

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN MBALE
DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I declare that this study, **“Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government”** is my own work and has not been presented for any award in any higher institutions of learning.

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APPROVAL

I do hereby certify that this research report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelors in Business Administration of Uganda Christian University has been under my supervision and approval as the University Supervisor.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

MR.KUKA PHINEKAS

(SUPERVISOR)

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my family especially my wife and parents, my workmates and classmates and friends who expressed the sanity, comforted and nurtured me to encouragement and helped me to make this research a success.

ACRONYMS

MDLG, Mbale District Local Government

HR, Human Resource

UCU, Uganda Christian University

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ABSTRACT

This report has focused the impact of conflict management strategies and Mediation on Employee performance; effect of Negotiation on Employee performance and Effect of Arbitration on employee performance in local government in Mbale district. The study used Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table where 80 sample size of respondents selected from 100 of the employees of Mbale District Local Government of which only 78 respondents filled and returned the questionnaires.. The study used a cross section survey research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study population involved the Chief Administrative Officer, Heads of Departments, Principle personnel officer, Town clerks, sub-county chiefs and community development officers. Data collection utilized questionnaires and interviews. Data was analysed to obtain frequencies, mean, standard deviation, correlations and regression statistics to ascertain the significance of the variables. The realized that mediation slightly influences employee performance ($r=.254$, $p=.043$). Respondents revealed that mediation can only influence employee performance if it is done well. It was revealed that Arbitration has a significant influence on employee performance ($r=.649$, $p=.000$). Respondents appreciated that whenever arbitration is applied in managing conflicts, employees' performance is improved. In addition, it was discovered that Negotiation influences employee performance ($r=.555$, $p=.000$). Respondents revealed that whenever there is a conflict, the parties in dispute are given an opportunity to meet, discuss and agree amicably. Respondents believe that after negotiation, there is improved employee relations that stimulates employee's productivity. In conclusion, Conflict management strategies positively influences employee performance in Mbale District Local Government. It was therefore recommended that Arbitration committees should maintain high level of integrity, transparency and impartiality, negotiation should also be applied in other situations even if there is no conflict and Mediation can be used only in situations of low productivity, delay in accomplishment of tasks and absenteeism of employees at work

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, justification of the study and the key terms definition.

1.1 Background of the Study

Due to growing demand to enhance organizational results and operational efficiencies at all levels, organizations have undergone significant changes (Trojanowska et al., 2018). Most, if not all, occupations in organizations need interpersonal connections (Aqqad et al., 2019). However, one obstacle stands in the way of building an environment that encourages cooperation. This issue is related to the fact that individuals are always competing for limited resources, power, prestige, and other factors, limiting their capacity to cooperate. Conflict is a term used to describe such a situation (Caputo et al., 2018).

Conflict can have negative repercussions such as dispersed habits, lower productivity, and dissatisfaction. In the context of positive outcomes, a company may improve its decisions, inventiveness, and performance. Drawing the significance of conflict in the workplace, it has been claimed that controlling conflict is critical to a company's long-lasting sustainability as well as success (Nzilani et al., 2019). It has also been claimed that ignoring or concealing disagreement can lead to distrust and defensiveness and detrimental impacts on group productivity and self-improvement (Muthinja & Chipeta, 2018).

There are different strategies for conflict management strategies, including, competing, Negotiation, Arbitration collaborating, compromising, avoiding, Mediation and accommodating (David, 2018). When the disadvantages of addressing the other person outweigh the benefits of resolving the dispute, the avoiding strategy is acceptable. It may also be utilized to solve minor problems (Zhang et al., 2017). Whereas, Compromising is a give-and-take arrangement in which both sides give up something to reach an agreement. Individuals with this personality type are cooperative and aggressive. When the interests of both sides in a conflict scenario are mutually incompatible, this approach is suitable (McKibben, 2017).

1.1.1 Historical background

Managers, irrespective of their level in hierarchy of the organization structure (Lower, Middle or Top) are bound to interface with conflict as much they deal with human being this is according to Jennifer & Jones, (2007). Politics in the organization in most cases give rise to conflict as employee or group of employees influence the goal and decision making of an organization to their own selfish interest, usually at the expense of some other employees within the organization (Jennifer & Jones, 2007). According to Lang (2009) stated that top managers in the organization spend more than 25% of their daily time on managing conflicts, while technical managers also use more than 18% of their valuable time on relational employee conflicts, and this has doubled since the early 1980s. Lang (2009) further observed that the reasons for this include the growing complexity of organizations, use of teams and group decision making, and globalization. Conflict significantly affects employee morale, turnover, low productivity and litigation, which affects the prosperity of a company, either constructively or destructively.

Globally, as discovered by Lipsky & Seeber, (2006), Conflict management strategies has gained a lot of popularity and recognition in the structural literature throughout the last two decades due to an alteration in attitudes and perception towards disputes in institutions. Prentice, (2006) also averted that several positive results have been realized such as ability to regulate one's conduct in conflict circumstances, reduction of suspensions, enhancement in relational communication skills, prevention of violence and improving the capacity to respect and recognize the diverse opinions or views of individuals at place of work are achieved as a result of conflict management programs. It is for this purpose that handling disputes is more vital than shunning and eliminating it.

In 1900's according to Ajike, et,al,(2015), Conflict was regarded as an indicator of poor organizational management which needed to be avoided, in the mid 1950's, it was accepted passively, and it was perceived as normal and expected as managers focused on addressing conflict, while in the 1970's, conflict was regarded necessary as not good or bad but could be used to stimulate growth, and in the 1990's managers embarked on confronting and managing conflict suitably as a mechanism to increase it positivity (Algert and Watson, 2002) in (Simon, 2013). Globally, as discovered by Lipsky & Seeber, (2006) in (Simon, 2013), Conflict management strategies has gained a lot of popularity and recognition in the structural literature throughout the last two decades due to an 3 alteration in attitudes and perception towards disputes institutions. Prentice, (2006) in (Simon, 2013) also explained that several positive

results have been realized such as ability to regulate one's conduct in conflict circumstances, reduction of suspensions, enhancement in relational communication skills, prevention of violence and improving the capacity to respect and recognize the diverse opinions or views of individuals at place of work are achieved as a result of conflict management strategies programs. It is for this purpose that handling disputes is more vital than shunning and eliminating it. Conflict among employees has been increasingly popular in Europe, North America and Africa in recent years. Conflicts occur from individual perspective to organizational settings, for example, competition for minimum resources, poor communication about roles and responsibilities of the employees among other factors; however, the results are not predetermined. Renner (2007) in (Simon, 2013) recalled various cases when managers from developed countries were expatriated to less developed countries to manage conflicts within various companies and they realized little success because of their failure to recognize and adapt to the conflict management strategies styles of the local culture. Conflict can be beneficially resolved and the final positive product will be realized.

Albert (2011), explained that there are productive and destructive conflicts in workplace, according to him, "Conflict is said to be positive when it is constructively discussed by the parties and amicable terms for settlement reached". He emphasized that constructively managed conflict in workplace triggers positive employee performance while poorly managed conflict lowers employees' morale, reduces employees' productivity, increase employee absenteeism, increase the chances of losing skilled personnel, leads to loss of man and machine hours, and may lead to an increase in the number of defective products produced due to lack of employees' commitment to work.

Nationally, the performance of employees in the private sector varies from that of the employees in local government as pointed out by Namboze (2013), who states that on average, 68.9% of private sector employees met their employment target output as compared to only 29.6% of local government employees.

1.1.2 Theoretical background

Contemporary theory of conflict as stated by Robbins, (2005) in (Simon, 2013) recognizes that conflicts between individuals are unavoidable. They happen as a natural outcome of change and can be beneficial to an institution only if efficiently and effectively managed as noted by Robbins, et al, (2003) in (Simon, 2013). This theory affirms that a conflict may improve a

group's performance in an organization. Conflicts happen throughout organization's operations therefore, it is not intelligent to place a lot of struggle in avoiding or preventing the conflict. Leung, (2010), concentrating only on meager or vital conflicts creates a chance for employees to resolve a dispute in a more efficient and effective way. Contemporary theory sees conflict as a natural and unavoidable intermediate result of people working together in groups (Leung, 2010). A situation of conflict should not generally be perceived as negative, but rather positive as it's a potential booster in contributing to the improved employee performance in an organization. According to Robbins, et al, (2003) in (Simon, 2013) conflict is appearing inevitable, it is automatically necessary for managers to be in better position to appreciate, recognize and identify the source of conflict, compare and contrast its constructive and destructive potentials, identify alternative techniques to manage it and in a practical way implement conflict management strategies techniques. Conflict management strategies theory provides that a healthy conflict management strategies system should be established in any institution (Ford, 2007) in (Simon, 2013). The conflict management strategies system should be integrated with in the management and administrative system of the institution at the high level of the institution hierarchy. Manager in various institutions are presented with conflicts by their employees and they are expected to solve them. He also urges that managers as third parties, they are required to enable the conflicting parties to recognize that all of them have legitimate needs that must be satisfied in order to resolve their conflicts. Managers should also bring parties into a permanent solution to their problem by using conflict management strategies techniques like Arbitration, Negotiation and mediation that will help manage conflicts effectively. According to Kirchhoff and Adams (1982), Traditional theory of conflict bases on assumptions that conflict is evil and must be totally rejected and abstained as it creates a state of disorder and anxiety among employees within the organization. Conflict is perceived as dissenting because it is accompanied with violence, hostility and destruction. Conflict is the outcome of unclear communication and mistrust among people. Robins, (2005) argues that conflict can well be minimized and addressed only at top management level, this view contends that all disputes in an organization should be avoided in order to give chance to top management to perform their tasks well as they envision for the organization. However, Robins (2005), insists that there is demand to recognize the root causes of conflict and take corrective action as a technique to improve performance of employees. Rahim, (1986) also noted that several conflicts have negative attributes, stimulate negative feelings and always result into destruction thus affecting employee performance. More so, he also claims that whether the intermediate results of conflict are good or bad, it depends on

the strategies used to deal with it in order to realize best results for improved employee performance.

1.1.3 Conceptual background

According to Adeyemi and Ademilua, (2012) Conflict management strategies refers to the process to control or minimize conflict through various measures. Conflict management strategies mechanisms are 6 referred to mean internal mechanisms used by the various authorities in resolving conflict. According to Edwin, (2013) conflict management strategies contains operationalization of certain measures to fully eradicate the negative results of conflict as you maximize and raise the positive results of conflict that will enhance performance of employees and effectiveness in an organized setting.

Hellriegel (2010), defined conflict management strategies as the intermediations designed to reduce conflict, or in some instances, to increase insufficient conflict. It is a practice whereby managers design plans, and actualize policies and procedures to ensure that conflict circumstances are resolved effectively. Knippen, Yohan, and Ghalla (2011), asserted that conflict management strategies widens understanding of the phenomenon, increases the resolutions and tend to work towards consensus and to seek an honest assurance to decision making. Since there is a wider, stronger element of divergence and discord within the conflict process, a significant amount of mental and psychological energy is generated. The ability to divert this energy into productive accomplishment for both parties involved in the conflict can result in the conversion of conflict into a joint discovery of a problem solving solution (Prentice, 2006).

Putnam & Krone, (2006), indicates that conflict among employees in an organization is unavoidable because it is the nature and feature of complex organizations. However according to Dana, (2000), noted that conflict if properly managed by using conflict management strategies techniques like arbitration, negotiation and mediation, it can to a greater extent be influential on satisfaction of employees and their performance in an organization

There are different strategies for conflict management strategies, including, competing, Negotiation, Arbitration collaborating, compromising, avoiding, Mediation and accommodating (David, 2018). When the disadvantages of addressing the other person outweigh the benefits of resolving the dispute, the avoiding strategy is acceptable. It may also be utilized to solve minor problems (Zhang et al., 2017). Whereas, Compromising is a give-and-take arrangement in which both sides give up something to reach an agreement. Individuals with this personality type are

cooperative and aggressive. When the interests of both sides in a conflict scenario are mutually incompatible, this approach is suitable (McKibben, 2017).

Performance is defined by Elena-Iuliana and Maria (2016) as the achievement of objectives and how these objectives are achieved. High performance results from appropriate behavior, especially discretionary, and the effective use of the required knowledge, skills and competencies. According to Carton (2014), Employee performance refers to the act of performing or carrying into execution or recognizable action, achievement or accomplishment in the undertaking of a duty. Carton and Hofer (2016) defines performance as working of individuals in an organization to be more effective. Employee performance is defined by Iqbal *et al.*, (2015) as the effectiveness of employee's specific actions that contribute to attain organizational goals. Employee performance is defined by Podsakoff *et al.*, (2013) as the way to do the job tasks according to the prescribed job description. In this study, employee performance was operationalized as effectiveness, efficiency, and quality work

For the purpose of this study, Negotiation, mediation and Arbitration were used as measures of conflict management strategies while while employee performance measures were quality of work, completion of tasks, employee relations, accomplishment of objectives and

1.1.4 Contextual Background

According to Walter (2018), Mbale District Local Government is a local authority managing Mbale district that was created by the Act of the Uganda parliament in 2010. Before then the district was part of Mbale district in Uganda. It was created as a result of decentralization process and was held with the mandate of ensuring good governance, implement and monitor public service, facilitating development, ensuring employee performance and above all to effectively and efficiently serve the public (Kumumanya, 2018). According to Armstrong, (2006) Conflict management strategies and employees' performance is where the employees have different views and understanding of how best to deal with conflicts as it may not destruct the employee's performance. In the organization context, Armstrong, (2006) addressed performance as the capacity to execute a job well. According to Lebens and Euske (2006), employee Performance is a combination of monetary and nonmonetary signs which provides data on the degree of success in line with activities, outputs and purpose in order to realize the positive results. Local government's causes of employee's poor performance are attributed to the conflicts that are very common but poorly managed in by management (Eunson, 2012). Mbale District Local

Government like any other bank institution faces challenges in deploying better conflict management strategies strategies that can benefit conflicts and stimulate better employees' performance despite the legal frameworks that are in place to manage conflicts constructively like the public service standing orders and code of conduct work ethics. Conflicts in local governments are caused by various factors (Coliagy, 2017) like delayed salaries, poor communication, inadequate office space, lack of motivation, political interference, erroneous deletion from payroll and competition for limited resources by different departments which has hindered better performance of employees of Mbale District Local Government. It is important the management involve into conflict management strategies/ resolution to effectively improve employee performance across all organization by settling the disputes (Lincon, 2021). The gap of poor employee performance at work place is still unsatisfying as many workers feel frustrated, abused, and misplaced at their jobs although conflict management strategies is a strong spear in the organization practices today. It's from this background the researcher is called to investigate on the Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite Mbale District Local Government embracing conflict management strategies by injecting lots of funds and employing seminars, conferences and employee meeting to enhance good employee performance, there are still poor employee performance results among workers. Conflicts in local governments are caused by various factors like delayed salaries, poor communication, inadequate office space, lack of motivation, political interference, erroneous deletion from payroll and competition for limited resources by different departments which has hindered better performance of employees of Mbale District Local Government (Andrew, 2016). However in the district annual performance report of 2018, it was indicated that performance has been declining since 2014 and 2015 respectively. This poor performance was characterized by delay in accomplishment of tasks, poor employee relations and low employee productivity which saw performance of employees reducing from 70% to 40% in 2018. The decline in this performance has been attributed to the bickering and various conflicts among the employees of the local government as was noted by (Musila, 2016).

Conflict management strategies would help to create new innovative opportunities, ideas, teamwork capabilities that are not the case at local government now. It is from this argument that the researcher urges to examine on the Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

Attempts have been made by both Mbale District Local government and the central Government to solve conflicts and improve the performance of employees for example; negotiations have been made between the junior staff and their superiors as facilitated by the Chief administrative officer, improved communication system and ensured employees involvement in decision making (Musila 2016).

Despite the initiatives by both the local government and the central government, studies still show that local government employees in Mbale district continue to perform dismally. Poor performance of employees can result in reduction on the funds transferred to the district from central government, low development and bad reputation of the local government.

However, few studies have been conducted on conflict management strategies and employee performance in Uganda and none has been specifically conducted in Mbale district to address poor performance of employees thus creating a gap that this study shall fill. It is due to this background that the researcher sought to analyze effect conflict management strategies on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government

1.3 General Objective

The study focused on the impact of Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To establish the contribution of conflict mediation on Employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.
- ii. To determine the influence of conflict negotiation on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.
- iii. To analyze the effect of Conflict Arbitration on Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the Contribution of conflict mediation on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government?
- ii. What is the influence of conflict negotiation on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government?
- iii. What is the effect of Conflict Arbitration on employee performance Mbale District Local Government?

1.5 Scope of the Study

1.5.1 Content

The study focused on the Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government covering all staff of Mbale district local government including councilors

1.5.2 Area scope

The study was conducted at Mbale District Local Government (MDLG) in Mbale district. Bududa District is bordered by Sironko District to the north, Kenya to the east, Manafwa District to the south, and Mbale District to the west. The district headquarters at Bududa are located approximately 36 kilometers (22 mi), by road, south-east of Mbale, the largest city in the sub-region

1.5.3 Time scope

The study covered information for a period of 4 years that is 2019 to 2023 a period when employee performance was at its lowest indicators.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study might contribute to the resolution of conflict in Mbale District Local Government. Also, concern of conflict policy and decision making might be addressed to policy makers like top management and other leaders. More so the study might be significant to the future researchers who wish to continue to improve the information related to this topic. Lastly, the success of the research might positively contribute to enrich of information in the Uganda Christian University's (UCU) library.

1.7 Justification of the Study

The research study focused on impact of Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government. As conflict management strategies was designed to enable elimination of conflicts and strengthen its policies that have most efficient and effective way evolvments in Mbale District Local Government. A proper understanding of the contribution of Conflict management strategies will be established, factors that influence employee performance were identified and an analysis on relationship between conflict management strategies and employee performance made to clearly bridge the gap. Therefore, policy makers might be able to correct their errors to impact of conflict management strategies

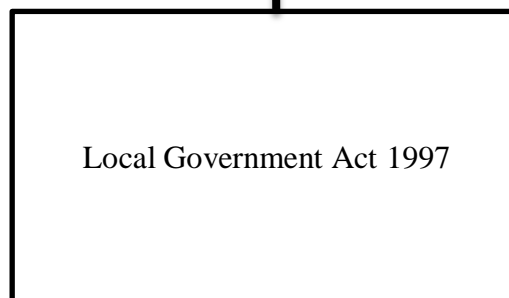
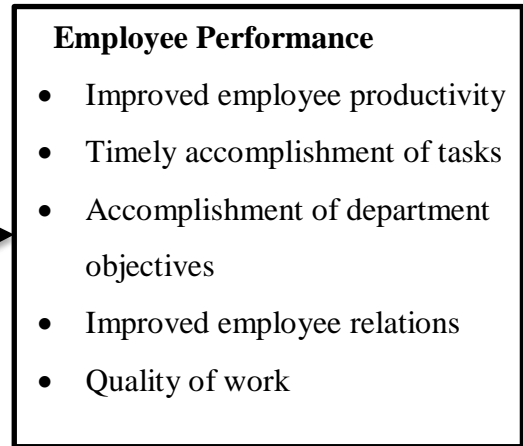
and employee performance in short and long run processes of conflict and employees at workplace.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Independent variable



Dependent Variable



Source: Adapted from Olang (2017); Richard *et al.*, (2009); Kaplan and Norton (1992)

From the above, conflict management within an organizational setting, the independent variables (IVs) of mediation, negotiation, and arbitration are crucial mechanisms employed to address and resolve conflicts among employees. These approaches offer distinct pathways for conflict resolution, with mediation involving a neutral third party facilitating communication and finding mutually acceptable solutions, negotiation entailing direct discussions between conflicting parties to reach a compromise, and arbitration relying on a third-party decision-maker who renders a binding resolution based on presented arguments and evidence. The dependent variable (DV) in this scenario is employee performance, which encompasses various dimensions such as improved productivity, timely task accomplishment, meeting department objectives, fostering

better employee relations, and ensuring the quality of work output. The relationship between the IVs and DV lies in the potential of effective conflict management strategies to positively impact employee performance outcomes. By resolving conflicts promptly and constructively through mediation, negotiation, or arbitration, organizations can mitigate disruptions, improve communication, foster a conducive work environment, and ultimately enhance employee performance across multiple metrics. However, the effectiveness of these conflict management approaches and their influence on employee performance may be contingent upon certain contextual factors, such as the regulatory framework provided by the Local Government Act, which serves as a moderating variable in this relationship. The Local Government Act may dictate specific guidelines or procedures for conflict resolution within the organizational context, thereby shaping the implementation and effectiveness of mediation, negotiation, and arbitration processes. Additionally, the Act may introduce legal considerations or constraints that impact the resolution outcomes and subsequent effects on employee performance. Therefore, the moderating variable of the Local Government Act plays a crucial role in influencing the strength and nature of the relationship between conflict management strategies and employee performance within the organizational framework.

1.9 Definition of key terms

Mediation

Negotiation: refers to the process by which two parties, each with its own viewpoint and objectives, attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory result on a matter of common concern.

Arbitration.

Employee Performance: refers to the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of work at which KCCA delivers its services.

Efficiency: refers to a process characteristic indicating the degree to which the process produces the required output at minimum resource cost.

Effectiveness: refers to a process characteristic indicating the degree to which the process output (work product) conforms to the requirements.

Quality of work: refers to the degree to which a product or service meets public requirements and expectations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the various rich literature related to the study topic majorly the objectives.

Theoretical perspective

Contingency Theory

This behaviorist theory was provided in 1958 by Woodward. The theory argues that there are many ways of managing a firm. The best course of management is contingent or depends on internal and external forces. Firms should come up with the best managerial system for that time after considering the conditions and situation the firm is in (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Thompson points out a big challenge for firms in his 1967 classic organization in action model as the achievement of originality in a world faced by uncertainties. According to him, firms seek to meet certain results. However, they are in a dynamic environment that is surrounded by uncertainties which makes it difficult for them to come up with the right plan that can be fully employed to give the desired results. According to Thompson, although firms are open system the environment in which they are is uncertain and the firms have little control over it (Cole & Kelly, 2011).

According to the contingency theory, a firm should come up with clear decisions and actions which have a relationship with some defined environments that are able to create a match (Islam & Hu, 2012). The theory further postulates that the organization does not only own a duty of care to its shareholders only but to its stakeholders too. Examples of these stakeholders include employees, suppliers, customers, communities, creditors, government and regulatory bodies, and current and potential investors all who impact the firm performance in a significant way (Agusioma, 2018). But those who are against the theory arguments base their arguments on the notion that the theory lacks an explanation on the action to be taken where the leader and the situation at hand do not match and that the theory further fails to give an explanation as to the reasons why some leaders with their leadership styles do well in some situations but fail terribly in others (Lazarus, 2014).

When applied to organizational conflict management strategies, this theory argues that the choice of the conflict management strategies techniques is contingent on the setting context from which the conflicts arise (Toku, 2014). This theory thus advances the notion that conflict management strategies approaches or mechanisms can vary considerably, depending on the organizational

circumstances that led to the emergence of the conflicts. Thus, the management must carefully select conflict management strategies techniques in light of prevailing circumstances in the organization and the desired conflict outcomes (Cole Kelly, 2011). The theory was relevant to the current research since it evaluates the impact of contingent variables such as conflicts on organizational workforce performance.

2.1 Mediation and Employees' Performance

In an empirical study conducted among Icelandic organizations, Violetta (2012) sought to evaluate the impact that use of mediation conflict management strategies method had on the performance of employees in Nordic companies. In the study, the conflicts that were noted to be common in the organizations under study were intergroup and interpersonal disputes. According to the outcome most of the managers of the Icelandic firms were well aware of the processes to use in resolving conflicts and many of them applied various conflict management strategies methods, including mediation, to resolve workplace conflicts. The study revealed the use of mediation as a conflict resolution method had a positive influence on employees' performance in the selected firms. The conclusion was that use of mediation led to a rise in employee performance. The current study sought to validate these observations in the local context. In an empirical investigation carried out in Nigeria, Ajike *et al.* (2015) examined how mediation conflict management strategies technique influenced employee performance at Nigerian Access Bank Plc. This was a case study that used 81 members of staff as the study sample. They were administered with questionnaires to respond to. Descriptive and regression analysis with the help of SPSS helped determine the association between study variables. The results indicated a favorable association between mediation and employee performance ($r= 0.715$; $p<0.05$). A recommendation made was that the banks management should come up with different and proper methods to resolve disputes immediately they arose before they could escalate to unsolvable levels. The current study differed from this study in that it was based on institutions of higher learning as the study units and not a bank as was the case in Ajike *et al.*'s study.

In another study, Lazarus (2014) sought to deduce the impact of conflict management strategies methods on the performance of workers in the civil service of Nigeria. Mediation was one of the methods of conflict resolution that was looked at. The descriptive design study utilized a self-administered questionnaire in data collection. The study sample was made up 240 participants from different ministries. The sample was chosen using stratified random sampling method.

Multiple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation helped analyze the nature of the relation between the study variables. The findings revealed that mediation as a conflict resolution method had a favorable and significant contribution to employees' productivity. The study concluded that workers at all levels in the Nigerian Civil Service should be trained on conflict management strategies and provided with proper orientation on ways to resolve disputes. This study was conducted among workers drawn from different ministries in Nigeria's civil service, while the current study was conducted among public universities' workers in Kenya.

In a study done in Kenya, Olang (2017) investigated the impact conflict management had on *Stima Sacco's* posted results. The descriptive survey study has a population that included employees from top, operational and low-level management cadres working at *Stima Sacco Society Limited*. Census technique was applied in selection of the study sample of 153 respondents. Structured questionnaires were used as the research tools and analysis of the gathered data was done using standard statistical methods of analysis using SPSS version 21 software. The results indicated that many of the participants represented by 71% were in agreement that mediation influenced the performance of the firm to a great extent. In addition, a statistically significant favourable relationship was established between mediation and the firm's performance ($r=0.539$, p value < 0.05). The current study differs from this study in that its focus is on the association between conflict management methods and employees' performance instead of with organizational performance as was the case with Olang's study.

In another study carried out in Kenya, Mwikali (2016) investigated the impact of the use of methods of managing conflict on the performance of staff of Kenya Power Limited. The descriptive study had target population of 1055 respondents. The sample has 290 participants who were chosen by purposive and random sampling methods. Questionnaires were the data gathering tools in the study. Inferential and descriptive statistics with the assistance of SPSS version 201 analyzed the primary data. The results of the study showed that many of the participants were in agreement to a great extent that mediation as a conflict resolution mechanism influenced employees' performance and that involvement of impartial third parties to mediate parties in conflict had a high chance of achieving a positive outcome in relation to resolving of organizational conflicts. While the study was based on a firm that was part of the Kenyan energy industry, this study focus is on institutions in the country's education sector

2.2 Negotiation and Employee Performance

Organizational conflict occurs, as actors engage in activities that are incompatible with those of colleagues within their network, members of other organizations, or unaffiliated individuals who utilize the services or products of the organization (Rahim, 2002). This often leads to disagreements and buildup of tensions that require intervention through conflict resolution (Akanji, 2015). The conflict resolution process encompasses a wide range of activities including negotiation, problem solving, dealing with emotion, and understanding positions (Brett, 2001). According to Dawson (2016), negotiation is a process by which two parties, each with its own viewpoint and objectives, attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory result on a matter of common concern. Negotiation can also be defined as the interaction between two or more parties with divergent interests in order to reach an agreement (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2011). Negotiation is used to minimize conflict affecting individuals so as to maximize cooperation and keep conflict to acceptable levels. This in turn drives performance (Wall & Callister, 2015).

According to Olang (2017), there are several negotiation tactics that can be applied. These include Face-to-face tactic whereby a mutual confidence as a foundation for negotiation can be established, Persuading tactic which assumes using different methods and manners to win over partners and to reach a better negotiating position, Deceitfulness tactic which assumes presenting false data and arguments, Threat tactic is based on deterrence from the side which holds a better position, or has more power. Promise tactic is based on having a better position and more power, with the stronger side persuading the weaker that it will keep its promises and Concession tactic which is the most important tactic in the negotiation strategy. All actors in the conflict count on both sides making a concession since negotiation increasingly gains importance as a popular and constructive way to manage conflict. De Dreu and Weingart (2013) assert that negotiators can help adversaries communicate with each other in many ways.

A survey of more than 550 employees of large Canadian organizations by Downie (2017) revealed that employees wanted to feel involved in decisions that affect them by negotiating with managers before decisions were made. Employees equated negotiation with fairness since participation led to creation of shared values. The survey report concluded that the components of a high performance workforce included effective voice for employees in strategy and governance, contingent compensation, teamwork and employee involvement in negotiation in problem solving. It further cautioned employers to recognize that employees had clear expectations of their employers and, in turn, that employers actions were critical since employees needed to have ownership of Strategy if they are to fully realize organizational performance.

Furthermore, Wanjiru (2012) carried out a study in Kenya on negotiation and its influence on the performance of commercial banks. The study found that negotiation had an influence on performance in the bank. For instance, negotiation was required before arriving at a compensation package agreeable by both parties. Moderate amount of conflict would be expected in the process but this would barely hinder performance, if handled properly.

Ajike *et al.*, (2015) observed that negotiation and its influence on performance can be seen in an organizations performance appraisal process. It goes without saying that an effective performance appraisal system can lead an organization to take strides towards organization performance and growth by leaps and bounds (Ajike *et al.*, 2015). These measures give top managers a fast but comprehensive view of the organization's performance and conversely, an ineffective performance appraisal system can seal the fate of an organization by creating chaos and confusion from top to bottom in the administrative hierarchy. This may result into conflict if employees feel that they are appraised unfairly. It can also result in poor performance if the employees do not clearly understand what is expected of them. It is therefore important that a negotiation be at the beginning of the performance contract so that an employee is well informed of what is expected (Osioma *et al.*, 2013).

Ideally,Reys (2011) explains that performance appraisal negotiations provide employees with useful feedback they can immediately apply to improve their performance. This feedback includes suggestions for change, as well as encouragement to continue with positive behavior. Managers show employees how improving their overall performance and developing new skills will lead to additional responsibilities, promotions and increased monetary benefits (Miller &Swope, 2006). Employees appreciate this honest feedback and become motivated to improve their performance. In addition, managers benefit by receiving insightful input on ways to improve both their leadership styles and departmental operations. Most would agree however, that organizations' performance appraisal processes operate in ways that are less than ideal (Thompson, 2005).

A study by Okoth (2013) on conflict resolution strategies used in secondary schools in Kisumu Municipality, Kisumu County concludes that the conflict resolution strategies of negotiation used in secondary schools in Kisumu municipality are effective in increasing performance. Therefore, negotiation was key to corporate performance since it helps to secure a consensus in resolving conflicts by making sure all members understand the reasons behind the compromises made by individual members.

The outcomes of negotiation to a large extent determine if the opposing teams will gain a mutual understanding and work towards the achievement of organizational goals to improve

performance. According to Laddha *et al.*, (2017), in any negotiation exercise the outcome will either promote group cohesiveness or buildup of tensions. The outcomes include win -win, win-lose and lose -lose outcome. The win-win negotiating outcome applies to many situations, including contract negotiations as well as conflict resolution. Negotiation is not one party dictating or imposing terms on another. When that happens, the outcome will rarely produce mutual satisfaction. The result can only be mutually satisfactory if both differences and common interests are considered (Khan *et al.*, 2015). in fostering economic productivity (Roberts, 2009). Economic performance of Kenya was affected before the power sharing deal was concluded. Adversely, organizations use third party intervention to improve organizational performance. Third-party intervention may worsen a conflict if the level of the intervention is not sufficiently high (Shmueli& Ben Gal, 2016). Conflict resolution behaviors have primarily been studied either as individual styles of the third party that are stable traits of individuals, as types of behaviors (such as threats or compromises), or as generalized behavioral orientations (Shelton & Darling, 2014). The history and establishment of third party conflict resolution system in Nigeria dates back to 2005, when the Negotiation and Conflict resolution Group (NCMG) initiated the concept in Nigeria with establishment of the Lagos Multi-Doors Courthouse in 2004. The introduction of the third party processes are attached in Nigeria is a response to the reform of judicial sector. Following the introduction, it is believed that performance output is increased when there is confidence in third party conflict resolution because once it is resolved, it becomes final, and there is no appeal to suggest that one party was dissatisfied with the initial outcome or court judgment. A study on conflict in the Public service commission Rwanda (Muganza, 2013) showed that conflict has negative impact on the working environment and the organizational performance, not mentioning the government loss of funds totaling 293,642,068Frw through court cases (PSC Annual Report: 2012-2013). This study sought to find out the influence of third party intervention as a conflict resolution strategy on employee performance in Mbale district local government.

Muigua (2015) conducted a study on Conflict resolution in East Africa. The study showed that disputes within organizations can be resolved by the use of a third party in three different ways, mediation, arbitration and litigation. Conflict resolution refers to a process where the outcome is based on mutual problem sharing with the conflicting parties cooperating in order to define their conflict and their relationship (Muigua, 2015). Resolution is non power based and non - coercive thus enabling it achieve mutual satisfaction of needs without relying on the parties' power. A resolution digs deeper in ascertaining the root causes of the conflict between the parties by aiming at a post conflict relationship not founded on power. This outcome is enduring, non-

coercive, mutually satisfying, addresses the root cause of the conflict and it is also not zero-sum since gain by one party does not mean loss by the other; each party's needs are fulfilled. Such needs cannot be bargained or fulfilled through coercion and power. These advantages make resolution potentially superior to settlement.

2.3 Arbitration and Employee performance

According to Colvin, (2004) arbitration is a conflict solving process in where disputing parties make their issue to a private independent person or third-party intermediary (panel of arbitrators) who through his expertise critically examines and re-examines all the evidence and later takes a unified decision before the parties involved in a dispute. The decision made by the arbitrator or panel of arbitrators is usually binding and, in most cases, enforced. Unlike court-based adjudication, arbitrators' decision is not appealed against. Fisher, (2000) noted that presentations are echoed before the arbitrators to establish facts and prove one-side right and the other wrong. This, therefore make, parties to presume that they are working at logger heads with each other, but not collaboratively and cooperatively. Arbitration is not generally as formal as court adjudication; however, the rules can be bent to some extent to achieve the party's needs. Although this aspect of conflict management strategies is good, it has some loopholes because, it may end up not solving a dispute since one side to the conflict will come out arbitrated against. Thus, in the worst scenarios, this can instead deepen the conflict than managing it.

Gotsman et al. (2009) in his research revealed that Arbitration is always best used in situations of employee conflict over resource allocations, wages, salaries, tasks among other disputes. Arbitration mechanism of conflict management strategies is an out of court technique for resolving a conflict. The arbitrator has the mandate to control the process, gives opportunity and listen to both sides that he bases on to make a final decision. Like in courts of law, only one side will prevail in arbitration though the appeal rights are limited and this is a great challenge of using arbitration technique in conflict management strategies. (Fisher, 2000), states that Arbitration technique can be much worse than better in managing conflicts in an institution due to win-lose results. Colvin, (2004) urges that in a more formal setting, the arbitrator or third party has to give a fair hearing to all parties' before making a decision. The parties always present their evidence through documents, exhibits and testimony by themselves or representatives. Ramsbotham et al, (2011), also discovered that parties may agree to already established procedures or they may establish their own procedures or the institution may

establish the procedures for the arbitrator to conduct in arbitrating. There can be either one arbitrator or a panel of more than one arbitrator. An arbitration hearing process can be held from any gazetted place that is convenient and agreed upon by both parties in a dispute. (Gotsman et al.2009) echoed that the outcomes of an arbitration can be enforced in case all parties had previously accepted to be bound by the decision and this limits the right of appeal against the arbitrator's final decision. An arbitrator's decision is same as a judgment in courts of judicature and therefore it is enforceable.

Ramsbotham et al, (2011), argues that arbitration should always be deployed only when mediations fails to work and this will automatically and naturally suggest arbitration as the best choice. Arbitration is always a voluntary process, whereby the parties in conflict willingly agree upon a private independent party to take a decision for them.

According to Gotsman et al. (2009). In arbitration, the arbitrator or panel of arbitrators has discretionary powers to make conclusive decisions which are binding and this demands the parties in conflict are to recognize, adhere and obey them. An agreement is designed between the conflicting parties and the arbitrator, indicating a main point and emphasizing that the arbitrator's decision shall be operationalized, thus giving the required significance of arbitration process and emphasizing to parties in dispute that the main objective of arbitration shall be fulfilled. This scenario makes the decision made by the arbitrator legal and binding thus permitting relevant authorities to enforce it against other decision makers. However, according to Goltsman et al. (2009) in his conclusion noted that arbitration always performs better depending on the situation at hand.

Warner, (2001) also criticized arbitration as a strategy of managing conflicts in an institution, arguing that arbitration can instead fuel more conflicts among the employees in an organization than solving them and this is due to the decision of the arbitrator which is binding and limits appeal against it, this may trigger the losing side to promote conflicts at the work place thus leading to poor employee relations, low productivity, creation of cliques at workplace which in turn lead to poor employee performance in an organization.

The study findings on Arbitration and employee performance were in agreement with several reviews in the literature by most scholars as it was postulated that Arbitration positively and significantly influences employee performance

2.4 Summary of the Literature Review

The literature above showed that scholars exhausted sufficient effort to relate conflict management strategies mechanisms and employee performance. These studies showed that conflict management strategies mechanisms like mediation, arbitration, and negotiation influence employee performance. However, Gaps still existed at the theoretical, conceptual, contextual and methodological levels. Theoretically many of the previous scholars have used different theories such as contingency theory to guide their studies however this study is being guided with contemporary theory .Conceptually the previous studies according to several scholars didn't specifically research about the three mechanisms (Mediation, Arbitration and Negotiation) of conflict management strategies and employee performance thus creating a gap to undertake this study. Contextually all studies were conducted outside Mbale district local government and most of this studies, the researchers applied only quantitative research methods and design to collect and analyze the data unlike this study which was both qualitative and quantitative research methods. These gaps called for immediate action to carry out this study in Uganda and particularly Mbale District Local Government. Therefore, in the context of Mbale District Local Government, this study assessed the influence of conflict management strategies and Employee performance

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter described the methodology of this study. Methodology refers to the detailed procedures to be followed to achieve the research objectives. This study applied both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This chapter presents the research design, the study area, study population, sampling design, methods and instruments of data collection, procedure for data collection and data analysis, quality management of data collection instruments and measurement of variables as well as Ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional research design to collect data from a population at a particular moment in time. This design was adopted because according to (Kothari, 2004) it is cost effective in terms of resources, time and it was very relevant in collecting data on the opinion from different respondents at one time. This study employed qualitative methods which involved the in-depth probe, inquiry and application of subjectively and objectively interpreted data. According to Earl-Babbie (2013), qualitative researchers are focused to gather an in-depth familiarity of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. A quantitative approach was adopted in order to gather quantitative data to test the hypothesis. A quantitative study as defined by Bhatti and Sundram (2015) is a way of calculating the data through the application of statistical methods and analysis and the outcome of the analysis represent numbers that further explains the propose remedy of a particular research problem

3.2 Study population

Study population refers to a complete enumeration of all items in the universe (Brew and Lucas 2009). The study focused on the district local government top administrators, heads of departments (Health, Education, Finance, HR, Works etc.) and District Service Commission but also the Sub counties and town councils were considered because they deal directly with employees of the local government. The target population of the study entailed 100 respondents who were selected basing on the information provided by the district CAO and the District personnel of Mbale district local government

3.3 Sample size

The sample size was determined by using Morgan and Krejuice table for determining sample size determination. Out of the 100, a sample of 80 respondents was selected using the table.

Table 1: Sample size distribution table

Category of respondents	Target Population	Sample population	Sampling method	Data collection tool
District Administrators	10	06	Purposive Sampling	Interview guide
Heads of department	10	05	Purposive sampling	Interview guide
DSC	09	05	Purposive Sampling	Interview guide
Sub-County Chiefs and Town Clerks	40	36	Simple Random Sampling	Questionnaire
CDOs	30	28	Simple Random Sampling	Questionnaire
Total	100	80		

Source: Mbale District Staff List, 2023

3.4 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique also known as judgmental sampling technique is a type of non-probability sampling technique where the researcher chooses a sample based on what she/he thinks is the respondent with the information the researcher is looking for or in other words they use their personal judgement (Palys, 2008). The study will apply Purposive sampling technique because according to (Palys, 2008) it saves time and also enables the researcher to get information from the right people who have knowledge and skills regarding the subject topic. This technique will be used in selecting, District Administrators, Heads of department and District Service Commissioners, the researcher used this technique because these respondents held enough knowledge and skills regarding the study topic

The researcher will use simple random sampling technique, According to Amin, (2010) a simple random sample is a subset of individuals chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual

is selected randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being selected at any stage during the sampling process. The technique will be used to select from the other town clerks, sub-county chiefs and community development officers who are very many.

3.5 Methods of data collection

The researcher used qualitative data collection methods like Interviews and self-administered structured Questionnaires. According to Oso and Onen, (2008) interviews is a data collection technique in which the researcher interacts with the respondents on a number of items in relation to study. He also defined questionnaires as a data collection technique in which the respondents respond to the number of items in writing.

3.5.1 Interviews

According to Brew and Lucas (2009), interviews involve the presentation of oral verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral verbal responses. Interviews, specifically structured interviews, were selected due to their flexibility to explore themes and topics that dig deeper for responses to the research question. This method allowed new emerging ideas to be raised and explored in the due course of the interviews. The choice to conduct interviews was based on practical reasons such as respondents' availability.

The interviews were structured, indicating that there was a pre-determined list of questions to be asked to the research respondents. This was both face to face and oral interviews, the questions were the same and were asked in a way that ensured the limited biasness in the response.

3.5.2 Questionnaire survey method

Kothari (2004) defines a questionnaire as a short-printed form, with questions given to respondents to fill in order to collect data often relating to the problem. The questionnaire formed a major data collection tool for this study because it was cheap, time saving, easy to administer, effective and it was the best form to obtain information from the local government staff who were busy. The main aim of using questionnaires was because it helped in preliminary data analysis and presentation of tables. Questionnaires were employed since the study was concerned with variables that cannot be directly observed such as views, opinions and perceptions of the respondents. In this research, closed ended (self-administered questionnaires) were designed and distributed to all respondents selected in this study.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The Researcher used both quantitative and qualitative tools of data collection like Interviews guide and Questionnaires.

3.6.1 Interview guide

An interview guide is a set of questions that the researcher queries the respondents during the interview (McNamara, 2009). In the same vein, Osborne (2008) states that an interview guide is list of thematic areas or issues that the research focuses on while engaging respondents during an interview. Interview guides shall be used to collect qualitative data from the respondents. The researcher shall design an open-ended questions in the interview guide to facilitate interviews with district administrators, heads of department and district service commissioners of Mbale district local government. The researcher postured questions that lead the respondents towards giving data to meet the study objectives and probe the respondents in order to seek elucidation about responses provided. Interviews were chosen because they were regarded as a tool that collects in-depth data about a particular research phenomenon. Mugenda Mugenda (2003), argue that interviews are beneficial because they provide in depth information which is not possible to obtain by using quantitative tools. Appendix II presents the interview guide.

3.6.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were chosen in this study because the study covered a large geographical area that made the use of questionnaires appropriate (Amin, 2005). A questionnaire was a set of systematically structured questions that were employed to gather quantitative information from respondents. As a significant research tool for collecting data, a questionnaire had its key function as measurement and used to homogenize questions so that the same questions are asked in the same way repeatedly (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Oppenheim, 2006). It is the major data collection technique in surveys and yields to quantitative data. The researchers developed and administer one set of structured questionnaires to collect data from the town clerks, sub-county chiefs and community development officers. A close-ended set of questionnaires scored on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree and 5= strongly disagree developed by the researcher was employed in this study.

3.7 Quality control

The research tools were piloted in the departments that were not incorporated in the sample of the study and altered to improve their validity and reliability coefficients to at least 0.70.

Elements with validity and reliability coefficients of at least 0.70 are acknowledged as valid and reliable in research (Kathuri & Pals, 1993)

3.8 Quality Management of data collection tools

3.8.1 Validity

Validity is defined as the extent to which results can be accurately interpreted and generalized to other populations (Oso & Onen, 2008). Validity is the extent to which an instrument like an interview guide or questionnaire measures the intention of the researcher.

Validity was tested using expert judgement where three judges rank the relevancy of the questions in the instruments in relation to the study variables.

The formula for Content Validity Index was;

$$CVI = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n r_i}{N}$$

Where CVI = content validity

n= number of items indicated relevant.

N = total no. of items in the instrument

$$CVI = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n r_i}{N}$$

Content validity index = 0.852 which is above 0.7 recommended value for validity of data collection instrument.

The results of CVI of 0.852 was realized, which implied that the instrument was valid for collecting field data as recommended by (Amin, 2005). The variables should have a CVI of above 0.70 as the recommended value for the instruments to be considered relevant (Amin, 2005).

3.8.2 Reliability

The researcher also employed internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) to check the reliability of the research tools. A Cronbach Alpha is a measure used to assess the reliability or internal consistency, of a set of scale or test items. According to Leedy and Ormod (2001) reliability refers to the consistence with which a measuring instrument yields results when the entity being measured has not changed. In other arguments, reliability of any given measurements refers to the extent to which it is a dependable measure of a concept being studied. To ensure reliability, the researcher used the internal consistency reliability method specifically the Cronbach alpha

co-efficient in SPSS. The reliability test yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.904 as shown in the table below, an indication of consistence in the research tool that was being employed.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>
.904	34

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

3.9 Procedure for data collection

The researcher wrote a proposal which was submitted for approval, after which questionnaires were developed for use in the study. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the faculty which introduced him to the respondents. The questionnaire was then pre-tested to explore the wording and grammatical content, this was done to establish its validity and reliability to improve the quality of the data collected. The appropriate number of copies of the research instrument were printed and made available to the respondents and after which the data collected was coded and summarized for analysis.

3.10 Data Analysis

According to Geoffrey Keppel (1991), data analysis as a computation of some measures alongside with searching for various patterns of relations that exist among information groups. Processing implies coding, editing, classification and tabulation of data collected so that they are easily analyzed.

During analysis, the data collected was edited to determine the information that sufficiently answered the research questions or objectives. The researcher then used statistical software (IBM SPSS statistics 23) to process the data into frequency tables and determined the mean, standard deviation and also tested the significance and relationship of variable by running the correlation and regression statistics for the quantitative data that was collected.

Qualitative analysis of data is the ambit of systematic processes from which qualitative data that has been gathered is transformed into some form of understanding and explanation or interpretation of the individuals and issues under investigation. Qualitative data analysis is usually founded on an interpretative approach as stated by Neuendorf, (2002). Qualitative data responses were coded, classified and sorted. The analysis was manually done and the responses were summarized and presentation of major findings of the study was in a narrative form.

3.11 Measurement of variables

The independent variable in this study was Conflict management strategies (Arbitration, Negotiation and Mediation) while the dependent variable was employee performance (improved employee productivity, timely accomplishment of tasks and improved employee relations). To measure these variables, the researcher developed a five-point Likert scale as suggested by Mugenda & Mugenda, (1999), p. 74 & 75 to capture respondent's perceptions which were evaluated to represent respondent's responses: (strongly agree = 1, agree = 2, neutral = 3, disagree = 4, and strongly disagree = 5) that was applied in this study.

3.12 Ethical considerations

The researcher observed the ethical principle of confidentiality as each respondent was informed of the intention of the study and the researcher guaranteed maximum confidentiality in all matters discussed.

The researcher requested the respondents to participate in this research and ensured that the respondents' consent is first sought as a pre-request for interview as this avoided resistance and harassment by the respondents during the research process.

The researcher ensured that he refrained from all forms of intellectual theft and plagiarism by running several anti-plagiarism tests as required by the institution to certify that am the sole owner of the work presented and has never been published or submitted before by another student to any institution for any award among other forms.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter examined the methodology that was adopted for this study. It discussed the research design, population, sampling methods, research procedures, Quality control, measurement of variables, data analysis methods, ethical considerations and limitations to the study. This methodology made it possible to address the research questions posed in chapter one. Chapter four addresses results and findings from the study

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter gives the description of the background variables, data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings as per the research question from the study which assessed how conflict management strategies influenced employee performance in Mbale district Local government.

In this chapter data collected from the field is presented, analyzed and interpreted. The presentation is guided by the research objectives stated above and as a result, the statistics are a reflection of what it takes to answer the research question. The results presented are based on the responses from the questionnaire and interviews conducted, tables, frequencies and percentages have been used in presenting and describing the findings of the study.

Table 3: Showing the Response Rate.

Category of respondents	Target Sample size	Actual Sample	Percentage (%)
District Administrators	06	06	100
Heads of department	05	05	100
DSC	05	03	97
Sub-County Chiefs and Town Clerks	36	36	100
CDOs	28	28	100
Total	80	78	97.5

Source: *Primary data, 2023*

As shown in Table 3, the study obtained 78 respondents out of 80 that were supposed to participate in this study. The Table also shows that out of 78 respondents, 64 respondents were administered with questionnaires which were all returned as it only 16 respondents were supposed to be interviewed but only 14 respondents were able to give an opportunity to the researcher for the interview exercise.

According to Lindner and Wingenbach (2002), researchers should report rates and show how potential no response rate error was handled because failure to do so can bring the validity of the findings into question. Studies that have high response rates provide a measure of reassurance that findings that are obtained can be projected in the population from which the sample was drawn.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

In this section, distribution of respondents by sex, age, highest level of qualification, position, years worked and in Mbale District Local Government were presented.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by sex.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	43	55.1
Female	45	44.8
Total	78	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023

According to Table 4, of 78 respondents, the males had formed a largest part of the sample at 55.1% compared to the females who only occupied 44.8% of the sampled population. This implies that the number of male employees in Mbale district local government are more than the female employees.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by Age

Age of respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-30	13	16.6
31-40	29	37.1
41-50	32	41.0
Above 50	4	5.1
Total	78	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023.

According to table 4.4 32 out of 78 respondents were aged between 41-50 years that form the largest portion with 41.0%, followed by respondents aged 31-40 years with 37.1% and then those between 20 and 30 only 13 out 78 that made 16.6% and lastly those above 50 years formed the percentage of 5.1%. This implied that the respondents studied were of mature age and their responses can be relied on.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by the position held at the district

Position of respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
District Administrators	5	6.41
District Personnel	1	1.2
Heads of Department	5	6.41
District service commissioners	3	3.84
Town clerk and sub-county chiefs	36	46.1
CDO	28	35.89
Total	78	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023.

According to Table 6 above, out of 78 respondents, 36 were sub-county chiefs and town clerks which forms a percentage of 46.1% then followed by CDOs with a percentage of 35.89% with district Administrators forming 6.41 and the same level with heads of department at 6.41 while District service commissioners formed 3.84% and finally the district personnel was one and he occupied 1.2% of the sampled population. This implies that all key offices in administration that are exposed to conflict management strategies were represented and this indicated that the responses gathered can genuinely be relied on in this study.

Table 7; Distribution of respondents by the highest level of education

Highest level of education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Degree	42	53.8
Post graduate	36	51.4
Total	78	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023

According to Table 7, out of 78 respondents studied, those holding a bachelor’s degree formed the largest population of the sample at 53.8% while those holding a post graduate qualification formed 51.4%. This suggested that most of the respondents were able to comprehend and interpret items in the data collection instruments used.

Table 8: Distribution of years worked in Mbale by the respondent

Number of years worked in Mbale by the respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 2years	13	16.6
2-5years	15	19.2
5-10years	30	38.4
Above 10years	20	25.6
Total	78	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 8 illustrates that out of the 78 respondents studied in this study, 38.4% of the respondents have since worked in Mbale between 5-10 years then followed by those who have worked there 9-10 years above while those who have worked there between 2-5 years formed 19.2% and finally those who have worked less than 2 years settled for 16.6%. This implied that the respondents who were sampled had the best experience in relation to the study because the highest number of respondents has worked in Mbale and in their respective positions for a long time; this indicates that the responses generated from them are genuine.

4.3 Empirical findings on Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The survey instruments had a list of items that measured Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government. The initial conceptualization of Conflict management strategies had the dimensions Arbitration, Negotiation and Mediation as independent variable while Employee Performance had dimensions like Improved employee productivity, improved employee relations and timely accomplishment of tasks.

In this section the researcher explores the extent to which Conflict management strategies influences Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The dependent Variable which is Employee performance was measured using improved employee productivity, improved employee relations and timely accomplishment of tasks. The results were further explained using correlations in order to show the extent to which the

variables were related. The results from the interviews were used to back up the quantitative data findings.

4.3.1 Presentation of findings on the dependent variable Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government was conceptualized into eight items. These eight items were closed ended on a five point Likert scale that consisted of items in which one represented strongly agree, two represented agree, three represented neutral, four represented disagree and five represented strongly disagree. This responses were shown in Table 4. 8 below:

Table 9: Descriptive statistics on employee performance

Statements on Employee Performance	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
	%	%	%	%	%	(M)	(STD)
Performance is the achievement of quantified objectives in MDLG	48.4	51.6	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.52	.504
MDLG continually enhances skills through continuous performance monitoring	39.1	57.8	1.6	1.6	0.00	1.66	.597
The balanced score card is an effect method of measuring employee performance in MDLG	29.7	39.1	23.4	4.7	3.1	2.13	1.000
Conflict management strategies avoids time wasting and help employees achieve set targets	43.8	50.0	6.3	0.00	0.00	1.63	.604
Conflict management strategies improves employee relations	54.7	40.6	4.7	0.00	0.00	1.50	.591

Conflict management strategies improves productivity of employees	34	27	3	0.00	0.00	1.52	.591
Conflict management strategies facilitates employees to timely accomplish tasks	32	21	7	4	0.00	1.73	.895
Conflict management strategies influences employee performance	71.9	21.9	1.6	3.1	1.6	1.41	.811

Source: Primary data, 2023

On Statement 1 of “Performance is the achievement of quantified objectives in MDLG”, a higher cumulative percentage of 51.6% agreed which followed 48.4% who strongly agreed to the statement while 0.00% respondents were neutral and still disagree with the statement. This implied that the employees in Mbale district had more knowledge about performance thus a question on whether employees knew the meaning of performance as a reason for poor performance would not a raise as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 1.52 and a lower standard deviation of 0.504.

On Statement 2 of “MDLG continually enhances skills through continuous performance monitoring”, 57.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement followed by 39.1% who strongly agreed while 1.6% of the respondents were neutral on this statement and this was the same as those who disagreed at 1.6% and strongly disagree respondents formed 0.00%. This is in agreement with the response gathered from the district personnel during an interview where the personnel remarked that “*for purposes of ensuring performance management, they always conduct periodic assessment to identify the training gaps and fill them by recommending or conducting the relevant training for the employees identified*”. According to the findings above, it is indicated that Mbale continually enhances skills of its employees through continuous performance monitoring as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 1.66 and a lower standard deviation of 0.597.

Item 3 of “The balanced score card is an effective method of measuring employee performance in MDLG”, it was revealed that 39.1% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 29.7% strongly agreed followed by 23.4% who were neutral and 4.7% disagreed and finally 3.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that balanced score card is effective method of measuring employee performance. This is strongly in line with the response generated from the Senior Human Resource officer of the district who remarked that *“the district administers the balanced scored per quota as a check on what was target vis-à-vis what has been achieved, and through this we know of our performance in various sectors and departments”*. Based on the above findings, it is indicated that balanced score card is an effective method used by the district employees to measure employee performance in Mbale district Local government as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 2.13 and a lower standard deviation of 1.000.

Item 4 of “Conflict management strategies avoids time wasting and help employees achieve set targets”, A highest percentage of respondents agreed with the statement as 50.0% respondents agreed followed by 43.8% of respondents who strongly agreed while 6.3% were neutral and finally 0.00% respondents disagreed with the statement. This is in agreement with the responses generated from DHO during the interview with the researcher and stated that *“he had issues with several hospital administrators, they would report late at work and yet they were the ones in charge of the stores, and this caused a lot of conflict between the hospital administrators and the junior staffs of the hospital because they could not work as their tools, medicine and other apparatus were in store whose keys are with the administrator who is not at work during working hours, this made me to redistribute roles and responsibilities among hospital employees and now each employee works and achieve their target with in mandated time”* thus conflict management strategies avoids time wasting and helps employees achieve set targets. This showed that employees in Mbale District prefer conflict management strategies because it avoids time wasting and supports employees to achieve the set targets as it has been presented by a higher mean of 1.63 and a lower standard deviation of 0.604.

Item 5 of “Conflict management strategies improves employee relations” recorded a higher percentage of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement by claiming 54.7% followed by those who agreed at 40.6% while 4.7% of the respondents were neutral as 0.00% disagreed with the statement. This implies that in circumstances of disputes that are characterized with disunity, bad blood and resistance in Mbale district among employees, conflict management strategies is used to unity the parties in conflict and thus improve employee relations in Mbale district Local

government as it has been presented by a higher mean of 1.50 and a lower standard deviation of 0.591.

On item 6 of “Conflict management strategies improves productivity of employees”, it was revealed that 34% of the respondents strongly agree with the statement while 27% also agreed as 3% of respondents were neutral and finally 0.00% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that conflict management strategies improves productivity of employees in Mbale district local government. In an interview with the Assistant chief Administrative Officer, the researcher noted that conflict management strategies improves productivity of employees in the district, ACAO remarked that *“they had serious task conflicts at the district between operation wealth creation officer and the production officer on who does what, but after harmonizing the two parties, each party is now very productive to perform better than the other”* thus conflict management strategies improves productivity of employees in Mbale district Local government. This indicates that employee’s productivity is always influenced by conflict management strategies in situations of disputes in the district as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 1.52 and a lower standard deviation of 0.591.

According to the above frequency table, it was revealed that on statement 7 “Conflict management strategies facilitates employees to timely accomplish tasks”, a higher percentage was recorded on strongly agree with 32% followed by agree with 21% while 7% of the respondents were neutral and finally 4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that Conflict management strategies facilitates employees to timely accomplish tasks in Mbale district Local government. According to the response gathered from the ACAO during an interview, he remarked that *“Conflict management strategies can only facilitate timely accomplishment of tasks only if the process of solving the dispute is done, however after a conflict has been fully managed, then accomplishing tasks becomes a walkover for employees in Mbale”*. This implied that in most employees in the Mbale district recognize conflict management strategies as a technique that can facilitate timely accomplishment of tasks as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 1.73 and a lower standard deviation of 0.895.

According to table 4.8 above, it was discovered that on statement 8 “Conflict management strategies influences employee performance” a higher percentage of respondents strongly agreed with the statement by 71.9% followed by 21.9% who agreed while 1.6% of the respondents were neutral as 3.1% of the respondents disagreed and finally 1.6% of the respondents strongly

disagreed with the statement that conflict management strategies influences employee performance in Mbale district local government. This is in conformity with the responses gathered from the interview with the CAO conducted by the researcher, the CAO remarked that *“Conflict management strategies is the diagnosis we run to in case we identify any conflict, this is because total elimination of conflict is impossible thus recognizing it and managing it is very beneficial as it greatly improves employee performance in the district.”* This implies that a higher number of employees in Mbale district local government appreciate conflict management strategies indeed influences employee’s performance as it has been clearly presented by a higher mean of 1.41 and a lower standard deviation of 0.811.

4.3.2 Findings on Arbitration and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

This objective was addressed by asking respondents to indicate on a five Likert Scale the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements about the variables and the researcher analyzed the questionnaires generated on this objective. In order to address this objective, the findings from interviews conducted supported the seven statements of the questionnaire which was closed ended on a five point Likert scale that consisted of statements in which one represented strongly agree, two represented agree, three represented neutral, four represented disagree and five represented strongly disagree. This responses were shown in Table 4. 9 below.

Table 10: Descriptive statistics on Arbitration and employee performance.

Statements on Arbitration and employee performance.	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
	%	%	%	%	%	(M)	(STD)
Arbitration is the private determination of a dispute, by an independent third						1.83	.551

party.	23.4	71.9	3.1	1.6	0.00		
Arbitration is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG	20.3	60.9	17.2	1.6	0.00	2.00	.667
Arbitration is facilitated by top administrators of the District	14.1	28.1	50.0	7.8	0.00	2.52	.836
Arbitration helps improve employee productivity in MDLG	20.3	65.6	12.5	1.6	0.00	1.95	.628
Arbitration facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees	29.7	39.1	20.3	10.9	0.00	2.13	.968
Arbitration helps improve employee relations in MDLG	35.9	39.1	21.9	3.1	0.00	1.92	.841
Arbitration influences employee performance	39.1	40.6	14.1	6.3	0.00	1.88	.882

Source: Primary data, 2023

According to statement 1 in table 10 about “Arbitration is the private determination of a dispute, by an independent third party”, 71.9% of the respondent agreed with the statement followed by those who strongly agreed with 23.4% and then 3.1% of the respondents were neutral while 1.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement 1 on Arbitration as 0.00% respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This is similar to the response generated

from the interviews as most respondents agreed “*that indeed arbitration is a private determination of a dispute by an impartial and biased third party, and in Mbale district the CAO, DSC, disciplinary committee on certain cases of conflict do perform the role of third party to solve the conflict*” among employees in Mbale district Local government. This implies that the employees of Mbale district Local government have prior knowledge on the definition and meaning of Arbitration as it has been clearly recorded with a higher mean of 1.83 and a lower standard deviation of 0.551.

On statement 2 of about Arbitration in table 4.9, out of 78 respondents that participated in this study, 60.9% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Arbitration is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG followed by 20.3% of respondents who strongly agreed to the statement while 17.2% of the respondents were neutral as 1.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Arbitration is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG. This is finding are in agreement with the response gathered from the DCAO during an interview were he “*remarked the Mbale district like any other public institution that involves working with people, conflicts are very visible and thus we manage them strategically to realize a positive results hence arbitration is one of the strategies we apply in managing conflicts in Mbale district Local government*”. This indicated that Arbitration is greatly applied in Mbale district local government to manage conflicts as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 2.00 and a lower standard deviation of 0.667.

On statement 3 about Arbitration in table 4.9, it was revealed that most of the respondents at 50.0% were neutral to statement that Arbitration is facilitated by top administrators of the District as 28.1% of the respondents agreed followed by 14.1% who strongly agreed that indeed Arbitration in Mbale district local government is facilitated by the top administrators of the district while 7.8% of respondents disagreed with the statement as 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. In contrary the above findings on the statement that Arbitration is facilitated by the top administrators, the DCAO during an interview stated “*that indeed top administrators in the district facilitate arbitration whenever there is a conflict, he further remarked that they can invite the LCV, RDC or the CAO himself can arbitrate but on cases were the CAO is not arbitrating then he has to just be involved in the arbitration process*”. This implies that as much as top administrators are facilitate arbitration, most employees are either not aware or don’t really know how arbitration is facilitated in Mbale district local

government as it has been clearly recorded with a higher mean of 2.52 and a lower standard deviation of 0.836.

According to the finding on statement 4 in table 4.9, it was discovered that majority of the respondents that formed 65.6% agreed with the statement that “Arbitration helps improve employee productivity in MDLG followed by 20.3% of the respondents who strongly agreed with the statement while 12.5% of the respondents were neutral on this statement as 1.6% of respondents disagreed and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Arbitration helps improve employee productivity in MDLG. The findings above are in relation to the response gathered from the head of department natural resources who *“remarked that arbitration improves employee productivity because when consensus is reached between the parties in conflict peace is cultivated and employees are renewed to work as the bottlenecks have been addressed”*. This implies that Arbitration as a mechanism of conflict management strategies, improves employees productivity in Mbale district local government as it has been clearly presented by a higher mean of 1.95 and a lower standard deviation of 0.628.

On statement 5 in table 4.9, findings show that 39.1% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Arbitration facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees followed

29.7% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement while 20.3% of the respondents were neutral about the statement as 10.9% of the respondents disagreed and finally 0.00% strongly disagreed with the statement that Arbitration facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees in Mbale district local government. This is in support with the response gathered from the DCDO during an interview who remarked that *“Arbitration gives employees opportunity to speak out and thus helps to solve those issues immediately and after the employees can get back to work”* however he noted that *“arbitration can indeed hinder timely accomplish tasks if it is not done early”*. This implies that Arbitration indeed facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees in Mbale district only if it is done early as it has been clearly presented by a higher mean of 2.13 and a lower standard deviation of 0.968.

According to the findings on statement 6 in table 4.9, it’s revealed that 39.1% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Arbitration helps improve employee relations in MDLG followed by respondents that strongly agreed with the statement who formed 35.9% as 21.9% of the respondents were neutral about the statement with only 3.1% of respondents disagreeing with the

statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Arbitration helps improve employee relations in MDLG. This was in agreement with the response gathered from the CAO during an interview as he said that *“after Arbitration teamwork is realized, opportunities are created for people to consult on issues they don’t know, levels of trust among employees improve and thus improved employee relations”* however he noted that *“after Arbitration, employees tend to do things with caution as they fear to cause a conflict and this reduces speed otherwise arbitration improves employee relations in Mbale district local government”*. This implies that Arbitration as a mechanism of conflict management strategies improves employee relations among employees in Mbale district local government as it has been clearly presented by a higher mean of 1.92 and a lower standard deviation of 0.841.

Finally on the last statement about Arbitration in table 4.9, it was discovered that 40.6% of the respondents agreed with statement that Arbitration influences employee performance in Mbale district local government as 39.1% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement then 14.1% of the respondents were neutral about the statement while 6.3% of respondents disagreed with the statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Arbitration influences employee performance in Mbale district local government. This is in line with the responses generated from interviews held by the researcher as majority of the respondents agreed that Arbitration influences employee performance as they rated it 8/10 on a Likert scale of 1-10. This implied that Arbitration indeed influences performance of employees in Mbale district local government as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 1.88 and a lower standard deviation of 0.882.

4.3.2.1 Correlation Analysis between Arbitration and employee performance.

A bi-variate correlation analysis was run between Arbitration and employee performance using Pearson correlation coefficient and results are presented in table 4.10 below.

Table 11: Correlation results for Arbitration and employee performance

		Arbitration	Employee performance
Arbitration	Pearson Correlation	1	.649**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64

Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.649**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

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

Source: SPSS data, 2023.

The results in table 11 shows a positive relationship at $r = .649^{**}$ between arbitration and employee performance. The coefficient of determination shows that arbitration accounted for 64.9% of variation in employee performance. These findings were subjected to the test of significance (p) and it is shown that significance of the correlation (.000) is less than the recommended critical significance at 0.01. Thus the relationship was significant and the hypothesis “Arbitration has a positive significant influence on employee performance” was therefore accepted.

4.3.2.2 Regression results on Arbitration and employee performance.

To establish the significance of arbitration on employee performance in MDLG, a simple regression analysis was conducted of which the ANOVA statistics of Adjusted R² and significance (p) were used and findings are presented in table 12 below.

Table 12: Model Summary for Arbitration and employee performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig
1	.649 ^a	.421	.412	.622	45.149	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Arbitration

Source: SPSS data, 2023.

Findings in Table 12 show a moderate and positive linear relationship (Multiple R=.649) between Arbitration and employee performance. The adjusted R square shows that Arbitration account for 42.1% of variation in employee performance. These findings were subjected to an

ANOVA test, which showed that the significance (Sig = .000) was less than the critical significance at .01 level and this was summarized in a fishers ratio (F=45.149), hence the hypothesis were accepted.

4.3.3 Findings on Negotiation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

This objective was addressed by asking respondents to indicate on a five Likert Scale the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements about the variables and the researcher analyzed the questionnaires generated on this objective. In order to address this objective, the findings from interviews conducted supported the seven statements of the questionnaire which was closed ended on a five point Likert scale that consisted of statements in which one represented strongly agree, two represented agree, three represented neutral, four represented disagree and five represented strongly disagree. This responses were shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Descriptive statistics on Negotiation

Negotiation and Employee Performance	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
	%	%	%	%	%	(M)	(STD)
Negotiation is an agreement reached while avoiding Argument between involved parties to amicably agree.	48.4	51.6	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.52	.504
Negotiation is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG	29.7	48.4	20.3	1.6	0.00	1.94	.753

Negotiation is facilitated by top administrators of the District	7.8	35.9	45.3	10.9	0.00	2.59	.791
Negotiation helps improve employee productivity in MDLG	21.9	60.9	12.5	4.7	0.00	2.00	.735
Negotiation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees	23.4	51.6	20.3	4.7	0.00	2.06	.794
Negotiation helps improve employee relations in MDLG	46.9	35.9	15.6	1.6	0.00	1.72	.786
Negotiation influences employee performance	57.8	31.3	9.4	1.6	0.00	1.55	.733

Source: Primary data, 2023.

According to statement 1 in table 13 about “Negotiation is an agreement reached while avoiding argument and dispute as the involved parties amicably agree.” Majority of the respondents agreed with the statement with 51.6% followed by those who strongly agreed with 48.4% and then 0.00% of the respondents were neutral while 0.00% of the respondents disagreed with statement 1 on Negotiation as 0.00% respondents strongly disagreed with the statement This is in line with the findings generated from the interviews conducted by the respondents as majority of the respondents referred to negotiation as “*a process of amicably agreeing on the common goal before the situation goes out of hand*”. This indicated that the employees in Mbale district local government are well informed and have basic knowledge about the definition and meaning of Negotiation as it has been presented by a higher mean of 1.52 and a lower standard deviation of 0.504.

On statement 2 of about Negotiation in table 4.12, out of 78 respondents that participated in this study, 48.4% of the respondents agreed with the statement Negotiation is always applied in managing conflicts in Mbale district local government followed by 29.7% of respondents who strongly agreed to the statement while 20.3% of the respondents were neutral as 1.6% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Negotiation is always applied in managing conflicts in Mbale district local government. The findings generated from the interviews also support the results in the table 4.9 above on statement as majority of the respondents acknowledged the application of negotiation as a mechanism of managing conflicts at the district. The CAO during an interview also noted that *“negotiation is not only used in situation of conflict but also in day to day running of the activities at the district”*. This indicated that negotiation is undoubtedly used by Mbale district to manage conflicts as it has been depicted with a higher mean of 1.94 and a lower standard deviation of 0.753.

On statement 3 about Negotiation and employee performance in table 4.12, it was revealed that most of the respondents at 45.3% were neutral to statement that Negotiation is facilitated by top administrators of the District as 35.9% of the respondents agreed followed by 10.9% who disagreed that indeed Negotiation in Mbale district local government is facilitated by the top administrators of the district while 7.8% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement as 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. According to the interview findings on whether Negotiation is facilitated by the top administrators in the district, the DCAO stated that *“indeed it’s not only top administrators in the district that facilitate negotiation whenever there is a conflict, but it depends on the magnitude of the conflict before inviting the top administrators to facilitate the negotiation”*. However he noted that *“the issue can attract the top administrators to intervene when all the relevant steps under the junior administrators have been exhausted”*. In supplementation to DCAO’S remarks, DHO said that *“however top administrators can swing in action to negotiation if it feels the case is necessary for them to facilitate”*. This implies that as much as employees are informed and have the basic knowledge, understanding and meaning of Negotiation, most employees are either not aware or don’t really know how Negotiation is facilitated in Mbale district local government as it has been depicted with a higher mean of 2.59 and a lower standard deviation of 0.791.

According to the findings on statement 4 in table 4.12, it was revealed that majority of the respondents that formed 60.9% agreed with the statement that “Negotiation helps improve

employee productivity in Mbale district local government” followed by 21.9% of the respondents who strongly agreed with the statement while 12.5% of the respondents were neutral on this statement as 4.7% of respondents disagreed and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Negotiation helps improve employee productivity in Mbale district local government. The findings above are similar to the responses gathered through interviews where majority of the respondents agreed that after negotiation, the productivity of employees increases immediately thus leading to improved employee performance in Mbale district local government. This implies that Negotiation as a mechanism of conflict management strategies, improves employees productivity in Mbale district local government as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 2.00 and a lower standard deviation of 0.735.

On statement 5 in table 4.12, findings show that 51.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Negotiation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees followed by 23.4% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement while 20.3% of the respondents were neutral about the statement as 4.7% of the respondents disagreed and finally 0.00% strongly disagreed with the statement that Negotiation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees in Mbale district local government. This is in support with the response gathered from the DHO during an interview who remarked that *“Negotiation process take a long time but after its completed and parties have agreed, then tasks are done on time because barriers have been cleared”*. This is in conformity with the majority of respondents that were interviewed as they stated that Negotiation just like arbitration can facilitate timely accomplishment of tasks only if it is done early. This indicates that Negotiation indeed facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees in Mbale district only if it is done early as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 2.06 and a lower standard deviation of 0.794.

According to the findings on statement 6 in table 4.12, it was discovered that 46.9% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Negotiation helps improve employee relations in Mbale district local government followed by respondents that agreed with the statement who formed 35.9% though 15.6% of the respondents were neutral about the statement as only 1.6% of respondents disagreeing with the statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Negotiation helps improve employee relations in Mbale district local government. The above results can also be supported by the response from the majority of the respondents who appreciated that Negotiation indeed has improved employee relations in Mbale district local government as there is improved trust among employees,

teamwork, coordination among other factors that subscribe to improve employee relations. This was in agreement with the response gathered from the PPO during an interview as he said that *“its true Negotiation improves employee relations because after negotiation, the parties walk out in agreement with a smile because of the win-win dimension that is always applied in Mbale district local government.* This implied that Negotiation as a mechanism of conflict management strategies improves employee relations among employees in Mbale district local government as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 1.72 and a lower standard deviation of 0.786.

Finally on the last statement about Negotiation in table 4.12, it was disclosed that 57.8% of the respondents strongly agreed with statement that Negotiation influences employee performance in Mbale district local government as 31.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement then 9.4% of the respondents were neutral about the statement while 1.6% of respondents disagreed with the statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Negotiation influences employee performance in Mbale district local government. This is in line with the responses generated from interviews held by the researcher as majority of the respondents agreed that Negotiation influences employee performance as they rated it 8.5/10 on a Likert scale of 1-10. This implied that Negotiation indeed influences performance of employees in Mbale district local government as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 1.55 and a lower standard deviation of 0.733.

4.3.3.1 Correlation Analysis between Negotiation and employee performance.

A bi-variate correlation analysis was run between Negotiation and employee performance using Pearson correlation coefficient and results are presented in the table below.

Table 14: Correlation results for Negotiation and employee performance

		Negotiation	Employee performance
Negotiation	Pearson Correlation	1	.555**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.555**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

	64	64
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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in table 14 shows a positive relationship at $r = .555^{**}$ between Negotiation and employee performance. The coefficient of determination shows that arbitration accounted for 55.5% of the variation in employee performance. These findings were also subjected to the test of significance (p) and it is revealed that significance of the correlation (.000) is less than the recommended critical significance at 0.01. Thus the relationship was significant and the hypothesis “Negotiation has a positive significant influence on employee performance” was therefore accepted.

4.3.3.2 Regression results for Negotiation and employee performance.

To establish the perspective strength of Negotiation on employee performance in MDLG, a simple regression analysis was conducted of which the ANOVA statistics of Adjusted R2 and significance (p) were used and findings are presented in table 15 below.

Table 15: Model Summary for Negotiation and employee performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig
1	.555 ^a	.308	.297	.680	27.570	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Negotiation.

Findings in Table 15 show a moderate linear relationship (Multiple R=.555) between Negotiation and employee performance. The adjusted R square shows that Negotiation account for 29.7% of the variation in employee performance. These findings were subjected to an ANOVA test, which showed that the significance (Sig = .000) was less than the critical significance at .01 level and this was summarized in a fishers ratio (F=27.570), hence the hypothesis were accepted.

4.3.4 Findings on Mediation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

This objective was addressed by asking respondents to indicate on a five Likert Scale the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements about the variables and the researcher analyzed the questionnaires generated on this objective. In order to address this objective, the findings from interviews conducted supported the seven statements of the questionnaire which was closed ended on a five point Likert scale that consisted of statements in which one represented strongly agree, two represented agree, three represented neutral, four represented disagree and five represented strongly disagree. This responses were shown in Table 16 below.

Table 16: Descriptive statistics on Mediation and employee performance.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
							(STD)
Mediation and Employee Performance	%	%	%	%	%	(M)	
Mediation provides chance for parties to listen to each other	26.6	46.9	18.8	6.3	1.6	2.09	.921
Mediation enhances speedy resolution of conflicts	15.6	34.4	32.8	17.2	0.00	2.52	.959
						2.92	.841

Mediation provides chance for parties conflicting to test their strengths, weaknesses and theories of their case	3.1	29.7	39.1	28.1	0.00		
Mediation enhances staff performance as it provides continuing relations	20.3	43.8	15.6	18.8	1.6	2.38	1.062
Mediation facilitates staff performance	32.8	23.4	18.8	20.3	4.7	2.41 Makes final decision	1.269
Mediator makes final decision in mediation	37.5	29.7	12.5	17.2	3.1	2.19	1.207
Mediation enhances employee performance	45.3	29.7	10.9	10.9	3.1	1.97	1.140

Source: *Primary data, 2023.*

According to statement 1 in table 16 about “Mediation is where one party airs out his/her views of the dispute situation and an invite for another conflicting party is also made to do the same

with the aim of solving the conflict.” Majority of the respondents agreed with the statement by 46.9% followed by those who strongly agreed with 26.6% and then 18.8% of the respondents were neutral while 6.3% of the respondents disagreed with statement 1 on Mediation as 1.6 % respondents strongly disagreed with the statement This is in line with the findings generated from the interviews conducted by the respondents as majority of the respondents referred to Mediation as *“a process where a parties in conflict encounter each other to fully address disputing issues, and this majorly if there bickering and rumormongering among employees”*. This indicated that the employees in Mbale district local government are well informed and have basic knowledge about the meaning of Mediation as it has been presented by a higher mean of 2.09 and a lower standard deviation of 0.921.

According to the results for statement 2 about Mediation in table 4.15, it was revealed that out of 78 respondents that participated in this study, 34.4% of the respondents agreed with the statement Mediation is always applied in managing conflicts in Mbale district local government followed by 32.8% of respondents neutral about the statement while 17.2% of the respondents were disagreed as 15.6% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement and finally 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Mediation is always applied in managing conflicts in Mbale district local government. The findings generated from the interviews also support the results in the table 4.9 above on statement as majority of the respondents even though Mediation is used as a mechanism of managing conflicts at the district, it used concurrently with Negotiation. The CAO during an interview also noted that *“Mediation is not commonly used in managing conflicts but when there are many whistle blowers about service delivery from the clients, then it’s applied”*. This indicated that Mediation is greatly understood by employees and it’s used by Mbale district to manage conflicts as it has been presented by a higher mean of 2.52 and a lower standard deviation of 0.959.

On statement 3 about Mediation and employee performance in table 4.15, it was revealed that most of the respondents at 39.1% were neutral to statement that Negotiation is facilitated by top administrators of the District as 29.7% of the respondents agreed followed by 28.1% who disagreed that Mediation in Mbale district local government is facilitated by the top administrators of the district while 3.1% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement as 0.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. According to the interview findings on whether Mediation is facilitated by the top administrators in the district, the DCAO stated that *“in cases of lapse, low productivity of employees, absenteeism among employees in*

the district, the top administrator confront those employees who are reported on such issues". However he noted that *"the issue can attract the top administrators to intervene when there are a lot of complaints and reports about delayed poor services by the employees in the district"*. This indicated that as much as employees are informed and have the basic knowledge, understanding and meaning of Mediation, most employees are either not aware or don't really know when and how Mediation is facilitated in Mbale district local government as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 2.92 and a lower standard deviation of 0.841.

According to the findings on statement 4 in table 4.15, it was discovered that majority of the respondents that formed 43.8% agreed with the statement that "Mediation helps improve employee productivity in Mbale district local government" followed by 20.3% of the respondents who strongly agreed with the statement while 18.8% of the respondents disagreed on this statement as 15.6% of respondents were neutral and finally 1.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Mediation helps improve employee productivity in Mbale district local government. The findings above are similar to the responses gathered through interviews were majority of the respondents agreed that after Mediation, the productivity of employees increases immediately because after you have been encountered on your poor performance on delays in offering services, you will immediately adjust and perform better thus leading to improved employee performance in Mbale district local government. This implies that Mediation as a mechanism of conflict management strategies improves employees productivity in Mbale district local government as it has been presented with a higher mean of 2.38 and a lower standard deviation of 1.062.

On statement 5 in table 4.15, findings show that 32.8% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Mediation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees followed 23.4% of respondents who agreed with the statement while 20.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement as 18.8% of the respondents were neutral and finally 4.7% strongly disagreed with the statement that Mediation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees in Mbale district local government. This is in support with the response gathered from the DHO during an interview who remarked that Mediation is very good in managing conflicts and ensuring that tasks are accomplished on time, for example in *"the education depart, you find that you want to transfer some teacher but the head teacher delays to submit information that can help you make an informed decision in time, but after confronting them, next time they are always alert and very responsive"*. This is in conformity with the majority of respondents that were interviewed as they stated that Mediation just like negotiation and arbitration can facilitate

timely accomplishment of tasks only if it is done early. This indicates that Mediation indeed facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees in Mbale district only if it is done early as it has been recorded with a higher mean of 2.41 and a lower standard deviation of 1.269.

According to the findings on statement 6 in table 4.15, it was discovered that 37.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Mediation helps improve employee relations in Mbale district local government followed by respondents that agreed with the statement who formed 29.7% though 17.2% of the respondents disagreed with the statement as only 12.5% of respondents were neutral about the statement and finally 3.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Negotiation helps improve employee relations in Mbale district local government. The above results are also supported by the response from the majority of the respondents who appreciated that Mediation indeed has improved employee relations in Mbale district local government because after an encounter each one of the parties will know the truth and can forgive each other and work together for the betterment of the district. This was similar to the response gathered from the SHRO during an interview as she cautioned that *“Mediation can improve employee relations but only if it’s done well, because it can instead fuel more conflicts among employees in Mbale district local government”*. This implied that Mediation as a mechanism of conflict management strategies can only improve employee relations if it is critically handled among employees in Mbale district local government as it has been depicted with a higher mean of 2.19 and a lower standard deviation of 1.207.

Finally on the last statement about Mediation in table 4.15, it was discovered that 45.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with statement that Mediation influences employee performance in Mbale district local government as 29.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement then 10.9% of the respondents were neutral about the statement while 10.9% of respondents disagreed with the statement and finally 3.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Mediation influences employee performance in Mbale district local government. This is in line with the responses generated from interviews held by the researcher as majority of the respondents agreed that Mediation influences employee performance as they rated it 6.5/10 on a Likert scale of 1-10. This implied that Mediation influences performance of employees in Mbale district local government only if it is done well as it has been clearly depicted with a higher mean of 1.97 and standard deviation of 1.140.

4.3.4.1 Correlation Analysis between Mediation and employee performance.

A bi-variate correlation analysis was run between Mediation and employee performance using Pearson correlation coefficient and results are presented in the table below.

Table 17: Correlation results for Mediation and employee performance

		Mediation	Employee performance
Mediation	Pearson Correlation	1	.254*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.043
	N	64	64
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.254*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	
	N	64	64

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in table 17 shows a weak relationship according to Pearson correlation $r = .254^*$ between Mediation and employee performance suggesting that the two variables were significantly related. The $r = .254$ and significance 0.043 between Mediation and employee performance suggests that there was low but significant positive relationship between the variables studied. Thus the relationship was significant and the hypothesis “Mediation has a positive significant influence on employee performance” was therefore accepted.

4.3.4.2 Regression results for Mediation and employee performance.

To establish the perspective strength of Mediation on employee performance in MDLG, a simple regression analysis was conducted of which the ANOVA statistics of Adjusted R² and significance (p) were used and findings are presented in table 18 below.

Table 18: Model Summary for Mediation and employee performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig
1	.254 ^a	.065	.050	.791	4.283	.043

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a. Predictors: (Constant), Mediation.

Findings in Table 18 show a moderate linear relationship (Multiple R=.254) between Mediation and employee performance. The adjusted R square shows that Mediation account for 5% of the variation in employee performance in Mbale district local government. These findings were subjected to an ANOVA test, which revealed that the significance (Sig = .043) was less than the critical significance at .05 level and this was summarized in a fishers ratio (F=27.570), hence the findings were accepted.

4.4 Chapter Conclusion.

In Conclusion therefore, it can be reached that conflict management strategies has a positive influence on employee performance with a very strong relationship as it is depicted in the regression and correlation statistics of quantitative data above. This is similar to qualitative data where employees rated all strategies of conflict management strategies (Arbitration, Negotiation and Mediation) above average in a scale of 1-10 as strategies that influence performance of employees (Improved productivity, Improved employee relations and timely accomplishment of tasks) in Mbale District Local Government. This implies that employee performance in Mbale District Local Government highly depends on Conflict management strategies. Therefore the hypotheses earlier postulated are upheld.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study assessed how conflict management strategies influenced employee performance in Mbale district Local government. The study specifically set out to: to identify how arbitration influences employee performance in Mbale District Local Government, to evaluate how negotiation influences employee performance in Mbale District Local Government and to examine how Arbitration influences employee performance in Mbale District Local Government. This chapter presents the summary, discussion, conclusions and recommendations arising out of the study findings according to the objectives.

5.2 Summary of the major findings

This section presents the summary of findings from the study per specific objective that guided this study.

5.2.1 Summary on Arbitration and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

According to the findings, Arbitration has a strong positive influence on employee performance at Mbale district local government as there was positive relationship according to correlation results. Descriptive statistics also revealed that majority of the respondents anonymously recognized that arbitration influences employee performance as it is depicted with a higher mean and lower standard deviation of meaning that when Arbitration is a method is applied, employees' performance is improved.

5.2.2 Summary on Negotiation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

Basing on the findings above, it was revealed that majority of the respondents anonymously appreciated that Negotiation influences employee performance as it is depicted with a higher mean and lower standard deviation meaning that when Negotiation as a method of conflict management strategies is applied, employee's performance is improved. The results from linear regression statistics also indicated positive significance as adjusted R square showed that Negotiation is significant in improving employee performance and these were in line with ANOVA test results, which revealed that significance of Negotiation on employee performance.

5.2.3 Summary on mediation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The regression analysis results revealed that mediation had low but significant influence on performance of employees in Mbale district local government. Descriptive statistics also revealed that majority of the respondents anonymously appreciated that mediation influences employee performance as it is clearly presented with a higher mean and lower standard deviation meaning that when mediation as a method of conflict management strategies is applied strategically and done well, employees' performance is improved.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

This section presents the discussion of findings from the study per specific objective that guided this research.

5.3.1 Discussions on Arbitration and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

According to the findings on this objective, a lot of data was collected and analyzed as it was revealed that Arbitration influences employee performance in Mbale District local government. The findings were also in contrast with Ramsbotham et al, (2011), who concluded that arbitration should always be deployed manage conflict in order to realize improve performance of employees in an organization. He however cautioned that Arbitration should be applied only when mediations fail to work and this will automatically and naturally suggest arbitration as the best choice. Arbitration is always a voluntary process, whereby the parties in conflict willingly agree upon a private independent party to take a decision for them.

Gotsman et al. (2009) also agreed with the findings as they averted that Arbitration is always best used in situations of employee conflict over resource allocations, wages, salaries, tasks among other disputes. Arbitration mechanism of conflict management strategies is an out of court technique for resolving a conflict and this can gives an opportunity for employees to dialogue and agree amicably among themselves.

According to the response from the interview with CAO, he revealed that after Arbitration teamwork is realized, opportunities are created for people to consult on issues they don't know, levels of trust among employees improve and thus improved employee relations. After Arbitration, employees tend to do things with caution as they fear to cause a conflict and this reduces speed otherwise arbitration betters employee relations and improves employees performance in Mbale district local government.

The findings were also in contrast with Colvin, (2004) who argued that in a more formal setting, the arbitrator or third party has to give a fair hearing to all parties' before making a decision. The parties always present their evidence through documents, exhibits and testimony by themselves or representatives, and with this formal setting makes arbitration as the best mechanism that can manage conflicts in an organization as all parties are given a chance to explain themselves before the third party that is recognized, endorsed and accepted by all parties in a conflict (Colvin, 2004).

The findings were however in disagreement with Warner, (2001) who argued that arbitration can instead fuel more conflicts among the employees in an organization than solving them and this is due to the decision of the arbitrator which is binding and limits appeal against it, this may trigger the losing side to promote conflicts at the work place thus leading to poor employee relations,

low productivity, creation of cliques at workplace which in turn lead to poor employee performance in an organization.

5.3.2 Discussions on Negotiation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The findings on this objective revealed that Negotiation influences employee performance in Mbale district local government. These findings were in consistency with, Wanjiru (2012) who also conducted a study on negotiation and performance of commercial banks in Kenya. Wanjiru's study discovered that negotiation positively influenced employee's performance in the banking sector. This was evidenced as negotiation was fully considered before reaching at a compensation package acceptable by the employee and employer. This study also went further to ascertain if Stima Sacco had a communication framework and plan in place considering the positive effect negotiation had on employee performance in the Sacco.

The findings also revealed that Negotiation improved employee productivity, in an interview with ACAO, it was discovered that after negotiation, the productivity of employees increases immediately because the type of negotiation at the district are always win-win, indicating that every party in the conflict comes out victorious after negotiation thus reviving employee commitment to work, creating motivation hence triggering high productivity hence leading to improve employee performance. This finding was in contrast with Kwon & Weingart (2004), in their study concluded that the result of negotiation can only be mutually satisfactory when the common interests are catered for and this thus will trigger and influence on performance of employees in an organization.

The findings also are also in consistency with Jadallah & Garven, (2011) who carried out a study on the US Army and recommended that negotiation is a key factor and all levels of management in the Army and advised that Army officials at all levels be trained in negotiations in order to obtain a skill that will facilitate effective implementation of their tasks. Jadallah & Garven, (2011) in their study also concluded that the outcomes of negotiation were a win- win type of negotiation for the military.

However Ferro, Cracraft, & Dorsey, (2006) in their study principles negotiation and human resources performance discovered that Win-Lose type of negotiation is probably the most commonly used form of negotiation in organizations. Individuals demand what they want, then each side takes up an extreme position, such as asking the other side for much more than they

expect to get. Through haggling, a compromise is arrived at, and each side's hopes that the compromise shall be in their favor. Azamoza (2004) is his research "negotiation a conflict management strategies strategy and its influence on performance". He also concluded that win-lose negotiation outcome can help strengthen the organization and enable an organization improve its performance.

5.3.3 Discussions on Mediation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

According to the findings on this objective, it was revealed that mediation influences employee performance as respondents rated it 6.5/10 on a Likert scale of 1-10. However according to SHRO during an interview noted that mediation can improve employee relations but only if it's done well, because it can instead fuel more conflicts among employees in Mbale district local government. This implied that mediation influences performance of employees in Mbale district local government only if it is done well.

This findings were in consistency with Markham, (1999); Palmer, (2003); Maurer, (2010) who collectively discovered that positive mediation is a technique of managing conflicts aimed at reducing disputes caused by defiance and resistance to change. Scholars Burgess Heidi and Burgess Guy, (1996); Cummings & Worley, (2009), Magee, (2001) and Hoover & Disilvestro, (2005), in their studies about mediation and employee productivity, their conclusions were quite similar as they argued that positive mediation advocates for empowerment, accountability and recognition in the organizations work environment as it is presumed to improve employee performance.

However according to Walker (2010) in his study about mediation as major strategy in managing organizational conflicts argued that mediation is the process of airing out one's views, thoughts and feelings about a dispute situation and an invite is as well made to the other party to also do the same about a conflict and all this is done with an aim of resolving that conflict. Thus, it involves, describing behavior and ones' reactions to that behavior, clarifying and exploring issues in the conflict (substantive, relational, procedural), the nature and strength of the parties' interests, needs, concerns and disclosure of relevant feelings. Walker (2010), in his study discovered that whereas this aspect of conflict management strategies sounds good and effective, it can only help in resolving conflicts which are simple and rise from misunderstandings. Walker (2010), concluded that in a more complex conflicting situation that involves un-coordinated exchange of views or even fighting thus making mediation not an effective mechanism of

conflicts because conflicting parties if not well set and prepared may end up fighting which can worsen the conflict further.

5.4 Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn basing on the specific research objectives that guided this study as shown below.

5.4.1 Conclusion on Arbitration and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

From the above findings on arbitration and employee performance, basing on the quantitative data, the researcher can conclude that all the dimensions used to measure arbitration positively influence the performance of employees as it has been presented by descriptive statistics, correlation and regression models above. However, from the qualitative data the researcher learnt that although arbitration facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks, it can on the other hand hinder timely accomplish tasks if it is not done early enough. Although arbitration improves employee relations to some extent, it also creates caution as employees fear to cause a conflict and harm the other party while executing their tasks thus reducing on speed to perform their tasks hence affecting performance.

Finally the researcher concluded that Mbale District Local Government continuously administers arbitration in managing conflict that arises among employees of the district to realize better and improved performance according to quantitative data which is in relation to findings from interviews as employees rated arbitration at 8/10 as the best strategy of managing conflicts in the district.

5.4.2 Conclusion on Negotiation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The researcher concluded that Negotiation has a significant influence on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government as affirmed the regression results in the SPSS. However the researcher learnt that whenever the district administers negotiation strategy of conflict management strategies, the results are win-win but the district does not provide the fallback position in case the results are win-lose. As presented in the descriptive analysis, majority of the employees in the district agreed that negotiation influence employee performance in the district. However qualitative data also revealed that negotiation is not only applied in situations of conflicts but in all situations that need teamwork, cooperation and unity to perform better.

Finally the researcher concluded that Negotiation relates with employees performance basing on the correlation statistics in the SPSS which is in conformity with qualitative data as employees rated Negotiation at 8.5/10 as the common and best strategy to manage conflicts in Mbale District Local Government.

5.4.3 Conclusion on mediation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

From the findings of this study it can be concluded that mediation has low influence on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government. The researcher learnt that mediation is a very delicate strategy of managing conflicts as it can worsen the conflicting situation than solving it. Qualitative data revealed that mediation is only applied when there is lapse in productivity, absenteeism and delay in accomplishment of tasks. However to realize improved productivity and timely accomplishment of tasks, mediation has to be done critically and carefully to worsen the conflicting situation. Finally the researcher concluded that mediation is not always used by Mbale district local government in managing conflicts among employees as it is revealed by quantitative data as regression statistics showed that there is low positive significance of mediation on employee performance and this is in complacent with qualitative data as employees rated Arbitration at 6.5 on scale of 1-10 as a strategy of managing conflicts to realize improve employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher drew the following recommendations presented below according to the study objectives.

5.5.1 Recommendations on Arbitration and Employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

From the study on arbitration and employee performance, the researcher can make the following recommendations;

With improved productivity, improved employee relations and timely accomplishment of tasks after employing Arbitration in situations of conflict among employees, the researcher recommends that Mbale District Local Government should continue applying Arbitration as a conflict management strategies strategy in order to trigger better performance of employees in the district.

To avoid creating fear among employees, the top administrators of the district should give mandate to lower local governments to also use Arbitration in managing conflicts that arise in

their respective jurisdictions and should not always apply arbitration as it creates caution and reduces speed of work.

To achieve timely accomplishment of tasks at the district, the researcher recommends that the concerned administrators at the district should apply arbitration earlier when the conflict has just started.

5.5.2 Recommendations on Negotiation and employee performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The study recommends Mbale District Local Government to embrace more types of negotiation other than one technique of win-win alone as this will provide more options incase win-win negotiation fails in managing conflicts.

Negotiation being the best strategy to harmonize, unity and work as a team, the study recommends Mbale District Local Government to always apply negotiation not only in situations of conflicts among employees but also in other circumstances that require parties to work together in order to realize better performance of employees in the district.

5.5.2 Recommendations on mediation and employee performance in Mbale

District Local Government.

Other than mediation strategy of conflict management strategies which may probably worsen the conflict situation than managing it, the study recommends Mbale District Local Government to apply other strategies of conflict management strategies like Accommodation, Avoidance, Compromise, Cooperation and Collaboration as other strategies that can manage conflicts and realize better performance of employees in Mbale District Local Government.

5.6 Contribution of the study to the Existing Body of Knowledge.

Whereas existing literature showed how Conflict management strategies influenced employee performance, none of the scholars gave evidence in the context of Mbale district local government. Thus the findings of this study provide information about the influence of conflict management strategies on employee performance in Mbale district Local Government.

5.7 Areas for Further Research.

Wholesomely the study tried to meet and achieve the set objective as shown in the write-up, however in the process the researcher has observed certain areas that require further research and these include:

The study was limited to two variables; Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance. There is therefore a need for researchers to take further studies in respect to other variables that may be influencing employee performance in Mbale district local government other than conflict management strategies.

The study was also limited to a few dimensions and strategies of conflict management strategies and employee performance. There is a need for future research to study about other strategies of conflict management strategies like (Accommodation, avoidance, assertiveness, cooperation, collaboration among other strategies) and employee performance in Mbale district local government.

The study was also limited to Mbale district Local Government. This makes the study limited to MDLG and not in other government institutions in Uganda. There is need also for further study to be replicated in other government institutions, private sector and non-government organizations to ascertain the similarity and differences in the findings.

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APPENDIX II

BUDGET

A	Income	Amount
	Saving	350,000
	Sub total	350,000
B	Expenditure	Amount
	Internet	75,000
	Typing	100,000
	Rough printing	23,800
	Photocopy	27,000
	Binding	8,000
	Transport	48,000
	Airtime	15,000
	Contingency factor 20% 296,800	59,360
	Sub total	356,160
C	Surplus/Deficit	
	A	350,000
	B	(356,160)
		(6,160)

APPENDIX II. QUESTIONNAIRE

THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO SUBCOUNTY CHIEFS, TOWN CLERKS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS IN THE DISTRICT

I am SODO ISAAC a Bachelor' Student of Business Administration at Uganda Christian University Undertaking Research on Conflict management strategies and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

The purpose of these questionnaire is to gather information on Conflict management strategies (Arbitration, Negotiation and Mediation) and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government. Therefore, you have been identified as a potential respondent to the study and kindly requested to complete this questionnaire as instituted in each question. The information gathered will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

I sincerely take this great chance to thank you in advance for spearing your valuable time in contributing towards this Research study. May God reward you most deservingly!

SECTION A

Background Information *(please tick appropriate box in each case)*

1. Gender: 1. 1 Male 1. 2. Female
2. Please indicate your age class. 2.1. 20 - 30yrs 2.2. 31 -40yrs
- 2.3 41-50yrs 2.4 Above 50yrs
3. Position in Mbale District Local Government *(tick as appropriate)*.
- 3.1 Town Clerk 3.2. Sub-county Chief 3. 3. CDO

4. Highest level of education 4. 1. Degree

4.2. Postgraduate

5. Please indicate the number of years you have worked for Mbale District Local Government (*tick as appropriate*).

5.1 Less than 2yrs

5.2. 2-5yrs

5.3. Up to 10yrs

5.4. 10 above 10yrs

This questionnaire is designed according to the objectives of the study.

*Please indicate your level of agreement to each of the following statements specifically with respect to MBALE DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT (using 1 =strongly agree, (S.A); 2= agree (A); 3 =Neutral (N.S); 4 =Disagree (A); 5 = strongly disagree (S.D). Please tick **ONLY ONE BOX** in each case as appropriate.*

SECTION B

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN MBALE DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

This section contains statements assessing employee performance at Mbale District Local Government. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes using a tick (v) or cross mark (x) the statement that describes your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Statements on Employee Performance					
Performance is the achievement of quantified objectives in MDLG					

MDLG continually enhances skills through continuous performance monitoring					
The balanced score card is an effect method of measuring employee performance in MDLG					
Conflict management strategies avoids time wasting and help employees achieve set targets					
Conflict management strategies improves employee relations					
Conflict management strategies improves productivity of employees					
Conflict management strategies facilitates employees to timely accomplish tasks					
Conflict management strategies influences employee performance					

SECTION C
ARBITRATION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

This section contains statements assessing the influence of Arbitration on employee performance Mbale District Local Government. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes using a tick (v) or cross mark (x) the statement that describes your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

Statements on Arbitration and employee performance.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Arbitration is the private determination of a dispute, by an independent third party.					
Arbitration is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG					
Arbitration is facilitated by top administrators of the District					
Arbitration helps improve employee productivity in MDLG					
Arbitration facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees					
Arbitration helps improve employee relations in MDLG					
Arbitration influences employee performance					

SECTION D

NEGOTIATION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

This section contains statements assessing the influence of Negotiation on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes using a tick (v) or cross mark (x) the statement that describes your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Negotiation and Employee Performance	1	2	3	4	5
Negotiation is an agreement reached while avoiding argument and dispute as the involved parties amicably agree.					
Negotiation is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG					
Negotiation is facilitated by top administrators of the District					
Negotiation helps improve employee productivity in MDLG					
Negotiation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees					
Negotiation helps improve employee relations in MDLG					
Negotiation influences employee performance					

SECTION E

MEDIATION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

This section contains statements assessing the influence of Mediation on employee performance in Mbale District Local Government. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes using a tick (v) or cross mark (x) the statement that describes your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Mediation and Employee Performance	1	2	3	4	5
Mediation is where one party airs out his/her views of the dispute situation and an invite for another conflicting party is also made to do the same with the aim of solving the conflict.					
Mediation is always applied in managing conflicts in MDLG					
Mediation is facilitated by top administrators of the District					
Mediation helps improve employee productivity in MDLG					
Mediation facilitates timely accomplishment of tasks by employees					
Mediation helps improve employee relations in MDLG					
Mediation influences employee performance					

Thank you so very much for your participation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview Guide that will be used to collect data from the CAO, DCAO, PPO, SHRO, ACAO, HODs and DSC of Mbale District Local Government.

SECTION A

Arbitration and Employee Performance in Mbale District Local Government.

1. Do you employ Arbitration to manage conflicts in MDLG?
2. When is Arbitration administered in MDLG?
3. How do you administer Arbitration in MDLG?
4. Do you participate in Arbitration in MDLG?
5. How is Arbitration Helpful to manage Conflicts in MDLG?
6. Does Arbitration effectively Manage Conflicts in MDLG?
7. What Outcomes do you release after Arbitration in MDLG?
8. Does Arbitration have effect on employee's performance in MDLG?
9. Does Arbitration improve employee relations in MDLG?
10. Does Arbitration facilitate timely accomplishment of tasks in MDLG?
11. Does Arbitration improve Employee Productivity in MDLG?
12. How do you rate Arbitration in Managing Conflicts in MDLG?
13. How do you rate Arbitration in managing conflicts in MDLG? On scale of 1-10.

SECTION B

Negotiation and Employee Performance in Mbale District.

14. Do you negotiate when there is a conflict in MDLG?
15. How do you negotiate in MDLG?
16. Who facilitates the Negotiation in MDLG?
17. Does Negotiation lead to improved Employee Relations in MDLG?
18. Does Negotiation trigger timely accomplishment of tasks in MDLG?
19. Does Negotiation ensure improved productivity of Employees in MDLG?
20. Does Negotiation have influence on the employee's performance in MDLG?
21. How do you rate Negotiation as the Mechanism of Conflict management strategies in MDLG?
22. How do you rate Negotiation in managing conflicts in MDLG? On scale of 1-10.

SECTION C

Mediation and Employee's performance in Mbale District

23. Do you use Mediation to Manage Conflicts in MDLG?
24. Why do you use Mediation in MDLG?
25. How and when do you use Mediation in MDLG?
26. What results do you realize after Mediation in MDLG?
27. Does Mediation relate with Employee Performance in MDLG?
28. What is the relationship between Mediation and Employee performance in MDLG?
29. Does Mediation lead to improved Employee productivity in MDLG?
30. Does Mediation in managing Conflicts improve Employee Relations in MDLG?
31. Does Mediation influence timely accomplishment of tasks in MDLG?
32. How do you rate Mediation as a mechanism of conflict management strategies in MDLG?
33. How often do you use Mediation in Managing Conflicts in MDLG?
34. How do you rate Mediation in managing conflicts in MDLG? On scale of 1-10.