Conflict Management Style of School Heads and its Influence on The Job Satisfaction of Teachers in Marilao North District, Bulacan, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to investigate the relationship between conflict management style of school heads and job satisfaction of teachers. This research is a non-experimental quantitative research design where survey was utilized to 52 Junior High School teachers and to 9 school heads. The results were analyzed and interpreted using the descriptive procedures and utilized multi regression analysis as statistical tools to test the hypothesis of the study. The study identified five conflict management styles: collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising. The results of the study indicate that collaborating has a negative impact and compromising has a positive impact as predicted by the job satisfaction of teachers. The r value for collaborating on school issues and compromising are statistically significant as the 0.033 (collaborating) and 0.028 (compromising) are less than alpha = 0.05. Regardless of school heads' positive response towards collaborating conflict management, teachers may not become aware of the same manner, possibly affecting their job satisfaction. The authors thus suggest pursuing further investigation on testing if there is a significant difference between the school heads' conflict management style and how teachers perceived their conflict management style, and also the factors on the inverse relationship of collaborating conflict management style and job satisfaction of teachers.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Job Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

School heads have a crucial role in composing the educational environment of the school for the learners, educators, and administrative staff. They are a leader who will guide and lead the school, including leadership and governance, curriculum and learning, accountability, and continuous improvement and management of resources. Being the school head, they not only focus on the improvement of education but also to face and fix conflict in schools. The principles in leadership and management suggested the management style used by the school head has an impact in managing the school. Management style also performs to mitigate issues and problems, and being resilient to different conflicts. There are many aspects to the leadership of a school head that he must pay attention to during his leadership in a school where he is assigned. It clearly stated in Republic Act No. 9155 duties and responsibilities of an educational leader in school level in a public school in the Philippines covering the instructional leader and administrative manager of a school. Despite being knowledgeable and well experienced in the field of leadership and management, school heads still face various challenges that might involve the teacher that may cause teachers' perception towards their teaching or job satisfaction. Every social life involves conflict. Due to its association with scenarios including limited resources, function separation, power dynamics, and role differentiation, it is an

essential aspect of life (Daisy, A., 2020).

According to Gabriel and Bill (2022), man cannot survive in isolation, hence conflicts, misunderstandings, and intrigues will inevitably arise during encounters with other community members. Disagreement or misinterpretation might take the form of revolution or conflict. The school is not immune to such issues, especially between teachers, between teachers and parents, or between teachers and students, and there are some conflicts between teachers and school heads. Therefore, a school heads' ability to handle conflict requires making a resolution to prevent the problem getting worse which occasionally begins with incorrect information or a straightforward misunderstanding that stresses out the parties involved. To this matter, there are five identified conflict management styles that the school heads could use in deciding on resolving problems within the schools. The five conflict management styles that this research identified are collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising.

Moreover, the school teachers have a vital part in the educational system that promotes quality education and serves as a catalyst of education. However, they also encounter different problems in their family and in their workplace. This issue is not new to the professional teachers particularly they experience pressure or burnout to their workplace from the school (Li, X., Lin, X., Zhang, F., & Tian, Y.,2021). One of the highlights given by the Department of Education in conducting In Service Training is about stress management of a teacher that could affect their job as a teacher. Increasing conflict can decrease the level of teachers' motivation to do their task and job in school (Ertürk, R.,2022). There are five areas of job satisfaction that this research identifies: professional advancement/promotion, income and security, relationship with school head, relationship with colleagues and work conditions. These areas must be given consideration by the school heads to construct an intervention and program to help teachers to overcome a particular issue that they are involved in.

Many studies have been conducted to determine the most common causes of conflict in a school (Chandolia, E., & Anastasiou, S., 2020). Therefore, the conflict management style used in leadership and management, especially in the public sector, was identified (Lahana, E., Tsaras, K., Kalaitzidou, A., Galanis, P., Kaitelidou, D., &Sarafis, P., 2019), also expressed the effect of using this conflict management style to solve any issue and problem that a leader may face (Mangulabnan, B., Rosa, R., & Vargas, D., 2021).

Previous studies have also proven the positive effect of using a conflict management style on high school performance that is rooted in the effective leadership management style used by a school principal in a school. Moreover, the integration of conflict management style has an indirect effect on teachers' job satisfaction (Okoye, K., & Okeke-Okonkwo, C., 2020).

The support given by the school heads to teachers has a positive impact on the teacher's professional development. This study focused on its research gap to examine the impact of the conflict management style used by the school head on teachers' job satisfaction. This study will answer specific questions below:

1. What is the conflict management style of the school heads?
2. What is the level of job satisfaction of teachers?
3. Does the conflict management style of the school head influence the job satisfaction of the teachers from the teachers' perspective?

The research variables covered the independent variable, conflict management of school heads, and the dependent variable, job satisfaction of teachers. The researcher conducted the survey for school heads and teachers from the public schools of Marilao North District, Division of Bulacan.

This study will be expected to be used as a reference to create a program and project to uplift teachers' motivation to professional development.

Conflict Management of School Heads

Conflict is a natural phenomenon in organizations as a result of interactions among people, (Chandolia,

etc., al, 2020). Hence, one significant role of school heads is conflict management. Conflict management is defined as the process of a party involved in a conflict or a third party devising a conflict strategy and implementing it to control the conflict to produce the desired resolution, (Wariwan,2010). It is important to solve issues and conflict before it escalates to a more complicated scenario.

Furthermore, in the Conflict Management Style of School Head and Teacher's Job Satisfaction and efficiency, a research by Meija and Arpon (2021), they identify conflict management styles of School heads. These are the collaborating style, accommodating style, competing style, avoiding style, and compromising style. Based on the result of the study, theseconflict management styles have a significant relationship towards the teachers' job satisfaction and efficiency.

However, despite of the significant relationship between conflict management of school head towards teacher's job satisfaction, there is still a need for further study as recommended by Hamzah, Rani, and Hamid (2017) in their study of Head teachers Conflict Management Styles, and Teachers Job Satisfaction in Malaysian Primary Schools. In their study, head teachers are expected to increase their competencies in managing conflict effectively.

They found that most head teachers in schools needed more continuing professional development and training to handle conflict in schools. They recommended that policymakers should consider leadership training and new policies designed to cater the needs of head teachers in an effort to increase the teachers' job satisfaction

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is commonly defined as the positive and negative feelings of an employee towards his job or how happy the person is with the things related to his job (Singh and Jain, 2013). In education, job satisfaction is a crucial aspect since it has a direct effect on the quality of teaching being delivered, performance of students and the overall role of the academic institution (Buvaneshwari, K. and Praveen, S.,2023).

According to Shila and Sevilla (2015), in a school set-up, job satisfaction is an important aspect for the members of the organization to remain committed and productive. In the case of teachers, their satisfaction level dictates their level of commitment to the institution. If they are satisfied, it is likely that they are more committed to the work and participate in activities of the organization. Same concept was shared by Adu-Baffoe (2021) when he mentioned how commitment and productivity of teachers are dependent on job satisfaction, they have through the services they provide.

There are several factors that influence job satisfaction. In a study conducted by Wandira (2023) , promotion is one of the aspects that influences job satisfaction. As employees, it is common that they want to be promoted to a higher level. HasibuaninSyahyuni, (2018) added that job promotion increases both authority and commitment of employees in the institution. Huang (2019), also shared that situational characteristics may affect emotions of employees like how income commensurate or how secure it is with the task or job being delivered.

Moreover, in the study of Jarun et.al. in Sarmiento (2023), it says there that the leadership style of school heads affects the job satisfaction of employees. This was supported by the study of Al Ajlan (2019) in Pascal and Tangi (2022) which stated that school heads' recognition of teacher's performance has an impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Lastly, in Özdevecioğlu and Doruk (2009) in Ertuk (2021), the factors affecting job satisfaction of teachers are the tasks itself, income, promotion, opportunities, leadership style, relationship with colleagues and work conditions. When teachers have a high level of job satisfaction and are getting enough administrative support from their school heads, this will definitely contribute to their emotion and personal advancement because they tend to enjoy going to work and they have this strong connection with the institution.

The hypotheses in this study are:

Ho: Conflict management style of school heads has no influence on the job satisfaction of teachers.

H1: The conflict management style of school heads has a significant influence on the job satisfaction of teachers.

METHODS

This section outlines the research design, locale of the study, research instrument, data gathering procedures used in obtaining pertinent data, and the statistical treatment of data. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of conflict management styles of school heads to job satisfaction of teachers. In order to determine the result of the two variables, the researcher collected the data during School Year 2023-2024 where the respondents' answered the adopted questionaire.

Research Design

This study made use of quantitative methods. It employed a multiple linear regression method. Through multiple regression analysis, the research determined the significant influence of conflict management styles of school heads on the job satisfaction of teachers. Multiple linear regression is used when we want to predict the value of a variable based on the value of two or more other variables.

Locale and Population of the Study

This study was conducted in Prenza National High School in Marilao North District, Marilao, Bulacan. Marilao North District is part of Educational District IV (EDDIS IV). The participants of the study were nine (9) school heads, and fifty-two (52) teachers of Prenza National High School, Marilao, Bulacan. To gather the data, this study employed a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique used in research to select individuals or groups of individuals that meet specific criteria relevant to the research question or objective. The researchers specifically selected school heads based on their designation in the school (at least head teacher) and for the teachers the years of service rendered was also taken into consideration (at least 1 year of service in the institution).

Research Instrument

The adopted questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part determined the demographic profile of the participants. The participants identified their position, educational attainment, years in service, age, and gender. The second part determined the school heads' conflict management styles: collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising. The survey instrument used was adopted from the study of Rubio and Picardo (2017), Leadership, management and conflict management styles among nurse middle managers. The third part determined the teachers' job satisfaction and transcribed it with the following categories: Professional advancement/ Promotion, income and security, relationship with school heads, relationship with colleagues, and work conditions.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers considered the ethical principle in research in the course of this study. Ensuring privacy, autonomy, confidentiality and anonymity were among the significant ethical issues that were deemed necessary and with foremost consideration.

In order to ensure the autonomy of the respondents, the researcher provided a letter of communication to the respective authorities. The confidentiality of the participants was also guaranteed by not asking their names or any personal information in any part of research to protect their welfare and being. Only pertinent details that helped answer the research queries were included. Likewise, the identity of the respondents were unknown to most people therefore the principle of anonymity was assured.

Data Gathering Procedures

The study commenced after the researchers had asked permission to conduct the research from the school heads. The researchers used Google Form in the distribution of questionnaires. After two weeks, the researchers consolidate the result from the downloaded data in the Google form. After collecting the data needed, the researchers tallied the result and tabulated the data gathered. All data gathered served as the basis for the researcher's analysis and interpretation.

Statistical Treatment

a. Data were collected, collated, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.
b. Frequency distribution was used to determine the distribution of the demographic profile of the participants in terms of position, educational attainment, years in service, age, and gender.
c. Mean was utilized to determine the distribution of school head's conflict management style in terms of collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising.
d. Mean, standard deviation and 95% confidence intervals were utilized in the five categories in job satisfaction namely: professional advancement and promotion, income and security, relationship with school heads, relationship with colleagues, and work conditions.
e. Multiple regression analysis was employed to find out the influence of conflict management of school heads to job satisfaction of teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section contains results presented in tables with explanation. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and confidence intervals were reported. Inferential statistics such as a test of relationships focusing on multiple linear regression was also presented.

Table 1				
Profile of the Participants				
Profile	Teachers (n = 52)		School Heads (n = 9)	
Gender	Male	13	Male	4
	Female	39	Female	5
Years of Service	0-3 years	6	0-3 years	1
	4-10 years	15	4-10 years	0
	More than 10 years	31	More than 10 years	8
Designation	Teacher	52	Head Teacher	8
			Principal	1
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor	9	Bachelor	0
	Master	41	Master	6
	Doctorate	2	Doctorate	3

Indicated in Table 1 is the descriptive statistics on the profile of the participants. Most of these respondents are female for both groups. Similarly, majority for each group had already more than 10 years of service in education while there were a few educators that recently started their career (i.e. 0-3 years) and some are continuing to practice their profession in 4-10 years. There were 52 teachers and 9 school heads in total. Most of the participants already finished or currently on-going with their master's degree while some were able to finish their doctorate programs. Teachers, who currently are starting their career, obtained their bachelor's degree and yet to study in graduate school. The next table describes how school heads manage conflicts.

Table 2		
Distribution of School Head's Conflict Management Style		
	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Collaborating			
I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.	3.56	0.53	Strongly Agree
I try to negotiate and a give-and-take approach to problem situations.	2.78	0.83	Agree
I try to meet the expectations of others.	3.11	0.33	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	3.15	**0.44**	Strongly Agree
Competing			
I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view.	2.89	0.60	Agree
When there is disagreement, I gather much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open.	3	0.50	Strongly Agree
When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.	2.89	0.60	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.93	**0.46**	Agree
Avoiding			
I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved?	3.33	0.50	Strongly Agree
I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.	2.56	0.73	Agree

I find conflicts exhilarating; I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.	2.44	0.88	Agree
Overall Mean	2.78	**0.62**	Agree
Accommodating			
Being in a disagreement with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious	2.78	0.83	Agree
I try to meet the wishes of my friends and family.	2.11	0.60	Agree
I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.	3.00	0.50	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	2.63	**0.31**	Agree
Compromising			
To break deadlocks, I would meet people halfway.	3.11	0.33	Strongly Agree
I may not get what I want but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace.	3.00	0.50	Strongly Agree
I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.	3.11	0.33	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	3.07	**0.36**	Strongly Agree
4.00-3.00 Strongly Agree 2.99-2.00 Agree 1.99-1.00 Disagree 1.00-0.99 Strongly Disagree			

Shown in Table 2 is the distribution of the school heads' responses and their style on how they manage conflicts. In a scale range where 1.00-0.99 strongly disagrees while 4.00-3.00 indicates strongly agree, having a mean score of at least 2.99-2.00 indicates that participants tend to agree on the items shown. It was found out that the school head agreed that collaborating with others had the overall highest response ($\bar{x}=3.15$), followed by compromising ($\bar{x}=3.07$), competing ($\bar{x}=2.93$), avoiding ($\bar{x}=2.78$) and lastly accommodating ($\bar{x}=2.68$).

Discussing with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs was the highest response while trying to negotiate and a give-and-take approach to problem situations was the lowest collaborating style of conflict management. Avoiding hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others and meeting people halfway to avoid deadlocks were tied as the highest while not getting what they wanted to maintain the peace was lower in compromising style. Gathering much information as the school heads can and keeping the lines of communication open obtained the highest mean score while the same lower mean responses when school heads argue their case and insist on the advantages of my point of view as well as usually saying very little and try to leave as soon as possible when they imposed competing style of conflict management. Trying to see the conflict on both sides such as asking themselves: "What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved?" where found to have the highest mean in the avoiding style while finding conflicts as exhilarating or enjoying the battle of wits was less preferred. Lastly, as school heads, they believe that they can figure out what needs to be done and think they are usually right, gaining the highest response while trying to meet the wishes of their friends and family was considered the least preference.

Moreover, the standard deviation indicates the dispersion of the responses. The higher the standard deviation was, the more scattered the responses were. The school head's conflict management responses have all lower than 1 standard deviation. This means that the responses of the school heads are clustered around the mean. In terms of the closest spread around the mean, accommodating had the lowest standard deviation (σ=0.31), followed by compromising (σ=0.36), collaborating (σ=0.44), competing (σ=0.46), and have a little spread of responses in avoiding (σ=0.62).

Trying to meet expectations of others, meeting people halfway to break deadlocks, and keeping my disagreements with others to myself to avoid hard feelings were the items that had the three lowest standard deviation while the three highest were trying to negotiate and a give-and-take approach to problem situations and feeling uncomfortable and anxious being in a disagreement with other people, and finding conflicts as exhilarating or enjoying the battle of wits.

While Table 2 indicates the responses of school heads as well as the dispersion of the responses, tables 3 and 4 talk about the teachers' job satisfaction and how it was possibly affected on how teachers perceived the school heads to manage conflicts.

Table 3				
Descriptive Statistics on Job Satisfaction				
Category	Mean	Std. Dev.	95 % Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Overall	3.03	0.20	2.97	3.09
Professional Advancement/Promotion	3.23	0.31	3.14	3.31
Income and Security	2.89	0.54	2.75	3.05
Relationship with School Heads	2.92	0.40	2.80	3.03
Relationship with Colleagues	3.13	0.29	3.05	3.21
Work Conditions	2.99	0.26	2.92	3.06

Indicated in Table 3 is the mean, standard deviation and 95% confidence intervals of the five categories in job satisfaction namely: professional advancement and promotion, income and security, relationship with school heads, relationship with colleagues, and work conditions. The highest mean score was professional advancement/promotion ($\bar{x}$=3.23), followed by relationship with colleagues ($\bar{x}$=3.13), work conditions ($\bar{x}$=2.99), relationship with school heads ($\bar{x}$=2.92) while interestingly, the lowest mean score was income and security ($\bar{x}$=2.89). This is interpreted as the higher the mean score, the more teachers agree with the items in these categories.

Generally, the dispersion of the responses of teacher-respondents are not too scattered by looking at the standard deviation for each category. Income and security got the highest standard deviation at σ=0.54 while the lowest was work conditions at σ=0.26.

The lower and upper bounds shown provide the approximate boundary that the respondents will have their mean score supposed job satisfaction will be collected from a population with a 95% confidence level. For instance, the professional advancement/promotion category had a sample mean score of 3.23 while the estimated population mean is within the boundaries of 3.14 – 3.31. Note that any mean score from 3.14 – 3.31 in this scale is nearer to strongly agree which indicates that the teacher respondents really agree on the items under professional advancement/promotion at 95% confidence level. Furthermore, lower bounds for each category were at least 2.75 which is more than halfway of 1 and 4 indicating that the teacher-respondents more likely agreed to most items than disagreeing in their job satisfaction.

Determining how teachers' perceived conflict management styles of their school heads and the possible connection of their job satisfaction is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis on Conflict Management and Job Satisfaction

Conflict Management Style		**(adjusted)**	**Unstandardized**	**df**	**F**	**Sig.**
Collaborating	0.51	0.18	-0.141	5, 46	3.17	0.033*
Competing			0.109			0.151
Avoiding			-0.069			0.345
Accommodating			0.020			0.084
Compromising			0.205			0.028*

*p < .05, Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Predictors: Collaborating, Compromising

A multiple regression analysis was done where the five conflict management styles: collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising were independent variables while the overall job satisfaction was the dependent variable as shown in Table 4. It was reported that two conflict management styles statistically significantly predicted the job satisfaction of teachers . The two variables were collaborating and compromising. The rest of the conflict management styles perceived by teachers were not able to predict their job satisfaction. The r value indicates a moderately positive significant relationship between the conflict management styles combined and the job satisfaction responses of teachers.

The unstandardized Beta coefficients show how the teachers' responses how they perceived their school head manage conflicts, but the focus is only on the two styles that were found to predict the job satisfaction of teachers statistically significant namely: collaborating (β=-0.141) and compromising (β=0.205). For instance, if there is an increase in the compromising style means an increase of 0.205 in terms of teachers' job satisfaction. Interestingly, when there is an increase on the collaborating style, there is an expected decrease of job satisfaction at -0.141 at 18% chance $[\![(R)\!]\!] ^2=0.18$. This may indicate that the teachers may have disagreed that they observed their school heads implementing collaboration by discussing issues with others, negotiating/doing a give-and-take approach to problem situations, and/or their school head tries to meet the expectations of others which lessens their job satisfaction. With this, it would be important to continue this study by testing if there is a significant difference between the school heads conflict management style and

how teachers perceived their conflict management style. Note that school heads had the highest mean score in collaborating based on Table 2. Yet, there is a possible disconnect from the teacher-respondents observed in them as shown in Table 4.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

An attribute of human beings is that each and every one of us are unique in our own ways. We all have different personalities, backgrounds, and experiences and hence, for most part, we cannot always agree on how we view a situation or approach a problem. This is the reason why conflicts arose. Conflicts are inevitable in human relationships and organizations.

In a school setting, when educators are usually perceived as being role models and having high ethical standards, conflicts do happen. Conflict management style of school heads has an effect on the culture and work atmosphere, particularly on job satisfaction of teachers.

In this study, it was found out that the conflict management style that is mostly used by school heads is that of collaborating followed by compromising, competing, avoiding, and lastly accommodating. Discussing with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs was the highest response while trying to negotiate and a give-and-take approach to problem situations was the lowest collaborating style of conflict management. Avoiding hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others and meeting people halfway to avoid deadlocks were tied as the highest while not getting what they wanted to maintain the peace was lower in compromising style.

However, when conflict management styles were analyzed versus their impact on job satisfaction, an interesting result is that only two of these conflict management styles have significant effect on job satisfaction: collaborating and compromising.

Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted in this study. Conflict management styles have a significant influence on the job satisfaction specifically for two styles. Surprisingly, a compromising style increases job satisfaction while collaborating style negatively affects the job satisfaction of teachers.

The authors therefore recommend further research on testing if there is a significant difference between the school heads' conflict management style and how teachers perceived their conflict management style, and also the factors on the inverse relationship of collaborating conflict management style and job satisfaction of teachers at this district in Bulacan.

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