

Conflict Management Styles of Middle-level Academic Administrators: Input to Conflict Development Plan

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Abstract

Conflict is endemic to all human and organizational life. It is an inevitable part on organization due to its related situations of division of functions, role disparity, power assertions and limited resources. Conflict arises when two individual or factions are disputing or opposing deliberately or unintentionally. Similar to other organizations, educational institutions are prone to relational conflict over several differences. Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument guided this research study (Thomas and Kilman, 1974). The five styles of conflict management devised by Thomas and Kilman are indispensable in the realization of this study. To assess the preference of the middle-level administrators of the Bulacan State University on how to deal with conflicts, assertiveness and cooperation are two key parameters were used resulting to five diverse styles: avoiding, compromising, accommodating, competing and collaborating (optional must be supported by the survey result).

Keywords: Conflict, Educational institutions, Diverse style

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INTRODUCTION

Academic institution nowadays has been busy spending more time improving of school facilities and infrastructure projects, modernization of the teaching instructions using information technology, curriculum revision, program accreditation, ISO certification, and other thrusts and advocacies for institutional development but less time in improving school personnel's ability to deal effectively with disparities and in building mutually educational rapport.

Educational institutions are facing the increasing difficulty and uncertainty arising from competition, globalization of education, change of school climate and culture, and the growing consideration for the natural environment. These increasing difficulty and uncertainty are cause by practical and academic problems in all domains of educational management.

Conflict is endemic to all human organization. It is an inevitable part on organization due to its related situations of division of functions, role disparity, power assertions and limited resources. It is a phenomenon in which constructive and dysfunctional effects on the performance of an individual and the organization are affected. Proper management of conflict is a critical factor in improving organization performance of an academic institution. On the other hand, inefficient management of conflict impedes the institution's performance and might lead to conflicts and tensions. Any incongruity of desires, values or goals between groups or individuals can be define as conflict, that is also includes the efforts of proving one's own disposition

accompanying mutual antagonistic feelings (Fisher, 1990). Similar, conflict can be characterized as a tussle between one or more parties with contrasting needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals. Conflict can lead to constructive and/or dysfunctional effects, thus, wherever a conflict may descent on this range, it will always affect the organizational contexts.

The goal of this paper was to provide the school, faculty members and academic administrators with conflict management information that can be beneficial both personally and professionally. For some, conflict is a topic that should be avoided, but most people are enthusiastic in resolving these conflicts. Through proper management of conflict, heads of academic institutions would contribute to the betterment of their respective college and create a harmonious working relationship. Proper application of conflict management styles or plan will inevitably lead to a more successful engagement which in turn would result in relief, understanding better communication and a healthier working environment.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Kirchoff and Adams' (1982) defined conflict as disagreement between individuals. It can vary from a mild disagreement to a win-or-lose, emotion-packed, confrontation. There are two theories of conflict management: The *traditional theory* which is based on the assumption that conflicts are bad, are caused by troublemakers, and should be subdued, and *contemporary theory* recognizes that conflicts between human beings are unavoidable. They emerge as a natural result of change and can be beneficial to the organization, if managed efficiently. Current theory of Kirchoff and Adams considers innovation as a mechanism for bringing together various ideas and viewpoints into a new and different fusion. An atmosphere of tension, and hence conflict, is thus essential in any organization committed to developing or working with new ideas.

According to Tucker et al. (2002), one way to understand what impacts how people work is explained by cooperative conflict theory. This theory emphasizes how goals are important in conflict management. Individuals' perceptions of the compatibility of their goals to those with whom they are interacting is vital in any interaction. On the contrary, those who believe their goals are competitive, also tend to believe that if one wins, others must lose. It is frustrating for a competitive employee who needs to prove that he is most capable and that his ideas are superior, if his competitor succeeds. Competitive goals strategy fosters a win-lose climate.

The conflict handling mode theory by Thomas and Kilmann (1974) utilizes the five styles are essential in the realization of this study are the following: competing, collaborating, avoiding, accommodating and compromising. The competing style is in concern for self, which is characterized by a drive to maximize individual gain, even at the expense of others. This style is in contrast to the collaborating style, which constructs solutions to conflict to meet the needs of all parties involved. The avoiding style is low in concern for self and disengages from conflict. The accommodating style sacrifices self-interests to satisfy the needs of others. Finally, compromising theoretically straddles the midpoint between cooperativeness and assertiveness, and involves making concessions to arrive at a solution of conflict.

The theories presented above provide the theoretical framework that guided this research study. All of the abovementioned theories helped the researchers in the conceptualization and development of this study.

To understand further the theoretical framework of the study, the researchers conceptualized the **I-T-O** system which served as the direction of the research and it is presented in Figure 1.

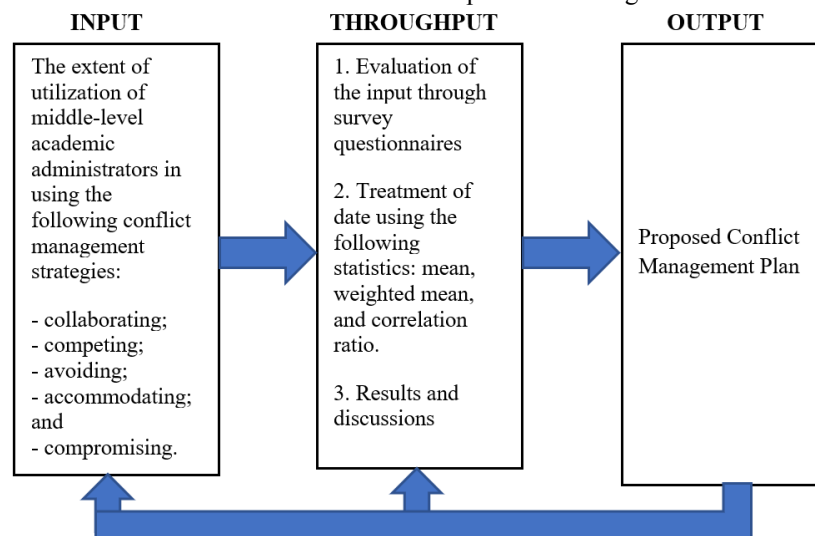


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

Figure 1 shows the relationship among the Input-Process-Output System of the research study. The **INPUT**

consists of the extent of utilization of academic administrators in using the following conflict strategies: collaborating; competing; avoiding; accommodating; and compromising. The **THROUGHPUT** consists of elements by which the input was treated and evaluated. Through survey questionnaires, the gathered data was dealt and treated using statistics (frequency distribution, weighted mean, composite mean, mean rank, percentage, and correlation ratio) for presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data. Lastly, the **OUTPUT** was the proposed conflict management plan.

Significance of the Study

This study is deemed significant to the following stakeholders: This study will provide current and future *administrators* with relevant information needed in their conflict style management. This research will have significant impact to the school administrators. They will find the research helpful in refining faculty morale and bringing about job satisfaction of their employees or subordinates. The results of this study seem to suggest that the *middle level educational managers* conflict management styles will be used for the five-year development plan and will served as a guide in problem-solving and an aid in the organizational decision-making. This study will serve as a way of information for the *faculty*, for them to make an employer-employee relationship, and satisfied in the educational systems they have. The *students* will be benefited by this study since they are the direct beneficiaries of the good performance of academic administrators and faculty who work in strength of unity resulting from common goals and beliefs. Their *parents* will be confident that their children's school is a healthy school. They will feel that it is truly their children's second home. The findings of this study are expected to serve as useful benchmark information for setting other related studies and investigation on other factors related to conflict management and other related areas.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to evaluate the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators of a typical state university in Bulacan that will serve as basis for the development of a conflict management plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the middle-level school administrators in terms of age, sex, years of administrative experience, academic rank, and educational attainment?
2. What is the extent of utilization of the middle-level school administrators in using the following conflict management styles in terms of competing; collaborating, compromising, avoiding and accommodating?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators and the following: age, years of administrative experience?
4. Is there a significant difference on conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators when they are group according to sex, and educational attainment?
5. Based on the findings what conflict management plan can be developed?

Hypotheses

Based on the problems of the study, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant relationship between the conflict management styles and the age of the middle-level school administrators of a typical university?
2. There is no significant relationship between the conflict management styles and the years of administrative experience of the middle-level school administrators of a typical university?
3. There is no significant difference on the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators of a typical university when they are group according to sex?
4. There is no significant difference on the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators of a typical university when they are group according to educational attainment?

Definition of Terms

The following terms/variables are defined conceptually and operationally.

Accommodating style – this style is also termed as smoothing or obliging. According to Yuan (2007) accommodating style is associated with high concern for the satisfaction of others and neglecting and sacrificing personal or concerns (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974) yielding to another's point of view. This brand of style is the opposite of competing. Accommodating is style is cooperative and unassertive.

Avoiding style – Lussier (2010) state that avoidance is being neither assertive nor cooperative and is commonly used by individuals who are emotionally dismayed by the pressures and frustrations of conflict. This style is unassertive and non-cooperative. It comprises low concern for self and for others and does not immediately pursue personal concerns and of those other individual or group (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974). Avoiding style is frequently castoff when impending consequences of provoking the other party seem to overshadow the benefit of resolving the conflict.

Collaborating style – this style is also termed as integrating style. To grasp an effective solution that is acceptable to both conflicting parties, Copley (2008) suggested that the conflict management should be accompanied with problem solving and comprises candidness, information sharing, working toward an alternative and examination of differences. However, Maier (2010) noted that problem solving is the lone method that is directed towards attitudinal, situational and behavioral components of conflict. Collaborating is equally assertive and cooperative and contradictory to avoiding. Collaborating comprises an effort to work with the conflicting party to resolve the issue and fully gratifies the concerns of the conflicting parties. Collaborating between two persons might yield to exploring a disagreement to mug up from each other’s insights, concluding to resolve some settings which would then have them conflicting for resources, or antagonizing and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem. (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974)

Compromising style – this style implicates bargaining “give and take” where both parties concerned renounce some aspect in order to attain a piece of mutually acceptable solution (Thomas and Kilmann, 1974). Compromising style intermediates amongst assertiveness and cooperativeness. It tackles an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not delve into it as much depth as collaborating. Compromising style might signify splitting the difference, exchanging compromises. (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974)

Competing style – this style is also labelled as dominating style. It conveys high concern for self and low concern for others, implying a stressing issue for admitting one condition without any reason or dialogue (Schermerhorn, 2000). Dominating or competing style portrays power-oriented approach, which one employs whatever authority seems applicable to win his or her own stance (Thomas & Kilmann, 1972).

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The respondents involved in the utilization of the conflict management style questionnaire are the middle-level managers such as the college deans, assistant deans, program chairs, department heads, and faculty of the different colleges of the said typical university for the academic year 2015 - 2017. They must at least have served the university for the last three years in the university and at least one semester in their current designation prior to the research administration. This study was limited to the members of the faculty and middle-level school administrators of a typical university. Therefore, it was limited to the present management team and each of their management styles.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the descriptive method of research to determine the conflict management styles of middle-level administrators. Descriptive research according to Best (1970), describes and interprets what it is and it is concerned with the point of view or attitudes that are held processes that are going on. Best(1970) added that descriptive studies are of large value in providing facts on which scientific judgment is based. They play a great role in the development of instruments for measurements of many things, instruments that are employed in all types of quantitative research. To gather the needed information, survey method was used. Social research reveals that survey approach to data collection is the “most frequently used mode of observation in the social sciences” (Hamayun, 2014). The most potent tool of survey research is the questionnaire, which empowers the researcher to collect every kind of data to answer every question about the topic (Yin, 1994)

Respondents of the Study

There were a total of one-hundred sixteen (116) faculty respondents included in the study. The respondents were composed of the following: Permanent or full-time faculty members and they must have served the university for at least 2 years, and at least six (6) units of teaching load with designation as dean, college secretary, department head, and program chair of the colleges, including the high school principal and senior high school coordinator.

Research Instrument

The instrument that employed by the researchers in this study was consisted of standardized instrument in the form of survey questionnaire that was adopted from Thomas and Kilman (1974) and modified to come up with a more comprehensive questionnaire that fitted for the current situation and location of the study. The questionnaire comprises of the following parts: Part I consisting of the personal profile of the respondents. This section contains pertinent information about the respondents such as age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, academic rank, and years of administrative experience at Bulacan State University. Part II consists of a survey questionnaire for identifying their conflict management styles adapted from Thomas & Kilman. The questionnaire which was originally a six-point likert item scale questionnaire was modified by the researchers to a four-point likert item scale for the purpose of this study. In order to address the conflict management strategies of the middle-level school administrators, conflict management styles questionnaire devised by Thomas and Kilman were utilized. The respondents were asked to describe the degree of their agreement or disagreement from “Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly disagree (1)” with statements pertaining to the five competencies of

conflict management styles. It is composed of 25 randomly arranged statements, five items for each five major styles of conflict management namely: Competing strategy (items 1, 6, 11, 16, and 21); Collaborating strategy (items 2, 7, 12, 17, and 22); Compromising strategy (items 3, 8, 13, 18, and 23); Avoiding strategy (items 4, 9, 14, 19, and 24); and Accommodating strategy (items 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25). The questionnaire measures the level of agreement or the rank ordering of respondents' predisposition for the five conflict management strategies based on the scores for their responses in a 4-point Likert items.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher conducted the study with the following steps: (1) Secures permission from the University President to undertake the study; (2) Check and modified the instrument used in the study; (3) Finalized the research instruments for reproduction and distribution; (4) Distributed the instruments to the middle-level administrator respondents. (5) Administered the questionnaire to the respondents; (6) Sorted the collected data; and (7) Requested the assistance of the statistician for the computation and textual presentation of the data based on to the sub-problems of the study.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered were compiled, collated and summarized separately per group. The responses for each item were categorized based on the specific problems raised. The following were utilized in the treatment of the data: *Frequency and Percentage* were used by the researchers in finding the number of responses and its corresponding percent in the presentation of the profile of the respondents. To identify the conflict management styles of a certain individual or group, *mean/composite mean/average* was used. The *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)* software was used by the researcher for finding the significant relationship between conflict management styles, and the age, and the years of administrative experience we use the *Spearman's Rho Correlation*. While the *t-test* for independent samples was used to determine the significant difference between the conflict management styles and the sex of the respondents. To determine the significant difference between the conflict management styles and the educational attainment of the respondents, *Analysis of variance (ANOVA)* was utilized. To determine the level of conflict management styles of the respondents, the following likert scale was utilized: 1.0 – 1.46 – strongly disagree (SD); 1.5 – 2.49 – disagree (D); 2.5 – 3.49 Agree (A); and 3.5 – 4.0 – strongly agree (SA).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Subproblem No. 1. What is the profile of the middle-level school administrators in terms of: age, sex, years of administrative experience, academic rank, and educational attainment?

Table 1. Respondents according to age

Age	Frequency	Percent
30 – 35	7	13.5
36 – 40	5	9.6
41 – 45	13	25
46 – 50	13	25
51 – 55	7	13.5
56 – 60	7	13.5
Total	52	100

Table 1 represents the number of respondents according to age. As gleaned from the table most of the respondents are between 41 to 50 years old, table 1 revealed that 13 or 25 percent are of the age ranging from 41 – 45 and 46 – 50 respectively. Also, 7 or 13.5 percent of the respondents are in the age range of 30 – 35, 51 – 55, and 56 – 60. There are only 5 or 9.6 percent were at the age range of 36 – 40.

Table 2. Respondents according to sex

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	26	50
Female	26	50
Total	52	100

Table 2 presents the number of respondents according to sex. It revealed that there are equal number of male and female respondents. As can be seen, both male and female has 26 or 50 as frequency and percentage respectively.

Table 3. Respondents according to civil status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	12	23.1
Married	39	75
Widow	1	1.9
Separated	0	0
Total	52	100

Table 3 shows the number of respondents according to civil status. As revealed in the table, most of the respondents 39 or 75 percent are married; 12 or 23.1 percent are single; and 1 or 1.9 percent is widow; and there was no tick for separated status.

Table 4. Respondents as to educational attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Ph.D./Ed. /DT/DN	19	36.5
MA/MS/MBA/MIT with Doctoral units	24	46.2
MA/MS/MBA/MIT Degree	8	15.4
BS/AB with MA units	1	1.9
BS/AB or equivalent	0	0
Total	52	100

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents as to educational attainment. As reflected in the table, most of the respondents are Masters' degree holder with doctoral units. There are 24 or 46.2 percent who are MA/MS/MBA/MIT with doctoral units; 19 or 36.5 percent were Ed.D/Ph.D/DIT/DN degree holders; 8 or 15.4 percent were MA/MS/MBA/MIT degree holders; and 1 or 1.9 percent who are BS/AB/BA with Masters' units. Moreover, 0 or none of the respondents are BS/AB graduates.

Table 5. Respondents as to Academic Rank

Academic Rank	Frequency	Percentage
Instructor	7	13.5
Assistant Professor	16	30.8
Associate Professor	17	32.7
Professor	12	23.1
Total	52	100

Table 5 shows the present academic rank of the respondents. As depicted in the table, most of the respondents are associate and assistant professors whose frequency and percentages were 16 and 17, and 30.8 and 32.7 respectively. There are also 12 or 23.1 percent are professors; and 7 or 13.5 percent who are instructors.

Table 6. Respondents as to Years of Administrative Experience

Years of Administrative Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 5	29	55.8
6 – 10	7	13.5
11 – 15	5	9.6
16 – above	11	21.2
Total	52	100

Table 6 depicts the distribution of respondents as to number of administrative experience. As depicted in the table, most of the respondents are rendering their services as administrators for at least 1 – 5 years with a frequency of 29 or 55.8 percent; followed by 16 years and above with 11 or 21.2 percent; next is between 6 – 10 years with 7 or 13.5 percent; and there 5 or 9.6 percent of the respondents whose administrative experience is between 11 – 15.

Subproblem 2: What is the extent of utilization of middle-level school administrators in using the following conflict management styles:

Table 7. Extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of competing

Criteria	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
• I need to attain excellent results and cannot be limited by others.	3.46	Agree	1
• When conflict arises, I usually stand on my principles.	3.35	Agree	2.5
• When pursuing my priorities, I am usually firm and not swayed by others.	3.35	Agree	2.5
• Once I have taken a position, I don't like to have others try to talk me out of it.	2.50	Agree	5
• After I have made a decision, I defend it strongly.	3.31	Agree	4
Composite Mean	3.19	Agree	

Revealed in table 7 is the extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of competing. It can be noted that all the items were rated by the respondents as “Agree”, they differ only in their mean value. “I need to attain excellent results and cannot be limited by others” with a (WM=3.46, rank 1); The items “When conflict arise, I usually stand on my principles” and “when pursuing my priorities, I am usually firm and not swayed by others” both got a (WM=3.35, and ranked as 2.5). While the items “After I have made a decision, I defend it strongly” and “Once I have taken a position, I don't like to have others try to talk me out of it” got the weighted mean WM=3.31 and 2.5, and the rank 4 and 5 respectively. Generally, the computed mean value of 3.19 was assessed by the respondents as “agree” as to competing.

Table 8. Extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of collaborating

Criteria	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
• I am always willing to listen to other's opinions, but I also want to give them mine.	3.79	Strongly Agree	1
• I am always willing to consider other people's opinions, but I make my own decisions.	3.38	Agree	3
• During conflict, I immediately work to get everyone's concerns out in the open.	3.31	Agree	4
• When there is a conflict, I make a point of presenting my view, and I invite others to do the same.	3.17	Agree	5
• I am a decision maker, but I make a point of listening to others to find the best solution possible.	3.69	Strongly Agree	2
Composite Mean	3.47	Agree	

Table 8 reflects the extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of collaborating. It can be viewed from the table that of the five items, two items were interpreted as “Strongly Agree” while the three items are “Agree”. These are the items: “I am always willing to listen to others opinions, but I also want to give them mine” (WM=3.79, rank 1) and “I am a decision maker, but I make a point of listening to others to find the best solution possible” (WM=3.69, rank 2). Items “I am always willing to consider other peoples' opinions, but I make my own decisions” has (WM=3.38, rank 3), “during conflict, I immediately work to get everyone's concerns out in the open” got (WM=3.31, rank 4) and “when there is conflict, I make a point of presenting my view, and I invite others to do the same” with (WM=3.17, rank 5). The school administrators assessed the computed composite means of 3.47 as agree when it comes to collaborating. Since people who are engaged in collaboration may be characterized as both cooperative and assertive (Helms, 2006), the data imply that the academic school administrators are both cooperative and assertive in dealing with conflict situations.

Table 9. Extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of compromising

Criteria	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
• I often make slight modifications in my goals to meet other people's needs.	3.44	Agree	1.5
• When a conflict arises, I am usually willing to adjust my priorities to reach a resolution.	3.44	Agree	1.5
• During a conflict, I try to find some compromise.	3.06	Agree	5
• When viewpoints are opposed, I generally propose a middle ground.	3.15	Agree	4
• I like to meet other people halfway.	3.31	Agree	3
Composite Mean	3.28	Agree	

The extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of compromising is reflected in Table 9. It can be noted that all the items were all interpreted as "Agree" from 3.06 to 3.44 as their weighted mean. These are: Items "I often make slight modifications in my goals to meet other people's needs" and "When a conflict arises, I am usually willing to adjust my priorities to reach a resolution" both got a (WM=3.44, and rank 1.5). The items "I like to meet other people halfway" (WM=3.31, rank 3), "when viewpoints are opposed, I generally propose a middle ground" (WM=3.15, rank 4) and "during a conflict, I try to find some compromise" with (WM=3.06) got a rank of 5. Generally, the composite mean the respondents rated values of 3.28 is "Agree" as to compromising. This means that the academic administrators have an orientation of being moderately supportive and firm. They tend to be on middle ground position with no strong position in either dimension, yet they are willing to see conflict resolved to the mutual benefit.

Table 10. Extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of avoiding

Criteria	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
• If people don't respect my opinion, I keep it to myself.	2.98	Agree	1
• When a conflict occurs, I tend to back out of the situation and do something else.	2.38	Disagree	4
• Differences of opinion are not always worth worrying about, so I usually avoid them.	2.63	Agree	3
• I try to avoid people who have strong opinions.	2.27	Disagree	5
• I often keep to myself, because most things are not worth arguing about.	2.73	Agree	2
Composite Mean	2.60	Agree	

Table 10 reflects the extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of avoiding. As seen in the table, the respondents assessed three (3) items as "Agree", these are: "If people don't respect my opinion, I keep it to myself" with (WM=2.98, rank 1), "I often keep to myself, because most things are not worth arguing about" (WM=2.73, rank 2), and "differences of opinion are not always worth worrying about, so I usually avoid them" (WM=2.63, rank 3). And "Disagree with the items: "when conflict occurs, I tend to back out of the situation and do something else" with a (WM=2.38, rank 4) and "I try to avoid people who have strong opinions" with the (WM=2.27, rank 5).

The composite mean value of 2.60 was rated by the respondents as "Agree" in terms of avoiding.

Table 11. Extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of accommodating

Criteria	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
• When someone else thinks they have a good idea I cooperate and help them.	3.96	Strongly Agree	1
• I don't like to rock the boat, so I cooperate with others and accept instructions easily.	3.02	Agree	4
• I like to ask others for their opinions and try to find ways to cooperate.	3.44	Agree	2
• I think it is more important to get along than to win an argument.	2.83	Agree	5
• I try to adjust my priorities to accommodate other people's needs.	3.33	Agree	3
Composite Mean	3.26	Agree	

Reflected in Table 11 is the extent of utilization using conflict management styles in terms of accommodating. It can be seen in the table that one out of five items were assessed as "Strongly Agree" by the

respondents, the item “when someone else thinks they have a good idea I cooperate and help them” (WM=3.96, rank 1). The rest of the four items was interpreted as “Agree” and these are the following: “I like to ask others for their opinions and try to find ways to cooperate”(WM=3.44, rank 2), “I try to adjust my priorities to accommodate other people’s needs” (WM=3.33, rank 3); “I don’t like to rock the boat, so I cooperate with others and accept instructions easily”(WM=3.02, rank 4) and “I think it is more important to get along than to win an argument”(WM=2.83, rank 5). Generally, the composite mean the respondents rated values of 3.26 “Agree” as to accommodating.

Table 12. Summary on the Extent of Utilization Using Conflict Management Strategies

Variables	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Collaborating	3.47	Agree	1
Compromising	3.28	Agree	2
Accommodating	3.26	Agree	3
Competing	3.19	Agree	4
Avoiding	2.60	Agree	5
Overall Mean	3.16	Agree	

Table 12 shows the summary and ranking of the five academic administrators’ extent of utilization using conflict management styles. As seen in the table, “collaborating” got (rank 1); it is followed by “compromising” (rank 2) next is “accommodating” (rank 3); “competing” (rank 4); and avoiding (rank 5). It is supported with the computed overall mean value of 3.16, rated as “Agree” on the extent of utilization using conflict management styles.

The aforementioned implies that the academic administrators have higher preference for win-win resolution as compared to other styles. This finding tends to agree with the findings of Cabansag (2006) that collaborating is rank first styles in middle-level managers of state colleges and universities in Cagayan Valley, while the least is the avoiding styles.

It also shows that their cooperative and assertive features as described by collaborative styles. The mean scores also revealed that the academic administrators are more collaborative than compromising. It means that they prefer to be at the middle ground approach rather than to solve problems in ways by which an optimum result is provided for all involved. The last two styles, competing and avoiding both manifest uncooperativeness. Competing styles use the authoritarian approach of conflict management while avoiding is the non-confrontational approach of conflict management styles.

Subproblem No. 3. Is there a significant relationship between the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators and the following: age; and years of administrative experience?

Table 13. correlation between the conflict management styles and the age of middle-level school administrators of a typical state university.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Competing	Equal variances assumed	.037	.848	-.963	50	.340	-.09231	.09581	-.28474	.10012
	Equal variances not assumed			-.963	49.981	.340	-.09231	.09581	-.28474	.10013
Collaborating	Equal variances assumed	.138	.712	-.187	50	.852	-.01538	.08216	-.18041	.14964
	Equal variances not assumed			-.187	49.536	.852	-.01538	.08216	-.18045	.14968
Compromising	Equal variances assumed	.622	.434	-1.010	50	.317	-.10000	.09900	-.29885	.09885
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.010	48.935	.317	-.10000	.09900	-.29896	.09896
Avoiding	Equal variances assumed	2.587	.114	-.624	50	.535	-.09231	.14785	-.38928	.20466
	Equal variances not assumed			-.624	48.131	.535	-.09231	.14785	-.38956	.20495
Accommodating	Equal variances assumed	3.899	.054	-.853	50	.398	-.09231	.10822	-.30967	.12506
	Equal variances not assumed			-.853	46.195	.398	-.09231	.10822	-.31012	.12550

It can be noted that age is significantly correlated with accommodating style of management, with $r_s = -.417$

at 0.05 level of significance. This means the null hypothesis will be rejected. This implies that the younger the age of the respondents tend to be accommodating in the styles of conflict management.

Table 14. Correlation between the conflict management styles, age, and years of administrative experience of middle level school administrators of a typical state university.

Spearman's Rho Correlation	Age	Years of Administrative Experience
Competing	-.094	.047
	.506	.742
	-.151	.131
Collaborating	.285	.353
	-.166	.302*
	.241	.029
Compromising	.111	-.001
	.434	.997
	-.417**	.044
Avoiding	.002	.758

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

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

Table 14 also displays the correlation between the conflict management styles and the years of administrative experience of middle-level school administrators of the state university. Notice that the compromising style of conflict management is significantly correlated to the number of years of administrative experience with $r_s = 0.302$ at .05 level of significance. This means the null hypothesis will be rejected. This implies that the longer the years of experience as being the academic administrators tend to be compromising in style of conflict management, rather than their younger counterpart.

Subproblem No. 4. Is there a significant difference on the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators when they are group according to: sex; and educational attainment?

Table 15 depicted the analysis of variance to test if there is no significant difference between the educational attainment and conflict management styles of the respondents.

Table 15. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the significant difference between the educational attainment and the conflict management styles.

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Competing	Between Groups	.227	3	.076	.620	.605
	Within Groups	5.850	48	.122		
	Total	6.077	51			
Collaborating	Between Groups	.153	3	.051	.578	.633
	Within Groups	4.238	48	.088		
	Total	4.391	51			
Compromising	Between Groups	.303	3	.101	.783	.509
	Within Groups	6.198	48	.129		
	Total	6.501	51			
Avoiding	Between Groups	1.050	3	.350	1.266	.297
	Within Groups	13.270	48	.276		
	Total	14.320	51			
Accommodating	Between Groups	.193	3	.064	.410	.747
	Within Groups	7.530	48	.157		
	Total	7.723	51			

Table 15 displays the t-test results of the significant differences on conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators when they are group according to sex. As can be seen from the table, the Levene's test for equality of variances assumed are all greater than 0.05 level of significance these are: competing (p-value = .845); collaborating (p-value = .712); compromising (p-value = .434); avoiding (p-value = .114); and accommodating (p-value = .054). This means that we have to accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference on the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators when they are group according to sex. This implies that regardless of sex, male or female, have the same styles of conflict management.

As can be viewed from the table, all the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Competing (p-value = .605); collaborating (p-value = .633); compromising (p-value = .509); avoiding (p-value = .297); and accommodating (p-value = .747). This means the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference on the

conflict management styles of the respondents when they are group according to educational attainment will be accepted. This implies that regardless of educational attainment whether they are doctorate degree, masters' degree, or bachelors' degree holders, they have the same styles of conflict management.

The academic administrators' conflict management style are crucial for the attainment of organizational goals and objectives. In other words, if the academic administrator is knowledgeable in conflict management styles, it will affect the performance of teachers, but if conflict is constructively managed, it will enhance the organizational climate of the institution.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The respondents' middle-level academic administrators was perceived the following as to age, most of them are between 41 to 50 years old. There are equal number of men and women. Most of the respondents are married and very few are still single. Most of the respondents are master's degree holder with doctoral units. There are also equal number associate and assistant professor respondents. Most of the respondent administrators were teaching the university for 1 year to 5 years.
2. The collaborating conflict management styles were the most used strategies by the academic administrators in handling conflict with their subordinates and the avoiding style was the least used by the respondents.
3. There is a significant relationship between the conflict management styles and the age of the middle-level school administrators in a state university; and there is a significant relationship between the conflict management styles and the years of administrative experience of the middle-level school administrators in a state university.
4. There is no significant difference on the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators of the state university when they are group according to sex; and there is no significant difference on the conflict management styles of the middle-level school administrators of the university as to the group according to educational attainment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Conflict management strategies were designed to enhance organizational learning effectiveness.
2. Creating a friendly environment may lead to openness. Thus, subordinates will be vocal to voice out their issues and concerns to their administrators which may be an avenue for coming up with creative solutions to problems.
3. A conflict management training programs will design for the faculty in general and the administrator in particular.
4. Since all organizations academic institutions are composed of people, each with their own personalities, administrators should be adept at handling interpersonal relationships and conflict management.
5. Academic institutions, through the human resource management office, should conduct trainings for both faculty members and administrators in conflict management to foster a more conducive working environment.

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