CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLE AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN LAMBAYONG DISTRICT – I

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ABSTRACT

Conflict is prevalent in any school. Unresolved disputes can undermine the school's capacity to succeed. Thus, depending on the situation and the concerned parties, school leaders must know how to handle and manage conflict. To establish strong relationships with subordinates, school administrators must learn and apply various conflict management styles. Hence, this study tried to examine the conflict management style and development outcomes of public elementary schools in Lambayong District-I, Division of Sultan Kudarat. The respondents of the study were Seven (7) School Heads and Thirty (30) teachers. Schools Heads were completely enumerated as respondents while Thirty (30) teachers were selected through a purposive sampling procedure. Data were collected using a survey questionnaire and then analyzed using Descriptive-correlational design and Pearson r statistics to discuss the findings.

Findings revealed that most of the school heads used collaborating conflict management style. Further findings revealed that school development outcomes in terms of school climate and teachers' commitment to work were practiced to the greatest extent. In conclusion, school heads' conflict management style has a significant relationship with school climate and teachers' commitment to work, more so, conflict management styles have nothing to do with teachers' performance.

Keywords: Conflict Management Style and Development Outcomes of Public Elementary Schools in Lambayong District – I

1.   INTRODUCTION

Understanding that we all approach conflict resolution in our own unique manner is one of the most important skills that today's working professionals need to possess. According to the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), used by human resource (HR) experts across the globe, there are five basic types of conflict management—collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising.

Dr. Barbara Benoliel, a trained professional mediator and mitigation expert, and faculty member in Walden University's Ph.D. in Human and Social Services department, argues that there is no one best approach to conflict management. "It may enhance your normal attitude to these circumstances and lead to efficient and successful conflict resolution if you understand how you intuitively react to problems and have a greater understanding of alternative management styles."

It's not good for the institution's purpose, vision, and objectives if its employees are at odds with one another. There will inevitably be disagreements among the group members due to their divergent values, beliefs, and perspectives. As a result, it is an inevitable part of human endeavors in both the public and private sectors (Kilmann, 2019). When there is tension at work, it is not always the fault of individual workers, although it is certainly a possibility. A high degree of employee involvement may be seen in workers who challenge the status quo and advocate for changes they believe will benefit the company (Emma, 2019). The organization might suffer if conflicts aren't resolved quickly and aggressively. It will become a larger barrier to realizing its purpose and potential. This study will seek to establish the prevalent Conflict Management Styles among public elementary school heads and the development outcomes of public-school teachers in Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This chapter deals with the methodology that is used in this study. It includes the research design, locale of the study, respondents, instruments, data gathering procedure, and statistical treatment.

A descriptive correlational technique was used in the research that creates static depictions of situations while also establishing relationships between various variables (White McBurney, 2009). Descriptive research is a type of study that entails watching behavior to describe attributes objectively and methodically. Descriptive and correlational research are two critical types of research that assist researchers in making bold and well-informed conclusions in their respective domains.

It sought the relationship between the independent variables, the school heads' conflict management, and the dependent variable and the development outcomes.

This study was conducted among Seven (7) public elementary schools in Lambayong District - I, Division of Sultan Kudarat. The researcher preferred the Lambayong I district because it is the center among the three (3) districts in Lambayong municipality it is also situated here as the biggest central school in Lambayong.

Complete enumeration was used in selecting the School Heads and purposive sampling for the teachers' respondents. The respondents of the study were Seven (7) public elementary school heads and Thirty (30) teachers of DepEd Lambayong District I, Division of Sultan Kudarat.

The tool for data collection is a 2-Part structured questionnaire. A questionnaire is a research instrument that gathered data from a large sample. Questionnaires were used to gather information and data from the target- respondents such as school heads and teachers. The survey questionnaire will be adopted and modified from the Reginald (Reg) Adkins, Ph.D., Elemental Truths with the help of the advisory committee. Whereas, the instrument for the development outcomes in terms of school climate and teachers' commitment to work was a researcher-made questionnaire. The said instrument was subjected to content validity using the Good and State then pilot-testing among 10 public elementary

schools and it was analyzed as to the reliability, a computation of the Cronbach's Alpha which is equal to .80 which means the instrument was acceptable.

Part I deals with school heads' conflict management styles and it was answered only by the teachers' respondents. The following scale will use.

Level	Range	Descriptions	Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Always	Observed to the great extent
4	3.51-4.50	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
3	2.51-3.50	Sometimes	Observed to the lesser extent
2	1.76-2.50	Rarely	Observed to the least extent
1	1.00-1.75	Very Rarely	Observed to the very least extent

Part II Would provide information on the development outcomes in terms of school climate, commitment, and performance and it was answered by the school heads and teachers. The following scale will be employed.

Level	Range	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Practiced to the greatest extent
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Practiced to the great extent
3	2.61-3.40	Moderately Agree	Practiced to the moderate extent
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Practiced to the least extent
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Not Practiced at all

Following the retrieval of the checklist and survey questionnaires, data were analyzed using the following statistical tools: After the checklist and survey- questionnaires retrieve, data were processed using the following statistical tools: The weighted mean determined the school heads' conflict management style. Pearson-moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship between the two significant variables the school heads' conflict management and development outcomes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conflict Management Styles of School Heads

Conflict management is the process of handling disputes and disagreements between two or multiple parties. The goal of this system is to minimize the negative factors that are influencing the conflict and encourage all participants to come to an agreement. Successful conflict management results in a mutually beneficial outcome that's agreed upon by each party (Amaresan,2012).

On Collaborating Conflict Management Style of School Heads

Collaborating involves finding a solution to the conflicting situation that satisfies both parties. An effort has to be made to actively pursue effective problem-solving actions in order that all parties can accomplish equally satisfying results (win-win).

Table 2. Mean Rating on Collaborating Conflict Management Style of School Heads

No.	Indicators Collaborating	Mean	Description	Interpretation

1	Discusses issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.	4.78	Always	Observed to the great extent
5	When there is a disagreement, it gathers as much information as that can and keeps the lines of communication open.	4.62	Always	Observed to the great extent
7	Tries to see conflicts from both sides. What does its need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved?	4.27	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
	Section Mean	4.56	Always	Observed to the great extent

The table exhibits the conflict management style of school heads in terms of collaborating with the section mean of 4.56 which means always implies that it is observed to a great extent as a conflict management style used by the school heads in their school. In particular the indicator "Discusses issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs" got the highest mean of 4.78 means always and was interpreted as observed to a great extent, in addition, the indicator "When there is a disagreement, it gathers as much information like that can and keeps the lines of communication open" has the second-highest mean of 4.62 with a description of always which implies that it was observed to the great extent.

The result of the study is associated with Howell (2018) states that Collaborating involves finding a solution to a conflicting situation that satisfies both parties. An effort has to be made to actively pursue effective problem-solving actions in order that all parties can accomplish equally satisfying results (win-win). In this strategy, individuals seem to be just as concerned with the wants of others as their own; however, they are not willing to give up their own positions to merely soothe the wants of other individuals. Innovative ideas often emerge when people use the collaborative approach to conflict management. When parties must continue to work together after a conflict has occurred, a collaborative conflict management strategy must be used to continue to work together in agreement. A collaborative strategy is positively linked to communication satisfaction and partner ability and trust.

On the competing conflict management style of school heads

The competing conflict management strategy is seen when individuals follow their own needs and goals to the exclusion of others.5 Individuals who use a competing strategy try to increase authority or influence by the use of open hostility.8 When dealing with this type of strategy frustration, irritation, or argument may be used; and conflicting parties may be fully removed from the situation by the use of authority.

Table 3. Mean Rating on Competing Conflict Management Style of School Heads

No.	Indicators Competing	Mean	Description	Interpretation
4	Would argue cases and insist on the advantages of point of view.	4.35	Often	Observed to the moderate extent

9	Finds conflicts exhilarating and enjoys the battle of wits that usually follows.	2.70	Sometimes	Observed to the lesser extent
14	It may not get what he/she wants but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace.	4.54	Always	Observed to the moderate extent
	Section Mean	3.86	Often	Observed to the moderate extent

The table above entails the competing conflict management style of school heads. Indicators "It may not get what he/she wants but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace" got the highest mean of 4.54 with a verbal description of always which means it was observed to a moderate extent, meanwhile "Finds conflicts exhilarating and enjoys the battle of wits that usually follows" has the lowest computed mean of 2.70 with a description of sometimes which implies observed to the lesser extent.

Overall, the computed section means 3.86 with a description of often that implies it was observed to a moderate extent.

The result of the study is parallel with the report of Kraybill (2018) that the Conflict Style Inventory refers to competing as a directing conflict management strategy. When the individual uses a directing conflict management style there is a high focus on the agenda (conflict) and a low focus on the relationship with the other party. The directing style has an "I win and you lose" approach. When individuals use this style, they more than likely hold some type of power over the other party involved and are able to demand the conflict be resolved in their favor. The directing approach is not always a "bad" conflict management style, it can be useful in emergency situations when decisions need to be made fast. When this style is used by a supervisor it gives the employee a sense of stability to know that their supervisor is constant in their decision making.

On Avoiding Conflict Management Style of School Heads

This strategy is used when both parties' distresses are ignored by not addressing the problem. The avoiding strategy is characterized by the acceptance that any effort to either discuss or contest the conduct of another is desperate and pointless.

Table 4. Mean Rating on Avoiding Conflict Management Style of School Heads

No.	Indicators Avoiding	Mean	Description	Interpretation
6	When it finds his/her in an argument, it usually says very little and try to leave as soon as possible.	4.00	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
10	Being in a disagreement with other people makes it feel uncomfortable and anxious	3.35	Sometimes	Observed to the lesser extent
15	Avoids hard feelings by keeping disagreements with others to himself.	4.22	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
	Section Mean	3.86	Often	Observed to the moderate extent

Table 4 exhibits the mean rating of school heads in their conflict management style in terms of avoiding.

The computed section means of 3.86 with a description of often which implies that it was observed to a moderate extent. In particular indicators "Avoids hard feelings by keeping disagreements with others to himself" has the highest mean of 4.22 with a description of often which interpreted as observed to the moderate extent, in addition, indicators "Being in a disagreement with other people makes it feel uncomfortable and anxious" has the lowest mean rating of 3.35 with a description of sometimes which means observed to the lesser extent.

The result of the study is related to the report of Kraybill (2018) state that, this strategy is used when both parties' distresses are ignored by not addressing the problem. The avoiding strategy is characterized by the acceptance that any effort to either discuss or contest the conduct of another is desperate and pointless. Those who use an avoiding approach have very little concern for their own desires; it is not unusual to find these people purposely removing themselves from situations that could lead to possible disagreements. These individuals are not likely to be self-confident, fail to pursue support from coworkers, and are incapable of taking a strong stand on conflicting issues. Often individuals who use an avoiding conflict management strategy may choose not to reply or develop a state of unawareness.

Moreover, Hamilton's (2017) study chose the avoidance conflict management strategy most often. Several studies have found that nurses tend to choose the avoiding style of conflict management. Avoidance can be a valued conflict management strategy when the matters instigating the conflict are of low significance.

On Accommodating Conflict Management Style of School Heads

An accommodating style of conflict management involves neglecting one's concerns to satisfy the concerns of others.5 This strategy is regarded as the acceptance that the preservation of pleasant interpersonal affairs is more significant than forming disagreements among colleagues.

Table 5. Mean Rating on Accommodating Conflict Management Style of School Heads

No.	Indicators Accommodating	Mean	Description	Interpretation
3	Tries to meet the expectations of others.	4.41	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
11	Tries to meet the wishes of friend and family teachers and other co-workers.	4.19	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
14	It may not get what he / she wants but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace.	4.54	Always	Observed to the great extent
	Section Mean	4.38	Often	Observed to the moderate extent

The table shows the section mean of accommodating as conflict management styles of school heads with the section computed mean of 4.38 that described as often which means it was observed to the moderate extent.

In specific, indicator "It may not get what he / she wants but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace" has the highest mean of 4.54 described as always which interpreted as observed to the great extent, meanwhile indicator "Tries to meet the wishes of friend and family teachers and other co-workers" has the lowest computed mean of 4.19 as described as often which implies that it was observed to the moderate extent.

The result of the study is related to the statement of Kraybill (2018) that accommodating as a harmonizing conflict response.7 The harmonizing style has a low focus on the agenda and a high focus on the relationship. Individuals will often use this style when they want to fit in with the other party. When this style is over-using the individual will eventually become depressed due to the fact of always giving the other party what they want and always losing what is important to the individual.

On Compromising Conflict Management Style of School Heads

A compromising conflict management strategy involves trying to find a "common ground" that partly satisfies both parties. With this strategy, individuals realize that every party cannot always be entirely satisfied in every conflict situation.

Table 6. Mean Rating on Compromising Conflict Management Style of School Heads

No.	Indicators Compromising	Mean	Description	Interpretation
2	Tries to negotiate and uses a give-and-take approach to problem situations.	4.81	Always	Observed to the great extent
8	Prefers to compromise when solving problems and just move on.	3.97	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
13	13. To break deadlocks, it would meet people halfway.	4.24	Often	Observed to the moderate extent
	Section Mean	4.34	Often	Observed to the moderate extent

As exhibited in the table above, it discusses the compromising conflict management style of school heads with the computed section mean of 4.34 described as often which is interpreted as that was observed to a moderate extent. In particular indicator "Tries to negotiate and uses a give-and-take approach to problem situations" has the highest computed mean of 4.81 with a description of always which implies that it was observed to the great extent. In addition, indicator "Prefers to compromise when solving problems and just move on" has the lowest computed mean of 3.97 with the description of often which is interpreted as observed to a moderate extent.

The result of the study is related to the report of Kraybill (2018) that compromising with a medium focus on the agenda and the relationship with the other party involved in the conflict. When individuals use this type of conflict management style, they possess a sense of fairness and realism.

Table 7. Conflict Management Styles of School Heads

No.	Conflict Management Styles of School Heads	Mean	Description
1	Collaborating	4.56	Always
2	Competing	3.86	Sometimes
3	Avoiding	3.86	Sometimes
4	Accommodating	4.38	Often
5	Compromising	4.34	Often

The table shows the conflict management styles of school heads. Among the five conflict management, a style of collaborating was commonly used by the school heads with a mean of 4.56 which means it was observed to a great extent, followed by accommodating with a mean rating of 4.38, compromising with a mean rating of 4.34, and the least conflict management styles used by the school heads were competing and avoiding with a mean rating of 3.86.

Compromising conflict handling style was found to be the most frequently used style among Croatian employees overall, as well as the dominant style in all 22 subgroups of respondents. Three out of seven individual characteristics.

surveyed were found to relate to the conflict-handling style used by Croatian employees (Sanja Sontor 2015).

The compromising and dominating styles are used to a lesser extent while the obliging and avoiding styles are rarely used. Partners are more likely than managers to use more assertive styles of conflict management (Jenny Goodwin, 2002).

School Climate Handled by the School Heads

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students, parents, and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures (K. B., & Pachan, M. 2008)

Table 8. Development Outcomes in Terms of School Climate Handle by School Heads

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. This school encourages students to take challenging classes no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, and/or cultural background.	4.86	Strongly Agree
2. This school emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices.	4.89	Strongly Agree
3. This school communicates with parents on a timely and ongoing basis.	4.65	Strongly Agree
4. Staffs at this school have many informal opportunities to influence what happens within the school.	4.65	Strongly Agree
5. Administrators involve staff in decision-making.	4.84	Strongly Agree
6. This school collaborates well with community organizations to help address youth substance use problems	4.70	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.77	Strongly Agree

The table exhibits the development outcomes in terms of school climate handled by the school heads. With an overall mean of 4.77 with a verbal description of strongly agree which means school heads practiced to the greatest extent.

In particular, this school emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices gaining the highest mean of 4.89 with a verbal description of strongly agree which implies that they practiced with the greatest extent. This school encourages students to take challenging classes no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, and/or cultural background has a mean rating of 4.86 means strongly

agrees this implies that the school practiced to the greatest extent. In addition, this school communicates with parents on a timely and ongoing basis, and staff at this school have many informal opportunities to influence what happens within the school has a mean of 4.65 which implies that the school practiced to the greatest extent.

<u>Teachers' Commitment to work</u>

Commitment to work or work commitment is defined as the level of enthusiasm an employee has towards his/her tasks assigned at a workplace.

Table 9. Development Outcomes in terms of Teachers' Commitment to work

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Staff at this school demonstrates a passion or emotional attachment to their work involved in teaching.	4.89	Strongly Agree
2. Invests "extra "time outside of expected contact hours with students.	4.81	Strongly Agree
3. Focuses on the individual need of the learner.	4.86	Strongly Agree
4. Takes responsibility for imparting a body of knowledge and/or certain attitudes, values and beliefs that prepare learner for the future.	4.7	Strongly Agree
5. Proactive in their professional development and in many cases are willing to share with and learn from their colleagues.	4.84	Strongly Agree
6. Shows a professional responsibility that reaches out beyond the four walls of the classroom and perhaps even extends beyond the boundary of the school by demonstrating willingness to engage with school and school's community.	4.89	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.83	Strongly Agree

Table 9 entails the development outcomes in terms of teachers' commitment. With an overall mean of 4.83 with a verbal description of strongly agree which means they practiced to the greatest extent.

In like manner, the Staff at this school demonstrates a passion or emotional attachment to their work involved in teaching, shows a professional responsibility that reaches out beyond the four walls of the classroom and perhaps even extends beyond the boundary of the school by demonstrating a

willingness to engage with school and school's community got the highest mean of 4.89 that implies strongly agree which indicate that the school practiced to the greatest extent.

Significant Relationship between the Conflict Management Style
of School Heads and the level of Development Outcomes

Conflict is inherent in organizations, and managing it is a function of the leader. As the nature of organizations has evolved over time, so has the role of conflict in them and the work of the leader in responding to conflict situations. Early organizational theorists viewed the conflict as detrimental to organizations. Now the conflict is considered a natural phenomenon, "a normal human condition that is always present to some degree" (Schein, 2010, p. 95), and students of organizations see unresolved conflict rather than conflict itself as a deterrent to organizational effectiveness.

Conflict Management Style of School Heads and the level
of Development Outcomes in terms of school climate

The succeeding table will discuss on the correlational analysis of conflict management styles of school heads and the development outcomes in terms of school climate.

Table 10. Correlation between the Conflict Management Style of School Heads and the Level of Development Outcomes in Terms of school climate

Variables	n	df	r	p value
Conflict Management	37	35	.369*	0.325
School Climate				

*- Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
  Critical value 0.325

Conflict management was paired with school climate with the computed r value of .369 at 0.05 level of significance is greater than the critical value of 0.325, this implies that the null hypothesis was rejected, therefore there is a significant relationship between conflict management style of school heads and school climate.

The result of the study is parallel with the study of Lezotte and Snyder (2011) Good leaders model the way. Members of an organization learn to trust leaders who "say what they mean and mean what they say". These leaders' actions are consistent with their beliefs, and they lead by the example of their observable behavior. Good leaders encourage the heart. They have high expectations of themselves and others and confidence that these expectations will be met. They provide firm direction, ample encouragement, personal attention, and feedback. Efforts and successes are recognized and appreciated.

Conflict Management Style of School Heads and the level
of Development Outcomes in terms of Teachers Commitment

The next table illustrates the analysis on conflict management styles and development outcomes in terms of teachers' commitment.

Table 11. Correlation between the Conflict Management Style of School Heads and the level of Development Outcomes in terms of Teachers Commitment.

Variables	n	df	r	p value
Conflict Management	37	35	.388*	0.325
Teachers' Commitment				

*- Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
   Critical value 0.325

On the analysis on the conflict management styles and teachers' commitment, with the computed r value of .388 at .05 level of significant is greater than the critical value of 0.325 which means null hypothesis was rejected therefore there is significant relationship between conflict management styles of school heads and teacher's commitment.

The result of the study is similar with the result of the of Lezotte and Snyder, (2011), they engender a high degree of enthusiasm and group cohesiveness and model the expectations they have of others. Leaders with a high degree of influence use their understanding of others to engage both individuals and groups in particular initiatives and goals of the organization. Leaders who are skilled in developing others understand the strengths, limitations, and motivations of the people they work with and are adept at coaching and encouraging these people to grow. Change catalysts are able to perceive the need for change and to find a way forward, engaging others as they do so.

**Conflict Management Style of School Heads and the
level of Development Outcomes in terms of Performance Rating**

The next table exhibits the analysis of conflict management styles of school heads and development outcomes in terms of performance rating.

Table 12. Correlation between the Conflict Management Style of School Heads and the level of Development Outcomes in terms of Performance Rating

Variables	n	df	r	p value
Conflict Management	37	35	.10	0.325
Performance Rating				

*- Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
   Critical value 0.325

Conflict management was paired to performance rating with the computed r value of .010 at 5% level of significant which is less than the critical value of .325, which implies that the null hypothesis was accepted therefore, this is no significant relationship between conflict management styles and performance rating.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS

Generally, the study tried to examine the level of school heads' conflict management styles and development outcomes. Specifically, it determined the school heads' conflict management styles in terms of Collaborating, Competing, Avoiding, Accommodating, and Compromising. Further, find out the relationship of School Heads' conflict management style and development outcomes in terms of school climate, teachers' commitment to work, and their performance.

There were 37 respondents in the study who were chosen through complete enumeration for the Seven (7) school heads respondents and purposive sampling techniques for Thirty (30) teachers' respondents.

The study's hypotheses were evaluated utilizing Pearson-moment Correlation.

Findings revealed that collaboration is observed to the greatest extent in school heads' conflict management styles.

In terms of school climate handled by the school heads and teachers' commitment was practiced to the greatest extent. Further findings revealed that schools heads' conflict management styles have a significant relationship with development outcomes in terms of school climate and teacher commitment.

Whereas, school heads' conflict management styles have no significant influence on performance rating.

From the salient findings of this study and the conclusion reached, the following recommendations are presented:

1. The school heads may sustain the school heads' conflict management styles.

2. Amidst the pandemic, the school heads may continue what they had started on the school climate and teachers' commitment.

3. Another research may be conducted in a wider scope to have a clearer picture of the school heads' conflict management styles amidst the pandemic.

5. CONCLUSION

School heads' conflict management styles in terms of collaborating were found observed to the great extent, competing and avoiding were found observed to a lesser extent, and finally accommodating and compromising were found observed to a moderate extent.

School heads' conflict management styles are significantly related to development outcomes in terms of school climate and teachers' commitment and found that school heads' conflict management styles are not the best prediction of performance rating.

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