EXPLORING THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Salphy and Samuel Mosima, who always supported me in my quest for study.

To my loving husband, Elvis Collins Fosu, for always being there for me, providing immense support, care, love, and prayers for me and our three beautiful kids.

To God Almighty, I return all the glory to you!

ABSTRACT

Conflict takes place in schools repeatedly, involving both teachers and learners. Susceptibility to conflict in various forms could seriously harm the development of a victim in the aspects of his or her emotional soundness, commitment levels, communication, physical well-being, and academic achievement. To successfully enhance teaching and learning in South African secondary schools, acountry referred to as a rainbow nation due to its cultural diversity, conflict resolution and management should be a key focus area. How school conflict is managed successfully is of paramount importance, particularly in a country that still grappling with socio-economic restructuring after the end of an apartheid regime characterised by social injustice. Since the emphasis of school conflict management is to create an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning and the successful integration of learners of diverse backgrounds, a vision of the knowledge and application of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in schools is offered as a tool that school leaders can embrace to effectively manage conflicts in schools to enhance teaching and learning.

A total of twenty-four participants were purposively selected from the three secondary schools in the Johannesburg east district, South Africa.The sample of participants included two heads of department, three teachers, and three learners from the Learner Representative Council from three secondary schools in Johannesburg Eastdistrict, Gauteng. The heads of the department were interviewed whilst the teachers and learners answered a questionnaire. This research gives an overview of the (i) conceptualisation of the term "conflict management" to enhance teaching and learning (ii) the use of school policies in addressing culturally responsive leadership (iii) the use of culturally responsive leadership strategies by the school management to resolve conflict (iv) challenges and successes in implementing conflict management in schools (vi) the use of conflict management to enhance teaching and learning in schools. This study aimed at exploring a culturally responsive leadership approach on conflict management to enhance teaching and learning in selected secondary schools' in the Johannesburg East district, South Africa.

This study adopted a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm. Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews as well as the answering of a questionnaire. Findings revealed that the school management team understood the concept of culturally responsive leadership as a form of leadership that is conscious of cultural differences that exist within the school environment. Secondly, data revealed that in the handling of conflict, the school management team's ability in resolving conflict through culturally responsive leadership strategies was limited as members lacked the necessary skills to deal with it effectively. Participants often resort to different unconventional methods which are not necessarily culturally responsive in dealing with conflict. There is an overreliance on educational policies in handling school conflict. The study closes with recommendations and among these is the need to empower the school management team and teachers with culturally responsive conflict management strategies training before they assume their leadership roles to enhanceteaching and learning. The researcher recommends that developmental workshops and seminars be established frequently to train existing school management members and that new school management team appointees be empowered with culturally responsive conflict management skills before they assume their leadership positions in the different schools assigned to them.

Key words: conflict, conflict management, culturally responsive leadership, school management team, teaching, and learning

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPS	Curriculum and Policy Statement
CRT	Culturally Responsive Teaching
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
LO	Life Orientation
OCR	Office of Civil Rights
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASA	South African School Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL STUDY OUTLINE

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Schools provide structured education to learners which helps develop academic aspects, as well as relevant skills for life such as confidence, good manners, responsibility teamwork, tolerance, and unity facilitating through the teaching and learning process. The school, therefore, ensures the holistic development of the learner ensuring learners' psychological and mental growth. The question is, has the school succeeded in this regard?

Conflict is regarded as a destructive tool which leads to low performance, communication breakdown, arguments and hostility which affects the running of schools (Bano *et al.,* 2013). conflict arising from religion, race, socio-economic status or family background, cognitive levels in a particular subject, and poor performance just to mention a few, is prevalent among learners in schools. The reality of school conflict has become a major concern not only in South Africa but across the globe. Conflict that is not well managed generally has a detrimental effect on a school, as it can lead to a hostile environment for both teachers and learners and affect the quality of work produced.It is therefore important for organisations to determine the root cause of the conflict and manage it appropriately to enhance teaching and learning in schools (Babaeian Jelodar, Yiu & Wilkinson (2022)

The prevalence of bullying, gangsterism, vandalism, and corporal punishment in most South African schools has influenced the standpoint of researchers to continue believing that schools are breeding grounds for violence (Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). Various forms of abuse have been reported in South African schools.Male teachers have been reported for learner sexual abuse-related offences and female teachers for child molestation (Makota & Leoschut, 2016). In addition,schools are flooded with cases of racial tension in a multi-cultural population. Cases of discrimination in south African schools are highlighted in the news as another cause of conflict, and in order to avoid it, favourable conditions need to be established for the success of interracial contact (Harris et al., 2019).

The South African School Act (SASA) 84 of 1996, was instituted to amongst other things, bring clarity to the education programme and help reduce conflict in schools.

Despite the attempts of the School Act, schools remain breeding grounds for conflict. Growing up in South Africa, a culturally diverse country, I was exposed to issues relating to gender-based violence, discrimination, gangsterism, and bullying. These issues were prevalent in communities and schools, which has been reinforced by my experience in the classroom as an educator. This experience has given me an indication that these issues stem from different factors persisting in schools that impact negatively on the teaching and learning process and therefore need to be addressed by the relevant bodies, such as the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the relevant unions that represent the teacher body including the school management team (SMT). However, leadership management systems that deal with conflict management, should not undermine the cultural orientation of teachers and learners but should rather use it as a tool to promote effective teaching and learning. It was myintention in this research, to throw more light on issues relating to conflict management in South African schools and to shed more light on culturally responsive leadship in resolving such issues. Having established that conflict exists in schools, this research assisted in determining the effectiveness of culturally responsive leadership in controlling and managing conflict in schools to enhance teaching and learning.

1.2 STUDY BACKGROUND

Conflict in schools generally has a detrimental effect on a school. It can lead to a hostile school environment for both teachers and learners and affect the quality of work (Kazimoto, 2013; Smiley, 2018). Various type of conflict experienced in South African schools have raised the need for effective intervention strategies. The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of culturally responsive leadership on conflict management in secondary schools and its potential to enhance teaching and learning outcome.

Conflict management is a critical issue in South African schools, particularly in secondary schools, as conflicts can negatively affect teaching and learning (Morrell, Thibeault,& De Lange,2010). The conflicts that occur in these schools are often a result of cultural and ethnic differences among learners and educators (Naidoo, 2017). In South Africa, there is a rich cultural diversity, with different races, languages, and cultural beliefs, making cultural competence an essential leadership trait (Banks, 2004). However, most school leaders lack cultural competence, leading to ineffective conflict

management strategies (Nkambule & Ngcobo,2017). Therefore, there is a need for leaders in secondary schools to embrace culturally responsive leadership to manage conflicts effectively (Capper, 2015).

Culturally responsive leadership refers to leadership that recognizes, values, and incorporates diverse cultural perspectives, knowledge, and practices into educational policies and practices (Gay, 2018). In the context of secondary schools in South Africa, culturally responsive leadership is significant in managing conflicts because it enables school leaders to create inclusive and supportive learning environments that promote positive relationships between diverse students and staff (Ntshoe, & Mbatha, 2020). Culturally responsive leadership also fosters mutual understanding, respect, and empathy among students and staff from different cultural backgrounds, which reduces the likelihood of conflicts and enhances conflict resolution skills (Anderson & Miller, 2017).

Effective culturally responsive leaders in South African secondary schools adopt a range of strategies to promote cultural inclusivity, including engaging in ongoing professional learning and development, building strong relationships with students and staff from diverse backgrounds, and creating policies and practices that reflect the cultural diversity of the school community (Swartz & Hartell, 2018). Additionally, culturally responsive leaders prioritize equity and social justice by addressing the systemic barriers and inequalities that impact marginalized students and communities (Teddlie & Reynolds 2016).

South Africa has a diverse population with different cultures, languages, and ethnicities, however there is a significant gap in culturally responsive leadership in secondary schools in South Africa. The lack of culturally responsive leadership practices in south African schools can lead to unequal educational outcomes for students from different cultural backgrounds. This gap can result in students feeling excluded, marginalized, and disconnected from their education, leading to poor academic performance and lower retention to name a few.

Existing gaps in culturally responsive leadership in South African secondary schools include: Lack of understanding and awareness of culturally responsive leadership among school leaders: Many school leaders in South African secondary schools lack a clear understanding of what culturally responsive leadership entails and how it can be implemented in their schools (Chisholm & Ndhlovu, 2018). As a result, they may not prioritize its implementation or may

implement it in an inadequate or ineffective manner.

Insufficient training and professional development opportunities: School leaders may not have access to adequate training or professional development opportunities to learn about culturally responsive leadership and how to implement it effectively (Ngidi, 2018). This can result in a lack of capacity to lead culturally responsive leadership initiatives or to support teachers in implementing culturally responsive leadership practices.

Limited teachers buy-in and support: Teachers may not fully understand or buy into the importance of culturally responsive leadership, leading to resistance or minimal effort in implementing culturally responsive leadership practices (Maphalala & Ndlovu, 2019). This can result in a lack of consistency in culturally responsive leadership implementation and limited impact on student outcomes.

Inadequate resources: Schools may lack the necessary resources, such as time, funding, and materials, to effectively implement culturally responsive leadership initiatives (Maphalala & Ndlovu, 2019). This can hinder school leaders and teachers' ability to effectively implement culturally responsive leadership practices and achieve positive outcomes. Limited Focus on Culturally Responsive Curriculum: The curriculum in South African secondary schools is not culturally responsive, and there is limited focus on including diverse perspectives and cultural histories. This lack of cultural responsiveness in the curriculum can lead to cultural disconnection for students and can perpetuate inequalities (Prinsloo & Breier, 2020). Previous studies have explored conflict management in schools in South Africa, few have focused on the role of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management (Qwabe & Mthembu, 2018). This study sought to address these gaps

Culturally responsive leadership in the context of conflict management involves an approach that acknowledges and values diversity while seeking to understand the underlying cultural factors that contribute to conflict. According to Garcia and Ortiz (2016), culturally responsive leadership is rooted in cultural humility, which requires individuals to acknowledge their own cultural biases and limitations and to engage in a process of ongoing learning and growth. This approach involves creating a safe and inclusive environment where individuals feel respected and valued, regardless of their cultural background.

In order to effectively manage conflicts in culturally diverse settings, leaders must also possess strong communication and collaboration skills. Communication involves actively listening to different perspectives and acknowledging the validity of diverse viewpoints, while collaboration involves working together to find mutually beneficial solutions (Koh, 2019). Additionally, leaders must be willing to adapt their leadership style to meet the needs of different cultural groups, as some cultures may value different leadership qualities than others (Kuo & Bell, 2020).

Culturally responsive leadership also requires leaders to have a deep understanding of the cultural factors that contribute to conflict in different settings. For example, in some cultures, direct confrontation may be seen as disrespectful or confrontational, while in other cultures, it may be viewed as a necessary and productive way to resolve conflicts (Koh, 2019). Therefore, leaders must be able to navigate these cultural differences and find ways to address conflict that are respectful and effective.

Finally, culturally responsive leadership involves a commitment to ongoing learning and growth. Leaders must be willing to engage in ongoing self-reflection and seek out opportunities to learn from individuals with diverse backgrounds and perspectives (Kuo & Bell, 2020). This approach can help leaders to continually develop their cultural competence and improve their ability to effectively manage conflicts in diverse settings.

Several studies have explored the topic of conflict management styles in South African secondary schools. Here are some potential school leadership conflict management styles that may have failed: Avoidance or passive conflict management style: This style involves ignoring or withdrawing from the conflict, which may lead to unresolved issues and potential escalation (Mthiyane, 2017). Autocratic or dictatorial conflict management style: This style involves imposing decisions on others without seeking their input or involvement, which may lead to resistance and resentment (Dikgomo & Mayaba, 2016).

Win-lose or competitive conflict management style: This style involves viewing conflicts as a competition to be won or lost, which may create winners and losers and damage relationships (Van der Westhuizen, 2018).Compromising or accommodating conflict management style: This style involves finding a middle ground or making concessions to resolve conflicts, which may lead to temporary solutions that do not fully address underlying issues (Munro,

2016).The researcher therefore offered an alternative leadership approach which may assist in conflict management in school, namely culturally responsive leadership.

1.3   THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Kholiavko, Safonov, Zhavoronok and Cosmulese (2021) explain that education impacts positively on the development of a society. They believe the pioneers, the youth, should receive sound education so that the society of that particular country can improve. This implies that it is the responsibility of schools or educationalinstitutions to make a positive contribution to the lives of learners, as they are the futureleaders who are essential for the development and economic growth of each country (Osokoya, 2008). Having established that conflict exists in schools, this research assisted in determining the effectiveness of culturally responsive leadership in controlling conflict in schools to improve teaching and learning. "The most visible markof inequality in the South African education system is that of racism, but otherinequalities also persist" (Karlsson, 2002:321). Linley (2018) laments that there is a continuation of practices in institutions which are racist in nature. Other forms of discrimination such as sexual orientation, gender, language, religion, socio-economic status, and disability, are prevalent in the education system, all of which contribute toconflict. (Linley, 2018)

Irrespective of the fact that conflict is regarded as a natural human occurrence, it poses a challenge in creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning. At school, learners encounter conflicts and how they handle these is an important determinant of how they adapt, adjust, and participate, which ultimately affects their overall school achievement.

Rahim (2002) reports that in classrooms where conflict was handled effectively, positive, and constructive outcomes is achieved for all parties involved in the conflict, therefore supporting the goal aimed at improved teaching and learning in schools. Rahim further noted that when teachers can resolve conflicts among themselves, it has a positive contribution to work production in a conducive learning environment. Khan, Iqbal and Hussainy (2016) refer to this as functional conflict management.

1.4   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The guide for every research is the theoretical framework (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). A research study must have a structure that can support it. Such a structure is referred to as the theoretical framework. It is a plan or referral to the researcher that enables the researcher to build his or her research inquiry. For this study, the culturally responsive theory was deemed most suitable as it gave room for the exploration of various content relating to the study at hand as further discussed in Chapter 2.

1.5   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The level of conflict present in the school has important implications for the schools' overall performance. Conflicts at present continue to be a factor in academic life. Schools frequently appear to be centres of tension on occasion. Conflict takes place in schools repeatedly, involving both teachers and learners. Ohaka (2016), for example, holds that negative conflict situations can have a declining and counterproductive effect on the educational, academic, social, and moral development of individuals in the school environment. This, in turn, could lead to job dissatisfaction of teachers, high absenteeism, continuous disturbance of school activities and lack of collaborative work between teachers and principals. Furthermore, Göksoy and Argon (2016) believe that conflict in schools could lead to intolerance from staff, violence and the formation of cliques, breakdown in communication and an undisciplined environment.

School management teams (SMT) are responsible for the promotion of conflict managementby adopting departmental policies and school-based policies designed by education overseers, and the School Governing Body (SGB). This means that the SMT has a crucial and critical role to play in the process of promoting conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching as well as learning in schools. However, it seems that many school management team members have not received any formal training on how to handle conflict using a culturally responsive leadership approach, and often, resort to using their skills. Even with the Departmentof Basic Educations' effort to curb conflict through school inclusion policies and general education policies, the implementation of these policies has not reached a critical

threshold where they are effectively implemented in schools (Ehlers,2008 & Conole, 2010). This has become a stumbling block to the provision of a conducive environment in schools. Research has shown that there is thus a need to inculcate culturally responsive leadership to ensure success in the teaching and learning process.

There are many potential causes of conflict in the school. They include difference in perceptions,Poor communication, poor academic performance, gossiping and blackmailing, poor teacher-class attendance, leadership and management issues, politics , violence in schools, low moral values, late coming, absenteeism, indiscipline, use of offensive language; and teacher–parent arguments and quarrels due to harsh punishment and verbal assault of pupils, to name a few (Iwuagwu, 2011). Conflicts are intrinsic to human beings, forming an integral part of their emotional growth and cannot cease to exist. They exist in all schools. The school is inserted in a space where the conflict manifest itself daily and assumes relevance, being the result of the multiple interpersonal relationships that occur in the school context. Thus, conflict is part of school life which Implies that teachers must have the skills to manage conflict constructively. Some of the strategies used by the school management team include:

The abolished exercise of corporal punishment

Corporal punishment, prevalent in the education system pre-1994, was prohibited in educational settings in line with Section 10(1) of the South African Schools Act 1996). However, even though corporal punishment is not an acceptable form of punishment, teachers in both primary and secondary schools are still battling to find an alternative form of learner discipline, and as a result, often resort to the same abolished exercise (Ward, Gould, Kelly & Mauff, 2015). Despite the efforts made by the education department to have policies and guidelines on how to maintain discipline, corporal punishment still surfaces in many schools in South Africa.

Excessive suspension of learners

South African schools, endorse the use of learner suspension as a punishment measure to curtail recalcitrant behavior. It involves a compulsory stay out of school for some days or weeks assigned to a learner to serve as punishment. It involves a mandatory leave assigned to a learner as a form of punishment and learners cannot attend classes (Loomis et al, 2022). According to Yaluma (2022), the suspension of learners does more

harm than good.

making learners sit on the floor, depriving learners of break time, and making learners clean toilets.

These forms of punishment are unacceptable as they are classified as examples of corporal punishment. Forms of corporal punishment include hitting with a hand or an object, pinching, burning, or throwing objects at a learner, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, kicking, grabbing, scratching, and pulling hair; or denying a child meal, the use of the toilet, and shelter from heat or cold.

Detention

Detentions can take place during school hours, at lunchtime, after school, or at weekends. If your child fails to be there without a reasonable excuse, the school may give them a more severe punishment.

Scolding or yelling and harsh verbal discipline

Some teachers implement scolding in front of the entire class. But some psychologists suggest that scolding a child in public can be an embarrassing and traumatic experience. Rather than using coercive power and insulting the learner Tlhapi (2015) states that educators should develop authority by displaying expertise in curriculum. Research shows that yelling and harsh verbal discipline can have similar negative effects as corporal punishment.

Parental involvement

Success in schools is determined by the support and co-operation of parents, community leaders and community members (Belle, 2016) and it involves working together to look for a common ground to solve a problem that fully satisfies everyone's concerns. Unfortunately, many parents are not directly involved in the education of their children and have left the teachers to work on their own without their support.

Attempts have been made to solve the problem of conflict however some of the methods used have failed to combat conflict in schools. South African schools endorse the use of learner suspension and detention as a punishment measure to curtail recalcitrant behaviour (Mathebula & Runhare, 2021). According to Yaluma, Little and Leonard (2022), the

suspension of learners does more harm than good. Detentions can take place during school hours, at lunchtime, after school, or at weekends and tend to be used for minor infringements (Makola, Ndlovu, & Schlebusch, 2022). Parents and teachers end up having conflict among them due to learners missing their transportation because of afternoon detention. This does not solve the problem but rather causes more conflict among teachers and parents.

Many teachers in South Africa, have limited knowledge of the disciplinary strategies for dealing with conflict and they end up making use of negative and humiliating methods instead of corrective strategies (Van Wyk, 2001). Some school leaders however ignore, avoid, inappropriately manage, or sweep under the carpet, issues that could promote conflict in school. This is an indication that some school leaders are insensitive towards some social deviances that go unnoticed until they reach boiling point (Stoll & Fink 2002).

The study on the topic "exploring culturally responsive leadership in managing conflicts in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning" can contribute to addressing the issue of conflicts in schools and expand scientific knowledge in several ways. First, it can provide insights into how cultural responsiveness in school leadership can help manage conflicts and promote a positive school climate. This can, in turn, improve student outcomes and enhance teaching and learning (Banks, 2015).

Secondly, the study can highlight the importance of recognizing and valuing diverse cultural perspectives in conflict resolution. By promoting cultural responsiveness in leadership, schools can create an inclusive and equitable environment that fosters positive relationships among students, teachers, and staff (Gay, 2018).

Thirdly, the study can shed light on the role of leadership in addressing systemic issues that contribute to conflicts in schools. For instance, culturally responsive leadership can help address issues such as bias, discrimination, and inequality, which can lead to conflicts among students and staff (Lopez, 2020).

Finally, the study can contribute to expanding scientific knowledge by providing evidence-based strategies for promoting cultural responsiveness in school leadership and managing conflicts. This can inform the development of policies and practices that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in schools (Howard, 2021).

1.5.1 Main Research Question

Focusing on the outlined background of the study, the main question of this research was: *What culturally responsive leadership do schools promote, regarding managing conflict, to enhance teaching and learning in secondary schools?*

1.5.2 Sub Questions

To investigate the main research question, the following sub-questions were formulated:

1. What does the scholarly literature suggest about managing conflict that occurs in schools?
2. To what extent do school-based policies and general educational policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management?
3. What culturally responsive ideologies or strategies do school management teams employ in resolving conflict?
4. What are the challenges and successes in implementing conflict management?
5. What strategies can be employed by the school to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning?

1.6 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at exploring a culturally responsive leadership approach towards conflict management to enhance teaching and learning in selected secondary schools in the Johannesburg East district, South Africa.

The objectives of the study were

1. To explore scholarly literature on conflict management in schools.
2. To analyse how general education policies and school-based policies address conflict management through a culturally responsive leadership approach.
3. To explore culturally responsive ideologies or strategies that school management teams employ in resolving conflict.
4. To investigate the challenges and successes in implementing conflict management.
5. To explore strategies that can be employed by the school to improve conflict

management to promote effective teaching and learning.

1.7   A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the literature discusses the scholarly literature relating to the Conceptualisation of the term 'conflict management' in schools to enhance teaching and learning. It also looks at how school policy is used to address culturally responsive leadership and discusses the use of culturally responsive strategies employed by the school management to resolve conflict. The literature highlights the challenges and successes in implementing conflict management in schools and in conclusion It discusses the use of conflict management to enhance teaching and learning in secondary schools *(cf.* Chapter 2).

1.8   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is described by Nieuwenhuis (2016) as the attempt to explain a given phenomenon by considering the strategy employed by the researcher in collecting, analysing and describing data. Wilkinson (2000) concurs that it is a technique used to identify, select, and analyse information about a topic. It informs us on how the research should be carried out. The framework within which research is conducted is termed research methodology (Remenyi *et al.,* 1998). The population, sampling, data collection and study site selection is all part of the research methodology (Matsekoleng, 2017).

1.8.1   Research Paradigm

Many scholars have defined 'paradigm' in general terms, but the word originates from Greek and means, 'pattern' (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). According to Hughes (2010:35), a paradigm is regarded as "factor that determines a research topic and therefore, suggests how a researcher approaches or thinks about the research topic in focus". According to Perera (2018), a paradigm indicates the way problems should be understood and resolved with respect to scientific belief systems

In trying to assess the extent to which school managers use culturally responsive leadership, to deal with the different conflicts that occur in schools, this study adopted an interpretive paradigm ideology for such purposes. This type of paradigm advocates

the use of qualitative research methods (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018)

1.8.2 Research Approach

There are different types of approaches to inquiry. A research approach deals with plans and procedures that indicate how the researcher will gather, analyse and interpret data. A research approach details the premise and the method employed by the researcher in the process of data collection to data interpretation (Chetty, 2016). As the topic of this research is exploring the use of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning, this suggests the need for the collection, analysis and interpretation of qualitative information. The most appropriate research approach is thus the qualitative method research approach. According to Cohen *et al.* (2018), such an approach gives room for more answers to the questions.

1.8.3 Research Type

Research design presents a clear-cut rule for procedures to be followed in research (Creswell, 2014). There are different types of research designs such as ethnography, case study, grounded theory and action research. The study was undertaken in an effort for School Management Teams to "attach meaning to their actions and in the process, refine individual use of their practices and experiences" (Creswell, 2007:20). The method allowed the researcher to use a qualitative approach in answering research questions and helped the researcher to integrate the findings either at the data collection or analysis or interpretation stage to draw inferences.

1.8.4 Research Methods

In the quest to uncover new information or to make a particular topic more explicit, data of different forms needed to be collected. All the processes, strategies and techniques employed in collecting and analysing such data were referred to as the research methods.

1.8.4.1 Selection of participants

The population for this study consisted of secondary schools situated in Johannesburg East district, South Africa. However, the study focused on three selected secondary

schools of which two were public secondary schools and one an independent secondary school.

In this study, the purposive sampling technique was adopted. With this technique, a participant is selected purposefully based on the role, responsibility, or traits of the participant (Suri, 2011). As per Maree and Pietersen (2016), purposive sampling is the intentional selection of respondents from the general population that suites thepurpose of the researcher in relation to key criteria and to use such selected respondents to represent a group, location, incident or a phenomenon. The professional management of conflict in schools as well as all activities that promote teaching and learning is crucial. To tackle this issue, school management teams wereestablished in most South African public schools. For sampling purposes, the researcher included the school management teams since they play a significant role in school governance.

Teachers that teach Life Orientation as a subject, interact with learners inside and outside of the classroom as demanded by the annual teaching plan and subject. They are therefore able to socialise more with learners and observe learner behavioural patterns, weaknesses, and strengths. Therefore, this research also included Life Orientation teachers as part of its sample. The Representative Council of Learners (RCL), a mandatory body, according to departmental requirements, act as direct representatives for their grade and sometimes sit on the school management board meetings and were included in the sample selection.

The sample, therefore, comprised of six school management team (SMT) members, nine teachers, and nine learners representing the student council, resulting in a total sample of twenty-four participants.

1.8.4.2   Data collection

Research methods are varied with respect to the kind of tools one uses in collecting data. The most frequently used methods include observation, surveys, interviews, focus groups and participant observation. The questionnaire, administered to learners, was subjected to a pre-test pilot study before its utilisation in the actual data collection exercise (Welman & Kruger, 2011). The questionnaire was administered to members of the target population who would not take part in the study. Though those who participated in the pilot study possessed characteristics representative of the members

of the actual study sample. This helped the researcher to refine the questions in the questionnaire and ensure that they measure what they were intended to measure.

The study also made use of semi-structured interviews as instruments of data collection from school management teams and teachers, while the questionnaire was used to collect data from learners (Bryman, 2008). An interview can be explained as a conversation that takes place between two people, an interviewer, who for the purpose of gathering information directs questions to the participant, who answer the questions (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). The interview questions were subjected to a thorough moderation and review by an expert in the field of education research. This process helped the researcher to diversify, re-strategise, revise, subtract and add new interview questions to the interview guide. The use of audio recorders as support for capturing certain data was only used subject to the comfortability of participants. The interviews were complemented with a review and analysis of documents (secondary data) relevant to the problem at hand (Yin, 2016).

1.8.4.3   Data analysis

Primary data for the study comprised of responses from the semi-structured interviews and the self-administered questionnaire. Data from the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire were analysed through thematic/content analysis which is usually applied to a set of texts, such as interview transcripts. During the interpretation, referrals were made to other secondary sources of information obtained through document analysis to complement the primary data of the study.

1.9   MEASURES FOR TRUSTWORTHINESS

Measures of trustworthiness according to Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Cohen *et al.* (2018) include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, all of which were discussed briefly in the next section and more detail in Chapter 3.

1.10   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Shah (2011) and Akaranga and Ongong'a (2013), ethics are moral principles that govern how an activity should be conducted. Examples of such ethical principles include non-deception, consent, prevention of psychological or physical harm, privacy and confidentiality (Panter & Sterba, 2011). Since research involves the

active participation of people, the integrity of the research must not be compromised, but handled with care, therefore the researcher must be guided by certain acceptable values and principles (Sotuku & Duku 2018) that protects the participants.

In this research, necessary steps were taken to ensure that participants remain undisclosed and that there was no violation of participants' privacy and non-disclosure. The collected data from participants was not disclosed to anyone in its raw form but kept in confidence. Permission was sort from participants before the use of any data collection device. It is worth noting that this research was conducted in compliance with the standards and ethics of the University of South Africa (UNISA).

1.11   KEY TERMS

There must be an understanding of certain terms as they are used within this study.

School management is a management strategy that is helps with running the school guided by the desired educational policies. It considers all aspects of the school (policies, material and human resources, programmes, activities, equipment) and integrates them into a fruitful whole (Marishane & Botha,2011)

Culturally responsive leadership is derived from the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy and involves those leadership philosophies, practices, and policies that create inclusive schooling environments for students and families from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds (Khalifa, 2018). Johnson and Fuller (2015) explain that culturally responsive leadership involves the creation of a conducive and all-inclusive environment for learners from diverse background by embracing the practices, policies and philosophies that support the creation of such environment.

Conflict a condition or situation where two or more people clash on ideas and opposing needs is called conflict (Havely and Cohen, 2019)

Conflict management is a strategy employed to reduce the frequency of destructive encounters by strengthening the inhibitors to conflict actions and avoiding triggering off events, according to Ogonor (2004). Conflict management is a method used by people in handling disputes (Igbinoba, 2011) Conflict management is a critical and integral part of any organisation to ensure that conflict is "managed adequately in order to delimit the negative effects between individuals and on an organisation" (Khan *et*

al., 2016:160).

Teaching and learning refer to combined processes where an educator assesses learning needs, establishes specific learning objectives, develops teaching and learning strategies, implements a plan of work and evaluates the outcomes of the instruction (Aragón, 2010).

School Governing Body (SGB) is the legal body elected from parents, teachers, learners, and ordinary people from the community (Marishane & Botha,2011). They responsible for the development of overall school policy, the vision and the mission of the school, financial management and fundraising, as well as making recommendations about appointments at the school. School Governing Bodies make decisions on behalf of the school and see to it that the school is administered properly, and all stakeholders share in the decisions of that body (DoE, 1997)

School Management Team (SMT) is one of the teams falling into the category suggested by Van Wyk and Marumoloa (2012) as a work group. The school management team is responsible for the professional management of the school, which are the daily activities of the school (Heystek, 2004).

1.12   CHAPTERS DIVISION

The study is comprised of five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction and overview

This chapter introduced the study and focused on highlighting the background of the research, the rationale, problem statement, research questions, aims and the objectives of the study. It also gave a brief description of the methodology that will be followed in the research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and literature review

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework together with the literature review. The chapter focuses on the conceptualisation and the relevance of Culturally Responsive Leadership Theory, and scholarly literature on conflict management,

looking at the extent to which school-based policies and general educational policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management, culturally responsive ideologies, or strategies that school management employs in resolving conflict, the challenges that teachers face in implementing culturally responsive leadership strategies in managing conflicts in class and strategies that can be employed by the school to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning.

Chapter 3: Research design and data collection

The focus of this chapter is the research methodology used to guide the research. This included the research design, paradigm, methods, population and sampling, and data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

This chapter presents the analysis of the data, followed by a discussion and interpretation relating to the discoveries or findings of this research.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, recommendations, and limitations

The chapter draws conclusion for this research, offers recommendations as well as describing the limitations encountered.

1.13   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter one focused on the introduction to the study. The first four sections described the study background, rationale, problem statement, research statements, and objectives of the study. The research design and the data analysis were then discussed briefly. Specific terms relating to the research such as teaching andlearning, school management, culturally responsive leadership, and conflict management, were then defined. The chapter also included explanations of the processes employed in the research and the research population. Finally, the chaptergave a brief indication of the layout of the whole study per chapter. The second chapterintroduces the theoretical framework, which is the backbone of the research, along with the scholarly literature review.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an overview of how the researcher intended to explore the use of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning. The purpose of Chapter 2 is to discuss the theory that underpins this study and bring to light its application to school management leadership to enhance teaching and learning. The focus is placed on the significance of culturally responsive leadership theory. The theory is discussed to address the research questions in Chapter 1. In addition to the theoretical framework, this chapter provides a review of the literature focusing on culturally responsive leadership in conflict management to enhance teaching and learning with special reference to Nigeria and South Africa. This chapter pays attention to the literature on conflict management, the extent to which school-based policies and general educational policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management, culturally responsive ideologies or strategies that school management employs in resolving conflict, the challenges and successes of implementing conflict management and strategies that can be employed by the school to improve conflict management to enhance teaching and learning. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the term theoretical framework.

2.2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a focal point to ground the study. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), a theoretical framework serves as the foundation upon which research is constructed. Ravitch and Carl (2016) further explain the need for research to be guided by the contextualisation of formal theories into the research by the aid of a theoretical framework. In this study, the theoretical framework forms the basis for constructing meaning on culturally responsive leadership in conflict management to enhance teaching and learning.

It thus helps the researcher to make an informed decision as to which design and data to be collected and how to analyse and interpret data (Lester, 2005). Akintoye (2015)

insists that the theoretical framework brings more meaning to the findings of the research and allows for generalisation of such findings by assisting the researcher in finding the right approach, analytical tools and procedures for the enquiry process. It provides a guide to research through which the researcher can build the inquiry using existing philosophical understandings of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management to enhance teaching and learning (Adom, Hussein & Joe, 2018).

Casanave and Yongyan (2015) posit that the use of a theory affords the researcher an opportunity to support and interpret their findings. Considering the above explanation, one must agree with the fact that a theoretical framework is very importantin every research study and provides a lens through which the findings can be viewed.In the next section, the theory deemed appropriate for this study, Culturally Responsive Leadership Theory, is discussed.

2.2.1   Culturally Responsive Leadership Theory

Khalifa (2018) describes culturally responsive leadership as a set of behaviours thatpromotes an inclusive school community that positively impacts historically marginalised students and families. Ladson-Billings (2009) concur with Skrla and Scheurich (2001) that culturally responsive leadership is a skill, or those skills and ability demonstrated by an educational leader to understand and respond to the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and performance styles ofethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more meaningful and relevant. Culturally responsive leadership involves the projection of a culturallyresponsive framework as a yard stick for measuring and interpreting a person's leadership qualities and establishing leadership that is culturally responsive (Lopez, 2015; Santamaria, 2014, 2015). For this reason, the researcher paid attention to culturally responsive leadership theory in exploring the use of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning. There are several perspectives that can be used to break down the culturally responsive leadership theory. Here are three perspectives that can be used to understand the theory:

Social Justice Perspective:
This perspective emphasizes the importance of equity and social justice in leadership practices. It highlights the need for leaders to understand the impact of systemic oppression

on marginalized communities and to work towards creating inclusive environments that promote social justice. (Roberts & Borders, 2016)

Multicultural Perspective:

This perspective emphasizes the importance of understanding and valuing cultural diversity in leadership practices. It highlights the need for leaders to be aware of their own cultural biases and to actively seek out opportunities to learn from and engage with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. (Maringe & Singogo, 2019)

Ethical Leadership Perspective:

This perspective emphasizes the importance of ethical decision-making and values-based leadership practices. It highlights the need for leaders to be guided by a set of ethical principles and to act with integrity and transparency in all of their interactions. (Brown & Mitchell, 2019).

As a research student, I have chosen to adopt the social justice perspective of culturally responsive leadership theory for my study. This approach is particularly relevant in today's increasingly diverse educational landscape, where it is essential for school leaders to understand and address the needs of all students, regardless of their cultural background. Furthermore, studies have found that school leaders who adopt a social justice perspective are more likely to create inclusive and equitable school environments, where all students feel valued and supported. Muhammad and Hollie (2019) found that a social justice approach to leadership was effective in promoting equity and inclusion in schools, particularly for marginalized student groups. The conceptualisation of culturally responsive theory in vital in school management leadership and is discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 Conceptualisation of Culturally Responsive Theory in School Management Leadership

There is a bone of contention between scholars as to the origins of cultural responsiveness. Whilst some believe the concept first emanated from the education sector, others argue that it was from the medical field and that it essentially recognises and makes use of the views, perception and practices of diverse people to inform professional practice (Giovanangali & Oguro, 2016).

Cultural responsivity links with social justice and therefore serves as an important concept to counselling professionals (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan & Buttler, 2016). The roots of cultural responsiveness can be found in the idea of multicultural education that began in the civil rights movements of various historically oppressed groups (Banks, 2000). Gay (2002) asserts that cultural responsiveness signifies adopting cultural perspectives, standpoints as well as experiences, relating to multicultural scholars as avenues to promote effective impartation of knowledge. Cultural responsiveness stems from the assumptions of the alignment of skills and academic knowledge with the experiences and belief systems of the learners. This makes such knowledge acquired more meaningful and interesting to the learner.

Accordingly, cultural awareness is an essential concept, which connects to social justice. Ladson-Billings (1995) established the phrase 'culturally relevant pedagogy' to refer to instruction that requires the engagement of learners whose experiences and cultures are consistently debarred from a standard background. Cultural awareness enables the elimination of cultural blockades, encourages building of cultural bridges, and enables people to accommodate others with different cultural background through love and appreciation.

Studies relating to culturally responsive leadership have been undertaken in areas including, teacher preparation schemes and programmes after school contact times (Immekus, 2016). However, not much research has been undertaken exploring culturally responsive leadership in conflict management to enhance teaching and learning.

According to Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally responsive leadership theory is a student-centred stance that integrates the significance of the cultural backgrounds of

learners with their experiences concerning the teaching and learning process. Learner-centred teaching places more emphasis on the learner as an active participant in the learning process (Good & Lavigne, 2018). It is under this approach; the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator rather than the role of the main source of knowledge in the teaching and learning process. (Good & Lavigne, 2018).

There is evidence from extensive studies of improved learner learning outcomes due to learner-centred teaching as compared to tradition teaching style (Cordero & Gil-Izquierdo, 2018; Lazarides & Buchholz, 2019). Culturally responsive leadership theory is an approach that intends to advance learners' cultural strengths and lived experiences to encourage learners' improvement and achievement and authenticate their place in the world (Villegas & Lucas, 2007). This intent, as indicated by Villegas and Lucas (2007), should be implemented first in the setting of the school environment and conflict management within the school, to promote effective teaching and learning.

A recent explanation of culturally responsive teaching by Gay (2018), expresses culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as making learning outcomes more relevant and effective for learners by considering the cultural experiences, frames of reference and performance styles of learners that are ethnically diverse when designing learning encounters. A culturally responsive theory in teaching is defined as making use of the perspectives, experiences, and most importantly, the cultural attributes of multiracial learners as channels for teaching (Gay, 2000). Rajgopal (2011) believes that the empowering nature of CRT makes it possible for learners to be more successful and better people. Gay (2018) indicates that culturally responsive teaching makes use of different types of strategies for teaching that are related to different learning approaches and that CRT creates a meaningful link between experiences acquired in school and the home. From this standpoint, it is very clear that teachers and learners that are from different cultural backgrounds or diverse ethnicity might have different styles of dealing with conflicts that may arise daily. The reason is that their prior experiences and cultural knowledge are not the same. This can pose a challenge or a barrier for learning and teaching.

For any school to deal with conflict effectively, the right school culture must be present. Msila (2012) have suggested that for leaders to ensure success, one must adopt and model attitudes that express cultural competence. Leaders must model values that

express cultural understanding and embrace the primary principles of cultural responsiveness. The next paragraph explores the relevance of this specific theoretical framework to the study.

2.2.3 The Relevance of Culturally Responsiveness Theoretical Framework to the Study

Schools have been described as breeding grounds fostering conflict relating to culture, race and religion, just to mention a few (Ungar, Connelly, Liebenberg & Theron, 2019). According to Hallinger and Leithwood (1998) culture is important, and it shapes how learners, teachers, parents think. Cultural diversity existing between teachers and culturally and linguistically diverse learners can negatively impact the education of such learners (Chamberlain, 2005).

Lin and Jackson (2019) report that people are naturally diverse, and this could be in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, language, abilities, religion, needs, political perceptions, cultural background, income just to mention a few. All these cultural variables can either promote or hamper interaction among learners and teachers and/or hinder the teaching and learning in schools.

According to Madhlangobe and Gordon (2012), a culturally responsive leader (CRL) is a leader who looks above their personal preferences and believes, accepts others for who they are and advocates for change by understanding and learning about othersand accepts their differences in their role as leaders to affect change.

Learners from certain or different backgrounds are usually socialised in a school culture that is different from their social background (Banks, 2001; Johansson, 2021). The onus, therefore, falls on educators to assist learners from diverse groups to liaise their culture from home and the community with the culture relating to that of the school. This poses challenges for educators (Banks, 2001) and hence the need for teachers and their leadership to understand these cultural differences when dealing with conflicts to enhance teaching and learning in schools.

In response to increasing concerns relating to the injustices and inequality that stem from cultural and verbose discrepancies, researchers have developed and supported a theory of culturally responsive pedagogy that explains an approach to equity. This involves a pedagogy that will help teachers address the different needs of multicultural

learners. Cultural responsiveness requires cultural competence. The theory of culturally responsive leadership as mentioned above, is the backbone of this research, especially because cultures vary in schools (Banks & Banks, 2004; Garcia, 2021).

Culturally responsive teaching portrays multiculturalism as an asset rather than an impediment and assists in establishing conditions and instructional methods that confirm and reflect the differences, similarities, and encounters of all learners. It also indicates that all learners are valued equally in schools. For instance, Mayfield (2014) has indicated that the opportunity gap between white and black learners can improve through culturally responsive leadership practices. Ylimaki and Jacobson (2013) support this by indicating that culturally responsive styles promote the culture and history of learners (Johnson, 2007), particularly if culturally responsive styles create an environment for multiracial learners to observe their cultural values in schools (Ford, 2013).

Creating a positive classroom atmosphere, motivates learners and improves the rapport between teachers and learners, which leads to the building of confidence in learners, leading to effective teaching and learning (Ahmet 2021).A school culture, created by a culturally aware and culturally responsive leader, influences how minority groups are treated by their mainstream counterparts, and it also influences how minority groups respond to situations (Taylor & Whittaker, 2003). To ensure learners' emotional safety and well-being in school, teachers need to create a good classroom climate, as it also predicts and contributes to the academic performance of learners (Frisby, Berger, Burchett, Herovic, & Strawser, 2014). Creating a good classroom environment is most crucial since it affects learner performance especially in schools where classrooms are overcrowded. Marais (2016), affirms that teaching and managing classes that are overcrowded is difficult and prevents the development of a classroom environment conducive to teaching and learning and according to Meier & West,(2020), learners in small classes achieve far better than learners in overcrowded classrooms.

Leaders who are culturally responsive and embrace as well as implement culturally responsive leadership, take advantage of cultural backgrounds that exist within a school community to promote a successful atmosphere for learners to succeed, which

assists learners to achieve more academically (Drago-Severson, 2012).It is the researchers view that schools should be safe havens that allow learners to develop their social competencies and should be places with positive learning climate to facilitate proper learning. The purpose of this research is to explore a culturally responsive leadership approach towards conflict management to enhance teaching and learning.

An adoption of culturally responsive leadership toward conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning, especially in South African schools, has not been adequately researched. Therefore, this research has an important bearing on conflict management in South African schools and schools in general. This has become necessary because most schools are multicultural and sometimes the school culture does not match the learners' cultural daily perspective which then brings about conflict.

Scholarly literature has revealed that school conflict does affect teaching and learning and if ignored or not managed effectively, could have a great impact on learner achievement. Ineffective management of conflicts will impact negatively on any organization (Oresajo, 2015). Conflict exists in different forms and could exist between learners and teachers of different races, religions, and cultures. This asserts that a culturally responsive leadership approach is indispensable when dealing with conflict management to enhance teaching and learning. The next section discusses the scholarly literature review that supports this study.

2.2.4. DRAWBACKS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP

While defining the characteristics of culturally responsive school leaders, the literature also describes, in contrast, the position of the school, district and system-level personnel who consider the presence of students from diverse cultural backgrounds as 'an unwanted burden' (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2020) Bias, fear, lack of cultural awareness, the absence of professional strategies and adequate support structures impede the ability of some educators to develop culturally responsive learning environments. Such educators are inclined to consider students from a different cultural background in a 'deficit' manner, blaming the students for what they lack. For example, Roybal (2018) describes a situation where teachers did not have the cultural proficiency to teach culturally diverse students effectively. In this example, a dispiriting climate

emerged with conflict, misunderstanding, low teacher morale, high student indiscipline, with low student achievement becoming the norm. In such situations, the impact of culture on the classroom remains largely misunderstood, ignored or minimised. Germain to the creations of effective culturally responsive learning environments, Khalifa et al. (2016) are also of the view that school leaders should be provided with the professional development and skillset to build culturally responsive practices together with an understanding of how to lead reform in teacher practice, the school environment, and in the school's interaction with the community of parents and students.

2.3   CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Havely and Cohen (2019) explain that a condition or situation where two or more people clash on ideas and opposing needs is called conflict. Bano, Ashraf and Zia (2013) agree that conflict is a situation where there is strife between the parties who share a common organisation but have different perceptions and opinions that are opposite to each other. Akparep (2019) concurs that conflict is an interactive process, which breeds a lot of incompatibility among individuals. Interpersonal conflict occurs when a group of people's beliefs and values do not match (Salleh & Adulpakdee, 2012) which often occurs daily among people. Behari-Leak (2017) concurs that lack of clarity, difference of beliefs increases interpersonal conflicts.

According to Kupe (2022), religious and racially motivated conflict occurs in schools. Historically, religious, and racial conflicts may be a result of long-standing hatred, circumspection or misunderstandings between groups that are different from each (Gundelach, 2014). In addition, conflict arising from religion, race, socio-economic status or family background, cognitive levels in a particular subject, and poor performance just to mention a few, is prevalent among learners in schools. The element of bias and prejudice stirs its head each time schools try to handle such differences, which has created new challenges (Ford, 2021). In addition to learners experiencing conflict, teachers experience conflict in the workplace as well.

Learners that are exposed to racial, discriminatory or hate crimes are seriously

affected by these actions and their physical, emotional, and academic development is harmed (OCR, 1999). Experiencing discrimination, institutional racism leaves one with mental trauma and stress, such individuals must deal with maladaptive responses to stress by means of substance abuse (Comas-Diaz, 2016). Learners who experience such conflict, benefit less from the educational process, which defeats the goal of providing equal educational opportunities to all learners (Comas-Diaz, 2016). In effect, racial and identity conflict negatively impact schools, such conflict produces an environment that is not safe for those students involved and all learners in general (Vorlicek, 2022). Conflict is regarded as a destructive tool which leads to low performance, communication breakdown, arguments and hostility which affects the running of schools (Bano *et al.,* 2013).

Management of conflict, according to Moran (2001), is an ideology and a skill set that helps individuals and groups understand as well as deal with conflict as it surfaces, and if handled well, could lead to strengthened relations, solidarity, and peace (Bano *et al.,* 2013)

Management of conflict is necessary because conflict is a part of everyday life and is unavoidable in the workplace (Aja, 2015). Therefore, conflict must be dealt with accordingly when it arises (Astor & Benbenishty, 2018)

According to Johnson (1994) in Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2013), conflict management is a situation where managers try to prevent harmful conflict by intentionally promoting positive resolution, as unmanaged conflict can create dysfunctional schools. With all school conflict, the critical aspect experienced is the disruption of teaching and learning, disruption of academic programmes, teachers transferring to other schools, hostility, and withdrawal from participating in extra- curricular activities (Oboegbulem & Alfa, 2013).

In most schools in South Africa, there is a high occurrence of conflict in and outside the classroom. Maunjiri and Uzhenyu (2017) state that conflict that occurs in school either between learner and learner, learner and teacher, and between teachers and learners' parents. When conflict is not managed properly, the consequences are severe (Enyinda, Enyinda, Nbah & Ogbuehi, 2021). According to Zewotir and North (2011), the government of South Africa is still struggling with past legacies, and at the same time trying to strike a balance between opportunity and risk; therefore, the South

African Education system is in a dysfunctional but transformative state. The majority of South African schools have inherited the legacy of dysfunction (Grant, Jasson & Lawrence, 2010).

As an example of a multi-cultural, diverse country, Nigeria experiences different categories of conflict, most especially those relating to ethnicity and religion (Omorogbe & Omohan, 2005; Osaghae & Suberu, 2005). Clear examples of such conflict in Nigeria are the tensions between Christians and Muslims due to power struggles and the violent attacks by Boko Haram which had serious effects on education. Young girls have been forced out of schools and violated, school were shut down and burnt as result of the attacks and teaching and learning was disrupted (Oladunjoye & Omemu, 2013)

Akinnubi and Gbadeyan (2015) states that one of the benefits of managing conflict properly is the effective usage of available resources. Nwogbaga, Mwankwo and Doris (2015) state that if one applies formal communication and control measures, conflict could be managed and resolved effectively.

Over the years, race-related conflicts have been reported in the news, highlighting South Africa as a country where conflict constantly occurs (Hemson, 2006), particularly with a multicultural nation and where conflict on race, gender, religion, andlinguistics, just to mention a few, occur. According to Lietz (2018), racial bias, attitudesusing practices and laws that are systematic and providing opportunities by race, is an example of institutional racism. The inability to handle such differences without prejudice or bias creates challenges for the school leaders with the issue of racism continuing to plague South African educational institutions. For example, the racist incident at Stellenbosch University, where a white student urinated on the belongings of a black student, has presented an opportunity to open deeper conversations on racism in South African institutions, Source: sabcnews.com,16 May 2022 As a result of this incident, lectures were suspended as black and coloured learners took to the street to protest. Source: sabcnews.com,16 May 2022.

Unresolved conflict can bring about prolonged disruption of school activities and job dissatisfaction which can promote absenteeism and high turnover (Johdi *et al.,* 2012).

Conflict management often focuses on the supply aspects of the conflict to control the conflict, thereby containing the situation by limiting the spread., According to Henkin, Cistone and Dee (2000), it, implies that the management of conflict must be viewed as a process aimed at bridging the gap between the rival parties involved in the conflictby consensus to ensure resolution.

From the above discussion, conflict is perceived as a natural occurrence in a society of which the school is a part. The inability of school leaders to handle such conflict without bias, has led to the prevalence of racism in South African schools.

2.4 THE USE OF SCHOOL POLICY TO ADDRESS CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP

The National Education Policy (2020) recognises the importance of bridging the language barrier between teachers and students, creating digital libraries, popularising language learning as well as ensuring greater access to education. Smith, Moir & Homan (2022) state that the main aim of policies is to improve the quality of life of people while policies in education are government initiatives that determine the direction of an educational system (Okoroma, 2000;). Education policy documents promulgated by the South African government after 1994, have developed a perception of what a complete system of education should resemble as per the following guidelines: the development of equality, human rights and human resources. (Christie, 2008). By law, school communities are required to encourage equality and rectifications in their various education activities (RSA, 1996a, 1996b).

The South African White Paper on Education and Training, notice 196 of 1995 which aimed at transforming the South African public service, highlights the following as the particular features of the policy as illustrated in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1: Education and training policy

EDUCATION AND TRAINING	
Aspect	**Explanation**
The Right to Education	The right to basic education; equal access to educational institutions; choice of language of instruction; establishment of educational institutions of a certain character.

Gender Equality Unit	The establishment of the Commission on Gender Equality ensuring gender equality within the education system.
Action Plan for Human Rights in Education	The action plans within each school and educational institution and within each branch and section of the education services at the national and provincial levels.
Language and Culture in Education	The right to use the language and participate in the cultural life of one's choice.
Freedoms of religion	The belief, opinion, and expression in education: including academic freedom in higher learning institutions.
Other rights of the person	The management practices in the education sector must comply with the nation's new constitutionally protected human rights culture.

(Source: White Paper on Education and Training Notice 196 of 1995 Department of Education Parliament of the Republic of South Africa Cape Town, 15 March 1995)

The amendment of the South African School Act (RSA, 1996a) reaffirms the rights and freedom guaranteed to all citizens. One such is the Basic Education Law Amended Act 15 of 2011, which ensures that there is no unfair discrimination in respect of official languages, (Amendment of section 9 of Act 84 of 1996, as amended by section 7 of Act 48 of 1999 and section 2 of Act 24 of 2005). The South African Constitution Section 29(2) gives learners of a public school the right to choose from any of the official languages they prefer as a medium of instruction where such education is reasonably practicable.

In 2003, Kader Asmal, the-then Minister of Education, explained that in South African schools, no specific religious culture should dominate over or subdue the other. Between 1999-2004, Minister Kader Asmal's initiative to include some of the central values in the South African education, led to the formation of key educational policies like the National Policy on Religion and Education of 2003, The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy. Ten key values contained in the constitution and regarded as keys for social transformation were identified by the Manifesto of values. These included (i) an open society, (ii) Ubuntu (human dignity), (iii) democracy, (iv) equality, (v) accountability, (vi) non-sexism and non-racism, (vii) the rule of law, (viii) reconciliation (ix) social justice and equity and (x) respect (DoE, 2001).

The policy regulating religion acknowledges the existence of different religious dispensations and education. This policy, the National Policy on Religion and Education, therefore, entertains the possibility of creative interaction between schools and faith, and at the same time, tries to protect young people from discrimination or coercion from religion. The policy was designed to be unbiased towards any religion or faith and intends to accept and adopt the religious diversity of South Africa. The education system, including the districts, provincial and national must embrace this concept to manage conflicts and enhance teaching and learning (RSA, 2003)

The Department of Basic Education annual report has revealed strategies to be put in place to ensure quality Education for all children in South Africa with special emphasis on the prioritisation of the girl child (source: Department of basic education annual report, 2020/2021, https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23995/). In Section 3(5) of the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996b), the policy on admission to school, states that learners should not be excluded based on gender, language, race, culture, disability, religion, HIV status, or pregnancy. Victimisation of a learner by suspension from classes, denial of participation in cultural or social activities of the school, or otherwise because the parent or guardian is or is unable to pay the school fees required, is unacceptable. If parents are not able to afford schoolbooks or school uniforms, this may also not be used as the reason for learner exclusion, as depicted in the National Education Policy Act No, 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996).

Literature reveals that in Nigeria, the National Gender policy (2006) was adopted to replace the Women's Policy of 2000 which sought to empower women to create gender equity (World Development Report, 2017). The National Gender Policy aims to ensure equal access to both formal and informal education for women, boys and girls. The policy seeks to eliminate gender-based cultural bias, establish equity between boys and girls, and reduce gender-based conflict and violence in schools.

The above discussion provides evidence of the attempt to restructure the education system in South Africa to ensure that parity exists in South African schools to enhance teaching and learning. There is also evidence that other African countries, such as Nigeria are on the same trajectory. The above-mentioned general Education policies and school- based policies including the amendment of the South African School Act (RSA, 1996a), the Basic Education Law Amended Act 15 of 2011, and policies like the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy of 2001 and the National Policy on

Religion and Education of 2003, can be used to guide leaders to manage conflicts in schools to enhance teaching and learning.

2.5   THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES BY THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TO RESOLVING CONFLICT

Educational leadership touches on the attributes and skills exhibited by leaders or managers when attending to the educational needs of multicultural groups of learners. The need to adapt the curricula and teaching methods to a culturally and linguistically diverse student body is emphasised (Andersen & Ottesen, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nusche, 2009). As per Khalifa (2020), most educational leaders lack culturally responsive skills. This has impacted negatively on the teaching and learning process (Valente, Lourenco & Németh, 2020). In culturally responsive practices, the promotion of equality and differences ensures that discrimination and any forms of conflict such as religion, race, socio-economic status or family background, cognitive levels in a particular subject and poor performance are addressed and a resolution found. The role of school leaders, therefore, cannot be overemphasised because they are responsible for creating a school environment that embraces diversity by encouraging staff, teachers and learners to improve their consciousness of the different aspects of heterogeneity to promote an all-inclusive environment where everyone feels safe, feels valued and respected. Many teachers in South Africa, however, have limited knowledge on the disciplinary strategies of dealing with conflict and they end up making use of humiliating punishment instead of corrective strategies (Van Wyk, 2001). Therefore, teachers and school leaders need a broad skill set to manage modern conflict in schools to enhance teaching and learning and minimise anynegative effects (Olubunmi, 2014; Uchendu, Anijaobi-Idem & Odigwe, 2013).

Culturally responsive leaders such as school managers who aim at promoting a positive school climate, can have a major impact on the comprehensive school setting and make the substantial changes required to meet the needs of all students while maintaining positive relationships with the community surrounding the school. According to Getha-Taylor et al. (2020), educational leaders should embrace diversity to be culturally responsive to ensure the smooth running of the school, these culturally responsive leaders scrutinise school policies and follow procedures when dealing with conflict in schools, to promote social justice for all (Getha-Taylor et al., 2020). For example, leaders and teachers visiting learners at home can be arranged to encourage

dialogue with members of the learner's family to gather vital information about the learner. Such interactions can inform leaders and teachers on beliefs and standards from the learner's home environment which can assist in solving conflict that occurs at school (NAEYC, 1995). Education leaders and teachers, armed with such information, can help in dealing with the conflict which could improve the learners' emotional and social adjustment needs. Empathy is a culturally responsive practice adopted by leaders for encouraging positive relationships. Empathetic leaders portraya sense of understanding of the experiences of others and are therefore able to offer support (Berliner & Materson, 2015). Schools should endeavour to teach learners to realise and embrace their own beliefs and practices as well as acknowledge the cultural heritage of other learners.

Cultural responsiveness integrates cultures and experiences of different ethnic groups in the instructional process in acceptance of their importance (Freeman & Freeman, 2004). The onus, therefore, falls on the culturally responsive leader and teachers to promote awareness. This can be done in the classroom with learning activities that inculcate attributes such as tolerance, compassion, respect, kindness and responsibility which helps learners to uncover similarities of beliefs and standards existing among peers (Berliner & Materson, 2015). Teachers should motivate learners to work together as a single unit, allowing learners to support and aid one another (Freeman & Freeman, 2004).

2.6　CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES IN IMPLEMENTING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

In implementing conflict management in schools, leaders may be faced with both challenges and success.

2.6.1　Challenges

Ramsbotham (2011) explains that in conflict management, parties involved should collectively be willing to consider a negotiated agreement and trust needs to be established (Bryson, Crosby & Middleton Stone, 2015; Ramsbotham, 2011). However, when conflict arises in schools, educational values are damaged (Pibowei-Okubo, 2019).

There are many reasons one could give for the rise of conflict in schools. Schools are

filled with different people from a variety of backgrounds, religions socio-economic status, people with different attitudes who are supposed to work together to realise the goals of an institution. Their nature induces different kinds of conflict that need to be resolved, as they impact schools negatively (Agi, 2016)

Problems arise when learners deliberately target teachers and make plans to frustrate them to a point where they are not able to perform their core duty, which is to teach (Varma,1993). Such learners tend to be arrogant, disobedient, disruptive, exercise examination malpractices and do not pay attention in the classroom. Some institutions also exhibit elements of bias and racial discrimination. The Sunday Times (15 January 2019) reported that a high school intentionally turned away black pupils on the grounds that their classrooms were full but accepted white learners. The school also promoted white learners who had failed but retained black learners that had failed. These are some of the discriminatory challenges experienced in schools.

Groups, having different value systems, might not participate in negotiations and might even undermine the conflict management process (Satterfield, 2002), especially in a situation where both groups stick to their opinions and insist that they are right, therefore, refusing to listen to one another. As a result of an unwillingness to comprise, the conflict remains unsolved. Once the conflict is not managed, it can lead to many dysfunctional outcomes. The learner teacher ratio is also a challenge in schools because when the classrooms are overcrowded, it becomes difficult to Instil order and discipline, and this affects learner performance and achievement (Savage,1999).

The effectiveness of conflict management is hindered by numerous challenges. The integration of learners with special needs to mainstream secondary schools has also become a problem since most schools are not well equipped to accommodate such learners. Teachers do not possess the requisite training and material to handle such learners (Tapala, Van Niekerk & Mentz, 2021). In addition, in many South African schools, parents are not involved in the education of their children and do not assist teachers in reinforcing discipline in their homes (Van Wyk, 2001)

If the SMT cannot find successful means to deal with the issue, the conflict will continue. Escalating discrimination that exists between groups and the issue of favouritism towards a particular group may render the conflict management process

unfair (Manktelow & Birkinshaw, 2018). Roszak, Horvat & Wółkowski (2021) suggest that if a person perceives that treatment, in reward and punishment systems is unjust, it could result in tension and conflict. Lack of communication could pose a challenge to effective conflict management (Iwuagwu, 2011). A resolution session can only be effective if the parties involved are willing to be open to discussion and hear what each has to say. Adhiambo and Enose (2011) state that conflict brings about discomfort and stress, and if unmanaged, can lead to non-productive results in schools from both learners and teachers affected.

2.6.2 Successes

Conflict management is a necessity in schools because teaching and learning that is meaningful cannot take place in an environment infested with conflict. Conflict needs to be managed in a functional manner (Ohaka, 2016). Conflict management strategies that are effectively applied well bring about harmony and peace in the school. People from different races can co-exist, proper communication impacts positively on teachers and learners. Productivity in schools increases (Fajyussalam, Badrudin & Sulhan, 2019).

As per SASA policy, Act No.57 of 2001, schools are mandated to have learner representatives referred to as a Learner Representative Council (LRC). This is the only learner representative body as per policy, which is a step in the right direction to ensure that the learners' voice is heard and will go a long way in ensuring the successful implementation of conflict management in schools, due to the inclusion of learners in the process.

Conflict resolution skills that relate to problem-solving, equip people adequately to resolve their problems quickly and effectively. The introduction of Life Orientation (LO) as a subject teaches learners about issues relating to gender equality, human rights, HIV and other social related issues, as depicted in the Curriculum and Policy Statement (CAPS) for Life Orientation (DBE, 2011). Life Orientation will inculcate culturally responsive values in learners, assist teachers in enhancing teaching and learning and the implementation of conflict management. The flow of activity continues at school and assists in eliminating extended disruptions that might arise. When the management team understands and works at resolving the conflict, the institution will perform at its best because there will be reduced tension among the different parties

or stakeholders. Through collaboration from all stakeholders involved, concerned parties affected by the conflict, can resolve their differences, leaving both parties satisfied. If conflict is well managed, creativity and innovation is developed, a harmonious school environment is created for effective teaching and learning to take place; however, if conflict is not managed well, it will continuously negatively impact any organisation (Oresajo, 2015).

2.7 THE USE OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

In recent years, the focus of management has gravitated towards the development of an effective way of dealing with and managing conflict in schools. Burton (2008) and Duke (2020) suggest that to avoid conflict and violence in schools, learners must be able to interpret and have access to knowledge of school policies and procedures that explain the consequences of such acts. The policies used by the school should correspond to the problems that need to be addressed. Schools must institute operations and implementations of anti-bullying, race and religious policies and the policies must clearly state the form of punishment for the perpetrator.

The school policies should accommodate all learners, eliminating any form of discrimination and prejudice. Each learner should have access to a copy of each policy that will serve as a guide to the learner as well as inform parents. Davis (2010) suggests that there should be a system that takes into consideration the various areas that may promote conflict in a politicised way. This study argues that allowing learners the opportunity to make an input and to engage in the disciplinary committee discussion process and the development of school policies encourages participation, involvement, and commitment which could help address issues of conflict in schools and thereby enhance teaching and learning. Therefore, the involvement of the learners' representative council in the decision-making should be encouraged to remedy the situation.

The School Governing Body (SGB) and School Management Team (SMT) were

institutionalized in the South African Schools Act of 1996 to help manage and run the school to enhance teaching and learning (RSA, 1996). Therefore, these bodies should work together on drafting school policies and attend training so that education managers, stakeholders and teachers are fully equipped with knowledge and skills for conflict management and resolution. Okoye and Obi (2022) explain theories and approaches that help combat conflicts such as negotiations, resolutions, co-cooperation and assertion, collaboration, accommodation and compromise, dimensions which could be adopted by culturally responsive leaders and the SMT as internal conflict resolution techniques.

Compromise as a dimension of conflict management, suggests a situation whereby the parties involved sacrifice something to come to a mutually acceptable decision. The parties involved try to negotiate and accept a give-and-take approach to problematic situations. Avoidance is a deliberate withdrawal or intentionally delaying buying time by not satisfying one's concerns nor that of the other party. It is low assertiveness and low cooperation and helps reduce tension.

Competition involves considering your own interest or stressing your position first before anyone else's interest or opinion, meaning I win, and you lose. It involves high assertiveness and low cooperation. Collaboration, where all parties are involved, involves working together to look for a common ground to solve a problem that fully satisfies everyone's concerns. It is a combination of assertiveness and cooperation. This style is the opposite of theavoidance style and helps to avoid or minimise any negative feelings. In the context of the school environment, conflict amongst learners and/or teachers must be effectively managed by the SMT to create a conducive learning environmentfor teaching and learning.

2.8   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the theoretical framework for this research. The definition, conceptualisation, and relevance of a culturally responsive leadership framework were discussed. This chapter also paid attention to the literature on conflict management, the extent to which school-based policies and general educational policies inculcate

culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management, culturally responsive ideologies or strategies that school management employs in resolving conflict, the challenges and successes of implementing conflict management and strategies that can be employed by the school to improve conflict management to enhance teaching and learning. The next chapter focuses on the research methodology that guided the research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research methodology adopted for this study. The chapter describes the research methodology which includes the research paradigm supporting this study, the research approach, the design as well as the methods used such as the population, and the study sample. In addition, the instruments used in data collection, the procedures used for collecting data, methods adopted for analysing data, and their interpretation are also described. The chapter addressed issues relating to the trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As indicated in Chapter 1, research methodology is a technique used to identify, select, and analyse information about a topic (Wilkinson, 2000). When a researcher isable to describe, explain and predict some or other phenomena, what are busy with isresearch methodology procedures (Rajasekar *et al.,* 2013). It is the framework withinwhich research is conducted (Remenyi *et al.,* 1998) and it informs us how the researchshould be carried out.

3.2.1 Research Paradigm

According to Greene (2015), the word 'paradigm' refers to different philosophical practices or perspectives and methodological analysis logics for social inquiry. Put in simpler terms, it is a standard, perspective or set of ideas such as a worldview. Rogers (2017) states that, a paradigm is a set of beliefs that stands for a general view and this shapes the way in which the nature of the world is determined, the possible relationship ranges that occur within it and the individual's place in it. Paradigms thusemanated from arguments raised by philosophers and were categorised as positivism, constructivism and interpretivism. The positivist paradigm argues that a single scientific method was not enough, to tell the truth about something. Some theorists (Martens, 2015; Patton,1990; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a) proposed borrowing elements from all three and creating a fourth paradigm known as the pragmatic

paradigm. The positivism paradigm considers knowledge cannot be confirmed by the senses and that only scientific statements are the true domain of scientists (Bryman, 2012; Kivunja & Kiyuni, 2017).

The constructivist paradigm is different from the positivist paradigm in that the premise upon which the constructivism theory is developed on the assumption that the human interaction with the real world gives birth to reality (Suhendi, Purwarno & Chairani, 2021). For the purpose of this research, the interpretivism research paradigm which insists that in the context of physical science, humans interpret their world and then take action based on their interpretation, was adopted for this study. This means that methods applied to understanding knowledge related to human and social sciences cannot apply in physical sciences (Hammersley, 2013). Holloway &Galvin (2016) indicate that the interpretive paradigm is termed the base of qualitative research approach because it focuses on social realities. Ekpenyong (2018) concurs that interpretivism is a paradigm that explain how people learn. The interpretivist paradigm proposes the use of tools such as interviews, participant observations and focus groups in a qualitative approach to help throw more light on the situation and to explain the findings (Taylor & Medina, 2011).

3.2.2 Research Design

A research design is the set of procedures and methods adopted in collecting and analysing measures of a variable or variables relating to the research problem identified. A research design provides the way or structure, adopted in the data collection and analysis of the process as per Leedy and Ormrod (2015). From a similar angle, Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) maintain that the research design is the overall plan for the entire research.

A qualitative research design was appropriate for this research. Qualitative research design is a suitable method for exploring the topic of culturally responsive leadership and conflict management in secondary schools. This is because qualitative research is designed to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied, which is particularly relevant for exploring complex social issues such as leadership and conflict management in schools. Qualitative research is particularly useful for understanding the context in which a phenomenon occurs. Culturally responsive leadership and conflict management are heavily influenced by contextual factors, such

as school culture, community dynamics, and individual personalities. A qualitative approach allows the researcher to delve deeply into these contextual factors to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. (Creswell, 2017; Merriam, 2018). Qualitative research is well-suited for exploring the experiences and perspectives of diverse groups of people. In the context of culturally responsive leadership and conflict management in schools, this is particularly relevant as it allows the researcher to explore the perspectives of students, teachers, administrators, and community members. This can provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Creswell, 2017). Qualitative research allows for a wide range of data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. This flexibility allows the researcher to tailor the data collection methods to the specific needs of the study, which is particularly useful when exploring complex social issues such as culturally responsive leadership and conflict management. (Merriam, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 2016)

Data were collected using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) agree that to collect qualitative data, one can make use of interviews, participant observation or describing records. Qualitative research considers the exploration andcomprehension of how problems relating to social or human factors are understood bygroups or individuals (Creswell, 2014).

3.3   RESEARCH METHODS

As indicated in Chapter 1, all processes, strategies, and techniques employed in collecting and analysing such data are referred to as the research methods. Creswell (2014) explained that research methodology is the systematic investigation of study materials and resources that shapes how people understand the world around them. Research methods comprise a range used in the collection of data. The choice is dependent on the approach taken.

3.3.1   Selection of Participants

The population is referred to by Polit and Hungler (1999:37) as "an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications" In order to determine the target population, one looks at the characteristics the people possess and the experience they have based on the study variable so that the resultsof the

study can be transferred back to the rest of the population.(Ackerman, Schmid, Rudolph, Seamans, Susukida, Moitabai & Stuart , 2019).

DePoy and Gitlin (2016:191) state that a population includes the "totality of persons, organisation units, case records, events, or other sampling units related to theresearch problem". Maxfield and Babbie (2014:186), further explain that "a target population is the main population from which a sample population can be consideredor drawn". It takes into account all elements and researchers usually generalise their results on the target population (Welman & Kruger, 2001).

In this study, the population comprised secondary schools in the Johannesburg East district of South Africa. However, the study focused on three selected secondary schools - two public secondary schools and one independent secondary school. These schools were selected because they are situated in the same district, receive similar resources, and attend the same workshops. An independent school was also considered among the three selected schools to understand the modus operandi of the independent schools as compared to public schools when it comes to implementing culturally responsive leadership.

Maxfield and Babbie (2014) point out that a target population is a very important feature of sampling. Population sampling is the process of taking a subset of subjects that can be used as a representative of the entire population. A population sample is defined as a small proportion of the total set of objects, individuals, or events that together make up the subject of a study (Creswell, 2013). According to Patton (2015), a sample is a group of people, objects, or items that are taken from a large population for measurement and should be representative of the population to ensure that the findings from the research sample can be generalised to the population as a whole, but it should be of sufficient size to qualify for usage for analysis.

For this study, the purposive sampling technique was adopted. The purposive sampling technique is also referred to as the judgement sampling technique, as it is the intentional selection of a participant taking into consideration the attributes the participant possesses and does not need any underlying theories it is a non-random technique (Patton,2014; Bernard, 2002).

In this study, the sample included the school management team (SMT), Life

Orientation (LO) teachers, and the members of the Learner Representative Council (LRC) at two selected public schools and one independent secondary school in the Johannesburg East district, Gauteng, South Africa as indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.2: Study sample size and composition

SN	Participants	Number
1	School Management Team (Heads of Department)	6 (2 per school)
2	Teachers (Life Orientation)	9 (3 per school)
3	Learners (Learner Representative Council - LRC)	9 (3 per school)
Total sample size		**24**

3.3.1.1 SAMPLING PROCEDURES

For this study, the purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting the 24 participants. The purposive sampling technique is also referred to as the judgement sampling technique, as it is the intentional selection of a participant taking into consideration the attributes the participant possesses and does not need any underlying theories it is a non-random technique (Patton,2014; Bernard, 2002).

The School Management Team (SMT) members were purposively sampled because they are tasked with the professional management of all activities that promote teaching and learning in schools, including conflict management (South AfricanSchools Act, Act 84 of 1996). The criteria used to select the heads of department included their experience in a leadership position. The researcher targeted heads of department who have been teaching for more than five years. The researcher targeted heads of department that were or at some point have taught Life orientation or heading the Life Orientation department ,reason being that life orientation as a subject deals with topics that deal with learner development in society, morals ,conflict management and other socio economic factors just to mention a few. The head of department were selected by the researcher because they shared one or more of the same characteristics. The six purposively sampled heads of department were involved in the semi-structured interviews. The key focus of the interviews were to find as much information as possible concerning the experiences they went through when dealing with conflict in schools as head of department.

Life Orientation teachers were also selected as these teachers are in a better position when it comes to regularly interacting with learners in and out of the classroom as the subject demands. They have the opportunity to better observe learner interaction behaviour. The researcher targeted teachers that had experience in teaching life orientation due to the subject content which also deals with conflict and the management. The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) is a mandatory body, according to Departmental requirements. They act as direct spokes people for their grades and sometimes sit at the school management board meetings. Taking these into consideration, I decided to select this category of learners.

The nine purposively sampled teachers and the nine-learner representative council were involved in the answering of the questionnaire. The key focus of the questionnaire was to find as much information as possible concerning the experiences they went through when dealing with conflict in schools.

3.3.2   Data Collection Techniques

A step-by-step documentation of a plan that the researcher uses in the process of collecting and analysing data is called a data collection technique (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011:28). The researcher is able to answer the research questions through the data collection process by carefully gathering important information (Rimando et al., 2015). The most frequently used methods include observation, questionnaires, surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. Structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are prominent research instruments used to gather data from sampled participants in this study.

3.3.2.1   Structured self-administered questionnaire

The researcher designed a structured self-administered questionnaire to be used as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was subjected to a pre-test pilot study before its utilisation in the actual data collection exercise. As researchers identify flaws in research design, analyse plans and refine information collected through pilot studies, they gain lots of experience (Nnaji *et al.,* 2018). The structured questionnaire was piloted with members of the target population who did not take part in the main study. These participants possessed characteristics and represented members of the actual

study sample. This assisted in adjusting the structured questionnaire and ensuring that the questionnaire measured what was intended concerning the objectives of the study.

The structured questionnaire was administered to learners (Appendix E) who were members of the LRC during Phase one of the data collection process and teachers (Appendix F). The structured questionnaire was anonymous therefore allowing participants the freedom of expression without the fear of victimisation or judgement. Data were captured as written responses.

3.3.2.2 *Semi-structured interviews*

A semi-structured interview is a type of interview where the interviewer or researcher starts with a set of interview subjects but is flexible enough to ask new questions or to vary the order of the questions asked when the research situation demands it (Saunders *et al.,* 2016). Cooper and Schindler (2014) indicate that in a semi-structured in-depth interview, interviewees are motivated to give as much information as possible. The interviewer begins with a small set of open-ended questions, and also spends time exploring participant responses, and urging them to provide more detail and clarification; these data are generally analysed qualitatively. Gestural communication signs are also observed and taken into account during data collection. In the process, data are captured as written responses and recordings. Guerra-Gomez *et al.* (2013) believes interviews are a very productive way of addressing issues of concern.

Semi-structured interview guides were used to collect data from SMT members and LO teachers (Bryman, 2008:470). The interview guides focused on finding answers to the sub-questions presented in Chapter 1. Before conducting the interviews, the interview guide questions were subjected to a thorough moderation and review by an expert. This process assisted in diversifying, re-strategising, revising, subtracting and adding new interview questions to the interview guide.

The qualitative data collected through the semi-structured interview guide (Appendix G) were complemented with the review and analysis of documents relevant to the problem at hand. With permission from participants, the interview sessions were recorded to allow for a verbatim transcript which would ensure a deeper understanding of the participants' view and reactions about culturally responsive leadership to conflict management to enhance teaching and learning.

3.3.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

According to Cresswell, 2013, Analysis of data is a process of interpreting data by the developing of codes after careful examination of the data base to create themes, this involves critical steps in the process of organising the collected data. Kolb (2012) further explains that qualitative data analysis includes working with, organising and breakdown of data into units that are manageable, then coding, synthesising the units and searching for patterns.

To analyse the qualitative data thematic/content, usually applied to a set of texts, such as structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview transcripts, was used in this study. The data were closely examined to identify common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. There are various approaches to conducting thematic analysis, but this research made use of the most common form which follows a six-step process: familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and the write-up (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Findings from the structured self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were the primary data and were combined and interpreted together. During the interpretation of the data, reference was made to other secondary sources of information obtained through document analysis to complement the primary data of the study such as relevant school policies.

3.4   TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), trustworthiness is the perception that people have about the results of a research that makes them convinced that the results or findings are good enough to be taken seriously. Trustworthiness in research suggests that evidence, upon which the reported research findings are based, is solid and that the arguments made on the said findings are realistic and believable. Trustworthiness thus entails that the researcher's results, are reliable without any question tags. Shenton (2004) states that the findings from trustworthy research can be said to be grounded in accurate data and thus can be trusted completely. There are fourimportant indicators that must be considered for research to attain a trustworthy status.These according to Lincoln and Guba (1994) include credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability of the findings. Meeting the four indicators of trustworthinessrenders

the research findings valid and reliable. That will make the research highly trustworthy and thereby improve its scientific rigour (Bless, Higson- Smith & Sithole, 2013). The trustworthiness of this research is confirmed as discussedbelow.

3.4.1 Credibility

According to (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams& Blackman (2018), in qualitative research, the representation of the authentic meanings of research as per information solicited from participant by the researcher, is the credibility of the research. Korstjens & Moser (2018), also explain credibility of a research as the consistency between research findings and reality.

To ensure credibility, this research made available extensive details relating toparticipants. This included gender, age, level of education, and employment levels that exist in the institution. I used gender and educational qualifications of participants in the following ways: Purposive sampling: purposive sampling was used to select participants who had the relevant experience with culturally responsive leadership and conflict management in secondary schools. This was to ensure a balance of genders and educational qualifications represented in the sample. According to Polit and Beck (2017), purposive sampling is a method of selecting participants who are likely to have the information needed for the study.

Semi-structured interviews: I conducted semi-structured interviews with participants to collect data on their experiences and their perceptions of culturally responsive leadership and conflict management in secondary schools. Whilst other participants answered a questionnaire. The questions were designed to elicit responses that were relevant to the research questions and were tailored to the participants' educational qualifications and experiences. According to Creswell (2014), semi-structured interviews allow for flexibility in the questions asked and encourage participants to provide detailed responses. The effect of the research findings on the outcome was laid bare irrespective of how they impacted this research.

3.4.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. (Koch, 1994; Polit & Beck, 2012). Anney (2018:277), explains

transferability as the "degree to which the results of a research, irrespective of different participants, yield the same results in similar context". Transferability refers to the potential for extrapolation. It relies on the reasoning that findings can be generalized or transferred to other settings or groups (Polit & Beck, 2012). Transferability is the ability of the conclusions of a study to be applied to other scenarios that are similar This is according to Mabuza,Govender,Ogunbanio & Mash(2014)

For the findings of this study to be applicable, a full description of the following relating to the research was provided, the background of this study, research design and methods, and the theoretical framework.

3.4.3   Dependability

According to Merriam (2015)for any research to be dependable the decision trail used by the initial researcher should allow another researcher to follow the same trail and be able to duplicate the research findings with ease, therefore, dependability involves "the provision of an audit trail of the process as it unfolds by the researcher and the aspect of consistency in the analysis procedures, which should be in line with certain standards" (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:122)

Bitsch (2005:86) also explains that dependability refers to "how stable the findings of a research can remain over time". To ensure dependability in this study, participants were allowed to review the findings of this research.

3.4.4   Confirmability

Objective research findings are ones that any other researcher performing the observation, or the same research using different methods, would also arrive at.

Confirmability expresses the theory of objectivity (Bhattacherjee 2012:111), it helps ensure "fairness in a research study". According to Anney 2018, other researchers should be able to confirm research findings. Only data provided by the selected participants were used in this research to help eliminate any element of bias. Participants were accorded access to the research report to peruse through and give their input.

3.4.5   Validity

According to Patino & Ferreira (2018), Validity of a research study is the extent to

which findings from the study participants truly represents the similar participants or individuals outside the study. To ensure validity, an analysis was done. This ensured that the questionnaire measured the concepts under the study (Pallant, 2011).

3.4.6 Reliability

The consistency of an instrument in producing results determines its reliability (Creswell, 2014). Research is reliable if the same measures are used by different researchers to obtain the same results (Maree, 2016). Joppe (2000) puts it that reliability is when the results of research are consistent and represent the study population accurately. He states that reliability is achieved if the results of a particular study are reproduced or replicated using the same method. In this study, enough questions were used to assess competence, and a consistent environment for participants was ensured.

3.5   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Saunders *et al.* (2016), define ethics in research, as behavioural standards portrayed by the researcher with regards to the rights of the research participants and all affected by the research in one way or the other. As the protection of human subjects through the application of appropriate ethical principles is important in any research study, consideration of ethical issues is crucial throughout the study to keep the balance between the potential risks of research and the likely benefits of the research (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynanden, 2001; Arifin, 2018).

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the authorities of different institutions and individuals to conduct the research. Ethical clearance (2021/10/13/47255501/12/AM) was obtained from the University of South Africa (UNISA) (*cf.* Appendix A) and permission to conduct the research was requested and obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) (*cf.* Appendix B). with permission being granted by the Department for research to be conducted in three secondary schools (*cf.* Appendix C) and participants were furnished with an information letter detailing the research aim, purpose, and procedure and then were requested to sign consent forms indicating their willingness to participate (*cf.* Appendix D).

It is worth noting that this research was conducted in compliance with the standards

and ethics of the University of South Africa. Steps were taken to ensure that participants' identities remained undisclosed and that there would be no violation of participants' privacy and non-disclosure. The anonymity of the participants in the study has been maintained by ensuring the questionnaires are not marked in any special way to identify certain individuals taking part in the study and participants' names were not used in the research report (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2014). The researcher also ensured that privileged information given is not presented in a way that easily leads to the identification of the source of information. Such information is presented using pseudonyms to hide its true sources. The researcher avoided using personal perspectives and judgement to influence the interpretations of the findings of the study.

3.6   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted the research methodology adopted for this study. The chapter dealt with the research paradigm supporting this study and outlined the qualitative research design. The population, study sample, and sampling technique were discussed as well as the data collection tools and data analysis techniques. The chapter also addressed the issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations. The next chapter presents the findings emerging from data analysis and its interpretation.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 presents the findings of data analysis and its interpretation in line with the research objectives stated in Chapter 1. The main study aimed at exploring a culturally responsive leadership approach toward conflict management to enhance teaching and learning in selected secondary schools in the Johannesburg East district, Gauteng, South Africa. The objectives of the study were to explore scholarly literature on conflict management in schools, to analyse how general education policies and school-based policies address conflict management through a culturally responsive leadership approach, to explore culturally responsive ideologies or strategies that school management employs in resolving conflict, to investigate the challenges and successes in implementing conflict management, and to explore strategies that can be employed by the school to improve conflict management to promote effective teaching and learning. The findings of this study are qualitatively presented, they are analysed and interpreted with the objective of answering the main research question: *What culturally responsive leadership do schools promote, regarding managing conflict, to enhance teaching and learning in secondary schools?* This chapter beginswith a report of the profile of the participants

4.2   PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

As indicated in Chapter 3, sampling resulted in members of the SMT, Life Orientation teachers and members of the LRC and their profiles are reported in the subsequent sections.

4.2.1   Profile of Participants: SMT and LO Teachers per School

Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 present the profiles of SMT members who participated in the interview sessions.

Table 4.3: Profile of participants - Falcon High School

FALCON HIGH SCHOOL	Gender	Post Level	Highest qualification	Number of years teaching	Current subject(s) taught	Grades Currently Teaching	Ethnicity /Race
FHOD₁	Male	2	PhD	30	Mathematical Literacy/ Life Orientation	12,10	Black
FHOD₂	Male	2	B.Ed.	19	Afrikaans/ Life Orientation	12,11	Coloured
FTEA₁	Male	1	B.Ed.	30	Physical Science / Life Orientation	12,11,9	White
FTEA₂	Female	1	MSc Ed.	18	Mathematics/ Life Orientation	12,10,11,8	Black
FTEA₃	Male	1	B.Ed.	20	English/Life Orientation	11,10,9	Black

Table 4.4: Profile of participants - Eagle High School

EAGLE HIGH SCHOOL	Gender	Post Level	Highest qualification	Number of years teaching	Current subject(s) taught	Grades currently teaching	Ethnicity /Race
EHOD₁	Female	2	M.Ed.	35	Natural Science/Life Orientation	12,11	Black
EHOD₂	Female	2	B.Ed.	6	Mathematics/ Life Orientation	12,11	Indian
ETEA₁	Male	1	BSc.-Honours	7	Accounting/ Life Orientation	12,11,9	Black
ETEA₂	Female	1	B.Ed.	11	IsiZulu/ Life Orientation	12,11,8	Black
ETEA₃	Male	1	Diploma	8 months	Afrikaans/Life Orientation	11,9	White

Table 4.5: Profile of participants – Hawks High School

HAWKS HIGH SCHOOL	Gender	Post Level	Highest qualification	Number of years teaching	Current subject(s) taught	Grades currently teaching	Ethnicity /Race
HHOD$_1$	Male	2	PhD	30	Mathematical Literacy/ Life Orientation	10,12	Black
HHOD$_2$	Male	2	B.Ed.	19	Afrikaans/ Life Orientation	11,10	Coloured
HTEA$_1$	Male	1	B.Ed.	30	Physical Science / Life Orientation	9,11	White
HTEA$_2$	Female	1	MSc Ed.	18	Mathematics/ Life Orientation	9,8	Black
HTEA$_3$	Male	1	B.Ed.	20	English/Life Orientation	10,9	Black

The tables above depict that out of the 15 teachers who took part in the research, which includes the HoDs, 87% were professionally qualified teachers, the majority of whom possessed a Bachelor of Education qualification. On average, 47% are currently teaching Grade 12 and all have experience teaching Life Orientation (LO). The ethnicity distribution is diverse but dominated by Black teachers. Data collected revealed that four teachers had over 23 years of teaching experience, two teachers were aged between 18 and 23 years, four teachers between 12 and 17 years, three teachers 6 to 11 years and one teacher had 4 years of experience with only one having less than a year's teaching experience.

Out of the Heads of Department (HoDs) interviewed (n=6), three were female and three were male of which 67% were Black. The mean average of the number of years as Heads of Department ($\dot{X}$) was 4 years ($\dot{X} = \frac{\Sigma f}{n}$). This average indicates that the majority of the HoDs have been in their managerial post for a long time and therefore should have experience in dealing with conflicts.

4.2.2   Profile of Participants: Learner Participation Table

Table 4.4 shows the demographic characteristics of the Learner Representative Council who completed the questionnaire.

Table 4.6: Profile of learner representative council

LEARNER REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL(RCL)		Gender	Ethnicity and Race	GRADE
FALCON HIGH SCHOOL				
FRCL$_1$		Male	Coloured	10
FRCL2		Female	Black	11
ERCL3		Female	Black	12
EAGLE HIGH SCHOOL				
EERCL$_1$		Female	Black	12
ERCL2		Female	Indian	11
ERCL3		Male	Black	10
HAWKS HIGH SCHOOL				
HRCL$_1$		Male	Black	12
HRCL2		Male	Black	11
HRCL3		Male	Black	10

The results indicate that there was almost an equal distribution of respondents by gender; 52% were male and 48% were female, as presented in Table 5.4 above. Although the schools together had a representation of learners from the different race or cultural groups, the Learner Representative Council (RCL) members that took part in the study comprised mostly Black South African nationals with 2% foreign nationals from different nationalities, 1% Indians and 1% Coloured learners.

4.3   PRESENTATION OF ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

The data were reduced and analyzed as explained in Chapter 3. Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework was employed for a thematic analysis. I familiarized myself with the data, generated codes and constructed themes and reviewed potential themes. Themes were then defined and named to generate the report. The resulting five main themes and categories are presented in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.7: Emergent themes and categories

Sub Research Questions	Themes	Categories
1.What does the scholarly literature suggest about managing conflicts that occur in school?	1. Understanding of conflicts in a school context	1.1 School management teams' conceptualisation of conflict in schools 1.2 Teachers conceptualisation of conflict in schools 1.3 Learners conceptualisation of conflict in schools
2. To what extend do school-based policies and general education policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management?	2. The relevancy of school - based policies and general educational conflict policies.	2.1 School management teams' perception on the relevancy of school-based policies to address conflict. 2.1.1Do school management team members have copies of school policies? 2.1.2. Do school management team members make use of the school policies when dealing with conflict inside and outside the classroom? 2.1.3 Do the school policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management? 2.2 Teachers perception on the relevancy of school-based policies to address conflict. 2.2.1 Do teachers have copies of school policies? 2.2.2. Do teachers make use of the school policies when dealing with conflict inside and outside the classroom? 2.2.3 Do the school policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management? 2.3 Learners perception on the relevancy of school-based policies to address conflict.

Sub Research Questions	Themes	Categories
		2.3.1 Do learners have copies of school policies? 2.3.2. Do learners abide to the school policies? 2.3.3 Do the policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership in resolving conflicts in schools?
3.What culturally responsive ideologies/strategies do school management team employ in resolving conflict?	3. Culturally responsive strategies employed in resolving conflicts in schools.	3.1 School management teams employed strategies to resolve conflict in schools 3.2 Teachers employed strategies to resolve conflict in schools 3.2.1 what strategies are used to resolve conflict? 3.2.2 suggested changes to be made in schools 3.2.3 Learner Performance 3.3 Learners satisfaction on how conflicts are resolved in their schools. 3.3.1 What are learners' perceptions on how teachers handle conflict in schools. 3.3.2 Suggested changes to be made at school? 3.3.3 What are the learners' experiences of the use of language for teaching and learning in class? 3.3.4 Learners sense of belongingness in school?
4.What are the challenges and successes in implementing conflict management?	4. The challenges and successes in implementing conflict management	4.1 School management teams challenges in implementing conflict management in schools 4.1.1 Dealing with learner discipline? 4.1.2 Interacting with learners from different cultural background? 4.1.3 Knowledge of access to teaching and learning resources for learners with special needs? 4.2.1 Teachers challenges in implementing conflict management in schools

Sub Research Questions	Themes	Categories
		4.2.1 Dealing with learner discipline? 4.2.2 Interacting with learners from different cultural background? 4.2.3 Knowledge of access to teaching and learning resources for learners with special needs? 4.3.1 Learner satisfaction on how conflicts are handled in schools 4.4 The successes of implementing conflict management in schools. 4.4.1 Learner performance
5.What strategies can be employed by schools to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning?	4.4.5 Strategies to improve conflict management through culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools	5.1 school management teams use of culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools. 5.2 Teachers use of culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools 5.3. The benefits of employing cultural responsive theory to promote teaching and learning.

The findings that emerged from the data analysis of the interviews and questionnaire are presented below in the form of discussions supported by direct quotes from the participants.

4.4 PRESENTATION OF EMERGENT THEMES

The main themes that emerged from the analysis included: understanding of conflicts in a school context, the relevancy of school-based and general educational conflict policies, culturally responsive strategies employed in resolving conflicts in schools, challenges, and successes in implementing conflict management in schools and strategies to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning.

4.4.1   Theme 1: Understanding of conflicts in a school context

The research sought to discover participants' understanding of conflict in a school context, as conflict has the potential to affect the teaching and learning. The theme was discussed below, under three categories.

Category 1.1: School management team conceptualisation of conflict in schools

How the school management team conceptualises conflict that occurs in schools is important considering that conflict may hinder teaching and learning if not managed properly and will impact learner performance negatively (Catana 2016). This category reflects on the participant SMT's conceptualisation of the term conflict within the school context. From the responses that emanated from the participants, there was an indication that they all had a very good idea of what conflict is in a school context and what it entails if not managed well. The following participants responses helped to authenticate the above category:

> *Conflict is a process that involves disagreements between two or more people in school. This means that there must be some form of communication that takes place in order to resolve the issue.* [FHod 1]

> *When teachers or learners are not able to co-exist with each other, it is usually because of conflict (a problem that is not addressed nor resolved.). This may hinder proper teaching and learning in the classroom.* [EHod 2]

> *Conflict is a mental struggle that occurs as a result of opposing needs or incompatible demands in schools. If the issue is not dealt with appropriately, the affected person or people may struggle to function well in school.* [HHod 1]

The participant responses indicated that there is an understanding of what conflict is and what it entails. The explanation given by the participants aligned with the definition of conflict given by Havely and Cohen (2020) that conflict is a condition in which people experience a clash of opposing aspirations. Conflict can also be defined as opposing views actions that results in arguments and fights between individuals or groups. It is evident from the participant responses that if conflict is not resolved or well managed, as it can be destructive.

Category 1.2: Teachers' conceptualisation of conflicts in a school context

To explore their conceptualisation of what conflict is, participant teachers were asked to define in their own words what conflict is and what they understood about it, in a school context. These were the teacher's response:

> *Conflicts are problems that arise due to misunderstandings between two people or groups of people in school.* [ETEA 3]

> *Conflicts that occur in school are many and they have to do with two people not agreeing on something or people who have different believe systems and values, and as a result do not have a good relationship with each other. This could be teacher-teacher conflict or teacher-learner conflicts or even learner to learner conflict.* [HTEA 2]

> *Conflict is a situation that arises due to people or a group of people who are not in agreement with each other and cannot find common ground in resolving the situation. [FTEA 1]*

All participants had a similar understanding of what conflict in a school context entailed. Their conceptualisation of the term confirms the assertion made by Salleh and Adulpakdee (2012) that conflict can occur when beliefs of two or more groups fail to match and that conflict can occur between students' parents and teachers, between students and teachers, between students and student.

Category 1.3: Learners' conceptualisation of conflict in a school context

This category focused on learners' understanding of the concept of conflict within the school context.

> *Conflict is a situation where people do not get along with each other because of prejudices and stereotypes that are out there.* [HLRC1]

> *Conflict is when one struggles to accept issues that are not in line with his or her own believes.* [ELRC 3]

> *Conflict is a verbal argument between two or more people in school concerning a certain matter and if care is not taken the argument can cause a physical fight.* [FLRC 1

Conflict is a fight between people or a group of people who don't agree on things, and the conflict can cause harm to one's feelings or emotions and can lead to depression. [HLRC2]

The responses of the learner participants indicate that they have a very good understanding of the term conflict. Their remarks also indicate that they are aware that conflict poses as a threat to one's emotions and health if not managed. This statement aligned with the explanation given by Oboegbulem and Alfa (2013) which indicates that part of the outcome of conflict is disruption of academic programmes.

4.1.1 Theme 2: The relevancy of school-based and general educational conflict policies

This theme concentrated on the relevancy of school-based and general educational conflict policies. Participants were asked to comment on their perceptions of the relevancy of school conflict policies. This theme had three categories that also has subcategories.

Category 2.1: School management teams' perception on the relevancy of school-based conflict policy to address conflicts

For a school to function properly and effectively, there should be clear school policies and departmental policies that guide the day-to-day running of the organisation. Clear procedures and guidelines need to be in place to assist the teachers to do their job well. Such school and departmental policies should cater for everything including student discipline, attendance, emergency procedures, health and safety issues just to mention a few. These procedures ensure accountability from either the teacher, learner or parent and establish expectations. Bearing all these in mind, participants were asked about their perception on the relevancy of school-based and general education policies to address conflict and their responses followed thereafter.

Policies help to establish standards in school and prevents the element of bias when handling some of these conflicts. [HHOD 1]

Some of the policies need to be amended since a lot has changed since the time they were formed. [FHOD 1]

Policies are straight forward, safes time and protects us when we apply them. [EHOD 2]

Category 2.1.1: Do school management team members have copies of school policies and general education policies?

At the beginning of the year each teacher in the school is given a file that contains school-based policies, and we receive throughout the year copies of relevant general education policies, we need. [HHod2]

The admin office has all the copies of all school-based and general education policies and is photocopied for us upon request. [EHod2]

We do have school policies and other general policies we get on the website; however, the policies are too many to keep track of. [FHod1]

Category 2.1.2: Do school management team members make use of the school policies and general education policies to resolve conflict in school?

Mostly we focus on the school code of conduct for learner discipline, dress code etc, and other school policies are only referred to when we find ourselves in a dilemma concerning certain issue, -that's when we browse for information. Otherwise, we also improvise along the way using our own experience and applying our mind. [FHod 2]

We adhere strictly to the school policies. Learners and parents have copies [HHod 1]

Some issues need wisdom to handle, some you just have no choice but to apply policy [EHod 1]

Category 2.1.3: Do school-based and general education policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict managements in schools?

Yes, they do inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address issues such as, no discrimination towards learners from different cultural, racial, or religious background. [HHod 2]

I don't believe they are specific in saying these are culturally responsive ways to deal with conflict, one must read in between the lines in order to

know whether cultural responsiveness is addressed. [EHod1]

I am not sure because I haven't managed to read all the policies [FHod2]

There are so many policies, yet we still find ourselves battling with conflicts in schools that have to do with race, culture and belief systems. To some extent the policies are not effective [FHod1]

The overall responses given by the SMT participants highlighted the fact that the team have access to school-based policies and general education policies; however, some participants indicated that they did not have the time to read through all the policies and have not developed a clear understanding of some of the policies. While other participants indicated that they found the policies useful because it guides them to a certain extent. The participants also indicated that they make use of school-based policies to curb the late coming, dress code, and discipline measures to a certain extent. Others indicated that there are a lot of policies, but they are still battling with finding solutions for conflict that occur in schools, suggesting that the policies are not so effective in other areas and perhaps need to be reviewed. The overall responses indicate that participants are not in agreement with each other concerning the relevancy of the above-mentioned policies.

Category 2.2: The teachers' perceptions on the relevancy of general educational conflict policies to address school conflicts

Category 2.2.1: Do teachers have copies of school policies?

Yes, we do have the school-based policies and the general education policies the management team have them somewhere in their offices. [ETEA1]

Yes, we are given copies of the school policies at the beginning of the year. [HTEA 3]

We were only given the school code of conduct and not the general education policies, we google those ourselves. [FTEA1]

No, the school didn't provide the policies for us, it is upon one's initiative and interest to get the copies of the policies. [FTEA2]

Category 2.2.2: Do teachers make use of the school policies to resolve conflict?

No, there is no time to consult policy when you are faced with a situation at hand, you act and check later with policy. [FTEA3]

No, as a teacher I usually refer the case to my immediate senior (the HoD) who will handle the case, I don't recall using policies. [FTEA2]

To a certain extent yes, there are times when one refers to policy to address an issue that has occurred in the classroom or outside the classroom [HTEA2]

Category 2.2.3: Do school-based and general education policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict managements in schools?

Yes, school policies do speak about things such as racism, equality and respecting everyone's culture, which to me is culturally responsive leadership, we also observe religious holidays. [HTEA2]

To a certain extent yes, but not optimally. The school being a former Model C school it hasn't really adopted black cultures fully. [FTEA2]

Yes, we do have a policy on religion, and admissions policy for example, which apply a culturally responsive leadership approach in school, because they speak out against any form of discrimination, be it gender, race or parents' social economic status. [ETEA3]

Not sure if they do inculcate it, I have not seen it specifically where its mentioned and in which of the policies. I still need to read up about it. [FTEA1]

The teachers' responses from the three questions indicate that some schools are more organised than others as they are able to give their teachers the policies whilst other schools do not cater for the teachers. Although there are school policies, some teachers did not know the content of the policies, while others indicated that the policy does not cater for Black cultures, especially in schools that were former Model C schools. This has led to the suggestion that some teachers do not use the policies to resolve conflict and still need time to familiarise with the different policies. In contrast, some participants indicated that the policies do cater for diverse staff and learners. The amendment of the South African School Act (RSA, 1996a) reaffirmed the rights and freedoms guaranteed to all citizens; however, some teachers indicated that with

increasing diversity in schools, black cultures are not catered for, as for example in former Model C schools because the school culture has already been established to suit the needs of others.

Category: 2.3. Learners' perceptions on the relevancy of school-based conflict policies

Category 2.3.1: Do learners have copies of school policies?

I received a copy with my admission letter in term one Grade 8. I honestly don't have. [HLRC3]

Our code of conduct is a book, and we carry it every day. Its compulsory. [FLRC1]

With ours, you can download it from the school app. [ELRC2]

The majority of learners stated that they had received the school code of conduct at the beginning of the school year. Many schools have designed a booklet for this policy so that it is easier for the learners to carry from home to school and read while other schools have it electronically accessible by learners.

Category 2.3.2: Do learners abide by the school policies?

To be honest, I have never read it, so I'm not sure if I'm doing right or not. [ELRC]

It's a lot to read and understand. I only know the simple ones. [HLRC2]

It is hard to obey because some learners always come to school late because of transport. [FLRC3]

Most responses indicated that despite having their school's code of conduct, some learners still do not comply with it, in terms of discipline, late coming and dress code, to state a few.

Category 2.3.3: Does the policy inculcate culturally responsive leadership in resolving conflicts in schools?

I have not read it. Too many things and pages inside. [ELRC3]

Sometimes I page through it but only when there is an interesting case. [HLRC 1]

Teachers must teach us what is inside the policy because we don't read it. Like I don't know if the policy is fair or not. [FLRC1]

Most of the learners indicated that they have not really read the policy given to them, it seems that it is involved, and learners have not had time to read the whole booklet. At times they just skim through and only locate in what they are interested. Their responses indicate that they are not very familiar with the content of the school policies and therefore do not know whether cultural responsiveness is practised.

The overall answers provided by learners for the three questions above suggest that schools do make an effort in ensuring that each learner has a school code of conduct; however, learners indicated that they just keep it at home and do not really read it. This also suggests that some learners are not following the school rules indicated in the policy, which then causes conflict among such learners and the SMT or teachers responsible for ensuring discipline in the school. As a result of the learners not making time to read the policy, many are not familiar with the content of the policy and are not sure whether the policy is culturally responsive.

4.1.2 Theme 3: Culturally responsive strategies employed in resolving conflicts in schools

Category 3.1: School management teams employed ideologies or strategies to resolve conflicts in schools

A very common problem in South African schools that serves as a hindrance to effective teaching and learning borders around conflict. Van Wyk (2001) states that many teachers in south Africa have limited knowledge when it comes to disciplinary strategies. Smiley (2018) states that conflict in schools generally has a detrimental effect on any school and it can, lead to a hostile school environment for both teachers and learners and affect the quality of work. The onus, therefore, lies on the SMT to constantly resolve conflict using different strategies and ideologies. Participants were asked about the culturally responsive ideologies or strategies that the SMTs employ to resolve conflict.

The ideology is endorsing unity in diversity and the strategy is engaging in talks with learners at assembly point, to make them understand the dangers of conflict,

so that they can learn to deal with conflict situations in better rather than engaging in arguments. [HHod1]

The ideology is respecting all cultures and using the constitution to instil and emphasise to learners the importance of human dignity. [EHod1]

Inclusivity and tolerance are ideologies in mind and the strategy we use is to record misdemeanour forms which are captured on the system and placed in their learner profile, depending on the level of offence, it may warrant a suspension. [FHod1]

Listening to both sides of the story between the parties involved, that could include compromising, after careful consideration, make a judgement or come up with a resolution, at times parental involvement is necessary. [FHod2]

From the participants' response, it is evident that they are constantly confronted with different kinds of conflicts and constantly need to develop themselves to acquire the necessary skills to be able to deal with the conflict as it arises. The implication is that not all SMT members were trained to deal with conflict and need to be equipped in the same manner to possess the expertise to assist learners. From the responses, it is also evident that SMTs seems to have a vision for the schools about inclusivity, respect, equality and tolerance.

Category 3.2: Teachers' employed strategies in resolving conflicts in schools

Category 3.2.1: What strategies are used to resolve conflict in school?

We use the school rules found in the learners' code of conduct and we try to enforce those rules to the latter. [HTEA3]

In the classroom, I and my learners set classroom rules at the beginning of the year and throughout the year. I always refer the learners back to the ground rules set for their class. [FTEA2]

The school has a detention system, where all learners that misbehave are kept behind after school in a certain classroom and are forced to do something meaningful and school related. [ETEA1]

It is difficult to discipline learners hence most teachers resort to punishing the

learners by making them sit on the floor during teaching time in the classroom and making them sweep classrooms during the break with the hope that the punishment will ensure that they do not commit the same offence. [FTEA1]

Category 3.2.2: Suggested changes to be made in schools

Some learners do not read the code of conduct at all. I suggest we read it to them occasionally to remind them. Maybe once every term. [HTEA 2]

Proper lines of communication must be established in schools to avoid inexperienced teachers taking matters into their own hands when trying to resolve issues. [HTEA 3]

I believe if learners have mentor teachers they can speak to regarding certain issues, it will assist in reducing conflicts. We can assign Mentor teachers apart from form teachers. [ETEA1]

When learners are reprimanded, it must be indicated to the student and interested parties, the exact code of conduct violated to avoid bias. [FTEA1]

There are many teachers who also need to familiarise with the code of conduct. [FTEA1]

The responses to the above two questions suggest that some school teachers struggle with how to handle discipline issues in class and resort to their own measures, which may instead of solving the problem, escalate it to a point where learner performance, or teaching and learning is affected. The responses suggest that teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge on how to handle conflict. This research sought to find out if there are alternative ways that can assist the teacher to manage conflicts in and outside of the classroom to enhance teaching and learning.

Furthermore, teachers felt that there are certain things that need to be changed to help the smooth running of the school. Getha-Taylor *et al.* (2020) stated that to ensure the smooth running of the school, teachers also need to scrutinise school policies and follow procedures when dealing with conflict in schools, to promote social justice for

all. Instead of relying on learners to read their code of conduct, teachers can read certain sections to them during assembly period or maybe once a term read through the booklet to establish proper lines of communication. A further suggestion from one of the teachers is to strengthen learners by allocating them mentor teachers who they can talk to confidentially regarding certain issues. Some teachers need to also familiarise themselves with the school code of conduct and when learners have done something wrong and they are being reprimanded, it must be indicated to them the exact code of conduct violated, in this way all learners are treated the same and there is no form of bias. With regard to learner performance, teachers felt that if conflict is reduced, they would be able to focus on the core duty which is to teach and not spend time resolving learner behaviour during contact time.

Category 3.3: Leaners' satisfaction on how conflicts are resolved in schools

Category 3.3.1: What are learners' perceptions on how teachers handle conflicts in school?

Teachers have their favourites and treat them differently when they break the rules. To me, everyone should be treated equally. [FRCL 2]

I am not happy at all. Teachers don't listen especially when they already have a perception about you, and some of the punishment is not nice, like I must sit on the floor. It is disrespectful. [ERCL3]

Some teachers are still racist deep down. No matter how you explain yourself they don't listen, and they still prove you guilty. Some they don't respect your culture. [HRCL2]

It's not nice to swear at a student as some teachers do and be so mean because sometimes, we learners we going through emotional issues. Teachers must learn to listen to us and not judge us but help us. [HRCL 3]

The learners' response to this question indicated that many of learners were not satisfied with the way teachers handle conflict at school. Hence the research sought

to explore how schools manage conflict and how those in leadership strategise in combating conflicts that arise in their school.

Learners felt strongly that if teachers listen to both sides of the story when an incident has occurred at school, it will help solve the problem easily without taking sides and the process would be fair. Some learners stated that teachers should strive to have a better understanding of their learners so that a good working relationship develops among them which would also reduce learner-teacher conflict. Tolerance of learners from different cultural backgrounds, races or religions should also be exercised when dealing with conflict situations in schools

Learners indicated that teachers should therefore develop empathy, respect and tolerance for each other's cultural background. According to the learners, this might help reduce conflicts in schools. The responses from learners shed more light on how conflicts can be managed, with their answers aligning with the literature review in Chapter 3 Section 3.3.1.

Category 3.3.2: Suggested changes by learners that can be implemented in school to help combat conflicts in schools.

I want to be comfortable with my personality in school, like my hairstyle and culture. I am who I am and doesn't affect my studies. This should be looked at [HRCL 1]

We must know and accept each other's culture and tradition in school. [HRCL 3]

Social work counsellors must always come to my school. We as learners have so many sad issues and depression. [ERCL 1]

Sports help form friendship and to know each other and support, so we must have more sports. [ERCL 2]

We need a computer lab with internet. Some of us don't have data or smart phone so we don't know what is happening out there. [FRCL 2]

Discipline must be taken seriously and improved by creating a school culture. Empower RCL also. [FRCL 3]

More learners mentioned that they would love their school to increase sporting activities as this will keep them busy and create an opportunity to bond with each other which will reduce conflicts. They would like to see an improvement in learner discipline, the creation of a positive school culture and would like everyone in the school to be culturally tolerant. One learner mentioned the need for regular visits by school counsellors to assist with learner issues. Computer labs would be appreciated, and some learners mentioned that they would change some school rules to suit their needs, for example one of the learners indicated that teachers should not be concentrating on hairstyle and wearing of earrings because those things do not define how a learner will perform academically. In terms of the research, it is an indication that there are issues that learners are not fully satisfied with which can bring about conflict at school. It is for this reason that the research sought to investigate how leaders respond to conflict.

Category 3.3.3: What are learners' experiences of the use of language for teaching and learning in class?

> *My history teacher sometimes explains things in Zulu, and I don't understand Zulu I am Indian.* [ELRC3]

> *I understand English but when my teacher explains in Sepedi, it makes me understand better what he said in English. I appreciate that.* [HLRC2]

> *With me, English is fine as a language of teaching, but some teachers don't understand or speak English properly.* [FLRC2]

The general consensus was that English was acceptable as the mode of instruction in class. However, some were concerned about teachers' use of language in class and some teachers who use the vernacular disregarding others who do not understand the language. A few were also of the opinion that certain subjects required a little bit more explanation in a local dialect. All issues concerning the language of teaching and learning have the potential of bringing about conflict especially in a school where the medium of teaching and learning is specifically English, therefore using vernacular is against policy and can ignite conflict between teachers and learners and parents.

Category 3.3.4: Learners' sense of belongingness in school?

I do a lot of sports, and other activities like chess, debates, so I really enjoy school. [FLRC 2]

I am disappointed because my classmate was not selected for discus at the provincial level because he is a foreign national just like me. Now the coach does not want to train foreigners for discus even if you are good. To him, it is a waste of time and effort. The term 'kwere kwere' is very popular. [ELRC 1]

The teachers and learners in my school are from different races and colour, some are even foreign nationals. To me it is a good mix and makes me very comfortable at school. [HLRC 3]

Sometimes I feel like I do not belong in my class because the other learners and the teachers will be having a discussion in a language I don't understand as I am English speaking. I sometimes don't feel included, and I am told to learn the vernacular. [ELRC 2]

The analysis revealed that some learners were very confident that they do fit and belong in their respective schools, due to the extra-curricular that is offered at the school, for example debate, chess, rugby. For such reasons, the learners believed that the school caters to their needs, and they felt a sense of belonging. However, some did indicate that they felt out of place because they are not citizens of this country, hence felt that they are treated differently by the system, some learners, andteachers. Such learners felt that they do not belong but are forced to adapt regardlessof how they are feeling. This stems from the history of xenophobic attacks and comments against foreign nationals.

These responses give an indication that some learners are thinking of ways that can help the school SMT and teachers resolve conflict. They have listed what they believe would help and if only their suggestion could be taken into consideration, they feel that it would better the school.

Learners also came up with suggestion on some of the things they would like their school to incorporate, to improve the school. In terms of the language of teaching and learning the learners indicated that teachers should be conscious of the fact that there

are learners in class who do not understand the teacher's vernacular and should avoid using it in school where the medium of instruction is English in order to avoid conflict.

4.1.3 Theme 4: The challenges and successes in implementing conflict management in schools

Category 4.1: The school management teams' challenges in implementing conflict management in schools

> *Lack of parental involvement in their schooling and their reluctancy to assist in disciplining their children.* [HHOD2]
>
> *Large classroom size.* [EHOD1]
>
> *Cultural believes and values.* [FHOD]
>
> *Some learners ignore the code of conduct and teachers are sometimes compelled to force them to be compliant which leads to more conflict.* [HHOD 1]

Lack of involvement from parents poses a challenge when it comes to discipline, as they are the ones that can assist teachers in dealing with their children. The responses suggest that the school is left on its own to find measures of discipline without parental involvement. The responses also indicated that large classroom size hampers classroom management. Cultural value and beliefs rooted in the upbringing of some learners make the implementation of conflict management difficult. Learners disregarding the code of conduct is another factor that makes conflict management challenging.

Category 4.1.1: Dealing with learner discipline?

> *We usually refer to the school policy and act based on it, for example: when we suspend a learner, we have a disciplinary hearing and what the procedures are that need to be followed, etc.* [HHod 2]
>
> *Sometimes I rely on my own skills to get the results that I need.* [FHod2]

If the offence is minor, we tend to deal with the issue; for example, we place the learners in detention. However, if the offence is major, we alsoinvolve the parents and draw knowledge from some school policies to bring about order. [EHod1]

From the responses given above, there is an indication that some HoDs did not receive professional training that relate to how one handles conflict that occur in schools. HoDs rely on school policies to guide them on certain issues that arise and if they cannot find the solution, they apply their own minds and rely on their own skills and experience.

This aligns with Ward *et al.* (2015) who reported that teachers in both primary and secondary schools are battling to find an alternative form of discipline and often still resort to the same abolished exercise of corporal punishment. Williams et al (2019) and Tjosvold *et al.* (2002) suggest that conflict resolution skills that relate to problem-solving, equip people adequately to resolve problems quickly and effectively. The fact that HoDs are not skilled in that area is of great concern.

Category 4.1.2: Interacting with learners from different cultural backgrounds?

Many schools are multiracial and therefore teachers attend to learners from different religious, racial, and cultural backgrounds. The participants were asked about learners' cultural backgrounds. When asked to talk about their experience in addressing learners' cultural background, this is what they had to say.

People are all the same regardless of where they come from. [EHod2]

Learners are often ashamed and ignorant of their background. [FHod2]

At my school, we are very accommodative and respectful of cultural backgrounds. We allow learners to express themselves culturally. [HHod1]

Few still adhere to cultures in this day and age; therefore, we don't put much emphasis on a learners' cultural background. [EHod2]

The responses from some of the SMT members indicate that they regard all learners as equal, regardless of where they come from and that is what they emphasise when addressing the issue related to cultural differences and race. The other response

indicated that the school is very aware of the cultural differences between learners and hence tries to accommodate everyone's cultural background and allow learners to express themselves during Heritage Day, for example. From these responses, onecan state that culturally responsive leadership is not practised much in some schools.While other schools do indicate that there is an awareness of culturally responsive leadership.

Category 4.1.3: SMTs Knowledge of access to teaching and learning resources for learners with special needs

Our school does not have facilities to support learners with special needs. The Department sometimes during the year, send health personnel to visit the school to diagnose learners with visual impairment and help them acquire medicated glasses. [HHOD 1]

Learners with special needs have been integrated with other learners, but I feel most of them are struggling because there is no special support, and most teachers are not trained to handle learners with special needs. [FHod2]

Our school has some resources, but teachers do not know how to use them to assist such learners. The Department must organise workshops to train teachers on how to handle learners with special needs. [EHod1]

Such resources are non-existent in my school. We only have a parking lot specifically for the disabled. [HHOD 2]

We do have programmes such as dragon which helps with speech to text and some graphic organizers but teachers do not know how to use them, and some of these technologies are expensive to maintain. [EHOD 3]

The responses suggest that most schools are not well equipped to support learners with special needs in terms of infrastructure and personnel. In some schools, resources do exist but as white elephants since teachers are not trained on how to use them to assist such learners.

Category 4.2: Teachers' challenges in implementing conflict management in schools

Overcrowded classrooms. [HTEA 1]

Learners' nature or a habit of targeting teachers intentionally, in order to ridicule and disrespect teachers in front of their classmates. [ETEA 3]

Teachers lack the management strategies in dealing with conflict in the classroom and outside the classroom as a result of educational policies that restrict many disciplinary measures, hence we need professional help. [FTEA 2]

The responses above indicate that sometimes having an overcrowded classroom make it challenging for teachers to implement conflict management. The teachers' responses also suggest that some learners intentionally disrupt lesson and set about frustrating teachers deliberately to disrupt teaching and learning time for their own benefit. The remarks made by one participant suggest that teachers themselves lack the strategies of implementing conflict management because of restrictions posed by the education policies.

Category 4.2.1: Dealing with learner discipline?

The task of dealing with learner discipline is a challenging one and if not managed well could lead to more conflict. Teachers were asked how they deal with learners' discipline in and outside the classroom, their responses were as follows**:**

I speak with the learner calmly and if the learner is displaying bad behaviour, I call in my senior who attends to the case and at times the parent of the learner is requested to come to school to engage in talks. [HTEA2]

If I struggle with a certain learner, I involve my HoD. [FTEA1]

I sometimes punish the learners by making them sweep my class or to sit on the floor in the class. [ETEA2]

These responses suggest that some teachers due to the number of years of teaching experience, are able to control the learners to a certain extent. Whilst other teachers are still struggling with learner discipline and therefore refer the learners to the HoD to deal with the issue.

Category 4.2.2: Interacting with learners from different cultural backgrounds

Teachers were asked how they find interacting with learners from different backgrounds, and their responses were as follows:

I find it very easy, due to the number of years I've been teaching. I have experience. [ETEA3]

It is a difficult task because you have to constantly be thinking about everyone's culture so that you don't offend anyone when making a statement in class. [HTEA3]

I don't have a problem interacting with learners who are from a different background. [FTEA3]

Most teachers reported that they find it very easy to interact with learners from different cultural backgrounds due to their experience and number of years in the education field. They were confident that they were well equipped to deal with a classroom of mixed learners from different race, gender or religious backgrounds. However, a few stated that the fact that learners are from different cultural backgrounds makes it difficult for them to deal with the learners because some ethnic groups have different ways of dealing with discipline.

Category 4.2.3: Teachers' knowledge of access to teaching and learning resources for learners with special needs

The overall participants' response indicated that they were not knowledgeable on finding resources for learners with special needs. The teachers indicated that they rely solely on the Department to provide the necessary policies so that they can equip themselves on how to assist learners with special needs which sometimes meant approaching other schools with such expertise to gain insight. Some indicated that they have not encountered such learners in their classroom and therefore are not sure if they would be able to handle such learners. Below are their direct responses:

The Department of Education always send policies that informs us. [ETEA3]

I personally have not attended any training for how to teach learners with special needs but would ask my colleagues who may know how if I have such a learner in class. [FTEA3]

I am not knowledgeable but could use the internet to research if faced with such a case. I would also refer them to the school-based support team to assist the learner where I can't. [HTEA3]

Category 4.3: Learner satisfaction on the schools' implementation of conflict management

Category 4.3.1: Learner satisfaction on how conflict is managed in schools

Equality and fair treatment are lacking from the school. [ELRC 2]
The disciplinary committee likes taking sides, they favour girls and are harsh on boys. [HLRC3]

The teachers are biased. [FLRC 1]

The teachers don't want to listen to our explanation and just make up their mind that we are guilty even when we are not the one at fault. [HLRC1]

The form of punishment the school management team gives is sometimes not fair, they ask us to clean the toilets and clean or mop many classrooms I thinks it's not okay for learners to clean toilets. [ELRC 1]

Learners' responses suggest that they are not fully satisfied with the way their teachers and the SMT handle conflict at school. Their responses indicated that learners were not treated fairly nor equally especially in terms of disciplinary hearing and finding resolutions for the different cases that arise in school. The learners' responses further suggests that when the learner that is to be disciplined is a girl, then the disciplinary action is lenient even if the person is the perpetrator. Some learners stated that the staff or committee that handles the disciplinary hearing are not fair because they judge the learner according to past behaviours and not only the incident in question. The responses from learners shed more light on how challenging it is to implement conflict management as learners are indicating gaps.

Category 4.4: School management teams' successes of implementing conflict management in schools

Category 4.4.1: Learner performance

When conflict management is implemented, there are fewer disruption to normal teaching and learning in the classrooms. [EHOD 2]

There is a conducive environment for teaching and learning, which affects how well learners can perform. [HHOD 1]

If learners are listening to their teachers and there is no conflict, chances of them performing better increase. [FHOD 2]

When there is harmony, creativeness flows and both teachers and learners work well together. [EHOD 1]

The responses from the SMT suggest that there are benefits in implementing conflict management in schools. Their responses suggest that no meaningful teaching and learning can take place in the midst of an environment filled with conflict.

The SMT's responses further suggest that if conflict is managed learners are creative in the classroom because of the harmony. Scholars tend to agree with the statements made by the participants.

4.1.4 Theme 5: Strategies to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning

Category 5.1: School management teams' use of culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools

Conflicts continue to be a factor in schools and negatively impact teaching and learning if not resolved. With this statement in mind, the HoDs were asked to comment on their *use of culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools*

The school can start with campaigns that will teach both learners and staff about conflict management and how to effectively manage culture and diversity. [HHod1]

The school can provide staff development that will assist in dealing with conflict. [EHod2]

The school encourage tolerance and the importance of mutual respect as well as has campaigned around cultural tolerance. [HHod2]

School policies to that effect. [FHod1]

The responses state that the school needs to encourage tolerance and the importance of mutual respect among learners and staff. Most of the HoDs indicated that they needed professional development so that they are equipped to deal with conflicts that arise in schools. Workshops and campaigns were requested to aid them. The implications of their statement suggest that the HoD had no professional training yet on how to deal with conflicts as they arise in school.

Category 5.2: Teachers' use of culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools

Teacher participants were asked to comment on their use of culturally responsive theory to resolve conflict in schools

Collaboration from all stakeholders. [HTEA1]

Inclusivity is important, all learners should feel valued. [ETEA 2]

Campaigns, that are held in school help learners understand and tolerate each other. [FTEA 2]

We promote diversity in our school. [HTEA 3]

They suggested that multi-racial or multicultural stakeholders should work together to find solutions that could work for everyone. They went on to say that the staff needs to have training and development to equip them with the relevant knowledge and necessary skills needed to deal with conflict that is not only culturally, racially or religiously related but deal with all kinds of conflict that might arise in general.

Inclusivity was listed as an important concept in a multi-racial school. To reduce any form of conflict, there should be unity and all stakeholders need to be included. Campaigns which could conscientise learners and staff on different cultures is crucial, according to the respondents. They emphasised that learners and staff members need to be conscientious in promoting unity and acknowledging diversity at the assembly point during school. *Our schools need to promote diversity*, reported one of the respondents. This could be done by ensuring that the school has its own culture, values and norms to instil in learners. In that manner, no particular culture is favoured more than the other, which is what the school policy on religion guards against.

Category 5.3: The benefits of employing culturally responsive theory to promote teaching and learning

Teachers were asked what the benefits were of employing culturally responsive theory to promote teaching and learning. Their responses were as follows:

> *Culturally responsive theory is learner centred, as we integrate the importance of one's cultural background with their experiences concerning teaching and learning.* [FTEA 2]

> *In the teaching and learning process we acknowledge the different learners we have in the classroom and ensure that our teaching styles reaches all learners.* [ETEA 1]

> *Culturally responsive leadership theory provides a sense of safety for learners in the classroom, creating a positive classroom environment as it allows them to embrace who they are without fear of prejudice.* [HTEA 3]

The responses of the participants suggest that it is beneficial to employ a culturally responsive leadership theory in schools. Their responses indicate that culturally responsive theory helps create a conducive learning environment, as learners are comfortable and feel safe in their classrooms or school**.** Giest (2019) supports the statement that the climate in the classroom should be positive in order to ensure the safety and well-being of learners. Some scholars agree that culturally responsive leadership theory is an approach that intends to advance learners' cultural strengths and lived experiences to encourage learners' improvement and achievement and authenticate their place in the world.

4.2   CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the data collected through the questionnaire and interviews were givena full interpretation after they were analysed. The developed themes and categories, emerging from the analysis of data, were used to answer the research questions. Participants' verbatim responses were presented in this chapter to substantiate the emerging themes.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of data acquired through the questionnaire and semi-structure interviews, according to the themes and categories that emerged. This chapter presents the summary of the literature review, research findings and the research conclusions. The limitations of the research are also presented. Recommendations drawn from the results of the study are offered to the Department of Basic Education, the Provincial and District departments of Education and schools that fall under the Department of Basic Education. Avenues for future research are also provided.

This chapter begins with a presentation of a summary of literature review.

5.2 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review of this study started with a discussion of the theoretical framework and was followed by scholarly literature on the topic under study.

The theoretical framework for this research was the Culturally Responsive Leadership Theory (*cf,* 2.2.1). This theory was selected for the research because, the theory advocates for an all-inclusive environment for all learners irrespective of the diversity that exists between learners and for its important role in conflict resolution in schools (*cf,* 2.2.1). The conceptualisation of the framework and its relevance was also discussed in this chapter (cf, 2.2.2 & 2.2.3). When conflicts are not handled effectively it impacts negatively on learners (*cf,* 2.2.3), therefore the role of leadership is paramount in conflict management in school and the culturally responsive framework serves as a yardstick for measuring and interpreting the qualities of such leaders (*cf.* 2.2.1).

The review of literature further discussed the topic under study taking note of the five research questions presented in Chapter 1 (*cf,* 1.4.2)

5.3   SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research study aimed at providing understanding into the use of culturally responsive theory in resolving conflicts to enhance teaching and learning in secondary schools in South Africa by the SMT which comprised of HoD, and teachers (*cf,* Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3). Learners were also given an opportunity to air their views (*cf,* Table 4.4). This research adopted the qualitative research approach to gain insight into the phenomenon under consideration (*cf,* 3.3.3). The research methods included the population sampling strategy (*cf,* 3.3.1), the method used for data collection which included the use of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews (*cf,* 3.2.1) and the analysis of information (*cf,* 3.3.3). Considerations given to issues relating to trustworthiness of the research (*cf,* 3.4) and ethical measures (*cf,* 3.5) which were strictly adhered to.

Key themes of immense importance were developed. These themes emanated from the participants of the study which comprised of the SMT HoDs, LO teachers and learners. The emergent themes included: participant's conceptualisation of conflicts in schools, the relevance of school-based policies and general educational conflict policies, culturally responsive strategies employed in resolving conflicts in schools, the successes, and challenges in implementing conflict management in schools and strategies to improve conflict management in schools through culturally responsive leadership.

The participants exhibited an understanding of what conflict meant in a school context (*cf.* 4.4.1 category 1.1,1.2 &1.3) and acknowledged the negative impact of conflicts in schools and the need for proper handling of conflicts with sensitivity to the element of diversity that exists within people. They further added that effective culturally responsive conflict resolution will eventually result in creating a conducive teaching and learning environment and improved learner performance. (*cf, 4.4.4* Category 4.4.1).

An in-depth analysis of the teacher participant's conceptualisation of the term culturally responsive leadership, revealed an understanding of the concept but a lesser emphasis on its application to resolve conflicts (*cf,4.4.1* Category 1.1-1.2). The participant teachers explained different methods they employed in handling conflicts

some of which aligned with cultural responsiveness and other methods were very orthodox (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.2.1).

Teacher participants acknowledged the importance of national, district and school policies in conflict resolution (*cf, 4.4.2*Category 2.1). The HoD indicated that they had copies of the educational policies and school policies which could be found in their files (cf, 4.4.2 Category 2.1.1) and such policies were readily available on websites and upon request from their schools' administration office. It was also revealed by participants that these policies are voluminous therefore, teachers do not take time to read through. The use of these policies to handling conflicts in schools, according to teacher participants, was not consistent (*cf, 4.4.2* Category 2.1.2) which is an area of concern. They indicated that some situations demanded experience to handle, but with more serious incidences there was no choice but to apply the school policy (*cf,*Category 2.1.2). The teacher participants could not specifically say whether educational policies were adequately culturally responsive, others insisted that the policies were not suited to the Black African learner (*cf, 4.4.2 category* 2.1.3 and 2.3.2). Learners indicated that they do have access to the school code of conduct, but some feel the policies are not adequate enough. As to whether general school policies actually addressed conflicts in schools, the general perception of teachers and learners was that, if these policies were effective, then why the existence or rise of so many conflicts in schools in recent time? (*cf, 4.4.2* Category 2.1.3). Simply put the general perception was that these policies were inadequate and needed to be reviewed. Teacher participants who include HoD as well, reported that they employed various strategies in resolving conflicts in class. Some establish class rules with their learners and strictly adhered to it (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.2.1). Others make use of academic detention and the demerits system. Teachers saw the application of cultural responsiveness in a limited way in their schools and classroom. It is the view of this research that teachers are not well informed about culturally responsive strategies (*cf,4.4.2* Category 2.3.2). Learner participants' responses as to their perception on how teachers handle conflicts indicated a dissatisfaction among learners (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.3.1). Some learners indicated that some teachers are racist while some pointed out the mean and uncaring attitude of some teachers and the inhumane treatment some teachers meet out to learners as punishment (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.3.1). From the responses, some learners stated that teachers should strive to

understand their learners in order to ensure a good working relationship and avoidance of teacher-learner conflicts. Learner participants suggested the need to increase sporting activities, such as sports which could serve as an avenue for destressing and a way of bonding between learners which will help in reducing conflicts (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.3.2). Pertaining to learners' experiences in the use of language for teaching and learning, learners generally accepted English as themedium of instruction (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.3.3) Concerns were however raised of some teachers who ignored other learners and explained concepts in the vernacular to the detriment of those who could not understand the language. Other learners however, appreciated the intermittent use of vernacular to re-explain concepts (*cf,* Category 3.3.3).

The data collected from learners from the questionnaire revealed that, some learners strongly felt a sense of belonging to the school while others were not so sure as they had to endure xenophobic verbal attacks in school due to their status as foreign nationals (*cf, 4.4.3* Category 3.3.4). When it came to assessing the challenges in implementing conflict management in schools, it was revealed that teachers struggle with learner discipline due to a couple of factors whichinclude the overcrowding of classrooms in public schools which makes classroom management extremely difficult (*cf,* Category 2.3.4). This is supported by Savage (1999) (*cf, 4.4.4* Category 4.2) and Olaleye, Ajayi, Oyebola and Ajayi (2017) & Marais(2016), who affirm that teaching and managing classes that are overcrowded is difficultand prevents the development of a classroom environment conducive to teaching andlearning. According to Meier & West, (2020), learners in small classes achieve far better than learners in overcrowded classrooms Educational policies prohibit teachersfrom the use of certain disciplinary measures (South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996), which has left many teachers stranded with limited ideas for disciplinarymeasures. Responses from HoD exposed concerns over the lack of parental involvement and cooperation in disciplinary issues relating to their children. Parental involvement in learners' education is paramount. This is supported by (Lara & Saracostti, 2019). From the interview data, some successes were noted by HoD in dealing with learner discipline issues. They were able to provide a conducive environment for teaching and learning, which in turn helps to improve learner performance. A strict adherence to school and educational policies in some cases, have led to such successes

Most of the research participants, were comfortable with Interaction with learners of different cultural backgrounds. This was evident from the various responses. Learners' responses indicated that, due to culturally diverse teachers and learners in their schools, it was very easy to interact, and this represented a true description of South Africa as a rainbow country. Other HoD and teachers complained of the Herculean task involved in providing for the needs of a culturally diverse school, since it involves a lot of consciousness in every action taken (*cf,4.4.4* Category 4.2.2). An important component of cultural responsiveness in schools was the need to cater for learners with special needs within the school environment (*cf.* 4.1.3). The interview data proved that SMT as well as teachers were ill equipped with the requisite skills for handling learners with special needs (*cf,* Category 4.2.3). The lack of access to information or training to interact with such learners was not readily available. The HoD and teachers reinforced the need for workshops to inform and train them on how to handle such learners with special needs.

5.4   RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The problem statement outlined in Chapter 1 led to the development of the main research question and the subsequent sub-research questions. This section presents the conclusions of the study where answers to each of the research questions outlined in Chapter 1 are given.

5.4.1   RQ1: What does the scholarly literature suggest about managing conflicts that occur in schools?

Many scholars believe that religious and racial conflicts may be because of long-standing hatred, or misunderstandings between groups that are different from each other (Gundelach, 2014). All racial and identity conflict negatively impacts schools resulting in an environment that is not safe for those students involved in the conflict and all learners in general (Vorlíček, 2022). Schools are found to be unable to handle such differences without prejudice or bias which creates new challenges (Ford, 2021). When the management of conflict is lacking, the consequences are dire (Enyinda, Enyinda, Mbah & Ogbuehi, 2021). Conflict witnessed by learners in their schools are related to gender, beliefs, gangsterism and bullying. When conflict arise, they should

be dealt with accordingly (Astor & Benbenishty, 2018). As conflict persist in school the SMT needs to work at finding solutions to resolve them so that they do not affect teaching and learning.

5.4.2 5.4.2 RQ2: To what extent do the school-based policies and general educational policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management?

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has put in place policies and plans that promote the inclusion of diverse races in schools, therefore encouraging the possibility for schools to have a blend of staff personnel and classrooms that are multi-racial. Section3 (5) of the South African School Act (SASA, 1996b) and the admission policy of any school, should not exclude learners based on language, race, culture, disability, religion, HIV status or pregnancy. The South African School Act (RSA, 1996a), designed to be unbiased towards any religion or faith, reaffirms the religious rights and freedoms guaranteed to all citizens. The development of equality, human rights and human resources are at the top of the list where education policies are concerned.

The findings of this research indicates that, many teachers acknowledged that these policies have been brought into the schools, but the content of the policies are not well understood and known (cf, category 2.1.1). It seems that despite the fact that educational policies have some elements of cultural responsiveness, there is a major gap between policy and practice. In many cases, school-based policies are no longer relevant considering change in demographics of a school where old policies still in place, and do not cater for all Black cultures. (cf, category 2.2.3) As teachers were not fully familiar with the information in the policies, they were unaware of whether culturally responsive leadership was addressed (cf, category 2.1.3). The study also revealed that, most schools had developed their own school code of conduct giving learners access to it; however, from the questionnaire issued to learners, in many cases, learners do not comply with the code of conduct of the school (cf, category 2.3.2). School policies need to be revised to be more in line with what is needed in the context of the school, more informative and address the challenges experienced by the diverse learner populations found in schools. The researcher intends in the near future to thoroughly research on the suitability of educational policies in South Africa in handling school conflicts.

5.4.3 RQ3: What culturally responsive ideologies or strategies do school management employ in resolving conflict?

It has been established by this research that, culturally responsive leadership, which involves those leadership philosophies, practices, and policies that create inclusive schooling environments for students and families from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds (Khalifa, 2020), is not effectively practised in the schools sampled in this study. These findings are supported by the interviews conducted. The SMT and teachers reiterated that the dominating strategies used in managing conflict include endorsing unity, engaging in talks with learners at assembly point, using the constitution to instill and emphasise to learners the importance of human dignity, Inclusivity, and tolerance. Listening to both sides of the story between the parties involved, that could include compromising or accommodating, after careful consideration, make a judgement or come up with a resolution, at times parental involvement is necessary. (cf, category 3.1) As per the interviews conducted, participants were unable to share their views on the issue of culturally responsive leadership and strategies for conflict management. The research findings conclude that, HoDs have had no professional training on how to deal with conflict in an effective manner using culturally responsive strategies. This issue has resulted in many learners being dissatisfied with the way teachers handle conflict in school (cf, category3.3.1), which could have a negative impact on the teaching and learning process (Valente *et al.,* 2020).

5.4.4 RQ4: What are the challenges and successes in implementing conflict management in secondary schools to promote teaching and learning?

Interviews conducted, has enabled the research to conclude as a fact, that there are challenges in the implementation of conflict management in schools. Such challenges hinder the promotion of effective teaching and learning with culturally diverse staff members and learners and even though professional development takes place, there is less focus on the issue of culturally responsiveness to conflict management. This research has established that, one major challenge in implementing conflict management in schools is the fact that some learners are intentionally disrespectful (cf, category 4.2.1) and still disregard and do not comply with the code of conduct of the school which constantly challenges the school managers and teachers to enforce

it on such learners (cf, category 4.1). This is a challenge since this can fuel teacher-learner conflict and hinder the implementation process, overcrowded classrooms make it challenging to have order and discipline in the classroom. (cf, category 4.1) Another challenge is the unfair or unequal treatment of learners by the schoolmanagement and teachers. Learners stated that they are not treated fairly or equally (cf,category 4.3.1) which then hinders any success in the implementation of conflict management. A clear example in recent times as per the Sunday times published on 15 January 2019: Elsewhere, a high school was accused of progressingwhite pupils who failed while holding back black pupils who'd failed. There have beennumerous other stories of racist behaviour, separatist language policies and instancesof schools turning away black pupils, claiming their classrooms are full. This action negatively impacts the implementation of conflict management since learners do not trust the system due to their perception of the presence of an element of bias (cf, category 4.3.1). Teachers are the actual agents on the ground when it comes to the implementation of policies. It becomes a challenge if the perception of teachers with regards to race, religion and gender is still one sided. From the interviews conducted and administered questionnaire, some learners indicated that not all teachers are comfortable teaching learners from different African countries and religious backgrounds. Some learners and teachers are of the opinion that their culture or religion is superior to others and therefore look down upon other teachers andlearners. The above statements, allows the research to conclude that teachers are stillchallenged by either inner or outer factors when it comes to implementing culturally responsive leadership strategies in terms of conflict management because they are still struggling to understand and promote diversity which is a major challenge.

The teacher participants mentioned during the interview that when sensitive issues arise in their classrooms, they respond quickly to the issue by talking to the learners. Therefore, timely communication is listed as an important aspect that yields positive results in conflict resolution in schools. The establishment of a Learner Representative Council (LRC) in schools, which focuses on the needs of learners and therefore is a very important structure in the schooling system is endorsed by policy. The South African Schools Act (SASA) states that a representative council of learners at the school must be established at every public-school enrolling learner in the eighth grade or higher, and such council is the only recognised and legitimate representative

learner body at the school. [Sub-s. (1) substituted by s. 3 of Act No. 100 of 1997 and by s. 1 (a) of Act No. 57 of 2001. One other success in the implementation of conflict management in schools is the inclusion of Life Orientation as a subject. The subject addresses important themes such as human rights, discrimination, gender equality, responsible citizenship, risky behaviour which includes substance abuse, teen pregnancy, alcohol abuse, underage drinking, Covid-19 and various other social issues, as outlined in the CAPS Life Orientation document (DBE, 2014). The researcher concludes that although structures have been put in place to ensure that culturally responsive leadership is practiced during conflict management, a lot still needsto be done in terms of implementation.

5.4.5 RQ5: What strategies can be employed by the school to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning?

As per Alshehri, K. (2022), conflict management strategies refer to ways or patterns by which people employ when dealing with conflict situation. This research found out that both teachers and learners had good ideas that could promote culturally responsive leadership in conflict resolution in schools. The following suggested culturally responsive leadership strategies by participants of this research included the following: 1) Teachers should strive to have a better understanding of their learners so that a good working together partnership develops among them (cf,category 5.1). Both teachers and learners should therefore be educated and taught about respecting each other's cultural backgrounds and learning tolerance. 2) Workshops on cultural tolerance for both teachers and learners are necessary and will help reduce misunderstandings (cf, category 5.1). These workshops should involve practical ideas on how to develop better disciplinary measures and provide training to all staff. 3) Having campaigns to conscientise learners and staff on different cultures and promote diversity should be conducted (cf, category 5.1). 4) Most of the HoDs indicated that they needed professional development so that they are equipped to deal with conflicts that arise in schools (cf, category 4.2). The district should offer constant support to assist the school in dealing with discipline so that conflicts are reduced in schools. When conflicts are reduced or resolved, this would positively enhance teaching and learning. School psychologists and social workers need to be school based so that

they can assist the staff in dealing with conflicts as they arise in school and not just on certain days of the week (cf, category 3.3.2).

Scholarly literature also suggests strategies that schools can employ to manage conflicts. Okoye and Obi (2022) suggest five styles in conflict management namely: 1. Avoidance style: with this style the approach is that parties facing the conflict withdraw from the conflict situation or play neutral. In the event that the conflict is not resolved, it will impact managerial tasks. 2. Accommodating strategy: this strategy requires one of the parties to ignore his or her own interests and embrace the interest of the other conflict opponent. It is a conflict management strategy that requires a high level of cooperation and low assertiveness. 3. Competition style: as it implies, this is a power-oriented strategy. Power is exhibited by one opponent over the other conflict opponent to win the conflict. There is less cooperation and a high level of awareness. 4. Style of compromise: the main goal of this style is to find partial common ground that partially satisfies all parties involved in the conflict. It involves some level of assertiveness and cooperation 5. Collaborative style: the cause behind the conflict is ascertained, the information is shared among stakeholders and a beneficial solution is established.

The conclusions of the findings of this research are that there are a lot of suggested strategies from both scholarly literature and participants that can promote cultural responsiveness in conflict management in schools to promote effective teaching and learning.

5.4.6 The Main Research Question: *What culturally responsive leadership do schools promote, with regards to managing conflicts to enhance teaching as well as learning in secondary schools?*

Due to the number of conflicts that occur daily in most schools in South Africa especially secondary schools, school administrators and classroom teachers are faced with the Herculean task of adopting different strategies to tackle issues that promote conflict in schools without prejudice or bias. In South Africa where the learner and staff population are very diverse, differences in cultural beliefs, race and religion.

just to mention a few, are the main reasons for conflicts which affect quality teaching and learning. Lack of effective professional development programmes for teachers, principals, and HoDs, insufficient school professional counselling for learners and lack of culturally responsive leadership practices, are all factors mitigating conflict management. There are diverse opinions from scholarly literature as to sources of conflicts and how to manage these in a way that does not infringe on the cultural values of learners. However, the general conclusion from the scholarly literature is that conflicts in schools are inevitable but the way such conflicts are handled is not satisfactory.

In answering the main research question, the participants stated that their schools do not consistently practice, nor place much emphasis on the framework of culturally responsive leadership. Some participants could not answer with certainty whether cultural responsiveness is addressed in school policies. Participants mentioned that their schools do not discuss the concept and do not place it at the centre of teaching and learning. The lack of skills in terms of conflict management and lack of knowledge about the different cultures were listed as the main factors that hinder schools in promoting culturally responsive leadership. From the answers provided in the questionnaire, the research has established that even though certain schools had a strong opinion of the non-existence of culturally responsive leadership in their schools, they unconsciously practised some good cultural responsiveness leadership. Such practices included the following: 1. the celebration of Heritage Day in schools which tends to conscientize the need to embrace the diversity in culture that exists in South African schools. 2. The availability of different languages as a subject choice for learners without restrictions encourages the appreciation of differences that exists in schools. 3. School holidays that cater for different religious occasions which is a way of recognising the importance of different religions. 4. The introduction of Life Orientation as a subject has been a step in the right direction as the subject helps to throw more light on different ways to adapt and co-exist with people of different cultural backgrounds. 5. Parent consultation meetings are held in schools once a term, and participants engage with parents and try to build an honest partnership to assist in the well-being of the learners concerning their, social, emotional, and psychologicalneeds. 6. The establishment and encouraging of learners to participate in sports and co-curricular activities has yielding great results in quelling racial and religious conflicts

in schools as it tends to promote belongingness and oneness in schools. All these are practices of cultural responsiveness towards conflict management which are backed by policy. It was established by this research that when conflicts arise, school management, apart from consulting policy, also apply experience and other measures. The establishment of wellness programmes and phase wellness tutors in some schools, is a step in the right direction to address learner stress and conflict issues relating to bullying, race, discrimination, abuse just to mention a few, in a culturally responsive manner. Wellness tutors are expected to address learners occasionally on social issues and persuade learners to accept and tolerate each other and to provide learners with avenues of communication to report issues that affect them in school and at home. Other internal culturally responsive conflict management strategies that school management employ can be grouped under the following: 1. Avoidance, 2. Accommodation, 3. Compromise, 4. Competition and 5. Collaboration. Some of these have already been discussed in the literature review.

Having mentioned the culturally responsive leadership that some schools promote to handle conflicts to enhance teaching and learning, there is no doubt that the Department of Basic Education has outlined policies that are culturally responsive which schools need to adhere to in order to reduce conflicts in schools, but the use of such policies is of no use if there is no monitoring and proper implementation procedure most especially for learners, school administrators and teachers. This simply creates a chaotic situation for all parties. The recent rise in conflict at schools, some of which have end up being fatal, indicate that these intervention methods are either inadequate or not properly implemented in schools. The response from the interviews conducted indicated that teachers sometimes try to communicate openly with their learners in the process of resolving conflicts or sensitive issues that arise in the classroom. These schools admitted that they still needed intensive and effective professional development in terms of applying culturally responsive leadership practices toward conflict management and the need to incorporate new material that relates to people from different cultures into the curriculum (culturally responsive pedagogy) to ensure all-inclusiveness. It was established that in some schools, conflict resolution is mostly based on orthodox methods such as religious principles or old school traditions which are often biased and inconsistent with educational policies leading to unfair treatment, which exacerbates the conflict.

To conclude, it has been established by this research that most schools do not adequately promote culturally responsive leadership in conflict management even though the schools were rich in diversity and were equipped with policies to guide them. The implication is that in the absence of a conscious effort by school leaders to apply cultural responsiveness in resolving conflicts in secondary schools in South Africa, conflicts will continue to be a major issue in South African schools.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings that emerged from this research point to several recommendations that may be implemented for practice. Recommendations are presented for school level, district level, provincial level, community level and institutional level.

5.5.1 Recommendations for School-Level

The first recommendation is for schools to foster and promote culturally responsive leadership. Research in the literature has shown that school leaders are responsible for creating a school environment that embraces diversity by encouraging staff, learners, and teachers, to improve their consciousness of the different aspects of heterogeneity to promote an all-inclusive environment where everyone feels safe, feels valued and respected. This can only happen if all stakeholders are ready to apply culturally responsive leadership.

The SMT needs to ensure the effective involvement of parents from the community by building strong and positive partnerships with students and their families. The research revealed that parents or the community is not involved in the well-being of their schools and are not actively involved in the schooling of their children. Capacity building in schools is of the essence. This involves the strengthening of the school management and governance so that the school can effectively handle conflict. For example, affiliate a school with a police station that responds promptly and can be relied upon, when schools are facing any kind of violence, or misconduct that are criminal on their own and availing a school counsellor to help learners with issues they struggle with

Another recommendation is that teachers need to understand their learner's cultural context through the promotion of their staff's cultural responsiveness. Many of the participants mentioned that cultural responsiveness is a concept that is hardly mentioned in school, and they also had no idea about their colleagues' views on it.

Cultivating the staff's cultural responsiveness may be important so that they develop an understanding of the cultural context learners come from and the communities they also hail from so that they can serve the learners well.

Another recommendation is for schools to have staff development programmes or courses for educators that promote cultural responsiveness to understand diverse learners. Both learner and teacher participants indicated that some teachers display favouritism and have beliefs or preconceived ideas about other cultures which makes it difficult for them to interact and understand each other. Teachers need to develop knowledge of learners' cultural backgrounds so that they can teach them effectively and resolve any conflicts that arise in schools because of race, religion and culture. Professional development should include learning how to create positive relationships with their students.

Schools should create an avenue for experts on diversity and other social factors to visit the school and engage in talks, presentations, workshops, or campaigns to help schools to embrace culturally responsive leadership practices. Schools may however not be able to fund such activities but rather need the support from the district.

The SMT alongside the SGB are expected to develop educational policies at the school level. These designed school policies can address culturally responsive leadership practices to increase inclusive practices by all stakeholders.

At times school leaders should consider the opinions of both teachers and learners when it comes to decision making about what the school should be like. Emerging from the findings, this research indicated learners had ideas or strategies that can assist in shaping their school positively, some wanted the day to be extended to evening classes, extracurricular activities and so forth as when there is mutual respectamong learners and teachers' conflicts are fewer.

5.5.2 Recommendations at District Level

The effective implementation of culturally responsive leadership in schools to enhance teaching and learning must include the SMT and willing teachers. Therefore, in terms of employment, the district needs to hire staff that is culturally responsive and ready to serve all kinds of schools regardless of the community. The findings revealed that some teachers are not comfortable teaching learners from different religions. This

may, unfortunately, be true for many teachers out there on the field. This therefore affects teacher-learners cooperation. I suggest that leadership training programs must be implemented to equip leaders in terms of the cultural realities within which students find themselves. The district's management and school leadership must accord teachers the needed support which includes, educating school managers and teachers to fully understand the rudiments of culturally responsive leadership, its importance to school and classroom management and what it seeks to achieve. The data analysis did mention that learners are not satisfied with the way the managementteam handles conflicts in their schools. A clear path must be established for school managers and teachers in handling conflicts. This should quantify steps that can be used to recognise and handle specific types of conflicts.

The district must facilitate and ensure that the school curriculum becomes more culturally responsive.

School policies need to be clearer in terms of disciplinary measures and should instil disciplinary procedures that may suit the different kinds of schools looking also into the community the school is in and the type of offence. Discipline remains a challengein schools and the policies are not effective enough. Suspending a learner for an offence does not guarantee the learner will repent, some come back from suspensiononly to cause a further disturbance. The district needs to engage on this issue becauseteachers are left handicapped and the SMT is not trained to handle such conflicts.

Another recommendation is for the district to place psychologists and school counsellors permanently in schools to work hand in hand with the staff to ensure that conflicts are resolved immediately as they arise in schools, to enhance the teaching and learning. Teachers are sometimes overwhelmed when it comes to discipline and resolving conflicts as they emanate from different things such as gangsterism, arguments, differences in beliefs and so forth; hence the recommendation that counsellors and psychologists should be school based.

Transformational programmes are a must, and the district can assist in implementing this initiative to support the schools and their leaders in ensuring that schools are a place of equality and safety and that they provide a learning environment conducive for all.

5.5.3 Recommendations at Provincial and Institutional Levels

Teacher training programmes in universities or colleges can incorporate programmes that enable the student teachers to experience working with culturally diverse student populations from the onset of their training or even during their practical training to equip them to be able to manage a diverse population. All provinces can adopt this initiative to train teachers as some are placed in schools and do not always end up with the school of their choice.

5.5.4 Recommendations at Community Level

School leaders need to build strong and positive relationships with the community they serve. Parents, learners, and teachers should be able to respect each other once these relations are built. Parental involvement can be very beneficial in terms of supporting learners at school. By law, school communities were obligated to encourage equality and rectifications in their various education activities (RSA 1996a, 1996b). The community plays an important role in shaping learners and leaders should engage and facilitate these initiatives.

5.6 AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Throughout this study, it was observed that there is a need for more research on the topic of culturally responsive leadership. This study focused on secondary schools that were multiracial to determine if they promote culturally responsive leadership; however, further research should be conducted at schools that have embraced culturally responsive leadership practices as a whole. The following topics may assist in contributing more knowledge on the concept of cultural responsiveness**:**

- Exploring the implementation of culturally responsive leadership practices, in culturally responsive schools.
- Investigating District leaders' cultural responsiveness towards schools they serve
- Exploring school policies on culturally responsive leadership practices
- Community involvement in creating a culturally responsive school environment
- The successes of culturally responsive schools in combating conflicts.
- To explore culturally responsive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning

- To investigate teachers' level of culturally responsive practices.
- Exploring how professional development helps teachers to be culturally responsive.

5.7   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from the research (James & Murman, 2004:66-67).

Sample size: In this study only three schools were selected for participation, and all three schools belong to the same district (Johannesburg east district in Gauteng Province). Therefore, the scope of the research does not represent the entire population of teachers and schools in all the education districts within Gauteng. The research population comprised of nine learners, nine teachers (post level 1, teachers), six SMT members (post level 2 teachers). This very small relative to the research question under study. According to Bryman (2008), the results of most qualitative research can be difficult to replicate or generalise due to the small sample sizes. Irrespective of this challenge, the selected cases will still portray valid and reliable conclusion. The depth of the qualitative data collected from interviews and questionnaires and analyses of the data, enabled the research questions to be answered.

In *qualitative research*, the individual skills of the researcher determine the quality of the research. The personal bias of the researcher could easily have influenced the research.

Due to *Covid-19 protocols*, the researcher could not proceed with follow-up interviews. Interviews had to be rescheduled due to Covid-19 outbreaks in the school.

Irrespective of the limitations indicated, the researcher is of the opinion that this study is valuable and will help bring to light the importance role of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools.

5.8   CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study focused on exploring culturally responsive leadership on conflict management in secondary schools in South Africa and differs from previous studies in several ways.

First, while previous studies have explored conflict management in schools in South Africa, few have focused on the role of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management (Qwabe & Mthembu, 2018). This study sought to address this gap by exploring how culturally responsive leadership can enhance conflict management in South African secondary schools.

Second, while there is some research on culturally responsive leadership in South Africa, much of this research has focused on the primary school level (Grobler & Wessels, 2019). This study extended this research by examining culturally responsive leadership in the context of secondary schools.

Third, while some studies have explored conflict management in multicultural school settings, few have examined this issue in the specific context of South African secondary schools (Powell & Graham, 2017). This study sought to fill this gap in the literature by exploring how culturally responsive leadership can be used to manage conflicts in a multicultural secondary school context.

Fourth, while some studies have explored the relationship between culturally responsive leadership and student achievement (Gupta & Singh, 2020), few have focused specifically on the relationship between culturally responsive leadership and conflict management. This study aimed to contribute to this area of research by exploring how culturally responsive leadership can enhance conflict management in South African secondary schools, ultimately leading to improved teaching and learning outcomes.

My closing thoughts emanate from my strong belief that cultural diversity in South African schools, a country referred to as "a rainbow country" should be an asset rather than a liability. Growing up as a teenager, as the school bus drove to school, I would

read the sign board that read "The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people". These words engraved in my mind, later in life, helped me to understand and live with people in harmony. This research has strengthened my opinion that cultural diversity is beautiful, it leads to innovation and promotes creativity, it gives ear to a variety of voices, richer ideas and viewpoints and should be viewed as a tool for progression and unity. Schools are converging points of different cultures and beliefs and should serve as a hub where people are taught to co-exist learn from each other and live in peace. This can be achieved with an informed leadership that is culturally responsiveand addresses the needs of all people.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance

UNISA | university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2021/10/13

Ref: **2021/10/13/47255501/12/AM**
Name: Ms KL MOSIMA
Student No.:47255501

Dear Ms KL MOSIMA

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2021/10/13 to 2024/10/13

Researcher(s): Name: Ms KL MOSIMA
E-mail address: 47255501@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 0780536203

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof A.S Mawela
E-mail address: mawelas@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 012 429 4381

Title of research:

Exploring the use of culturally responsive leadership towards conflict management to enhance teaching and learning in secondary schools

Qualification: MEd Curriculum Studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2021/10/13 to 2024/10/13.

The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2021/10/13 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024/10/13**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2021/10/13/47255501/12/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof PM Sebate
EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

Appendix B: Request to conduct research: GDE

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GDE RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN INSTITUTIONS AND/OR OFFICES OF THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. PARTICULARS OF THE RESEARCHER

1.1	Details of the Researcher	
Surname and Initials:	MOSIMA	
First Name/s:	KGOMOTSO LYDIA	
Title (Prof / Dr / Mr / Mrs / Ms):	MS	
Student Number (if relevant):	47255501	
SA ID Number:	8706030781086	
Work permit no. (If not SA citizen)	N/A	

1.2	Private Contact Details	
Home Address		**Postal Address (if different)**
305 MONTE CARLO FLATS		
MARGARET AVENUE		
KEMPTON PARK		
Postal Code: 1619		Postal Code:
Tel:N/A		Cell: 0780536203
Fax:N/A		E-mail:47255501@mylife.unisa.ac.za

1

Appendix C: Approval to conduct research: GDE

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	24 January 2022
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2022– 30 September 2022 2022/26
Name of Researcher:	Mosima KL
Address of Researcher:	305 Monte Carlo Flats
	Margaret Avenue
	Kempton Park
Telephone Number:	078 053 6203
Email address:	57255501@mylife.unisa.a
Research Topic:	Exploring the use of c' towards conflict man and learning in Sec
Type of qualification	Masters
Number and type of schools:	3 Secondary
District/s/HO	Johannes'

Re: Approval in Respect of Re

This letter serves to indicate that ap'
researcher to proceed with research ir
with the researcher to negotiate ap'
and/or offices involved to condu'
presented to both the School (h
Manager confirming that permi'

The following condition'
above study subject
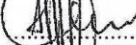withdrawn should ar

1. Letter that wo
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1. Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. **Because of COVID 19 pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate. The approval letter will then indicate the type of arrangements that have been made with the school.**
4. **The Researchers are advised to make arrangements with the schools via Fax, email or telephonically with the Principal.**
5. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
6. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
7. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
8. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
9. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
10. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
11. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
13. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
14. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
15. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
16. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

....
Mr Gumani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: ...... 24|01|2022 ....

2

Appendix D: Information Sheet and Consent Form

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Title: "EXPLORING THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING"

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Kgomotso Lydia Mosima and I am doing research towards a Master of Education Degree in Curriculum Studies at the University of South Africa with Prof A.S Mawela, a Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled *"EXPLORING THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING"*

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this study to understand how schools promote culturally responsive leadership towards conflict management to enhance teaching and learning. This study seeks to understand how conflicts that arise in schools due to race, religion or cultural differences are treated by school leaders and to assess whether schools employ a culturally responsive leadership style to deal with the conflicts. Understanding the above-mentioned issue will help bring improvements with regards to conflict management in schools and that could boost performance of learners if the school environment and school culture is mindful of such gaps. Teachers may be able to do self-introspectionabout how they handle conflicts in the classroom and outside the classroom as they arise and how that impacts classroom environment with regards to teaching and learning. This study thus contributes new insights towards practice and knowledge concerning conflict management

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited to participate in this study because of your role as a member of the school management team and your experience in dealing with conflict and learner discipline in the school. **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

Your participation in this study is absolutely voluntary. Should you decide not to participate, you may withdraw at any given time without providing a reason for your participation. Your withdrawal will not influence your relationship with the researcher in any way. Note that you are not waiving any legal claims or rights because of your participation in this research study. Some participants taking part in this study will respond to a semi-structured Face-to-face interview, while other participants will respond to a questionnaire which consists of closed and open-ended questions.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARICIPATE?

Participation is voluntary and there is no penalty or loss of benefit for withdrawing from participating even when consent to participate was given. If you do decide to take part, you will be given an information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. Should you wish to withdraw from the study, you can do so without giving some reasons.

 WHAT ARE THE POTENTILAL BENEFITS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The potential benefits of this study will be to know if school leaders inculcate culturally responsive leadership to handle racial, religious and cultural conflicts that may arise in schools to enhance teaching and learning.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

There will not be any consequences for you to participate in this study as it is not about fault-finding and not intended to report any participating teacher to his/her authorities. You will not be asked questions that might put you or your job at risk.

WILL ALL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All the participants have the right to insist that their names not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research study will know their involvement in this research, however I assure all the participants that I will maintain confidentiality of all data gathered including their personal details. The participants should, however, note that their valuable input to this research study may be used in a research report, journal article and conference proceedings.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored in a study room at home for a period of five years in the locked cabinet and this will be saved for future research and academic purposes. Electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Reviews and approval if applicable. As a means of destroying the data kept, hard copies will be shredded, and electronic copies permanently deleted from the hard drive through the use of the relevant software programme.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There shall be no payment or incentive that participants shall receive, however the participants are urged to use this exercise as opportunity become aware of the issues that affect their practice.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received ethical approval.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Kgomotso Lydia Mosima on 0780536203 or email her at 47255501@mylife.unisa.ac.za. Also, you will be made aware as soon as the completed study is submitted to UNISA library for access if you will want to do so. The findings of the study will be published in targeted journals. This information will be disclosed to you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Surname and name   Date

-----------------------------------   -------------------------------------

Participation Consent Letter

I,_____(participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty. I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the semi-structured questionnaire I am going to respond to. I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name and Surname (please print): _____

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date

Researcher's Name and Surname (please print) : KGOMOTSO LYDIA MOSIMA

Researcher's signature   Date

-------------------------------------   ---------------------------------------

Parental Consent Letter for learner participation

I,_____(parent name and surname), mother/father /guardian of
_____(Learner name and surname) confirm that the person asking my consent for my child to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my child's participation.

I have read (or it has been explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to allow my child to participate in the study.

I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that he/she is free to withdraw at any time without penalty. I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my child's participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the semi-structured questionnaire I am going to respond to. I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name and Surname (please print): _____

_____   _____

Parents Signature   Date

Researcher's Name and Surname (please print): KGOMOTSO LYDIA MOSIMA

Researcher's signature   Date

--------------------------------   ----------------------------------

Appendix E: Learner Questionnaire

Title: "Exploring the use of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning"

A. Learners Biography

i. Please indicate your names _____

iii. Indicate your grade _____

iv. Please indicate your position in the LRC _____

1. Can you confidently say that you fit and you belong at your school?

_____

_____

2. If you answered yes/no to question 1, please explain why you think so?

_____

_____

3. How comfortable are you around other learners of different cultural backgrounds (race, religion)?

_____

_____

4. Do you have access to your school code of conduct?

_____

_____

5. In your opinion, do you think learners comply with(obey) the school code of conduct?

_____

_____

6. How often have you witnessed conflicts (arguments and fights) in your school?

_____

_____

7. What are some of the causes of these conflicts?

_____

_____

8. Are you satisfied with the way teachers in your school handle(manage) such conflicts?

_____

_____

9. In your opinion, do you think there are better ways such conflicts could have been handled? Give an example.

_____

_____

10. When it comes to disciplinary action, do you think all learners are treated equally or fairly?

_____

_____

11. On a scale of 1-10, how well do you think your school has managed conflicts?

_____

12. Do you think teachers accommodate/consider cultural differences (religion, race, gender) during lessons?

_____

_____

13. If you had the opportunity of changing anything in your school, what would it be?

_____

_____

Appendix F: Teacher Questionnaire

Title: "Exploring the use of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning"

A. Teachers' Biography   _____

i. Please indicate your names   _____

ii. Which grade and subject do you teach?   _____

iii. Indicate your teaching experience   _____

iv. Please indicate your highest qualification   _____

1. How do you deal with discipline in and outside of the classroom?

_____

_____

2. What is your understandings of the term, culturally responsive leadership?

_____

_____

3. How easy do you find interacting with learners at your school who are from a different cultural background than your own?

_____

_____

4. How knowledgeable are you regarding where to find resources for working with learners with special learning needs?

_____

_____

5. How comfortable are you in incorporating new material about people from different backgrounds into your curriculum?

6. Do you find it easy to teach a class with learners from different religions?

7. What are the challenges teachers face in implementing culturally responsive leadership strategies in managing conflicts in class?

8. When a sensitive issue of diversity arises in class, how do you address it?

9. What strategies can be employed by the school to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning?

10. What are your colleagues' views of culturally responsive practices, to enhance teaching and learning?

11. To what extent does the school-based policies and general educational policies inculcate culturally responsive leadership to address conflict management?

12. What visible or invisible barriers are in place at your institution that may hinder the promotion of culturally diverse staff members and learners?

Appendix G: Interview Schedule

Title: "exploring the use of culturally responsive leadership in conflict management in secondary schools to enhance teaching and learning"

The interview guide consists of one (1) section

1. Please respond to all questions
2. All information gathered will be kept confidential

A. Departmental Heads' Information

i. Please indicate your names   _____

ii. Which grade and subject do you teach?   _____

iii. Indicate your teaching experience   _____

iv. Please indicate your highest qualification   _____

Section 1

1. How would you describe the ethnicity composition of the learner population in your school?

2. What is your understandings of the term and practices of culturally responsive leadership?

3. What culturally responsive ideologies or strategies do school management employ in resolving conflict?

4. Do you have any examples o f w h e r e you or a n y other school management team leaders have been culturally responsive in dealing with a conflict situation at this school?

5. Does your school consider the learners cultural diversity when assigning specific leadership roles to learners? If yes, kindly explain one instance.

6. Do the professional development initiatives at your institution lay emphasis and train staff on cultural responsiveness when handling conflicts? How?

7. Are you confident that the school policies adequately cater for culturally diverse staff members and learners?

8. What barriers are in place at your school that may hinder the promotion of culturally diverse staff members and learners?

9. What is your experience in addressing learners' cultural backgrounds?

10. How do you include the community in school efforts to promote cultural diversity?

11. Explain how you connect with students and parents from a cultural perspective.

12. Do the professional development initiatives at your school place the students' culture at the center of learning? How so?

13. Has your school offered professional development in culturally relevant/responsive teaching practices?

14. What strategies can be employed by the school to improve conflict management through culturally responsive leadership to enhance teaching and learning?

Appendix H: Proof of Editing

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that editing and proofreading was done for:

KGOMOTSO LYDIA MOSIMA

Student number: 47255501

Master of Education
Curriculum Studies
College of Education
University of South Africa

EXPLORING THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Cilla Dowse
06 October 2022

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