Dysfunctional Consequences of Conflict on Teachers' Productivity: A Theoretical Insight

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Abstract

Conflicts have become more prevalent in the educational system than any other social organisation on earth. Despite this, conflicts occurring in schools are the least discussed events in social conflict discourses, making this research necessary for a better understanding of the behaviour of violent conflict in the educational system. The point is that when conflict is misperceived and mismanaged, it will exert unimaginable force which will produce adverse effect on students, teaching and non-teaching staff, the system and the society in general. However, conflict outcomes depend on the nature, ferocity of conflict, and approaches adopted for mitigation. Thus, this study described the dysfunctional consequences of conflict on teachers' productivity. To achieve the objectives of the study, discussions were woven around six thematic areas which include: the conceptualization of conflict, the issue of teachers' productivity, the factors influencing teachers' productivity, the dynamics of dysfunctional conflict, exploration of the effects of violent conflict on education and finally, the issues of dysfunctional conflict and teachers' productivity.

Introduction

Teachers' productivity has attracted enormous attention at all levels of education worldwide. This is because it constitutes the fulcrum through which investment in education is transformed into reality. Studies have attested to the significance of

teachers' productivity on the growth and development of education (Emunemu & Isuku 2012; Schleicher 2012; OECD Document 2012). Teachers' productivity is a measure of the efficiency with which the overall process of teaching and learning utilises its labour force (Odunuga & Ajila, 2000) and the most powerful predictors of student success (Kaplan & Owings, 2004). One of the factors that can depress teachers' productivity, even when requisite resources are provided for teachers to effectively operate is conflict. Conflict is an inevitable element in the school setting. When allowed to escalate beyond the acceptable limit, conflict can shrink the productivity of teachers. School conflict, to a large extent, has the potential to produce negative effect on teachers, and consequently result in dysfunctional outcomes on students, the school and the society in general. The quality of education cannot be guaranteed in a conflict-ridden society. This is because conflict in the society has a way of manifesting in the school, especially when poorly mitigated. Therefore, unregulated conflict can affect the school and equally "snowball into perpetual decline in the productivity of school personnel and consequently lower the quality of education in a country" (Alimba & Fabunmi, 2014). This idea reflects that when teachers are dysfunctionally affected by conflict, it will reduce their productivity, thereby affecting the quality of education, and in the long run, will adversely affect the growth and development of a country. Conflict affects teachers in different ways. According to Alimba (2016), it

> reduces the productivity of teachers; discourages effective teaching behaviour in teachers; leads to poor preparation of academic activities by teachers; breeds factions/division among teachers; makes teachers to lose job concentration and dedication; lowers the morale of teachers; results in suspension of teachers; results in stress in teachers; leads to violent fight between or among teachers and can result in health problems in teacher.

However, it is imperative to note that the outcome of a conflict depends on its nature, intensity and approaches adopted to resolve it. These elements play vital roles in the initiation and consequently escalation of conflict in the school. Conflict may not necessary produce negative outcome, it depends on the parties concerned and how the conflict is handled. The implications of conflict on school personnel, the system and the society at large have not been given much scholarly attention overtime. In fact, it is even more difficult to see studies that unilaterally address the adverse effects of conflict on teachers' performance potentials. Based on this, the negative effects of conflict on teachers' productivity were addressed in this study. To achieve the specific objectives of the study, discussions were focused on the under listed thematic areas:

(i)   Conceptual description of conflict
(ii)   Insight on teachers' productivity
(iii)   Determinants of teachers' productivity
(iv)   Dysfunctional Conflict: Its focus and dynamics

    (v)   Effects of violent conflict on Education

    (vi)   Dysfunctional Conflict and teachers' productivity.

Conceptual Description of Conflict

Conflict has been conceptualized in different ways, however, the understanding of the concept from the perspective of a Latin word "confligere" which means "to strike together" conjure the idea that conflict is a negative phenomenon. This idea has influenced the way conflict was understood and interpreted for a long time as a dysfunctional or destructive element in social relations and organisation. Equally, the emergence and experiences of the first and second world wars added impetus to the understanding of conflict as something destructive in nature. Thus, the reasons why some scholars viewed conflict as implying negativity. For instance, Nwolise (2003) considered conflict as a clash, confrontation, battle or struggle. Auwal (2010) stated that conflict is perceived largely as something devastating, abnormal, dysfunctional and therefore detestable. Lindelow and Scott (1989) stressed that conflict conjures negative connotation, invokes negative feelings and often leads to destruction. However, contemporary thinking in the field of peace studies revealed that conflict is something that is inevitable and that may not necessarily be bad or negative in nature. For instance, the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (2000) observed that conflict is an inherent part of living which can be used as an opportunity for learning and growth. Hoelscher and Robert (2002) viewed conflict as the underlying power that stimulates innovation. Much more than these definitions, conflict reflects different issues, which range from the fact that conflict can be considered a state of incompatibility, a behaviour, an opposition, an interaction of interdependent parties, a bad omen or a constructive outcome (Alimba, 2014). Despite the differences on how conflict is viewed, the following factors are essential elements that characterise conflict:

(i)   Conflict is a process. It passes through series of stages before it can become a felt struggle.

(ii)   Conflict occurs where people are interdependent. People must be connected in one way or the other, either through their views, goals, aspirations, position or blood relationship before they can be enmeshed in a conflict.

(iii)   Conflict can be expressed in manifest or latent form. In manifest form, the parties concerned will exhibit felt struggle which will blow the problem out of proportion for people to know about its existence. Manifest conflicts can easily attract interventions because people are aware of its existence. When people are not aware of the existence of a conflict, it is a latent conflict. Such conflicts are consciously hidden from people, hence, resolving them are often difficult.

(iv)   Conflict involves needs and interests. Needs are those things that are significantly of utmost importance to people, which they must obtain as soon as the purchasing power is available. Interests on the other hand, are mere

desires of people. These elements, especially needs, have the potential to generate conflict, when opposition is felt on the way to achieve them.

(v)   Conflict is caused by interference. Interference is a conscious effort to prevent someone from achieving his/her set goals. This kind of behaviour usually induces negative reaction.

These ideas showed that conflict is an inescapable element in social relations, which occurs when the interactions of people are marked with differences in goals, perceptions, attitudes, views, beliefs, values or needs (Alimba, 2014). This means that conflict is a natural phenomenon that results from differences in individuals' behavioural patterns and attitudes in relationship, organisation or even in a society.

Insight on Teachers' Productivity

The normal academic ritual of examining the issues of "teacher and productivity" was fist analysed before delving into the concept of "teachers' productivity". Teachers are the hub of the educational system. The provision of all other materials or resources without teachers on ground will amount to nothing. According to Fabunmi (2007) teachers are the most important element in the school system. They are more important than the quality and quantity of equipment and material and degree of financing. All these are passive resources in the school system. It is only teachers that can use them as instructional aids for effective dissemination of knowledge and learning (Fabunmi, 2007). A teacher is a person who has the registrable professional qualification which enables him to be appointed to teach at any appropriate level of recognised education in any nation and who has a sound mind and is mentally alert (NUT, 1994). A teacher therefore, is someone who transmits knowledge and directs the learning process. Some of the fundamental functions of a teacher are: teaching, attending to parents, examining students, awarding marks, settling conflicts between students, punishing students when necessary and acting as a role model to students. Kochhar (2000) identified the duties of teachers in the school system as:

(i)   planning the curricular and co-curricular programme;
(ii)   organising the programme;
(iii)   supervising and guiding the pupils;
(iv)   maintenance of cumulative records, etc.
(v)   evaluating the achievement of the pupils;
(vi)   reporting; and
(vii)   maintaining relations with pupils, colleagues, principal, parents and community for effective education.

It is obvious, based on the duties of teachers, that the quality of education and learning outcome of students rest heavily on the ability of teachers to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently. Teachers that adequately carry out their duties as expected to achieve set goals are regarded as productive teachers. Productivity is an important

concept that its usage cuts across organisations. Nwachukwu (1988) posited that the importance of productivity in any organisation can hardly be overstated.

This is because it is simply one of the many criteria that can be used for evaluating the effectiveness of groups and organisations (Neal & Hesketh, 2001). Productivity is the measure of how well resources are annexed and utilised to achieve set goals in organsations. Akangbou (1987) described productivity as the relationship between immediate costs and cumulative benefits. According to him, the objective of productivity is to see that future costs are reduced relative to benefits or costs are held constant while benefits are increased. Adamu (1999) defined productivity as the relationship between what is produced and the amount of resources used in the production. "What is produced" is known as output and "resources used in the production process" are referred to as inputs. Outputs are finished goods or services. They are goods or services that are ready for consumption or to be further used as intermediate goods for producing other goods. Inputs on the other hand, include money, capital, materials, time and labour, which are used to bring about the creation of a given quantity of outputs. Fabunmi (2004) defined productivity as the output of individuals or groups of individuals, which is often discussed in relation to the immediate cost of production. Productivity in its simplest definition is real output per hour of work. A reflection on the above definitions revealed that productivity involves four basic elements, which are "inputs, outputs, throughputs (processes) and time" (Peretomode & Peretomade, 2001). Sofoluwe (2000) presented productivity symbolically as:

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{total output}}{\text{total input}} - \frac{\text{total results achieved}}{\text{total resources consumed}} = \frac{\text{effectiveness}}{\text{efficiency}}$$

This implies that productivity connotes efficient performance resulting in high level of output of goods and services, both in quantity and quality with minimal waste in resources and minimal cost in money, energy and time as well as the users of products (Sofoluwe, 2000). One thing that is glaring from the symbolic representation of productivity is that the term productivity is associated with effectiveness and efficiency. Neal and Hesketh (2001) opined that there is relatively widespread agreement regarding the use of performance, effectiveness, efficiency and productivity at the individual level of analysis. The association of these terms with productivity possibly motivated Odunuga and Ajila (2000) to define productivity as having to do with the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of goods and services turned out of a production process. The four main issues that are apparently central to productivity are:

    (i)   productivity is a relative term;

(ii)   productivity borders on "usefulness";

(iii)   productivity concerns efficiency and effectiveness of the individual; and

(iv)   productivity is based on the value system in a society (Ahmed, 2000).

According to Pritchard (1995) all the definitions of productivity illustrated above can summarily be grouped into three categories. The first is the economist/engineer definition, where productivity is an efficiency measure: the ratio of outputs over inputs, where both usually are expressed in dollar terms. Prichard (1995) added that an example of productivity (efficiency) under this definition would be the dollar value of refrigerators produced this month divided by the total costs to produce them. The second definition of productivity is a combination of efficiency (outputs/inputs) and effectiveness (outputs/goals). According to Pritchard (1995) in this definition, a company making refrigerators could measure productivity by a combination of the efficiency measure above plus an effectiveness measure, such as number of refrigerators divided by the objective or goal for the number to be produced that month. The third definition of productivity is the broadest, and considers productivity as anything that makes the organisation function better.

In this definition, productivity would include efficiency and effectiveness, but also things like absenteeism, turnover, morale, innovation. This approach can easily accommodate measures of quality, attendance, and any other type of measure that is seen as leading the organisation to accomplish its goals (Pritchard, 1995). Therefore, teachers' productivity can be seen as the teachers' knowledge of content and pedagogy, the teacher's skills and classroom practices in delivering the curriculum and the teacher's relationships with students and other members of the school community (Schalock, Schalock and Myton, 1998). Thus, a productive teacher is one who strives to implement the curriculum in such a way as to bring about a productive learner (Sofoluwe, 2000). Therefore, teachers' productivity is the ability of a teacher to master the curriculum, convert it into teachable subject matter and impart it on learners to acquire knowledge, change their attitudes and develop skills acceptable for self-development and societal improvement. This insightfully showed that teachers' productivity is the capacity and capability of a teacher to master the specific domain of his subject in order to teach it effectively to develop students for onward building of their environments. It is a measure of the relationship between what teachers can produce and the amount of resources devoted for production. "What teachers can produce" is simply the output, which is the final outcome of the production process. In the educational system, the outputs are the graduates which have acquired knowledge, and skills for societal development. The "resources devoted for production" range from material to human resources provided and used up in the process of production. This involves school facilities, money, curriculum, management, etc that are employed in

the process of production. Jackson Public School District (JPS) (n.d.) reported ten criteria that can be used to describe a productive teacher, which are:

> (i) demonstrates effective planning skills; (ii) implements the lesson plan effectively; communicates effectively with the students; (iv) prepares appropriate evaluation activities; (v) prepares appropriate evaluation activities; (vi) provides students with appropriate evaluative feedback; (vi) displays a thorough knowledge of curriculum and subject matter; (vii) selects learning content congruent with the prescribed curriculum (viii) provides opportunities for individual differences; (ix) ensures student time on task and (x) sets high expectations for student achievement.

The point is that teachers that exhibit, demonstrate and observe these set of variables are considered as effective, efficient, committed and productive teachers. Teachers' productivity is a concept that incorporate other concepts such as teachers' effectiveness, teachers' performance, teachers' quality, teachers' commitment and teachers' efficiency. Eneasator (1997) asserted that because of the conceptual problem encountered in measuring or estimating teacher productivity, the term efficiency is used inter-changeably with productivity. In this context, a teacher can be said to be efficient or productive when such an individual is sufficiently motivated, devoted and committed to his or her duties and demonstrates the willingness to stay in the teaching profession despite inducements to leave. Such an efficient or productive teacher can be seen to produce maximum output with a given quantity of input or produce a given quality of output with the minimum quantity of inputs (Eneasator, 1997).

Determinants of Teachers' Productivity

There has been unprecedented rise in public criticisms against teachers. These criticisms have increased overtime because of the constant and continued decrease in the productivity of teachers in the country. According to Okpechi (1991) every organisation must strive towards high productivity, enlisting the following as factors that can make an organisation to be productive: its organisational structure, its leadership, reward and incentive system, relationship between the employees and their jobs, and the use of modern time and energy saving technology and techniques. One can argue, at this juncture, that the low productivity of teachers could possibly be associated with the absence of these elements in school for teachers' efficient performance. Justifying this, Uyanga (1995) stated that the factors responsible for poor productivity of teachers are poor funding of schools, facilities are poor or lacking, personnel not well trained, morale is low, infrastructure is inadequate and teaching-learning environments are deficient. Where these factors are visible and obvious, teachers' productivity is bound to be low. There are also indications that school climate can equally contribute to the improvement or otherwise of teachers' productivity.

Eneasator (1997) posited that in the school system, for teachers to be highly productive, schools should operate more of open organisational climate types. In open school climate, teachers are highly motivated and are found to be committed to their school. This climate is characterised by high spirit, high consideration, thrust and low disengagement. Schools operating in a climate contrary to the open climate type will experience low productivity. Oluchukwu (2000) cautioned that school heads should endeavour to see to it that appropriate school climate is created and maintained so that teachers can work hard and thereby enhance their productivity.

Dysfunctional Conflict: Its Focus and Dynamics

Dysfunctional conflict is a negative or destructive conflict. It is measured by the outcome of a conflict. Therefore, any conflict outcome that is not desirable is considered as a dysfunctional conflict. When conflict is viewed as a clash, contest, opposition, rivalry, negative force, consequent upon its destructive outcomes in social relationships, organisations or societies, it is termed dysfunctional conflict. Auwal (2010) considered dysfunctional conflict as conflict that is largely devastating, abnormal, dysfunctional and therefore detestable. It is an aberration, a dysfunctional process in social systems (Wehr,1979). This kind of conflict conjures negative connotation, invokes negative feelings and often leads to destruction (Lindelow & Scott, 1989). The traditional conflict theory really explained the dysfunctionality of conflict. The theory viewed conflict as a dysfunctional element that blows no one any good. Thus, it is expected that it should be eliminated or eradicated at all cost for the survival of individual relationships and organisations. Cetin and Hacifazlioglu (2004) noted that the classical theorists believed that conflict produced inefficiency and was therefore undesirable, even detrimental to the organisation and should be eliminated or at least minimised to the extent possible. This theory considered conflict as a bad omen in organisational development and recommended a conflict management approach that is centred on avoidance. According to Truter (2003) avoidance is not a successful method for achieving a long-term solution since the original cause of the conflict remains. The use of this style may create greater problem for the parties in the future. Therefore, using this style can make conflict to be largely unresolved and unresolved conflict can escalate in future, leading to attitudinal problems between or among the conflicting parties. The dynamic nature of dysfunctional conflict is highly unfixed based on its damaging effects. When conflict escalates due to perception and management problems, its outcome may be inestimable. The point is that the further it escalates, the more violent it becomes and the more the chances of causing more damages. This will produce negative effects on those concerned and thwart their abilities to perform. The dynamics of dysfunctional conflict on productivity is illustrated in Fig. 1. When conflict is allowed to exist for a long period without resolution, it breeds enmity between the parties. This will lead to a bigger problem for the parties and may attract supporting parties to the conflict, thereby making it complex

and complicated. At this point, the conflict becomes contagious and will result in breakdown in communication. When communication breaks down, the level of enmity increases creating room for the escalation of the conflict.
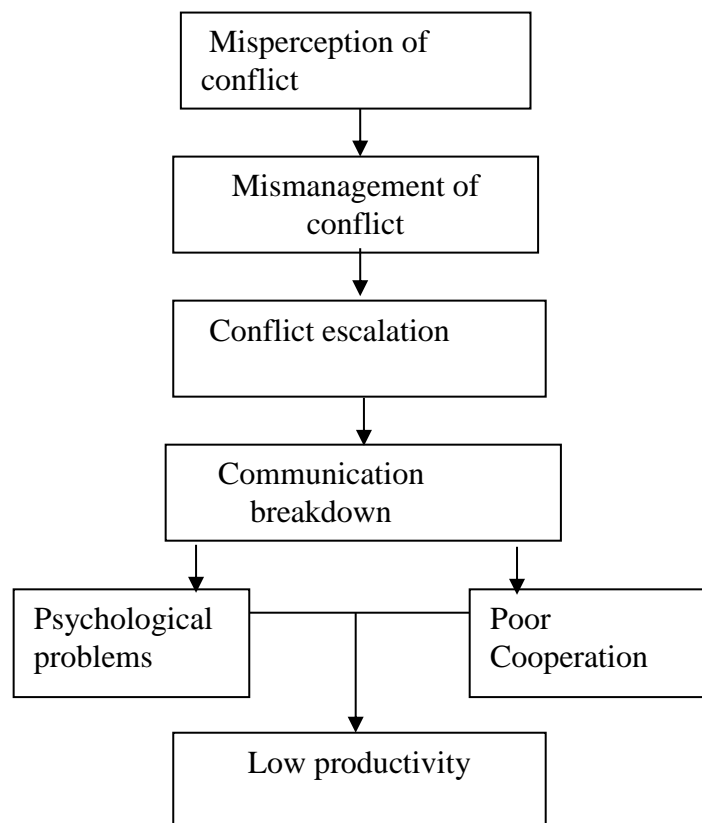
Misperception of conflict
↓
Mismanagement of conflict
↓
Conflict escalation
↓
Communication breakdown
↓
Psychological problems | Poor Cooperation
↓
Low productivity

Fig. 1: Dynamics of dysfunctional conflict on productivity

It is clear from the above diagram that when communication breaks down, it will result in psychological problems and poor cooperation among the conflicting parties. Consequently, these problems are bound to negatively affect the work behaviours of the parties concerned, and thus result in low productivity.

Effects of Violent Conflict on Education

One of the common characteristics of violent conflicts is that it automatically produces dysfunctional outcomes. Even in interpersonal violent conflict, human and material resources suffer severely. Therefore, the consequences of such conflict on the school system cannot be easily estimated. For instance, conflict remains a major impediment for the realisation of the EFA (Education for All) and Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs), especially for the universal completion of primary education and gender equality in primary and secondary education (Buckland, 2005). Poirier (2011) posited that conflict situations are often considered to be one of the most important factors in the deterioration of education. It was concluded that conflicts therefore have a very strong impact on secondary enrolment (Poirier, 2011). It can also result in the death or displacement of teachers, staff and students (Bell & Huebler, 2010). It is recorded that more than two-third of teachers in primary and secondary schools were killed and displaced as a result of the Rwandan genocide (Buckland, 2005). Therefore, in the course of violent conflicts, teachers are often among the population groups most at risk (Seitz, 2004). It has been proven that teachers were specifically targeted during war periods. In Burundi 25% of all primary school teachers have either been murdered or have fled abroad since 1993 (Fountain, 2000).

In Cambodia, nearly 75% of the teachers were murdered during the era of the Red Khmer (World Bank, 2002). According to Akresh and de Walque (2008) the Rwandan genocide was extremely violent and disrupted the school year throughout the entire country. Schools were closed, school buildings and supplies destroyed, teachers killed, students and teachers alike became refugees abroad, families lost their savings and became orphans losing one or both parents to the genocide (Akresh & de Walque, 2008). The question that needs to be asked at this juncture is why are students, teachers (i.e. harmless people) and schools attacked during violent conflict? Coursen-Neff and Sheppard (2011) produced answers to this question that non-state armed groups target schools, teachers and students because, first, rebel groups often see schools and teachers as symbols of the state. Indeed, in rural areas, they may be the only structures and government employees in the vicinity, serving multiple purposes. For instance, in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan armed opposition groups have attacked schools used as polling places around elections. Second, teachers and schools make high-visibility "soft" target: they are more easily attacked than the government security forces, and attacks are likely to garner media attention to the assailants and their political agenda, and undermine confidence in government control. Thirdly, schools are attacked because armed groups are hostile to the content of the education being delivered or because of the students they educate. In some countries, schools have been targeted because their curriculum is perceived to be secular or "western", others are simply because schools educate girls. Not all the violence is ideological: criminal elements may want to drive out competing sources of authority; some attacks are simply local disputes that may or may not have to do with education (Coursen-Neff & Sheppard, 2011). Based on these reasons, one can conveniently argue that the attack on teachers, students and schools are intentional and deliberate in nature. Therefore, depending on the gravity of the conflict, the entire educational system may be paralysed. Paulson and Rappleye (2007) reported that in 2002, UNICEF did succeed in re-starting a scattered educational system that had virtually ceased to function due to internal fighting in

Afghanistan. The impact of violent conflict on the prospect and survival of education is highly frightening, frustrating and devastating. Nothing is spared when conflicts turn violent in the educational system or violent conflict is transferred into the system. The existing human and material resources in school usually face a serious state of quandary, demanding urgent attention from the government and the public to salvage it from total collapse.

Dysfunctional Conflict and Teachers' Productivity

Teachers' productivity is an important variable that functionally influence the learning outcomes of students and the state of quality of education. Conflict is a major factor that can easily influence the productivity of teachers either for good or bad, depending on the nature of the conflict, the orientation of the parties concerned and the conflict management approaches adopted. For instance, Weiss, Cambone and Wyeth (1992) indicated that the transition to teamwork led to conflict and tension among teachers, which affected their sense of solidarity and work satisfaction at school. When conflict is poorly managed, it destabilises the emotional stability of teachers, thereby leading to reduction in their levels of performance. The Centre for the Prevention of School Violence (2002) reported that conflict can ruin the stability of an organised work environment and substantially waste time, money and resources. When this happens, the time, money and resources of teachers involved will be wasted, making their work efforts to greatly diminish, leading to poor turnover.

Goldstein and Conoley (1997) pointed out that the degree of violence against teachers and its consequences have led to the identification of a "battered teacher syndrome," characterised by a combination of stress reactions including anxiety, disturbed sleep, depression, headaches, elevated blood pressure and eating disorders. This, therefore, is a reflection of the fact that no teacher will be inflicted with these kinds of chronic ailments that will be able to make tangible contributions on students and the school system. This gives insight into the fact that dysfunctional conflict will not only reduce the effectiveness and efficiency of teachers, it will also bring about health problems for them.

Apart from this, dysfunctional conflicts create distressing and disruptive atmosphere in school. These kinds of atmosphere are capable of incapacitating teachers' work attitudes and render them unproductive. In fact, an atmosphere of this nature can lead to increased absenteeism, more grievances and reduced productivity (Lewin, 1987 and Tjosvold, 1991). Conflicts can reduce team performance and member satisfaction because it produces tension and antagonism, and distracts people from their task performance (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003). Gatlin, Wysocki and Kepner (2008) posited that conflict obviously affects the productivity of both managers and associates (employees) and can have a far-reaching impact on organisational performance. By extension, a conflict can adversely impact on the productivity of school administrators

and teachers and consequently lowers school performance. Makaye and Ndofirepi (2012) stressed that school conflicts often disturb the tone and climate of school and ultimately impact negatively on the performance of both teachers and students. Based on the foregoing, a conflict is considered as the most volatile element that has the capacity to diminish, thwart and cause sharp decline in the productivity of workers, especially teachers, when mismanaged.

Jonkman (2006) posited that conflict demotivates, demoralizes and retards progress in a school. In other words, conflict can dysfunctionally affect teachers' attitude to work, resulting in low morale and poor performance in schools. Conflict can cause teachers to become frustrated. According to Kgomo (2006), frustration can manifest in a number of observable behaviours, such as hesitation, vacillation, sleeplessness, stress and anxiety. Teachers that exhibit these forms of behaviours will face the problems of alienation, absenteeism, lack creativity and on the whole, make them less efficient and effective in discharging their duties. Three basic elements suffer when teachers are affected by dysfunctional conflict. These are the students, the educational system and the society. Thus, teachers are expected be exposed to conflict management dynamics to enable them understand how and when to utilize the right conflict management strategies for constructive results.

Conclusion

Conflict becomes dysfunctional when its outcomes are totally unpalatable to the parties concerned. The outcomes of a conflict scenario can manifest functionally or dysfunctionally. Conflict outcomes that are dysfunctional in nature are often driven by misperception and the adoption of inappropriate conflict management strategies. These elements basically define the outcome that will emerge, when conflict ensued. The point is that when conflict is misperceived and mismanaged, it escalates resulting in dysfunctional outcomes. In the school system, teachers are at the receiving end, in most cases, to the extent that they easily get entangled with conflict. Conflict consumes time, energy and resources. These resources are also what teachers need to perform. A diversion of such inputs from teaching and learning process to resolving conflict will create a gap in the work behaviours of teachers, which will invariably affect their productivity. This study has reviewed the negative consequences of conflict on teachers' productivity. It is therefore, imperative for teachers to understand that their job performance is a function of how they can constructively deal with emerging conflicts in their schools. Conflict is a major variable that can thwart and distort teachers' efforts in spite of the volume of resources provided for them to operate. Therefore, when schools' conflicts are constructively managed, a favourable climate is induced for teachers to exercise their creative and innovative powers in the course of discharging their duties. This development will significantly influence learning behaviours of students and positively impact on the system. To think critically, interact harmoniously and work compatibly with others to ensure that the desired goals are

achieved in a system can only come by in a serene atmosphere, devoid of constant and incessant occurrence of conflict. This type of atmosphere will enable teachers to exchange ideas and be creative in imparting the required knowledge and skills that will transform the attitudes of students to make laudable contributions to the development of their societies. Dysfunctional conflicts cannot breed anything good because their outcomes are expressed in negative terms. This implies that school personnel should understand the inherent characteristics of a dysfunctional conflict and the need to ensure that emerging conflicts in schools are proactively managed to prevent them from escalating into violence.

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