers and school administrators creating an environment of scepticism (Wetungu, 2012). This was attributed to failure of Head teachers in their administrative functions such as supervision, monitoring and conflict resolution. Gulu District, was not exceptional as there was growing concern for teacher performance in the secondary schools (Orace, 2016). The reasons for this were not farfetched since teachers were seen to have failed to do their daily duties of scheming, lesson planning, class attendance, assessing students' progress and managing time. It's upon this background that this study attempted to find out the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in Gulu District.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Teachers' performance is one of the most significant activities in schools. Performing teachers deliver the subject matter effectively, cater for student differences, plan classroom instructional strategies, know individual students, and assess student understanding and learning outcomes. Despite several and substantial initiatives by the Government of Uganda and its development partners to enhance the quality of secondary education (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013; Oonyu, 2012; Nsubuga, 2008), performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Uganda remained poor as it is characterized by poor time management, and inadequate lesson preparation and syllabus coverage and inadequate teaching methods (Onen & Kimoga, 2015). While a significant amount of research on education in Uganda implicate factors such as motivation (Nairuba, 2011), teachers' welfare (Kigenyi, 2017), head teacher's management skills (Ojok, 2014) and working environment (Ochola, 2016) for teachers' level of performance in secondary schools, and whereas conflict tends to occur in educational organizations including schools (Omunu, 2014), our understanding of the nature of relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools seems unclear. This study therefore seeks to establish the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District,

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study examined the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in Public Secondary Schools in Gulu District with a view to improve the performance of teachers.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The study sought to address the following objectives:

1. To determine conflict management styles commonly used by head teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District.
2. To determine the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District.
3. To establish the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. What conflict management styles are commonly used by Head teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District?
2. What is the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District?
3. What is the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

H_0: There is no relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may help secondary schools managers to appreciate the influence of conflict management styles on teachers' performance. The findings, recommendations and conclusions may be useful to education policy makers by identifying gaps in the existing teachers' performance management system. This study may also prompt the different stake holders in education to organize and train different heads of institutions on how to manage conflict within the school. Another significance is that, it may show case teachers' reaction in the face of conflict within the institution. The study may also be significant in that, the findings may be useful to education researchers, educational planners and other scholars of educational administration as it will hopefully increase their awareness of the values of conflict management. This study may also be a bench mark for responsible government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and Sports to introduce policies that enhance teacher performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District.

1.7 Scope of the Study

In this section, the study explains the content, geographical and time scope as indicated below:

The geographical scope of the study was Gulu District, a rural district with its headquarters located in northern part of Uganda in Awach Town council about 360 kilometers from Kampala City. Gulu District has 05 public secondary schools.

The study was to examine the relationship between Headteachers' conflict management styles which was operationalized as; collaboration, accommodation, compromising, competing and avoidance and teachers' performance operationalized in terms of teachers' ability in using productive teaching methods like scheming, lesson preparation and lesson delivery.

The study covered the period 2019 to 2022. This was sufficient time to evaluate the conflict management styles of head teachers in public secondary schools and teachers' performance. This period was selected because in most public secondary schools in Gulu District there seemed to be marked decline in performance (UNEB 2016 Report, 2017). This

thus became the basis for exploring whether head teachers' conflict management styles could be implicated for teachers' performance.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual frame work of this study focuses on the relationship between the Head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance.

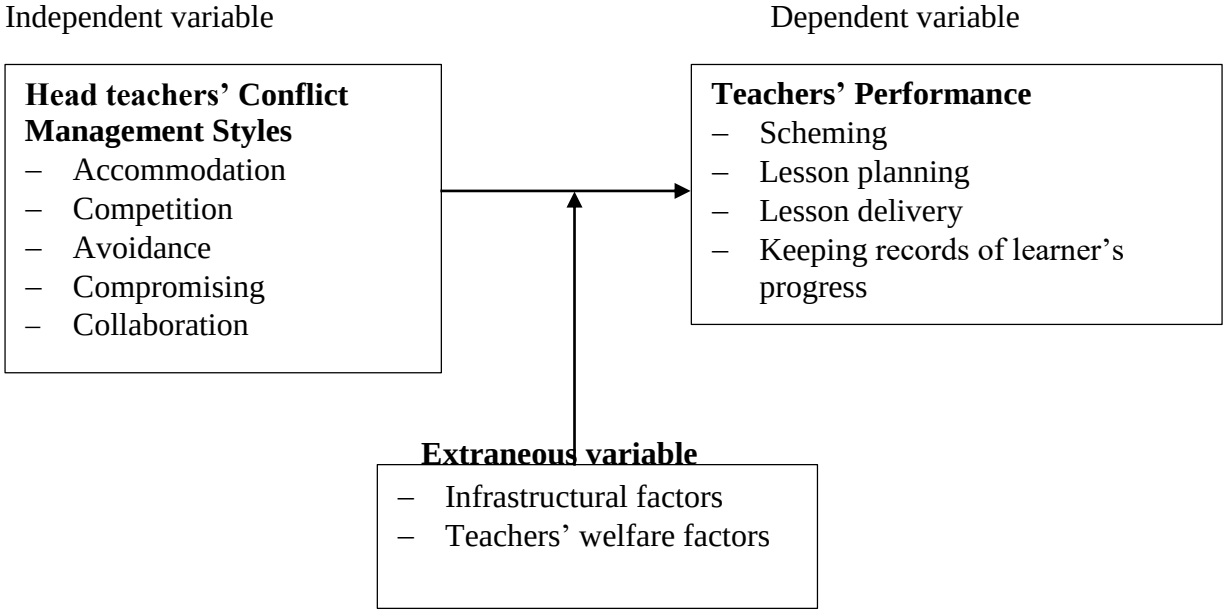


Figure 1: Conceptual frame work for Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance

Source: adopted and modified by the researcher from Hoy and Miskel (1992)

In an attempt to formulate a conceptual framework for analyzing and explaining the head teachers' conflict management styles and level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District, the attributes considered were head teacher's conflict management styles and teachers' performance. Head teachers' conflict management style was the independent variable and the main components are competition, collaboration, compromising, accommodating and avoiding. Teachers' performance was considered the dependent variable and included phenomenon like; scheming, lesson planning, lesson delivery, keeping records of students' progress and time management. However, level of teachers' performance can also be influenced by other factors other than Head teachers' conflict management styles like infrastructural factors teacher's welfare. The framework was adopted because it explains clearly how to meet the expected target. The framework therefore helps to

trace the contribution of each conflict management style to the performance indicators of teachers.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents literature relevant to the study. The literature reviewed limited to Head teachers conflict management styles, teachers' performance and the relationship between Head teachers' conflict management style and teachers' performance and summary of literature reviewed. The study puts into consideration other researcher's views and other opinions related to conflict management styles and their relationship with teachers' performance. The review was done in accordance with the study objectives.

2.1 Conflict Management Styles used by Head teachers in Public Secondary Schools

Managers may have different management styles. A review of the relevant literature reveals that there are a few options available for school managers who wish to tackle a school conflict and these can be grouped into five different styles as described below

An accommodation conflict management style involves low concern for self and high concern for others. This style is associated with an attempt to reduce differences and emphasize commonalities for the purpose of satisfying the needs of the other party. This style has been found to be used by an individual believing that he/she may be wrong and that the issue in question is much more important than the other person's engagement. This style is associated with an endeavour to play down the differences and emphasizing harmony to satisfy the concern of the other party. Such an individual is like a conflict absorber. This style, according to Kreitner and Kinicki (2004), is appropriate and efficient to use when you are likely to get something in return ultimately. Research by Akuffo (2015) showed that obliging conflict management style is positively related to teacher performance. Wachira (2011) in his study on influence of Head teachers' conflict management styles on teacher's job satisfaction observed that Head teachers used accommodating style to influence teachers in preparation of professional documents. This is important as headteachers portrayed cooperativeness. It also meant that teachers' concerns were being taken into consideration. However, Kanjogu (2018) in his study of Head teachers' preferred parent-school conflict management styles found out that the least preferred style by both genders was accommodating. Thus, when using accommodating, head teachers allow teachers to have their way at the expense of their preference. The advantage one gets is, it encourages cooperation but the disadvantage is that it does not deal with the causal problems.

Competition is a conflict management style which involves forcing behavior to win the situation. Hellriegel (1995) stated that competing style is applied when managers want to achieve their goals without caring of others and to satisfy one's own concerns and gaining power. The competing style has been described as a situation when one party in conflict has a high concern for self and a low concern for others when dealing with a conflict situation ((Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004, and Robbins & Judge, 2009). In this style, the manager uses forceful tactics to win its drives and is not ready to move from his/her initial stand. Dominating/competition conflict management style focuses only on winning goals and defeating opponents. Farooqi, et al., (2016) stated that competing style is applied when managers want to achieve their goals without caring of others and to satisfy one's own concern and gaining power. Rahim (2012) asserts that this mode can be suitable when a manager deals with daily and repetitive decisions or when the subordinates is competitive. Olielo (2017) in his study found out that only a few head teachers use competing conflict management style to solve conflict at school. It implies that head teachers do not prefer use of competing conflict management style. However, Wachira (2011) found that majority of the head teachers indicated that teachers were not satisfied with competing when assigning remedial teaching whereas a few were satisfied with competing style. This showed that head teachers did not use domination as a conflict management style as it was important in influencing teachers' performance. It is also evident that males head teachers were more inclined towards competing modes in comparison with their female counterparts, while females were more disposed towards avoiding and collaborating modes in comparison with male respondents, (Kanjogu, 2018). In a nutshell, dominating style may be effective but not suitable in democratic society.

Avoidance was another conflict management style; this style is used when the administrator wants to refrain from the conflict. In such style, the administrator does not want to help anyone to achieve his goals or/and does not want to impose his own behavior. This style is used when the matter has no importance for the administrators. According to Farooqi, Akhtar and Islam (2013), the administrators who use avoiding style neither satisfies themselves nor to the other party. Farooqi, et al., (2016) found that administrators who use avoiding conflict management style neither satisfies themselves nor to the other party. Research by Olcuma and Titrek, (2015) found that avoidant decision-making style affect teachers' performance negatively and increases staff turnover intentions. The use of avoidance was lowly rated by teachers and head teachers as one of the conflict management style (Olielo, 2017). Kanjogu (2018) deduced that both male and female head teachers had a high preference for avoiding,

he further said that females are more inclined to avoiding than male head teachers. Wachira (2011) found that avoidance was not very often used to manage conflicts, it was the least used strategy. The administrator uses this style when he/she feels that someone else is in good position to solve the problem.

Compromising conflict management style is a style which is assertive and cooperative at the same time (Goldfien & Robbennolt, 2007). Here the manager wants to fulfill his own needs and wants concession from the opponent group. It is all about to maintain harmonious relationship as compared to achieve personal goals. In this style, one party respects the wishes of other party or both parties are in giving in or giving up situation. This style is suitable when both parties have important goals to achieve. Rahim (2012) said that compromising style may be effectively used to handle the strategic and complex issues. Olielo (2017) found out that rarely do head teachers use compromising conflict management style but a few head teachers agreed to have used it. Wachira (2011) found out that a few head teachers used compromising style. It is also evident that males were more inclined towards compromising mode in comparison with their female counterparts (Kanjogu, 2018). Thus, it is give and take where parties are concerned for both self and others (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004).

The integrating conflict management style is another style which is a blend of assertiveness and co-operation. This approach involves the use of open lines of communication, information sharing and the consideration of each party's goals (Bradford et al., 2004). Wachira (2011) found out that most head teachers used integration style to influence teachers to take extra duties. This denotes that teachers were satisfied with the head teacher's use of integration style while assigning extra duties. Anyhow, applying integrating style is difficult because human behavior as well as interest differs (Huntington, 1993) and demands energy and hard work to reconcile the situation.

2.2 Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Teachers play vital role in the implementation of the education plans at school level. This role sometimes challenges the level of teachers' performance where educational resources are scarce. Teachers face challenges of the optimal use of the available resources in the production of maximum output. In school organization, teachers' performances are evaluated against the set standards. Various scholars (e.g., Awan & Asghar, 2014; Bizuneh, 2016; Kakooza, 2017) have shown that teachers' role performance depends on Head teachers'

Conflict Management Styles, which is critical to the survival of quality education. Hornby (2000) further described teachers' role performance as inside duties and outside duties. Inside duties include preparation for classes, guiding the learning of students, checking students' progress, and setting good example for students, whereas outside duties include involving students in co-curricular activities such as HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, religious and environmental clubs, fieldwork, games and sports. Lai-Yeung (2014) related teachers' performance to their availability and ability to provide guidance and counseling to the students so as to form the students holistically and help them in problems concerning their academic and social life. The teacher roles examined herein include; Scheming, Lesson planning, Lesson delivery, keeping records of students' progress and Time management. Kakooza (2017) attributed the poor learner performance to teachers' absenteeism estimated at 17%. He further observed that considering teachers who were present in school but not teaching, the rate of absenteeism was even higher. All these served as warning signs of a management gap in Public Secondary Schools in Uganda that needed to be bridged if teachers' role performance was to improve. Nampa (2007) researched on teachers' performance in Catholic founded schools in Luwero District and found out that teachers need to be guided for good performance. Guidance ensured that everything moves in the right direction and what goes wrong is put right.

Oketcho and Sempala (2019) found out that there was generally moderate level of teachers' performance among the secondary school teachers in Tororo District. They also found out that there was a low but statistically significant positive relationship between Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance. Whereas a correlation does not imply causation, we conclude that when Head teachers' Conflict Management Style is appropriate, Teachers' Performance increases reciprocally. The moderate teachers' role performance implies that their competence, preparation for duty, teaching methods used, assessment regularity and techniques, time management, syllabus coverage, learner supervision and disciplining of errant learners, participation in co-curricular activities, and interpersonal relationships were lacking in some respects. Probably they had the requisite knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to teach, but these were not exercised to their maximum ability.

2.3 Relationship between Head teachers' Conflict Management Style and the level of Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The conflict management styles which a school head teacher uses can have a broad relationship on the teachers' attitude towards work, and the kind of relationships they have with the head teachers. The amount of supervision and direction given to the teachers will increase their satisfaction with supervision. Conversely, many studies recorded that supervision to the extent that the school head teachers exercise dominating and avoiding is found to have a negative impact on the teachers' satisfaction (Su- Mei Lin, 2003; Nurmi and Darling, 2007).

According to organizational conflict researchers Burke (2001), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) generally assert that Head teacher who exhibits collaboration, compromising and accommodation styles are more prone to foster a cordial dyadic relationship among Head teacher and teachers. These styles are related to an effective conflict management. Several studies on the collaboration, compromising and accommodation styles of handling conflict show consistent results in satisfaction with supervision (Tutzauer and Rolofif, 2005). Likewise, other studies recorded that superior uses of dominating and avoiding is linked to negative effect on teachers' performance.

Alimba and Chinyere (2013) observed that there is a positive correlation between Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance in Public Secondary Schools. The competing and avoiding styles are negatively correlated with teachers' performance. Tumwesigye (2008) equally found that collaborating, compromising and accommodating styles are positively correlated with teachers' performance while avoiding is insignificant to teacher's performance. Hence conflict management styles are potent determinants of teachers' performance in public secondary schools.

Wachira (2011) agrees with Enoch's postulations which states that different conflicts can be managed using accommodation conflict management styles but schools tend to achieve much especially when the differences between group and individuals are solved while using collaboration approaches because they lead to mutual consideration and understanding.

Yuan (2010) carried out analysis on conflict management styles and their effect on teachers' performance. The findings showed that usage of different mechanism to manage conflict is based on situations they appear. However the use of appropriate conflict management styles lead to co-operation among teachers, improve understanding and reduced

stress which gear good performance. The use of destructive conflict management styles lead to increased differences which result to poor performance.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, target population, sample size, sampling techniques and procedures of data collection, validity, reliability and data analysis.

3.1 Research Approach

The quantitative approach was used as there was need to establish level of each variable as well as relationships between the independent variable and the dependent variable numerically. Quantitative studies relied on numerical quantifiable data to describe situations or establish relationships between two or more variables. They also allowed statistical inferences which was required in this study.

3.2 Research Design

The study was conducted using descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design was used because descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings, but often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems (Orodho, 2003). Specifically, the study adopted across-sectional survey design. This design was particularly selected because it took place at a single point in time, allowing analysis of number of variables at once and helped in looking at the prevalence of the research problem in the study population (Bordens & Abbott, 2011). The study examined the relationship between Head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District. Conflict Management Styles was the independent variable while teachers' performance was the dependent variable.

3.3 Target Population

The study was carried out in all public secondary schools in Gulu District to establish the relationship between head teachers' conflict management and teachers' performance. The respondents were teachers. Teachers were selected because they are the people whose performance was of concern, thus to be measured in relation to the challenges in the school. Based on the data from Gulu District Education Office by October 2022, there were 94 teachers in five public secondary schools in the District.

Table 1: Showing the target population

Sub-county	School	Number of teachers
Paicho	Paicho secondary school	18
Awach	Awach secondary school	14
Patiko	Patiko seed secondary school	21
Palaro	Palaro seed secondary school	21
Lukome	Lukome secondary school	20
	Total	94

Source: Gulu District Education Office Data Base (2022)

3.4 Sample Size

There are five public secondary schools in Gulu District. The study targeted all the 94 teachers in all the public secondary schools in the District. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample of 30% is adequate for a small population of less than 100,000 individuals. Where the population is very small like in this case, all individuals were included using census method.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Procedure

Sampling is the selecting of a given number of respondents from a defined population. A sample is part of entire population selected for study to obtain information on the who+le set of human respondents from the population (Kothari, 2006).

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Data was collected using teachers questionnaires. The questionnaires had the advantage of being cheap and easier to administer and resulted in data suitable for analysis as designed by the researcher.

3.6.1 Questionnaire survey

Survey in research is a critical component of measurement in applied social research. It is a broad area that encompasses many procedures that involve asking questions to specific respondents. The survey method was used to collect in-depth data about situations, events and circumstances within the area of study. The survey method offered the following advantages; it allowed collection of data from large number of respondents, who were kept anonymous.

3.6.2 Questionnaires

The questionnaire for teachers was used to collect information on teachers' perception of head teachers' conflict management styles and their level of performance and commitment to work. The questionnaires had the advantage of being cheap and easier to administer and resulted in data suitable for analysis as designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was used to reach a large number of people simultaneously as per Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003). Questionnaires gave respondents freedom to express their views or opinion as suggested by Gay (1996), and where particularly used to collect data on conflict management styles and teachers' performance. (See appendix 1)

The questionnaire provided detailed information since questionnaires offer anonymity and respondents feel free to answer the questions. The Likert scale which is one of the most widely and successfully used techniques to measure attitudes toward a topic by asking respondents to indicate whether they strongly agree =5, agree =4, are undecided =3, disagree =2 or strongly disagree =1 with each of series of statements about the topic was used in the questionnaire. The questionnaires contained three sections. Section one collected the personal details. Section two collected data on nature of conflicts that existed and section three collected data on performance of teachers.

3.7 Quality control methods

3.7.1 Validity of data collection instrument

Validity of the instruments refers to the accuracy of instruments used in the research to collect meaningful and right data (Amin, 2005). Content validity literally means the amount of substance in the study. Copies of the questionnaires consisting of the objectives of the study was given to three senior researchers to find out whether the instruments will measure what it is supposed to measure and also check on the phrasing, understandability and wording of the statements. Each of senior researchers rated the items on a two point rating scale of Relevant (R) and Not Relevant (NR). Content Validity Index (CVI) was used to establish whether the questionnaire measures what it was intended to measure. The Content Validity Index (CVI) was computed by considering the number of items declared relevant divided by the total number of items presented (Appendix 3).

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{number\ of\ items\ rated\ relevant}{total\ nuber\ of\ items}$$

$$CVI = \frac{32}{40}$$

$$CVI = 0.8$$

As recommended by Amin (2005), in order for the instruments to be valid, the CVI should be at least 0.7.

3.7.2 Reliability of data collection instrument

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency in which a measuring instrument yields when the entity being measured has not changed (Amin, 2005). Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) consider reliability as the extent to which a research tool gives consistent results after repeated trials. Reliability precisely refers to how consistent a research procedure or instrument is, (Twinnomujuni, 2011). To ensure reliability, the researcher constructed a questionnaire with appropriate wordings that is simple, direct and familiar to the respondents. At the same time, the schools and respondents were selected without bias. The researcher carried out a pilot test of the instruments to determine the reliability. This pilot testing was carried out in two public secondary schools in Gulu City since they are not part of the sample. A Cronbach Alpha reliability Coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. This was quite above the minimum reliability index recommended in survey studies of 0.7+ (Amin, 2005)

3.8 Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher got a letter from Gulu University introducing him to the secondary schools in Gulu District (See appendix 2). Before collecting data from the respondents, they were assured of the confidentiality and guaranteed that data collected would only be used for academic purposes. Appointments were made with the selected respondents to allow them fix their own convenient time of participating in the study. Upon obtaining the requisite permission, the researcher proceeded with data collection by giving out questionnaires to the teachers in these schools. The data collected was sorted out, arranged in the right order ready for analysis.

3.9 Data Analysis

The collected data was organised before the analysis. This was to make sure that the researcher gets all the relevant data expected for making the analysis. The data collected was analysed quantitatively.

The researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics that was generated using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS.16.0). In this case therefore, descriptive statistics included both measures of dispersion and inferential statics. On measures of dispersion, the study employed percentages, for inferential statistics, the study used both correlations and regressions. Correlation analysis used was Pearson correlations to determine the relationship between two variables. Whilst regression was used to determine the extent to which the two variables are related.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Before engaging in actual fieldwork, the researcher obtained letter of introduction from Gulu University (See appendix 3). The study ensured that participants are given a voluntary participation ethic. This means that respondents participated in the study without being forced. To ensure privacy, respondents was promised confidentiality about the information shared with the researcher.

Furthermore on privacy, the respondent's identity was kept anonymous and they were not put on pressure as to what they should or not say (Mugenda &Mugenda, 2003). They were also assured that the information they shared was for academic purposes only (Amin, 2005).

Lastly, the researcher also ensured that the questionnaire design has a neutral language, English that all respondents understood so that they can provide relevant and well informed data as required by researcher.

3.11. Limitation of the study

The study was confined to public secondary schools in Gulu District hence the findings may not be representative of all public secondary schools in the country and therefore similar studies may need to be carried out in other public secondary schools.

3.12 Delimitation

The study has the following delimitations:

It delimited itself to public secondary schools in Gulu District

As conflicts exist in schools, the study focused itself on conflict management styles used by head teachers.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Interpretation

4.0 Introduction.

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of findings arising out of the data collected among secondary school teachers in the five government secondary schools in Gulu District. It provides results in relation to the study objectives: (i) to assess the conflict management styles commonly used by head teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District, (ii) to examine the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District, (iii) to assess the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District. The chapter commenced with presenting the bio-data of the respondents who participated in the study.

4.1 Response Rate

The sampled population for the study was 94 but 87 respondents provided relevant data necessary for the study. This sample was considered sufficient respondents because this was a response rate of 0.925 (92.5%). Sivo, Saunders, Chang and Jiang (2006) suggest that, a response rate of 60% is acceptable.

Table 2: The response rate of participants in different public secondary schools in Gulu District.

Sub-county	School	Number of teachers
Paicho	Paicho secondary school	18
Awach	Awach secondary school	12
Patiko	Patiko seed secondary school	19
Palaro	Palaro seed secondary school	20
Lukome	Lukome secondary school	18
	Total	87

Source: Primary field data (2022)

4.2 Bio-data.

This section presents the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents which include the gender, education level attained by respondents, age and number of years of experience as explored below.

Table 3: Bio-data of respondents

Bio-data		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	61	70.1
	Female	26	29.9
Age	20-29 Years	12	13.8
	30-39 Years	41	47.1
	40-49 Years	26	29.9
	50+ Years	8	9.2
Education	Diploma	33	37.9
	Bachelors	44	50.6
	PGD	4	4.6
	Masters	6	6.9
Experience	<1 Year	7	8.0
	1-5 Years	46	52.9
	6-10 Years	15	17.2
	10+ Years	19	21.8

Source: Primary field data, 2022

4.2.1 *Gender.*

Majority of the respondents were male secondary school teachers (70.1%), while minority (29.9%) were female secondary school teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District. This is an indication that both males and females participated in the study (See Table 3), therefore the study was gender inclusive. The disparity in the proportion of male and female participation also reflects the staffing composition of secondary school teachers in Gulu District. This data seems to mirror the disparity between the girl child and the boy child in education in the district and the region at large.

4.2.2 Age.

Majority of the participants were aged 30-39 years (47.1%), followed by those aged 40-49 years (29.9%). The remaining portion was aged 20-29 years and 50+ years representing 13.8% and 9.2% of the respondents respectively (See Table 3). This could imply that the majority of the teaching staff are still young and energetic that would be very productive when subjected to effective management.

4.2.3 Education level.

Bachelor's degree was the most commonly attained level of education among the participants (50.6%), followed by diploma holders (37.9%). The remaining participants had completed Master's degree and Post graduate diploma representing 6.9% and 4.6% of the total participants respectively (See Table 3). This has implication to the teacher policy which puts the minimum qualification for teachers in Uganda to be a Bachelor's Degree. In relation to conflict management, the follower characteristics in terms of education may not be considered homogenous, therefore varied conflict management styles may be useful.

4.2.4 Duration in current school.

From Table 3, majority of the participants in the study had worked in the current school for at least one year with those who worked 1-5 years constituting up to 52.9% followed by those who had worked in the school for 10+ years (21.8%). The remaining participants had worked in their current schools for 6-9 years and less than one (1) year representing 17.2% and 8.1% of the total participants respectively (See Table 3). Meaning that the Ministry of Education and Sports' policy of teachers not taking more than 5 years in a school was not being properly implemented since 47.1% of the teachers had stayed in their present school for more than five years.

4.3 Head teachers' conflict management styles

In an attempt to answer research question one which was stated as "what conflict management styles are commonly used by head teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District?", the researcher collected data using items on head teachers' conflict management styles operationalized by five constructs: collaboration; compromising; competing; avoidance and accommodation. The level of application of each conflict management styles has been shown in the subsequent tables.

The Likert scale was used to indicate whether respondents strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree. These levels were coded from 5 to 1 respectively. The scores were then grouped into three categories: strongly agree and agree as scores for respondents in agreement; not sure remained as not sure and disagree and strongly disagree as scores for disagreement. The results were presented in tables and read in percentages.

4.3.1 Level of head teachers' use of integrating/collaborating conflict management styles

The study revealed that majority of the Head teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District practiced integrating / collaborating conflict management style when dealing with conflicts in their schools as revealed by an average of up to 79.5% level of agreement with the positive statements of the teachers on a five point Likert scale (See Table 4).

Table 4: Head teachers' use of integrating /collaborating conflict management style

Integrating /collaborating conflict management style	**S.A+A (%)**	**S.A (%)**	**A (%)**	**NS (%)**	**D (%)**	**S.D (%)**	**S.D+D (%)**
Investigate issues with others for an acceptable solution	67.8	47.1	20.7	4.6	20.7	6.9	27.6
Work with teachers to find a solution to a problem	85.1	47.1	37.9	4.6	6.9	3.4	10.3
Brings everyone's concern in the open	79.3	43.7	35.6	6.9	11.5	2.3	13.8
Collaborate with other teachers to come up with decisions	75.9	40.2	35.6	8.0	11.5	4.6	16.1
Willing to listen to other's opinions along his/her opinion	82.8	54.0	28.7	5.7	8.0	3.5	11.5
Gathers as much information whenever there is disagreement	86.2	49.4	36.8	3.4	8.0	2.3	10.4
Average	**79.5**	**46.9**	**32.6**	**5.5**	**11.1**	**3.8**	**15.0**

Source; primary field data, 2022

This was mainly because up to 86.2% of the teachers said their head teachers do gather as much information as possible whenever there was a disagreement before coming with a conclusion as well as 82.8% of teachers perceive that their head teachers are very willing to listen to other's opinions along with theirs before coming up with a ruling. The study also revealed that 85.1% of the teachers agree that their head teachers do work together with them to find a solution to a problem and do bring everyone's concerns in the open described by 79.3%. Collaboration of head teachers with other teachers in coming up with decisions was also high in Gulu district public secondary schools supported by 75.9% of the participants as well as investigates issues with others for an acceptable solution as reported by 67.8% of the participants (See Table 4).

From the above data, it's clearly seen that there is high level (79.5%) use of integrating/collaboration conflict management styles by head teachers in Gulu District this was achieved through head teachers gathering much information whenever there is disagreement,

listen to others opinions, collaborate with other teachers in coming with decisions and bring everyone's concerns in the open.

4.3.2 Level of head teachers use of dominating/competing conflict management style

The use of dominating /competing conflict management style was also a commonly practiced style of managing conflict in public secondary schools in Gulu District by the head teachers as supported by up to 70.5% of teachers on average (See Table 5).

Table 5: Head teachers' use of dominating / competition conflict management style

Dominating / competition management conflict style	**S.A+A (%)**	**S.A (%)**	**A (%)**	**NS (%)**	**D (%)**	**S.D (%)**	**S.D+D (%)**
Uses his/her influence to get his/her ideas accepted	78.2	34.5	43.7	3.4	16.1	2.3	18.4
Uses his expertise to make decision in his favor	75.8	35.6	40.2	9.2	11.5	3.4	15.0
Firm and not swayed by others when pursuing his priorities	75.8	35.6	40.2	9.2	11.5	3.4	15.0
Defends his decision firmly	72.4	34.5	37.9	10.3	12.6	4.6	17.3
Strives to attain excellent results by limiting others	56.3	19.5	36.8	16.1	20.7	6.9	27.6
Stands on his principles whenever conflict arise	64.4	31.0	33.3	12.6	16.1	6.9	23.0
Average	**70.5**	**31.8**	**38.7**	**10.1**	**14.8**	**4.6**	**19.4**

Source; primary data, 2022

This was evidenced by the common practice of head teachers of using their influence to get their personal ideas accepted as reported by 78.2% of the teachers; head teachers were also firm and not swayed by others when pursuing their personal priorities as well as use their expertise to make decisions in their favor as reported by up to 75.9% of the teachers who participated in the study; head teachers defend their decisions firmly and usually stand firm on their principle whenever conflict arises as reported by 72.4% and 64.4% of teachers respectively. Some head teachers strived to attain excellent results by limiting others as reported by 56.3% of the teachers (See Table 5).

4.3.3 Level of head teachers' use of accommodation conflict management styles

The use of obliging / accommodating conflict management style was supported by 68% level of agreement of the teachers on the positive statements on average on a five point Likert scales in the positive statements (See Table 6).

Table 6: Head teachers' use of accommodation conflict management style

Obliging / accommodation conflict management style	**S.A+A (%)**	**S.A (%)**	**A (%)**	**NS (%)**	**D (%)**	**S.D (%)**	**S.D+D (%)**
Believes in getting along with others than winning an argument	62.1	25.3	36.8	9.2	16.1	12.6	28.7
Asks others for their opinions and tries to cooperate with others	70.1	32.2	37.9	5.7	16.1	8.0	24.2
Adjusts his/her priorities to accommodate other people's needs	63.2	24.1	39.1	6.9	23.0	6.9	29.9
Gives in as soon as the other party gets emotional about an issue	65.5	29.9	35.6	10.3	12.6	11.5	24.2
Gives in totally rather than try to change another's opinion	72.4	37.9	34.5	4.6	13.8	9.2	23.0
Believes in keeping peace rather than getting what he wants.	74.7	40.2	34.5	2.3	10.3	12.6	23.0
Average	**68.0**	**31.6**	**36.4**	**6.5**	**15.3**	**10.2**	**25.5**

Source: primary field data, 2022

This was because 74.7% of the teachers have head teachers who believe in keeping peace rather than getting what they want and gives in totally rather than trying to change another's opinion as reported by 72.4% of the teachers. Head teachers also asked others for their opinion and tries to cooperate with others as reported by 70.1% of the teachers and gave in as soon as the other party gets emotional about an issue reported by 65.5% of the teachers. The study also revealed that head teachers preferred to adjust their priorities to accommodate other people's needs and believed in getting along with others than winning an argument as reported by 63.5% and 62.1% of the teachers in Gulu district respectively (See Table 6).

The study therefore revealed that 68.0% of head teachers in Gulu district public secondary schools practiced obliging / accommodation conflict management style incases of conflicts in their school (See Table 6).

4.3.4 Level of head teachers' use of avoidance conflict management style

The study also found that some Head teachers in Gulu district management styles supported by 51.4% level of agreement of teachers with the statements like; head teachers does something else when faced with a conflict as reported by up to 74.7% of the teachers and always tried to avoid people who have strong opinions when handling conflicts as reported by 57.5% of the teachers. 37.6% of head teachers say very little and left when they find themselves in an argument, and avoided handling conflicts as reported by 40.8% of the teachers. The head teachers also kept to themselves and avoided hard feelings whenever a conflict arises as reported by 50.2% and 48.3% respectively of the public secondary school teachers in Gulu district who participated in the study (See Table 7).

Table 7: Head teachers' use of avoidance conflict management style

Avoidance conflict management style	**S.A+A (%)**	**S.A (%)**	**A (%)**	**NS (%)**	**D (%)**	**S.D (%)**	**S.D+D (%)**
Tend to back out of the situation and does something else	74.7	42.5	32.2	8.0	9.2	9.3	17.5
Tries to avoid people who have strong opinions	57.5	26.7	29.9	4.6	21.8	16.1	37.9
Says very little and leaves when he finds himself in an argument	37.6	8.0	19.5	9.2	29.5	23.7	53.2
Avoids handling conflict	40.8	12.6	24.1	8.0	32.8	18.4	51.2
Keeps to him/herself	50.2	9.2	31.0	4.6	22.6	22.6	45.2
Avoids hard feelings whenever a conflict arises	48.3	12.6	35.6	1.1	18.4	32.2	50.6
Average	**51.5**	**18.8**	**28.7**	**5.9**	**22.4**	**20.2**	**42.6**

Source: primary data, 2022

From table 7 above, avoidance conflict management style was a moderately practiced conflict management style by head teachers of public secondary schools in Gulu District.

4.3.5 Level of head teachers' use of compromising conflict management styles

The study further revealed that head teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu district practiced a compromising conflict management style as indicated by teacher's level of agreement of 79.1% on average (See Table 8).

Table 8: Head teachers' use of compromising conflict management style

Compromising conflict management style	S.A+A (%)	S.A (%)	A (%)	NS (%)	D (%)	S.D (%)	S.D+D (%)
Prefers to propose a middle ground when a conflict arise	87.4	56.3	31.0	3.4	8.0	1.1	9.2
Finds compromise when a conflict arise	93.1	58.6	34.5	3.4	3.4	0.1	3.4
Makes slight modifications in his goals to meet other people's needs	79.3	44.8	34.5	14.9	3.4	2.4	5.8
Willing to adjust priorities to reach a resolution in case of conflict	78.2	46.0	32.2	12.6	4.6	4.6	9.2
Prefers to compromise when solving problems	69.0	37.9	31.0	6.9	14.9	9.2	24.1
Prefers a middle ground than looking for completely satisfying solution	67.8	39.1	28.7	9.2	14.9	8.0	23.0
Average	**79.1**	**47.1**	**32.0**	**8.4**	**8.2**	**4.3**	**12.5**

Source: primary field data, 2022

This was depicted in the level of agreement of teachers in the following statements; head teachers compromise when a conflict arises 93.1%; head teachers prefer to propose a middle ground when a conflict arises 87.4%; head teachers make slight modifications in his/her goals to meet other people's needs 79.3%; head teachers are willing to adjust priorities to reach a resolution in case of a conflict 78.2%; head teachers prefer to compromise when solving problems 69.0%; and head teachers prefer a middle ground than looking for a completely satisfying solution 67.8% (See Table 8).

The study therefore revealed that head teachers in government secondary schools in Gulu District practiced a compromising conflict management style when faced with conflicts in their schools with an average positive response of 79.1%.

Comparing the Head teachers' conflict management styles, from the proceeding tables it shows that the level of application of the conflict management styles by head teachers varied as shown by their percentages that are in agreement with their application by Head teachers. There was also noticeable evidence that head teachers practiced these conflict management in their schools in Gulu District. This was because all percentages of the conflict management style is above 50%.

From Table 4 it's seen that integrating /collaboration conflict management style (79.5%) was the most commonly used conflict management styles used by head teachers in

Gulu District, followed by compromising conflict management style (79.1%) Table 8, then dominating conflict management style (70.4%) Table 5, then obliging conflict management style (68.0%) Table 6, and the least used conflict management style in Gulu district was avoidance (51.4%), Table 7. This shows that head teachers' are working really hard to ensure that they control conflict in their schools since they are detrimental to healthy school growth.

4.4 Teachers' Performance

To answer research question two which was stated as "what is the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District"? The data for answering this question were collected using items on teachers' performance like preparation of scheme of work, preparation of lesson plan, attendance in class, maintenance of students' record among others. The five Likert scale was used to explain whether respondents (teachers) agree (SA+A), not sure, and disagree (SD+D), to show the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District. The data was analyzed by use of percentages (See Table 9).

Table 9: Level of teachers' performance

Performance	S.A+A (%)	S.A (%)	A (%)	NS (%)	D (%)	S.D (%)	S.D+D (%)
Always prepare schemes of work by the first day of the term	79.5	46.4	33.1	4.6	8.0	7.9	15.9
Always present scheme of work for inspection	80.6	51.8	28.8	5.3	8.4	5.7	14.1
Prepares lesson plans daily	60.9	33.3	27.6	23.0	11.5	4.6	16.1
Moves with lesson plans in class	70.1	48.7	21.4	13.8	6.9	9.2	16.1
Regularly attend to all lessons	70.3	45.3	25.0	6.8	14.9	8.0	22.9
Always responsive to student views and comments during lesson	89.3	50.1	39.2	4.1	3.3	3.3	6.6
Regularly assess students through tests	90.9	49.9	41.0	1.9	4.1	3.1	7.2
Maintains students' record properly	78.8	44.1	34.7	5.4	7.2	8.6	15.8
Maintains record of work covered	91.4	44.1	47.3	3.6	2.6	2.4	5.0
Arrives at school on time	81.6	51.7	29.9	9.6	6.5	2.3	8.8
Average	**79.3**	**46.5**	**32.8**	**7.7**	**7.4**	**5.5**	**12.9**

Source; primary data, 2022

From table 9, majority of respondents (79.3%) agree that public secondary school teachers in Gulu District to a large extend do their work well. Some few however, didn't accept that teachers perform their duties properly as indicated by 12.95% in disagreement whereas 7.71% were not sure. The great percentage average agreement (79.3%) realized, can be interpreted

that the level of teacher's performance in public secondary schools was high. This meant that teachers were committed to regular teaching, frequent evaluation of learner's progress, proper management of time and keeping proper students' record.

From table 9 still, the study found that majority of teachers would arrive to school timely supported by 81.6% of teachers. The study also found that 70.1% of teachers used their lesson plans in class, only 60.9% prepared lesson plans daily, 90.9% of teachers in Gulu District regularly assessed students through tests. The study further found that presentation of scheme of work for inspection as well as attendance to all lessons by teachers stood at 80.6% and 70.3% of teachers in Gulu district respectively. Maintenance of record of work as well as student records by teachers was also revealed to be 91.4% and 78.8% respectively, teachers were also highly responsive to students during lessons (89.3%) and prepared scheme of work (79.5%) always respectively (See Table 9).

Overall, there is high level of teachers' performance as revealed in all the constructs measured that yielded high levels of agreements from participants (See table 7).

4.5 Relationship between Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles and Teachers' Performance

The research question asked was "what is the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu district"? The researcher used Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance. The results was computed as shown in table 10 below.

Table 10: The relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance

Conflict Management styles	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Integrating /collaborating style (1)	1	.421**	.012	.207	.506**	.503**
Obliging/accommodation style (2)	.421**	1	.073	.464**	.426**	.638**
Dominating / competition style (3)	.012	.073	1	.254*	.072	-.035
Avoidance style (4)	.207	.464**	.254*	1	.134	.379**
Compromising style (5)	.506**	.426**	.072	.134	1	.501**
Teachers' Performance (6)	.503**	.638**	-.035	.379**	.501**	1

Source; primary data, 2022

According to table 10, there is generally a moderate positive correlation between the head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District.

Integrating /collaborating conflict management style ($r=0.503$, $p<0.05$), of head teachers was a significant positive predictor of the level of performance of teachers with a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 50.3%, implying that an increase in the perception of teachers on the conflict management style of their head teacher towards an integrating / collaborating style increased their level of performance. Table 8 also revealed that obliging/accommodation conflict management style (($r=0.638$, $p<0.05$) had a positive correlation coefficient of 63.8%, showing that a unit increase in the perception of teachers on the conflict management style of their head teacher towards an Obliging / accommodation style increased their level of performance. Compromising style ($r=0.501$, $p<0.05$), was also a positive predictor of the level of performance of teachers with a coefficient of 50.1%%, this meant that increase in the perception of teachers on the compromising conflict management style of their headteachers also increased their level of performance

However, the study further revealed that the perception of teachers towards dominating / competition ($r=-0.035$, $p>0.05$) conflict management style and avoidance conflict management style($r=0.379$, $p>0.05$), of head teachers were not significant predictors of the level of performance of the teachers since their p-values were greater than 0.05.

From table 10, it can be seen that there is a significant relationship between Head teachers' conflict management style and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in

Gulu District, leading to a rejection of the null hypothesis while withholding the alternative which states that there is a relationship between Head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Recommendation and Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the study findings according to the research questions. The discussion is supported with the other earlier research findings. Conclusion were made according to study objectives and recommendations advanced to policy makers and researchers.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Head teachers' conflict management styles

The first objective of this study was to identify the conflict management styles commonly employed by head teachers in Gulu District. The population selected for the study revealed that head teachers employed compromising, collaborating, competing, avoiding and accommodating conflict management styles. Carsten (2001) point out that one may prefer to be assertive or co-operative. Assertiveness and cooperativeness are the two components that make up your choices of how to respond in conflict because conflict happens when ones concern seem to be unconformable with somebody else concerns. Assertiveness is therefore a behavior when trying to satisfy your own concerns while cooperativeness is a behavior when trying to satisfy other parties concerns.

The most commonly used conflict management style was collaborating style (79.5%) followed by compromising conflict management style (79.1%), then dominating conflict management style (70.4%), the next was accommodating conflict management style (68%) and the least used conflict management style was avoidance (51.4%). These shows that respondents are in agreement that head teachers apply conflict management style in the daily running of their schools.

This study is in support of studies by Anwar, Zainab & Ahizar (2021) who found out that cooperative style of conflict management such as collaboration, accommodation and compromising are much helpful in a place where democratic management style is being practiced and autocratic leaders intended to follow non-cooperative management style such as competing and avoiding styles in order to manage schools. Olielo (2017) in his study of influence of head teachers' conflict management styles on teachers job satisfaction found that

head teachers' practiced all the five conflict management styles with collaboration being the most used, followed by compromising, dominating avoiding then accommodation.

This finding is further supported by study of Ochola (2016) which revealed that collaborating conflict management style is the most commonly used in Abim primary schools and avoidance is the least used. This study also concurs with Covey (2010) findings when he found that collaborating style also known as win-win is a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. The outcomes of the agreements are mutually beneficial and satisfying to both parties. Similarly, Whetten and Cameron (2005) also found that collaborating attempt to address fully the concerns of both parties so that both can feel that they have worn the case.

Compromising emerged the second commonly used style of conflict management (79.1%), studies by authors like Pruitt and Rubin (1986) consider this style to be that which brings about results which reflect intermediate concern for self-paired to intermediate concern for others. Authors like Van de Vlient (1999) in their studies saw it as a distinct style that seeks a middle ground. In this case, when this style is employed, it leaves each party with some satisfaction. This style is moderately assertive and moderately cooperative. These findings are in line with Slabbert (2004) study of conflict management styles in traditional organizations when he used Thomas Killman conflict Mode Instrument styles, which indicated two parameters, that is, assertiveness and cooperation, resulting in five distinct styles: avoiding, competing, collaborating, accommodating and compromising which was also the focus for this study.

Whereas the study findings revealed that collaborating style was the commonly used style in public secondary schools in Gulu District, studies by Adhiambo and Enose (2011) that involved assessment of conflict management strategies in Nyakach District in Kenya secondary schools however, found that strategies like arbitration, reconciliation and effective communication were commonly used. Adhiambo did not examine the conflict management styles like competing, accommodating, compromising, collaborating and avoidance and their relationship with teachers' performance, which this study explored. Hence Deutsch (1949), posited that the outcome of a conflict episode depends on how the conflict is handled, either cooperatively or competitively.

5.1.2 Teachers' Performance

The second objective of this study was to establish the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District. The study found out that there was high level of performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District, evidenced by the percentage agreements of respondents to the key elements of teachers' performance. The high level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District was in all the areas considered, scheming 80.1%, lesson delivery was 76.3%, record keeping 85.1% and time keeping 81.6%. This study is in agreement with Hamdia (2011) who argued that job satisfaction of the staff can be influenced by a number of factors like quality of ones relationship with their colleagues and supervisors. This study also supports Shiamina (2006) that job satisfaction increases productivity and decrease turnover. This study further concurs with Kim (2008) findings that job performance with supervision is one of the most important attitudinal issues in work places that managers face. These means that head teachers and those in charge of departments in schools need to employ supervisory style that bring about high levels of performance to their subordinates in order to perform well.

The current performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Gulu District is in line with the performance of teachers in the pre-colonial time. This could be attributed to by conducive environment created by government and Non-governmental Organizations (NGO). For instance, the Ministry of Education and Sports has been training teachers in cyber school technology solutions knowledge through workshops in the teaching of science subjects (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2010) and secondary school science and mathematics teachers (SESEMAT) project annual workshops (Ssekwe, 2012) and teachers' salaries are gradually being enhanced. These coupled with appropriate conflict management style could be some of the contributing factors of this performance exhibited by the secondary school teachers in Gulu District. Therefore the study concludes that proper conflict management styles are necessary in improving the teachers' performance in any school.

5.1.3 Relationship between Head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance

The third objective of the study was to find out the relationship between head teachers' conflict management style and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District. Based on the data analyzed, the frequencies for the two sets of variables were

correlated using Pearson's correlation, the analysis revealed that three conflict management styles had significant relationship with teachers' performance. Domination and avoidance was significant and negatively related to teachers' performance, while compromising, collaboration and accommodating were positively related with teachers' performance. The results indicated that the conflict management style adopted to resolve conflict could positively or negatively impact on teachers' performance.

This findings are in support of study conducted by Tumwesige (2008), who asserts that collaborating, accommodating and compromising were positively correlated with teachers' performance while avoidance and competing style is insignificant to teachers' performance.

The study findings is also in support of studies by scholars like Wachira (2011), Cole (2010) and Nevzartv (2014) who assert that if the whole process of collaborating, accommodating and compromising styles is adhered too, it can help in achieving satisfaction on both sides but mostly on the side of aggrieved and this is what generates employee performance. According to Walford (2011), accommodation style is too useful when dealing with trivial issues than bigger original conflict.

This study finding is further supported by study of Yuan (2010), who carried an analysis on conflict management styles and teachers' performance. The finding found out that usage of different mechanism to manage conflicts was based on situations as they appeared. However, the use of appropriate conflict management styles lead to cooperation among the teachers improved understanding and reduced stress which geared good performance.

Use of destructive conflict management styles lead to increase of differences thus results to poor performance. This is in line with Robbin (2003) theory that asserts that cooperative conflict management styles yield positive results and assertive conflict management styles lead to destructive results.

Indeed the finding is also in agreement with Huan (2012) who noted that collaboration conflict management style resolves conflict in the best way which is accepted by all concerned parties. Furthermore, Wager (2013) posited that using this style supports open discussion of issues, task proficiency and equal distribution of work among team members and development of creative problem solving and the needs of teachers involved in the conflict are satisfied.

The findings of this study concur with Oetzel and Terry (2015) who observed that dominating and avoidance styles are weak and ineffective in most scenarios. According to Newton and Davis (2012), competition is effective in dealing with interpersonal conflict when it benefits both parties. It is clear that teachers who are dissatisfied with administration's competition conflict management style display lower commitment and are at greater risk of leaving the organization

Okoth (2012) was of the view that school managers who were found using avoidance style to manage conflict ended up in more conflict. This finding is also in consonance with Kehinde, (2011) who was of the view that avoidance management style has the tendency to prompt counter productive work behavior.

The finding however, contradict Puranik and Parasher (2012) who look at the style of accommodation as just a way of increasing responses to conflict that emerge because it allows complainant's needs without minding so much about the leaders' needs.

5.2 Conclusions

The study was intended to determine the commonly used conflict management style used by the head teachers, to establish the level of teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District and to establish the relationship between head teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance. The study employed a descriptive statistic design and the data was collected using questionnaires in a five Likert scale which was analyzed by use of tables, percentage and Pearson's correlation. The following conclusions were drawn;

Performance of teachers in respect to their duties such as scheming, lesson planning, and lesson delivery found to be high. Therefore, the anecdotal information about poor performance by teachers in public secondary schools may not hold in light of the operationalization of teachers' performance in this study. Unless 'teachers' performance' is operationalized beyond non-routine areas, the study concludes that teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District is high. However, in as much as the percentage average agreement on dimensions measuring performance did not at any point reach 100%, it still remains plausible to acknowledge that there could be some semblance of poor performance among teachers. It is also reasonable to conclude that all the conflict management styles considered in this study collaboration, competition, accommodation, compromising and

avoidance, are not only used in conflict management but also seem strong in the context of school management and therefore need to be given the consideration they deserve. This helps to rule out any possible attribution of poor performance by teachers in Gulu District to poor conflict management styles. It may also be tenable to say that the conflict management styles are appropriate when alternated or used concurrently in the right measure, thus ruling out the notion of 'one-size-fits all' when it comes to conflict management styles.

5.3 Recommendations.

The study recommends that:

Since using accommodating, integrating and compromising conflict management style enhances teachers' performance, head teachers should continuously adopt these conflict management styles. Managers should believe in getting along with others than winning an argument, ask others for their opinion, adjust their priorities to accommodate other people's needs and believe in keeping peace rather than getting what they want.

Head teachers should make effort to address the demands and expectations of employees during the conflict management process. This can be achieved through seeking views of affected parties before a decision is made.

Since competing and avoidance conflict management styles are detrimental to teachers' performance, management should desist from using such conflict management styles because it is likely to affect teachers' performance which at the end may affect the image and service delivery of the institution.

The findings will help education policy makers by identifying gaps in the existing teachers' performance management system.

The following are some of the areas for further research:

A comparative study of influence of Head teachers' conflict management styles on teachers' performance in other areas other than Gulu District for comparison purposes should be conducted.

A similar study need to be undertaken in private schools to allow for generalization of the study findings about performance of teachers.

Gulu District being a rural setting, it would be important to conduct a similar study which has urban setting in order to give a balanced view of influence of head teachers' conflict management styles on teachers' performance in public secondary schools.

Further study can be conducted on other factors that affect teachers' performance other than Head teachers' conflict management styles.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teachers' Questionnaire on Head teachers' Conflict Management Style

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is intended to collect data from teachers on Conflict Management Styles of Head teachers and its relationship to Performance of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Gulu district. You have been identified as a respondent and you are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire as illustrated in each section.

Kindly answer the questions as honestly as possible and the information you give will be kept confidential and used for academic purposes only

Section one: Background Data

Please circle the response that is the most appropriate option in respect to the following items;

What is your gender?

Male ☐ b) female ☐

What is your age group?

20-29 years ☐ b) 30-39 years ☐ c) 40-49 years ☐ d) 50 and above ☐

What is your highest level of education?

Diploma ☐

Bachelor degree ☐

Post graduate diploma ☐

Master's degree ☐

Doctorate ☐

For how many years have you been working in this school?

Less than one year ☐

1-5 years ☐

6-10 years ☐

Over 10 year ☐

Section two: Head teachers' Conflict Management Styles

Integrating /collaborating conflict management style; it includes identifying concern of the opponent and finding an alternative which meets each party's concern.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking a scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-not sure, 2-disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

S/No	**Your Head teacher**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1	Investigate an issue with others to find a solution acceptable to us.					
2	Work with teachers to find solution to a problem which satisfy your expectations.					
3	Bring everyone's concern in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best way possible.					
4	Collaborate with other teachers to come up with decision acceptable to all.					
5	Is always willing to listen to other's opinions, but he also gives his opinion.					
6	Gathers as much information as he can whenever there is disagreement in order to keep the lines of communication open.					

Obliging/accommodation conflict management style; it is an appeasing approach of emphasising areas of agreement while point out disagreement.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking a scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-not sure, 2-disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

S/No	Your Head teacher	5	4	3	2	1
1	Believes in getting along with others than winning an argument.					
2	Likes to ask others for their opinions and tries to cooperate with others.					
3	Usually adjust his/her priorities to accommodate other people's needs.					
4	Usually gives in as soon as the other party gets emotional about an issue.					
5	Usually gives in totally rather than change another's opinion.					
6	Believes in keeping peace rather than getting what he wants.					

Dominating / competition conflict management style; implies the use of position power and dominance to resolve the conflict.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking a scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-not sure, 2-disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

S/No	Your Head teacher	5	4	3	2	1
1	Uses his/her influence to get his/her ideas accepted.					
2	Uses his expertise to make decision in his favour.					
3	Is usually firm and not swayed by others when pursuing his priorities.					
4	Defend his decision firmly.					
5	Strives to attain excellent results and he does that by limiting others.					
6	Usually stand on his principles whenever conflict arise.					

Avoidance conflict management style; it involves avoiding, denying and giving up, that is refusal to deal with the conflict by ignoring it as much as possible.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking a scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-not sure, 2-disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

S/No	Your Head teacher	5	4	3	2	1
1	Tend to back out of the situation.					
2	Avoid people who have strong opinions.					
3	Usually say very little, when he finds himself in an argument.					
4	Avoids handling conflict.					
5	Often keep to him/herself.					
6	Usually avoids hard feelings whenever a conflict arises.					

Compromising conflict management style; it involves considering various issues, bargaining, use trade of negotiations and searching for solutions that brings some degree of satisfaction to both parties.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking a scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-not sure, 2-disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

S/No	Your Head teacher	5	4	3	2	1
1	Prefers to propose a middle ground, when a conflict arise.					
2	Find some compromise, when a conflict arise.					
3	Usually makes slight modifications in his goals to meet other people's needs.					
4	When a conflict arises, our head teacher usually is willing to adjust his priorities to reach a resolution.					
5	Prefers to compromise when solving problems and just move on.					
6	Prefers to agree to a middle ground rather than looking for completely satisfying solution.					

Section three: Teachers' Performance

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking a scale of 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-not sure, 2-disagree and 1-strongly disagree.

S/No	As a teacher, I	5	4	3	2	1
1	Always prepare schemes of work by the first day of the term					
2	Always present my scheme of work for inspection by the administrators					
3	Prepare lesson plans daily					
4	Use lesson plan while teaching					
5	Regularly attend to all my lessons					
6	Am always responsive to student views and comments during lesson					
7	Normally carryout regular assessment of students through tests.					
8	Always maintain student's record properly (e.g. registers, academic progress records etc.)					
9	Always update my record of work covered					
10	Always arrive at school on time					

Appendix 2:

Estimating the content validity index for questionnaires on conflict management style and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District

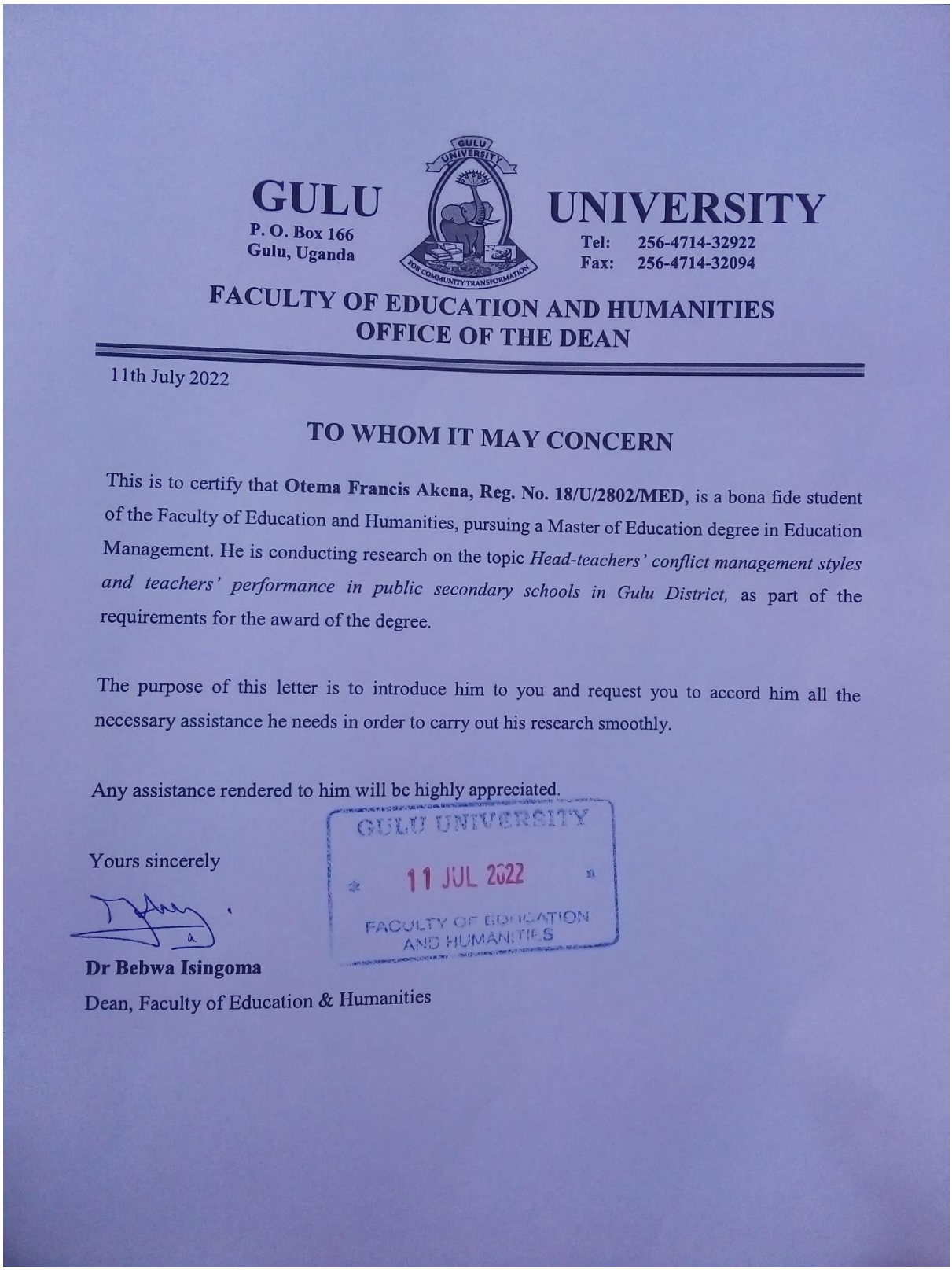
Head teachers' Conflict management styles

Items		**Rating**				
S/No	**Head teachers' conflict management styles**	**Rater 1**	**Rater 2**	**Rater 3**	**CVI individual items**	**validity**
	Integrating conflict management style					
1	I integrate my ideas with those of others to come up with a decision jointly	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
2	I work with others to find a solution to a problem which satisfy our expectations	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
3	During conflict, I bring every one's concern in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
4	I collaborate with others to come up with decision acceptable to us	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
5	I am always willing to listen to other's opinion, but I always want to give them mine.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
6	When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can to keep the lines of communication open	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
	Obliging /accommodation conflict management style					
7	I think it is more important to get a long than to win an argument.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
8	In like to ask others for their opinions and try to find ways to cooperate	R	R	R	1.0	Valid

9	I adjust my priorities to accommodate other people's need.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
10	I give in as soon as the other party gets emotional about an issue	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
11	I give in totally rather than try to change another opinion	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
12	I may not get what I want, but it is a small price to pay for keeping the peace.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
	Dominating / competing conflict management style					
13	I use my influence to get my ideas accepted	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
14	I use my expertise to make decision in my favor	R	NR	R	0.7	Valid
15	When pursuing my priorities, I am usually firm and not swayed by others	NR	R	R	0.7	Valid
16	After I have made a decision, I defend it strongly.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
17	I need to attain excellent results and cannot be limited by others.	NR	R	R	0.7	Valid
18	When conflicts arise, I usually stand on my principles.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
	Avoidance conflict management style					
19	When a conflict occurs, I tend to back out of the situation and do something else.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
20	I avoid people who have strong opinions.	R	NR	R	0.7	Valid
21	When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
22	The best way to handling conflict is to avoid them.	NR	R	R	0.7	Valid
23	If people don't respect my opinions, I keep it to myself.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
24	I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreement with others to myself.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
	Compromising conflict management style					
25	When viewpoints are opposed, I generally propose a middle ground.	R	NR	R	0.7	Valid

26	During a conflict, I try to find some compromise.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
27	I often make slight modifications in my goals to meet other people's needs.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
28	When a conflict arises, I am usually willing to adjust my priorities to reach a resolution.	NR	R	R	0.7	Valid
29	I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
30	I agree to a middle ground rather than looking for completely satisfying solution.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
	Teachers' performance					
31	Your teachers prepare schemes of work by the first day of the term.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
32	I always inspect teachers' scheme of work.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
33	My teachers prepare lesson plan daily.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
34	Teachers always come with lesson plan in class	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
35	Teachers regularly attend to lessons	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
36	My teachers are always responsive to student views and comments during lesson.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
37	Teachers give regular assessment to students through tests.	R	R	NR	0.7	Valid
38	Teachers maintain student's record properly (e.g. registers, academic progress etc.)	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
39	Teachers maintain record of work covered.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid
40	Teachers always arrive at school on time.	R	R	R	1.0	Valid

Appendix 3: Introductory letter



GULU UNIVERSITY

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

11th July 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that **Otema Francis Akena, Reg. No. 18/U/2802/MED**, is a bona fide student of the Faculty of Education and Humanities, pursuing a Master of Education degree in Education Management. He is conducting research on the topic *Head-teachers' conflict management styles and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Gulu District,* as part of the requirements for the award of the degree.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce him to you and request you to accord him all the necessary assistance he needs in order to carry out his research smoothly.

Any assistance rendered to him will be highly appreciated.

GULU UNIVERSITY
11 JUL 2022
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

Yours sincerely

Dr Bebwa Isingoma
Dean, Faculty of Education & Humanities