

Conflict Management Strategies Employed by Teachers and School Heads in Selected Public Schools

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Abstract— This quantitative study determined organizational conflicts in an educational context and conflict management strategies employed by educators as the basis for an enhanced conflict management program. The study employed 35 respondents, comprising three (3) school principals and 32 teachers from selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province, to gather data through surveys. Results indicated a generally low occurrence of organizational conflicts across surveyed schools and conflict management strategies that mostly follow a compromising conflict management style followed by collaborating and accommodating strategies. The study also revealed relationship conflicts and occasional procedural conflicts are more common in schools due to the nature of the organization, while the sporadic occurrence of issues made conflict management challenging for educators. The study proposed the use of the P.A.C.E. (Proactive Approach to Conflict Management in Education) program as a proactive approach to managing organizational conflicts in an educational setting. The study concludes that public secondary schools in Sorsogon province have a generally positive working environment despite the presence of conflicts. The P.A.C.E. program can be potentially effective in enhancing conflict management programs by addressing the challenges identified by the respondents and is recommended for use in education settings depending on the needs. Recommendations for conflict management programs and the future direction of related studies are also set forth for a more nuanced understanding of the compactness and effectiveness of conflict management strategies.

Keywords— Conflict Management Strategies, Organizational Conflicts, Public Education, Quantitative-Descriptive Design, Thomas-Kilmann's Conflict Management Model

I. INTRODUCTION

Conflict is inevitable to any organization. It may hinder an organization's progress and success. Because of conflict, many organizations strongly emphasize conflict management to ensure that operations function smoothly and that employees behave appropriately. Conflict management is a critical concern for educational institutions, as conflict affects teachers' and school administrators' overall performance and well-being.

Conflicts within the educational sector and institutions can hinder the delivery of quality education. That is why it is essential to understand how teachers and school heads handle conflicts or challenges. As there are various causes of conflicts, such as communication, differences in needs, values, and ideas, and power struggles, schools must have effective strategies to resolve and manage these conflicts. In West Africa, having responsible and insightful school administrators and heads helps manage and resolve conflicts effectively by having someone to build consensus and stop the blaming game whenever conflict arises (Afful-Broni, 2012). Organizational conflict in school settings is a universal issue for the global educational sector. Incidents across the globe emphasize the need for

effective conflict management strategies to mitigate their effects.

At the national level, the Philippines has its own unique challenges in the educational sector. The Philippines' population comprises people with diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. These differences are also present in the educational sector. Like many countries, the Philippines' educational sector is not conflict-free. These conflicts could come from various sources, from stakeholders, and within the educational system. These conflicts could affect the productivity of teachers and school administrators and compromise the country's education quality.

As a country with slow economic growth, wide wealth disparities, and great demand for quality education, one significant conflict in the educational sector in the Philippines is the allocation of funds and resources. Barbour et al. (2011) noted that educational institutions in the Philippines often experience budget constraints, which lead to disparities in resources, facilities, and infrastructure in schools throughout the country. These issues can lead to conflicts among teachers, school administrators, school heads, and the local government

units and agencies responsible for allocating educational funds.

Another prevalent conflict in the Philippine educational sector is the changes in the curriculum and educational reforms. Saguin and Ramesh (2020) revealed that there had been resistance and disagreements among teachers, school administrators, policymakers, and educational agencies regarding the changes brought by shifts in educational policies and curricula over the past few years. From the general education program to the K-12 curricula, and now to the possible revision of the K-12 program, educational reforms, and curricula are bound to meet some resistance and conflicts, especially if the implementing bodies still need to prepare for the changes.

Moreover, conflicts in Philippine education settings could also come from labor issues and power struggles, specifically those relating to teachers' salaries, benefits, and working conditions. Teachers protest or go on labor strikes to express and address their grievances. Teachers' unions and associations also significantly promote teachers' rights and interests, sometimes leading to disagreements with educational agencies and school administrators (Alegado, 2018; Oracion, 2014). These incidents can also lead to disruptions of classes and legal cases, which could be very frustrating to all the sectors involved. Without proper and effective strategies to manage these kinds of conflicts, education will inevitably be compromised.

As conflict is unavoidable and a significant factor in educational settings in the Philippines, it is equally important to understand the causes and employ conflict management strategies to address the issue. Marquez (2023) stated that most conflict management strategies in the Philippines fit into accommodating, cooperating, and compromising. These strategies usually work for conflicts between teachers and school heads about reporting, behavior, and management issues; however, more precise, and direct strategies could be applied in different scenarios.

Mangulabnan et al. (2021) suggested that conflict management strategies in the Philippines should not only focus on improving the leadership skills of school heads to micromanage their respective schools but also help advocate fair distribution of funds and resources, building an open dialogue with educators and stakeholders, and more progressive approaches in

education. Conflicts within the Philippine educational system can significantly impact the well-being of students, teachers, and school administrators and the quality of education in the nation, so it is crucial to resolve these problems locally and nationally.

In Sorsogon province, educational institutions have a workforce of diverse teachers and school administrators. They have a wide array of people working in the same field. The differences could influence the dynamics of organizational conflicts in local culture, socio-economic conditions, and local educational policies. Therefore, examining conflict management at the local level will provide valuable insights into localized solutions that can be adapted into a national or broader framework. Like any schools, educational institutions in Sorsogon province have management, facilities, and workforce conflicts. Guardacasa and Benavides (2020) noted that school heads often have conflicts with teachers regarding tasks since there is a lack of effective communication and instruction regarding clinical tasks. This kind of conflict among teachers and school heads is typical in educational settings but could also adversely affect the teaching and learning experiences.

Furthermore, as an educator, the researcher has firsthand experience in facing and resolving conflicts in their locality. The researcher is aware of the different conflicts in school, such as power struggles and differences in ideas, perspectives, and principles. The researcher saw how these conflicts could affect teachers' performance and the experience they provide to the students, sparking the researcher's interest in this topic.

Given the abovementioned contexts, the importance of conflict management strategies in ensuring success in teaching and learning, and personal experiences, the researcher was prompted to pursue this study and explore the topic deeper. By understanding how teachers and school heads handle their unique challenges, this study could help create targeted interventions to improve workplace harmony, raise teachers' morale and productivity, and eventually improve the quality of education provided to students. This study can inform policymakers, school administrators, and teachers at different levels and contribute to the general improvement of education in Sorsogon province and, by extension, the entire Philippines.

This study determined the organizational conflicts and conflict management strategies employed by public

secondary school teachers and school heads in Sorsogon province. The results of this study were utilized as a basis for proposing an enhanced organizational conflict management program. Specifically, it answered the following research problems:

1. What are the different organizational conflicts encountered by teachers and school heads in the following components?
 - a. Curriculum and Instruction
 - b. School Leadership and Management
 - c. Student Services and Support
 - d. Community Engagement and Partnerships
2. What conflict management strategies are commonly employed by teachers and school heads based on the five domains of conflict management?
3. What are the challenges faced by teachers and school heads in managing organizational conflicts?

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This quantitative study employed a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design for the quantitative study includes the gathering and analysis of quantitative data to describe the phenomenon being studied. This allows the researcher to track the trends of different variables relating to the topic of the study. The data gathered are given numerically to analyze patterns to gain an understanding of the subject being studied (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). The researcher utilized statistical techniques to determine patterns or trends in organizational conflict, conflict management strategies and challenges in managing organizational conflict.

Respondents

This study's primary respondents were school heads and teachers from public secondary schools in the Sorsogon province, Philippines. Focusing on the teachers' and school heads' perspectives for this study is based on their significant roles in conflict management in educational settings. To ensure the representation of diverse viewpoints and populations in selected public secondary schools, the chosen respondents were educators with different teaching roles, experiences, and years in the academe. Respondents were stratified based on their respective schools to ensure appropriate representation of teachers and school heads from each selected school. The number of respondents from each school constitutes 10% of their teaching staff, including the principals. As for the specific number of participants, for Gallanosa

National High School, one (1) school principal and 24 teachers; for Gabao National High School, one (1) school principal and five (5) teachers; and for Irosin North National High School, one (1) school principal and three (3) teachers. Getting ten percent of the total population is a good enough sample size if the population size does not exceed 1000 (Bullen, n.d.).

Sampling

The study utilized a stratified convenience sampling method for the selection of participants. This type of sampling technique is called quota sampling, which uses convenience sampling but allocates respondents based on a specific criterion (Frost, n.d.). In quota sampling, the researcher uses non-probability sampling, wherein the population is divided into subgroups (strata) that the researcher defines and recruits sample units until the quota for each stratum is reached. The researcher used the school size as the stratifying factor and then filled in the quotas within each stratum using convenience sampling. Using this hybrid sampling technique allows the researcher to conveniently select respondents while ensuring that the larger schools are represented with more significant respondents.

Research Instrument

This study used a survey questionnaire adapted and utilized for quantitative data gathering. Experts validated the instrument for implementation. The survey questionnaire has three parts. The first part is a survey of the existing organizational conflicts in the schools based on the study by Mohamed (2020). The items on the survey questionnaire were categorized into three types of organizational conflicts: tasks, relationships, and procedural conflicts. Statements in this section were also grouped based on the four components of school operation, including curriculum and instruction, school leadership and management, student services and support, and community engagement and partnerships (Saguin & Ramesh, 2020). This is used to identify the most common organizational conflicts in schools and their types, and the areas where these conflicts are most visible, based on the respondents' responses.

The second part of the survey questionnaire is based on the five conflict management styles presented by Thomas and Kilmann for their Conflict Management Model (Thomas, 2008) and adapted from the studies of Adkins (2006) and Black and Bright (2019). Items in this part of the survey question reflected the five management styles: collaboration, competition,

compromise, accommodation, and avoidance. This is to identify the most commonly used conflict management strategies and styles at the organizational level in educational institutions.

Moreover, part three of the survey questionnaires consisted of a list of challenges in implementing conflict management in the school based on the studies of Calora (2020) and Valente et al. (2020). The respondents were asked to identify the extent or level of challenge the statements represent to identify the key challenges of school conflict management. The perceptions of the respondents regarding the level of difficulty in managing conflicts in school were included in this section to determine the extent of the need for an effective conflict management program.

Data from this survey questionnaire were gathered, organized, analyzed, and interpreted using statistical measures and descriptive analysis. The survey questionnaire is in the form of a five-point Likert scale survey.

Data Gathering Procedure

Standard procedures were followed in conducting this study. The researcher identified three major public secondary schools in Irosin, Sorsogon, as the locale for the study and asked the superintendent's permission to conduct the study at the chosen schools. The selected public secondary schools are Gallanosa National High School, Gabao National High School, and Irosin North National High School. The total number of school heads and teaching staff of the chosen schools was also obtained from the division office.

With the superintendent's approval, the researcher also sent a request letter to principals of selected schools for approval. Consent forms containing the data privacy and confidentiality agreement and terms of using the information collected were also prepared for the respondents beforehand.

As part of the preparation, before the actual gathering of information from the respondents, a survey questionnaire for conflict management strategies was adapted from different studies about organizational conflict management and prepared for the quantitative data gathering. Survey questionnaires were retrieved the day they were distributed to the respondents. The data gathered was then subjected to analysis and

interpretation using appropriate analysis tools and techniques.

Statistical Treatment

The researcher employed descriptive statistical tools, including frequency and weighted mean. This establishes a pattern and identifies the most common organizational conflicts encountered by public secondary school teachers and school heads, the conflict management strategies they employ and challenges they face in managing these conflicts.

Frequency is utilized to determine the most commonly used conflict management strategies and most frequently encountered types of organizational conflicts, as this tool allows researchers to fit data sets into certain categories through data distribution (Mahbobi, 2015).

The weighted mean, or arithmetic mean, allows the researcher to summarize the distribution of individual values in the data set (Cruz & Garrett, 2008).

The formula for the weighted mean is:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{fx}{n}$$

Where:

\bar{x} = Mean value

f = Frequency in each class

x = Midpoint of each class

n = Total number of scores

The treatment of quantitative data provided statistical evidence regarding organizational conflicts in educational institutions, and strategies for managing organizational conflicts. It also helps understand the challenges in managing conflicts encountered by the respondents and the need for and consideration of an enhanced conflict management program.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Analysis of Organizational Conflicts in Public Secondary Schools in Sorsogon Province

This study analyzed the various organizational conflicts in public secondary schools in the Sorsogon province.

The analysis of responses from the 35 respondents, comprised of teachers and school heads from selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province, offers an understanding of the nature of organizational conflicts in a public education setting. The results of the analysis revealed varied frequencies of organizational conflicts across key components of school operations.

Table 1 presents the prevalence of organizational conflicts across components of school operations. It can be inferred that although all the components of school operations have relatively low incident of organizational conflicts, most of the conflict have something to do with school leadership and management, with a weighted mean of 2.51, while community engagement and partnerships have the lowest frequency of organizational conflict, with a weighted mean of 2.27.

Table 1.1 Prevalence of Organizational Conflicts within School Operations

COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL OPERATION	AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Curriculum and Instruction	2.42	Rarely
School Leadership and Management	2.51	Rarely
Student Services and Support	2.42	Rarely
Community Engagement and Partnerships	2.27	Rarely
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.41	RARELY

Chandolia and Anastasiou (2020) emphasized in their study that most of the conflicts in educational settings are within organizational parameters, as disagreements on administrative processes and interpersonal relationships are inevitable in an organization. This indicates that although there are relatively few incidents of conflict in the selected schools, some aspects, especially the factors relating to school leadership and management, warrant further investigation.

reveals several items per component of school operations. While most of the responses from the items in the organizational conflict survey administered by the researcher fall into the “rare” category, some of the items have slightly higher weighted mean, suggesting the need for a closer inspection.

Below is the table presenting the weighted mean of items relating to organizational conflicts under the curriculum and instruction domain of school operations.

Diving deeper into organizational conflicts present in public secondary schools, the analysis of weighted mean

Table 1.2 Frequency of Organizational Conflicts within Curriculum and Instruction

ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS (Curriculum and Instruction)	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Disagreements on curriculum content, sequence, or learning objectives	2.49	Rarely
Disagreements on teaching approaches, classroom activities, or assessment methods	2.31	Rarely
Conflicts over access to instructional materials, technology, or funding for specific projects or lessons	2.60	Rarely
Misunderstandings or disagreements with colleagues within or across departments	2.83	Occasionally
Miscommunication with the school head regarding curriculum and instruction	2.14	Rarely
Difficulty in explaining or misunderstanding with subject teachers regarding students’ learning progress and academic content and requirements	2.31	Rarely
Conflicts on Curriculum Guidelines and policies implementation	2.17	Rarely
Disagreements over grading practices, standardized assessment, or other assessment methods	2.17	Rarely

Conflicts over the selection or allocation process of professional development opportunities	2.74	Occasionally
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.42	RARELY

Based on table 1.2, most conflicts appear rarely. Analysis of the conflict incidents also reveals that “miscommunication with the school head on issues about curriculum and instruction” (2.14), “disagreements over curriculum guidelines and policy implementation, and grading and assessment methods” (2.17) appear to be the least frequent sources of conflict within the curriculum and instruction component. This finding suggests that communication and clear curriculum policies, instructions, and processes can help create a relatively positive working environment in schools. Shanka and Thuo (2017) and Valente et al. (2020) asserted that having clear guidelines and curriculum objectives and effective communication can help reduce and prevent conflicts within an organization. When goals, instructions, and procedures are clearly and properly communicated to all members of the organization, proper expectations are set, thus avoiding conflict.

On the other hand, occasional “disagreements with colleagues and conflicts over the selection or allocation process of professional development opportunities” with a weighted mean of 2.74 imply a need for greater attention to these kinds of conflicts in the organization. Disagreements among organization members are usually caused by individual differences and competition for promotions, work assignments, resources, and opportunities. These kinds of conflicts are considered relationship conflicts and could have adverse effects on an organization. However, when effective management and conflict resolution are administered, conflicts can help improve individuals and relationships with the group (Kipkemboi & Kipruto,

2013; Shanka & Thuo, 2017). Seeing that these items gained the highest weighted mean in this component shows that relationship conflicts tend to be more visible in the organization than other types of conflicts. This also requires more attention to what causes conflicts between organization members.

Table 1.2 also shows that all the organizational conflicts related to curriculum and instruction rarely happen with a weighted mean of 2.42. “Misunderstandings or disagreements with colleagues within or across departments” (2.83) are the most common curriculum and instruction-related conflict. This conflict happens sometimes because of competition for limited resources and varying cultures between departments. Unclear communication due to limited interaction was mentioned by some of the respondents as the most common cause of conflict within and across different departments. “Miscommunication with the school head regarding curriculum and instruction” (2.14) is the least common conflict related to curriculum and instruction, highlighting the level of leadership of the school heads. The results also lean towards occasional to rare occurrences of conflict, suggesting that these conflicts are not major issues in the school.

Another component of school operations is school leadership and management. The results of the average weighted mean show that this component has the highest frequency of conflicts; thus, further exploration of this area can help in understanding conflict management in educational settings. Table 1.3 shows the weighted mean for items under the school leadership and management component.

Table 1.3 Frequency of Organizational Conflicts within School Leadership and Management

ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS (School Leadership and Management)	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Disagreements on how school funds should be allocated across different departments and projects	2.37	Rarely
Conflicts over performance evaluation, teachers’ assignments and promotions, and recognition	2.54	Rarely
Disagreements about resource allocation or priorities for school facilities	2.51	Rarely
Miscommunication among teachers regarding school policies and instructions	2.40	Rarely
Disagreement between teachers regarding roles and responsibilities within the school	2.54	Rarely

Tension or pressure when mediating or resolving conflicts between faculty members/co-teachers	3.00	Occasionally
Disagreements on how school policies or procedures should be implemented or interpreted	2.51	Rarely
Questions regarding transparency or fairness in school decision-making	2.60	Rarely
Misunderstandings about compliance regarding DepEd guidelines and policies	2.09	Rarely
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.51	RARELY

Based on the overall weighted mean for school leadership and management, 2.51, interpreted as rarely, it can be inferred that there are few incidents of organizational conflicts relating to this component; however, its overall weighted mean is slightly higher than the other components requiring more investigation. Organizational conflicts seem to occur rarely across most areas of school leadership and management, as indicated by their generally low weighted mean. “Misunderstanding about compliance regarding DepEd guidelines and policies” got the lowest weighted mean of 2.09, signifying clarity in the instructions coming from the head educational agency and the effectiveness of setting clear guidelines and policies in preventing organizational conflicts. Setting guidelines and policies and streamlining processes can help teachers set clear expectations and ideas on what is required of them to prevent disagreements and confusion, which could lead to conflict (Mangulabnan et al., 2022; Saguin, 2019). This shows that procedural and task conflicts are rarely the case for big conflicts in school if the fundamental principles, policies, and guidelines are established clearly.

It is also worth noting that occasional tension exists when teachers or school heads mediate conflicts between colleagues. This type of relationship conflict got the highest weighted mean of 3.00 out of all the items in the survey, which indicates that it is the most common organizational conflict across the selected

schools. This result implies the need for attention to the interpersonal dynamics within the organization. Ntho-Ntho and Nieuwenhuis (2016) noted that school principals and headteachers could feel pressured during mediation as they are expected to resolve the conflict fairly and effectively, while conflicts can worsen if the opposing parties feel any bias during mediation. This is why it is important to employ appropriate conflict management strategies when resolving conflicts. Mediation is a strategy to resolve or prevent conflicts; however, if not done properly and efficiently, it can cause further conflicts. School leaders and teachers should be able to handle interpersonal conflicts and individual differences to balance the dynamics in the organization and equip leaders and teachers with enough knowledge, awareness, and skills to handle conflicts and serve as mediators (Bonilla et al., 2020).

Additionally, this study also explored the organizational conflicts in public secondary schools within the student services and support domains of school operations. Results from the analysis of responses from selected teachers and school principals revealed that this component rarely has organizational conflict, as shown in its average weighted mean of 2.42, interpreted as a rare frequency of organizational conflicts. Below is a more detailed presentation of the organizational conflicts identified that are related to this component of school operations.

Table 1.4 Frequency of Organizational Conflicts within Student Services and Support

ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS (Student Services and Support)	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Conflicts on how to identify and/or address specific students’ needs due to differences in teaching styles	2.74	Occasionally
Difficulty in collaborating with teachers, counselors, and administrative staff	2.49	Rarely
Disagreements about funding or staffing for students’ services and support programs	2.57	Rarely
Difficulty in communicating with other teachers about student support needs	2.37	Rarely

Conflicts arising from differences in cultural and/or religious values related to students' support	2.09	Rarely
Difficulty in interacting with fellow teachers and other members of the organization due to differences in personalities	2.6	Rarely
Disagreements in identifying and handling students at risk or needing specific interventions	2.51	Rarely
Conflicts regarding data privacy and confidentiality practices among organization members	2	Rarely
Difficulty in collaborating with other departments or committees to provide students support	2.43	Rarely
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.42	RARELY

Table 1.4 shows the weighted mean for each organizational conflict identified within student support services and indicates that this component doesn't usually have an organizational conflict. It also has the item with the lowest weighted mean (2.00), which refers to "conflicts regarding data privacy and confidentiality practices among organization members." This can be related to the previous findings that suggest that the clarity and effective communication the schools have about the guidelines, protocols, and procedures reduce organizational conflicts. As the teachers and school principals know of the expectations the DEPED and school have for them, they become more aware of their duties, including securing data privacy, and practicing confidentiality for the sake of the students and other school stakeholders. Mougiakou et al. (2022) noted that education professionals like teachers and school heads place a high value on students' data privacy and confidentiality and follow ethical principles regarding these subjects to avoid conflict. With ethical principles embedded in educators' minds, it seems apparent that this conflict rarely happens in schools. Respondents never had trouble dealing with the privacy and confidentiality of their data.

On the other hand, one notable finding for this component of school operation is the occasional occurrence of "conflicts in identifying and addressing students' specific needs due to differences in teaching styles." This conflict has the highest weighted mean (2.74) for conflicts related to student support and

services. Sengsouliya et al. (2021) asserted that the mismatch between teachers' teaching styles and students' learning styles can be a cause of teacher-student conflicts. It can also cause teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher conflicts as it entails differences in preferences and styles, which some people might not agree with. As teachers assume autonomy in their classes, having someone oppose them due to their teaching styles can be offensive to them and can lead to organizational conflicts. Mariyadas and Saravanakumar (2021) suggested that this type of relationship conflict among education professionals is common due to differences in experiences and opinions. This could be resolved and prevented through effective conflict-resolution strategies.

Furthermore, another school operations component is community engagement and partnerships, which focus on the relationships of schools with the community and other stakeholders. Below is a summary table of the weighted mean of the responses of selected public secondary school teachers and school principals regarding organizational conflicts related to community engagement and partnerships.

Table 1.5 presents the weighted mean for identified organizational conflicts within the community engagement and partnerships component. Based on the component's average weighted mean of 2.27, it shows that organizational conflicts rarely happen within this component.

Table 1.5 Frequency of Organizational Conflicts within Community Engagement and Partnerships

ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS (Community Engagement and Partnerships)	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Disagreements on extension projects that would be relevant to the school and community	2.14	Rarely
Challenges in collaborating with different school and community organizations	2.37	Rarely

Conflicts over volunteer opportunities and community involvement	2.2	Rarely
Power imbalances between teachers and other school staff and leaders	2.4	Rarely
Mismatched expectations or goals between teachers and school staff result in misunderstanding	2.26	Rarely
Conflicts resulting from competition in resources school and miscommunication	2.26	Rarely
Confusion on the roles and expectations of each faculty member or organization's member	2.51	Rarely
Disagreements on how information is shared with or withheld from other members of the organization	2.23	Rarely
Disagreements regarding compliance with DepEd guidelines about collaborative projects and community engagement activities	2.09	Rarely
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.27	Rarely

This component of school operations has the lowest weighted mean among all components, signifying a slightly lower frequency of occurrence of organizational conflicts among teachers and between teachers and administrators due to issues relating to community engagement and partnerships compared to other components of school operations. "Disagreements over compliance with DepEd guidelines for collaborative projects and community engagement activities" also had the lowest weighted mean of 2.09 in the survey. This result implies clarity of the guidelines and dissemination of guidelines among teachers and principals, thus preventing conflicts in the organization. Another notable item with a relatively low occurrence is "disagreements on extension projects that would be relevant to the community," with a weighted mean of 2.14, interpreted as a rare occurrence. This component exhibits infrequent conflict frequencies across all items, emphasizing a relatively positive working environment between schools and the community. "Confusion about the roles and expectations of each faculty member or organization's member" received the highest weighted mean (2.51), suggesting the importance of clear expectations among faculty members. An organization needs to have members who know what to do and when to do it.

The abovementioned organizational conflicts can be classified as procedural conflicts as they involve processes relating to community engagement and partnerships. This finding supports previous studies that suggest that procedural conflicts can be minimized when there are clear guidelines, policies, instructions, and expectations set to guide people and avoid confusion in the group (Ronquillo et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2022). Having clear standards and procedures can help substantiate actions and avoid misconceptions or any

type of conflict; thus, it is important to consider this when managing conflicts and in planning conflict resolution programs or training.

Overall, the data suggests a generally harmonious working environment within the selected secondary schools in Sorsogon province. This positive trend among schools surveyed should be acknowledged and could be explored better to understand the factors contributing to this positive pattern. However, while most organizational conflicts fall into the "rare" category for occurrence, there are several items with weighted mean closer to "occasionally" that warrant attention. These items were mostly classified as relationship conflicts, which are the most common type of conflict within the organization.

Valente et al. (2020) asserted that relationship conflicts are inevitable in any organization as they involve interpersonal connections. The differences between individuals when it comes to perceptions, ideologies, interests, positions, and power dynamics can give rise to relationship conflicts such as misunderstandings, miscommunication, offenses, and humor. In the case of selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province, the most prevalent organizational conflicts involve misunderstandings between colleagues and power struggles for access to professional opportunities and teaching resources. It must be noted that in the case of the schools surveyed, these specific organizational conflicts usually stem from individual differences between the parties involved. Understanding the nature of identified existing organizational conflicts can help school management formulate effective conflict management strategies for their schools.

2. Assessment of Conflict Management Strategies Employed by Public Secondary School Teachers and School Principals

This study also explored the different conflict management strategies employed by teachers and school principals in selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province. This exploration is centered on the five basic conflict management domains, such as collaboration, competition, compromise, accommodation, and avoidance. Survey results reveal prevalent conflict management strategies employed by the respondents and valuable insights into conflict management in public school settings.

Analysis of survey responses from teachers and school heads of selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province shows the respondents' preferences when it comes to conflict management strategies. It shows a constructive approach to conflict management within the surveyed schools. Table 2.1 below shows the extent to which the respondents utilized different conflict management strategies across the five domains of conflict management.

The table presents the average weighted mean of each domain of conflict management based on the respondents' preferences. According to the analysis of mean scores, it can be inferred that most of the strategies employed by the respondents in addressing organizational conflicts are compromising strategies. This domain has a 4.22 average weighted mean, which can be interpreted as "always." This result indicates the strong inclination of respondents to compromise to resolve or deal with the conflicts at school. Other notable conflict management domains that are oftentimes used by the respondents are collaborating (4.17) and accommodating (4.06). Respondents also occasionally use avoidance (3.03) to address organizational conflicts. Results also suggest that competing is the least preferred conflict management approach based on its average weighted mean of 2.47, which denotes a rare reliance on this approach.

Table 2.1 Conflict Management Strategies Employed by the Respondents

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT DOMAINS	AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Compromising	4.22	Always

Collaborating	4.17	Oftentimes
Accommodating	4.06	Oftentimes
Avoiding	3.03	Occasionally
Competing	2.47	Rarely

The results of the analysis of responses for conflict management strategies show a clear preference for compromising, collaborating, and accommodating, which places strong emphasis on open communication, finding mutually beneficial solutions, and collective efforts. There are also less visible avoidant and competitive behaviors among the respondents when addressing conflicts within the organization. These findings suggest a preference for constructive and relationship-oriented strategies in handling organizational conflicts. These results coincide with the findings of studies by Ilgan (2020) and Ramos (2023), which suggested the prevalence of compromising, collaborating, and accommodating styles in conflict management. Research suggests that these three conflict management domains have enabled teachers to work on the issues collaboratively while maintaining a positive working environment. Diving deeper into the strategies related to these conflict management domains could provide a nuanced understanding of the commonly used strategies for conflict management and resolution in public secondary school settings.

Results reveal compromising as the most preferred conflict management style among teachers and school principals in secondary schools in Sorsogon province. Compromising puts a strong emphasis on finding a middle ground between the opposing parties, mediating, and negotiating, integrating the give-and-take approach, and finding a balance between assertive and cooperative strategies (Benoliel, n.d.; Valente et al., 2020).

Table 2.2 presents a summary of responses identifying compromising as the most preferred and prevalent conflict management style and its associated strategies.

The emergence of compromising style as the most prevalent conflict management approach among teachers and school principals, with an average weighted mean of 4.22 interpreted as "always," emphasizes a trend within the selected schools towards finding mutually beneficial and practical solutions, even if it requires partial sacrifices from the parties involved. Analysis of strategies relating to comprising also highlights principles of reciprocity based on its highest scoring strategies: using a give-and-take approach and

assessing gains and losses on both sides, which have 4.43 weighted mean. This underscores a pragmatic yet analytical approach to ensuring fairness and mutual concessions.

Results suggest that efforts are made to gain solutions that could satisfy the parties involved while analyzing and considering the overall well-being of everyone involved when it comes to handling organizational conflicts. With these strategies, proactive efforts are made to ensure that no one feels entirely “defeated” and that the negotiations and concessions made will lead to acceptable solutions for the parties involved. Haraldsen et al. (2023) asserted that compromising is a suitable conflict management style in educational organizations as it maintains positive relationships while working on solutions. It provides a balance between the outcome and the process of reaching an agreement among the

parties involved. Another focused principle in compromising strategies is reaching a workable solution. The consistently high weighted mean for “meeting halfway” (4.40, always) and frequent responses for “negotiation for mutual sacrifices” (4.11, oftentimes) and “compromising then moving on” (3.74, oftentimes) implies participants' willingness to work together to reach a workable solution for everyone involved. These strategies showcase a pragmatic, collaborative, and solution-oriented approach to conflict management and resolution. Gaffal and Padilla Gálvez (2023) and Sharma et al. (2024) emphasized that one strong point of compromising style in conflict management is its capacity to preserve the integrity of parties involved through mutual solutions and foster commitment in reaching an agreement, setting aside personal preferences.

Table 2.2 Summary of Strategies for Conflict Management within Compromising Domain

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR COMPROMISING	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
I try to compromise with the other person and move on	3.74	Oftentimes
I use a ‘give-and-take’ approach in resolving conflicts with others	4.43	Always
I try meeting people halfway to get what I need and not offend people at the same time	4.40	Always
I negotiate with the opposing party to see what sacrifices both of us can make the benefit each side	4.11	Oftentimes
I assess the gains and losses on both sides and work for balance with the other party	4.43	Always
AVERAGE MEAN SCORE	4.22	ALWAYS

Previous studies about conflict management in educational settings also highlight compromising strategies as the most prevalent and preferred strategies due to the nature of educational organizations (Ilgan, 2020; Larasati & Raharja, 2020). Khan et al. (2020) also reported in their study that school principals also prefer a compromising style in addressing conflicts, as this style allows organization members to move forward despite disagreements and limited resources and achieve immediate solutions to problems. The prevalence of compromising styles in public secondary schools in

Sorsogon province could be beneficial in creating and maintaining a positive working environment in schools. Another prevalent conflict management style among the respondents is collaborating. The large extent to which this style is used based on its average weighted mean of 4.17, interpreted as “oftentimes,” indicates a high inclination towards open communication, understanding, and collaborative efforts in achieving benefits on both sides. Table 2.3 shows a summary of strategies relating to collaboration in conflict management.

Table 2.3 Summary of Strategies for Conflict Management within Collaborating Domain

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR COLLABORATING	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
I try to communicate my side effectively and discuss the issue openly to resolve and prevent further misunderstanding	3.74	Oftentimes

I encourage everyone concerned to discuss the issue(s) openly and honestly for understanding and resolution	3.83	Oftentimes
I try to keep my communication lines open to understand and gather information about the issue whenever there is a disagreement	4.37	Always
When meditating, I try to understand both sides of the issue and think of what I need to do and the needs of both parties	4.54	Always
I try to find a solution that would work for everyone concerned and ask for their feedback	4.37	Always
AVERAGE MEAN SCORE	4.17	OFTENTIMES

The table above identifies the commonly used conflict management strategies associated with collaborating styles. Analysis of the results revealed a high frequency of using collaborative strategies in handling organizational conflicts in school. This highlights a trend that fosters an understanding of different perspectives and problem-solving through collective efforts to achieve a win-win situation. Lin (2023) noted that collaboration is one of the most preferred conflict management styles along with compromising in universities and other educational institutions as it encourages direct and effective communication among organization members and can strengthen team relationships and creativity as members work together to find solutions the parties desire and need.

Examining the responses gives insights into common practices for collaboration in schools. The significantly high weighted mean for statements falling into the “always” category, such as “understanding the issues and required efforts for both parties” (4.54), “keeping open communication” (4.37), and “finding workable solutions for everyone and asking for feedback” (4.37), entail a commitment to a cooperative problem-solving approach. Ronquillo et al. (2022) stated that having open communication and collaborative efforts in resolving concerns prevents a win-lose perception of the issues and are core components of effective collaboration. Ensuring and encouraging open and honest discussion about the issues helps members understand each other

and visualize what needs to be done to satisfy everyone’s needs.

Additionally, collaboration also entails mediation strategies as reflected in statements such as encouraging both parties to understand and work with each other openly and honestly to resolve conflict (3.83, oftentimes) and communicating and discussing issues of both sides openly to avoid further misunderstanding (3.74, oftentimes). This implies that mediating is a critical part of collaboration as it fosters the sharing and understanding of different perspectives involved in the issue. By coming together, collective long-term resolutions can be agreed upon or created, thus preventing further conflicts (Caruso, 2022). With collaborative conflict management, public secondary school teachers and principals in Sorsogon province develop better mediation, collaboration, and communication skills to ensure a positive working environment for everyone.

Furthermore, accommodating is also a frequently utilized conflict management style in handling organizational conflict in schools. Based on its high average weighted mean of 4.06, it can be said that accommodating strategies are oftentimes used by teachers and principals in the surveyed schools. Table 2.4 is the summary for this domain of conflict management for a better understanding of the strategies applied by teachers and principals in selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province.

Table 2.4 Summary of Strategies for Conflict Management within Accommodating Domain

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMMODATING	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
I try to keep my peace rather than win the argument	4.43	Always
I set aside my interests in conflict situations to prioritize harmony and relationships	4.29	Always
I try not to hurt other people’s feelings and disagree respectfully	4.34	Always
I try to meet others’ expectations more than my own	3.57	Oftentimes

I put more weight on my relationship with the person than the logic beyond my perspective when trying to make a decision	3.66	Oftentimes
AVERAGE MEAN SCORE	4.06	OFTENTIMES

The analysis of strategies for accommodation implies a strong inclination and tendency for teachers and school principals in public secondary schools in Sorsogon province to employ strategies that foster and preserve harmonious relationships, avoid confrontations, and prioritize relationships over conflict resolution. These strategies set aside assertiveness to keep the peace. Rahim (2023) noted that accommodating strategies prioritize the need to meet other parties' expectations to avoid conflicts from escalating and preserve interpersonal dynamics within the organization. As for the case of public secondary school teachers and principals in Sorsogon province, preferred accommodating strategies imply a conciliatory approach to handling organizational conflicts.

The analysis of individual statements within this specific conflict management domain provides an understanding of the specific strategies employed by the respondents. The remarkably high mean scores interpreted as "always" in terms of the extent of use for statements such as "keeping personal peace rather than winning an argument" (4.43), "disagreeing respectfully to avoid offending others" (4.34), and "setting aside personal interests to prioritize harmony and relationships" (4.29), emphasize a strong desire to protect interpersonal dynamics within the organization by the respondents. This aligns with Thomas-Kilmann's (2008) model, which emphasized accommodation as yielding one's own interest to meet the interests of the other party and prevent conflict escalation (Thomas, 2008). Through these strategies, the social fabric of the organization is being preserved, maintaining stability and cohesion among its members; however, this could also undermine long-term effectiveness and well-being as some personal needs remain unmet.

The survey results also reveal that respondents oftentimes put more weight on their relationships with the involved parties than making logical decisions and

try to make others's expectations higher than their own based on their weighted mean of 3.66 and 3.57. This shows that respondents value their interpersonal relationships with members of the organization. While this entails sentimental decisions rather than logical means, respondents agree that oftentimes it helps prevent confrontations and conflict escalation. Rambuyon and Domondon (2021) asserted in their study that accommodating conflict management strategies is preferred because of the power imbalance and unique interpersonal dynamics within educational institutions. In a field where hierarchy is highly evident, some teachers and administrators utilized accommodating strategies in handling conflicts to respect the other party's positions and value relationships. This conflict management style is often visible when dealing with someone who is perceived to be of higher rank than the other opposing party.

Accommodating strategies in conflict management reflect a high level of sensitivity and diplomacy within an organization. This can facilitate a respectful conversation in resolving conflicts and foster a collectivist culture; however, it is also important to note that this should be balanced with assertiveness and situational awareness, as some conflicts may warrant a more direct and assertive approach rather than a harmonized decision.

Among the less prevalent conflict management domains in public secondary schools in Sorsogon province is the avoiding style. With an average weighted mean of 3.03, this conflict management style is occasionally used by teachers and school principals in the surveyed school. This average indicates that while avoidance is not a dominant conflict management style among the respondents, certain incidents warrant avoidance as perceived by the respondents. Below is the summary table for the strategies employed by respondents relating to the avoidance conflict management style.

Table 2.5 Summary of Strategies for Conflict Management within Avoiding Domain

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
I try to leave conflicting situations as soon as possible without saying much about it	3.14	Occasionally

I don't give an opinion on things that don't concern me even if concerned parties ask me	3.00	Occasionally
I keep my disagreements with others to myself rather than confronting them about it	3.06	Occasionally
I try to give it some time before addressing the conflict	3.43	Oftentimes
I don't acknowledge or talk about the issue and just let things be	2.51	Rarely
AVERAGE MEAN SCORE	3.03	OCCASIONALLY

Table 2.5 presents the statements reflecting avoidance strategies employed by teachers and school principals across the surveyed public secondary schools in Sorsogon province. Analysis of items under this conflict management style revealed that taking some time off before addressing the conflict is the most common avoidance strategy employed by respondents based on its weighted mean of 3.43, interpreted as oftentimes. This suggests a delaying technique in handling conflicts, which is a less extreme form of avoidance. Hailikari et al. (2021) explained that procrastination as a form of avoidant conflict management strategy has something to do with the party's perceived efficacy and flexibility to address the issue rather than their intention to resolve the conflict. Some people need more time to be prepared to deal with conflicts; thus, avoidance may be an appropriate choice oftentimes, especially when the issue at hand is complex and crucial.

Additionally, analysis of weighted mean of other avoidant conflict management strategies also suggests that respondents selectively use these strategies depending on their perception of the issue and the circumstances surrounding it.

The occasional use of avoidant strategies, based on their weighted mean, such as immediate withdrawal from the issue (3.14), not confronting others despite disagreement (3.06), and not expressing opinions on some issues not directly related to oneself (3.00), implies active withdrawal and internalizing disagreements as forms of avoidance. While suppressing engagement and opinions on issues may not solve the conflict, others perceived it as an appropriate way to avoid further conflict and uncomfortable confrontations (Rahim & Katz, 2020; Ronquillo et al., 2022). This can be a good strategy, with respondents only engaging in conflicts that directly impact them and warrant immediate attention to contribute to a more effective and relevant resolution. In the avoiding domain, most of the respondents occasionally use this strategy during conflicts.

Similarly, not talking or acknowledging the existing conflict is also considered a rare option in handling conflicts based on its weighted mean of 2.51. This indicates that respondents rarely ignore conflicts and have a high sense of situational awareness. This highlights the importance of addressing conflicts, even if one should decide to briefly avoid dealing with them. Studies showed that ignoring conflicts can have adverse effects in the workplace, such as superficial harmony, incivility, increased tension, decreased productivity, and strained communication (Hershcovis et al., 2018; Smiley, 2018).

Although avoidance typically has a negative connotation, as implied by the results of the analysis, there are scenarios where it can be considered an appropriate and strategic response to conflict. It can save parties from unhealthy confrontations and provide enough time to internalize the issue and facilitate productive conversations that offer long-term resolutions; however, caution should be employed as to what issues could use some cooling-off time and ensure that no critical issues are left unnoticed and urgent needs remain unmet.

The least prevalent conflict management strategies across the surveyed schools are strategies relating to competition. The low average weighted mean of 2.47 indicates the rare utilization of competition as a conflict management style. This suggests that respondents rarely treat conflicts as "me/us vs. them" situations.

This also implies that respondents tend to use less adversarial strategies in handling conflicts. As the earlier findings suggest, respondents prefer win-win approaches to conflict resolution over win-at-all-costs approaches, supporting the low weighted mean for this conflict management domain. Table 2.6 presents a summary of the weighted mean of responses regarding competing conflict management strategies employed by the respondents.

Table 2.6 Summary of Strategies for Conflict Management within Competing Domain

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR COMPETING	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
I push my idea and insist on the advantages of my perspective	2.80	Occasionally
I find conflicts exciting and win the argument no matter what	1.86	Rarely
I do things on my own as I am usually right and know what needs to be done to resolve the issue	2.11	Rarely
I ignore people's opposition and carry out what I need to do to prove that I am right	1.74	Never
I stick with the standards and emphasize the rules, responsibilities, and roles of each side to settle arguments	3.86	Oftentimes
AVERAGE MEAN SCORE	2.47	RARELY

Although competing conflict management strategies are rarely the first choice of teachers and school principals in the surveyed schools, the results presented in the table indicate that some competing conflict management strategies are employed by the respondents that are more prevalent than other competition strategies. The slightly higher weighted mean of statements such as sticking with established principles and rules in settling arguments (3.86, oftentimes) and pushing ideas and insisting on the advantages of one's perspective (2.80, occasionally) suggest the importance of adhering to established rules and standards in mediating conflicts and potential openness in considering different perspectives. Respondents also seem to think that sometimes, when teachers and school principals deem it necessary to do some things to resolve conflicts, a certain level of assertiveness is necessary. This aligns with the principles of conflict management, asserting that a competing style is the most appropriate when urgent decisions are necessary and authority is being challenged (Fiori, 2021; Ronquillo et al., 2022).

Additionally, findings also suggest that respondents rarely think they are always correct and find excitement in winning an argument based on their mean scores (2.11 and 1.86). They also never used a competing strategy that completely ignored others just to win the case (1.74). These low weighted mean suggest that respondents have a minimal desire to win and aggressive dominance in handling conflict within the organization. Mamaci (2023) attested that aggression and a win-at-all-costs approach to handling conflict resolutions can cause animosity and bitterness, leading to more organizational conflicts. The infrequent use of these aggressive strategies in public secondary schools in Sorsogon province can preserve harmony and create a positive working environment, as reported by the respondents.

The exploration of different strategies for handling organizational conflicts across the selected public secondary schools in Sorsogon province revealed varied conflict management strategies employed by teachers and school principals. The prevalence of compromising, collaborating, and accommodating conflict management styles supports the pragmatic, cooperative, and relatively positive working, and conflict culture across the public secondary schools in the province. The rarity of avoiding and competing conflict management styles also supports the preservation of social fabric, interpersonal dynamics, and the collaborative nature of handling conflict in educational settings. This examination of conflict management strategies provides empirical evidence and valuable insights into developing enhanced conflict management programs within educational settings. The emphasis on the advantages of compromising, collaborating, and accommodating indicates existing skill sets and best practices to build upon for the enhanced conflict management program. On the other hand, understanding when competing or avoiding strategies can be of occasional importance and highlight specific areas for interventions to improve conflict management and resolutions in schools.

3. Assessment of Challenges in Managing Organizational Conflicts

This study also assessed the degree of difficulty in managing certain organizational conflicts. The respondents were asked to rate how challenging it is to manage these conflicts from 1 (not challenging at all) to 5 (extremely challenging). Below is Table 3.1 showing the respondent's mean rating.

Table 3.1 Summary of Responses Regarding Challenges in Conflict Management

CHALLENGES IN MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Lack of effective communication channels or processes to solve the conflicts	3.20	Occasionally Challenging
Cultural or personal differences between individuals or groups involved	3.17	Occasionally Challenging
Lack of effective conflict resolution skills and training	3.09	Occasionally Challenging
Limited time and resources dedicated to resolving conflicts	3.29	Occasionally Challenging
Fear of retaliation in raising concern or addressing conflicts openly due to power imbalance	3.11	Occasionally Challenging
Lack of leadership support in addressing conflicts	2.91	Occasionally Challenging
Differences in the perception of conflicts and conflict management styles	3.26	Occasionally Challenging
Conflicting expectations in how conflicts should be resolved	3.20	Occasionally Challenging
Unclear roles and responsibilities within the school about conflict management	3.17	Occasionally Challenging
Resistance to changes needed to resolve the conflict	2.86	Occasionally Challenging
Inconsistent enforcement of conflict resolution procedures	2.94	Occasionally Challenging
Ambiguous conflict resolution policies in school	2.77	Occasionally Challenging
Lack of awareness of conflict and its impact even among the people involved	2.86	Occasionally Challenging
Insufficient workforce to deal with conflict resolution	2.74	Occasionally Challenging
Absence of camaraderie and teamwork among members of the organization	3.06	Occasionally Challenging
OVERALL MEAN SCORE	3.04	OCCASIONALLY CHALLENGING

Based on the results, all the identified challenges are occasionally challenging, which means that the respondents encounter them now and then, with some instances more challenging than others. While these challenges may appear sporadically, they still contribute to the overall difficulty of handling conflicts within educational institutions. Specifically, the “insufficient workforce to deal with conflict resolution” with a weighted mean of 2.74 was seen as the least challenging, suggesting that there are enough people to deal with any conflict that arises in the organization.

The biggest problem, however, lies in the “limited time and resources” being put into resolving conflicts, which has a slightly higher weighted mean (3.29), suggesting a seemingly more challenging concern. Isabu (2017) stated that the greater the limitation in resources, the greater the chance for a conflict to arise. Also, spending even a little more time understanding the conflict and the needs of the parties involved helps in coming up with a better solution (Committee, 2015).

There is also a wide range of mean scores, which indicates that some challenges are perceived as more challenging than others. The differences in perceptions of conflicts and conflict management styles got a weighted mean of 3.26 (occasionally challenging). Similar results were obtained for the challenge regarding conflicting expectations for conflict resolution, which garnered a 3.20 weighted mean interpreted as occasionally challenging. In addition, the same weighted mean (3.20, occasionally challenging) was attributed to a lack of effective communication channels or processes for conflict resolution. These results emphasize the importance of having a positive conflict culture wherein parties involved can properly and openly communicate their expectations and opinions on the ongoing conflict.

Saiti (2015) noted that awareness and communication skills are needed to break any boundaries within a school system and manage conflicts. These boundaries may come in the form of political affiliation, religious differences, or personal and cultural diversity. Having a dedicated communication channel and personnel to

handle conflicts is seen by the respondents as a vital factor in improving the organization's conflict management program.

The lack of both conflict management resources and proper communication channels in schools makes conflict management more challenging. The challenges that received the highest weighted mean and the trend of responses' frequencies are all related to resources and communication, suggesting the areas where the organization should focus on in conflict management programs. Therefore, there is a need for a program specifically tailored to address the specific challenges identified in this study. The enhanced conflict management program must have proper resources and communication channels to resolve any conflict effectively and efficiently within the organization.

The identified challenges in conflict management across public secondary schools in Sorsogon province emphasized the multifaceted nature of conflict management and resolution. Determining and acknowledging existing challenges in conflict management in schools can help create a responsive conflict management strategy and cultivate a positive working environment for everyone to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study regarding organizational conflicts and conflict management strategies, the following conclusions were drawn:

Most of the prevalent organizational conflicts are relationship conflicts revolving around differences and misunderstandings among staff, which warrant a closer inspection of the interpersonal relationships and dynamics within the organization.

The strategies employed by teachers and school principals have a strong reliance on compromising, collaborating, and accommodating conflict management styles. Avoiding and competing conflict management styles are least preferred by teachers and school principals, as school culture places high value on balanced efforts and solutions, cooperation, harmony, and relationships.

The most observed challenges in managing organizational conflict are resources and communication-related challenges. Addressing these

challenges is vital for the establishment of an effective conflict management program.

Following the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were crafted to ensure enhancement of conflict management strategies and programs in school settings:

Training and resources must be expanded to support teachers and school heads in their roles in conflict management. Strong awareness and knowledge about conflicts and conflict management, as well as opportunities to facilitate mediation and negotiation, should be given to teachers and school heads.

Efforts for conflict management and resolution should be focused on enhancing collaboration, improving communication, and establishing a support system. Educational administrators and institutions or agencies should invest in resources and a workforce dedicated to conflict management and resolution. Different strategies in conflict management should be employed as deemed necessary.

Further investigations on factors inhibiting organizational conflicts and best practices in conflict management should be done to contribute to a deeper understanding of conflict management strategies and foster and sustain a positive conflict culture in schools.

The proposed P.A.C.E. program should be utilized by public secondary schools in Sorsogon province as a general framework for an enhanced conflict management program in educational settings. Improvements in communication, resources, and the conflict resolution committee should be key features of the enhanced program. Regular feedback and program assessment should be done to ensure its sustainability.

For future research directions, qualitative techniques and longitudinal studies should be employed to deepen the analysis of the topic, track effectiveness of the P.A.C.E. program, conflict management strategies and increase their reliability. Future researchers and educators can build upon this study by exploring conflict management in a wider scope and in varied contexts.

Integrating these recommendations can offer valuable insights into improving conflict management strategies and programs in different contexts and in a more systemic manner. Building upon this study can also

catalyze sustaining the proposed enhancements in conflict management programs in school settings. Shared commitment and efforts are necessary to ensure that conflicts can work for the benefit of the organization and broader communities.

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