Investigating the Conflict Management Styles of Leadership in Secondary Schools through Structural Theory of Conflict

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ABSTRACT:

Conflict exists in all kinds of work settings no matter how much you attempt to avoid it, if you work with people the chances are you will have to deal with conflict at some point. Conflict management has received much attention in the organizational literature in the recent past; because of a shift in attitudes toward conflict in organizations. This study focused on the conflict management styles of the principals of public and private sector schools. The study employed a survey; the population consisted of all the 'secondary school principals of Bangi Selangor Malaysia. To test the instrument and determine sample size through formula, a pilot study was conducted, and the sample size was 154. For six research and four demographic variables, a 5-point Likert scale was used to record the responses. The study concluded that leadership should not suppress or resolve the conflict, but shall manage it in consultation with the supervisor and other employees. Since the principal's conflict management styles affect the member's behavior and eventually the organization's performance. Therefore, different types of conflict management styles should be applied based on the appropriate situation, and that requires the ability of a manager to adapt their behavior according to the different situations to meet the needs. At the same time, trust is also an essential component that plays a role as the foundation of relationships, which is especially important when it comes to teamwork.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Conflict Management Styles, Leadership, Structural Theory, Secondary Schools

Introduction

Conflicts are inevitable in organizational setup and manifested in types be in individual or interpersonal. It is the outcome of several factors including a shortage of resources, the difference in opinion, values, attitude, or goads, etc. If not managed properly, it may result in poor organizational performance (Javed & Akhtar, 2019; Doe & Chinda, 2015; Imperial & Madrigal, 2021; Boucher, 2013). It ranges from work issues to power and authority over the use of resources to interpersonal matters and misunderstandings (Kundi, Mughal, Albejaidi, & Pasha, 2021; Wong, Wong, & Peng, 2010). It could be detrimental to the employee and job performance if it becomes unmanageable (Moonga, 2016; Faroogi, 2014; Saiti, 2014, 2013). Today, organizations are facing constant and huge pressure to improve organizational performance. One important area that captured the widespread attention of organizational researchers is increasing workplace conflict (Kembukem, 2014), and has become a significant responsibility of managers' to manage it (Wong, Wong, & Peng, 2010; Bano, Ashraf, & Zia, 2013; Barmao, 2012). Though many studies have been conducted on the conflict in educational institutions in the west, however, not enough studies could be found in Malaysa. Therefore, the basic aim of this study is to comparatively analyze the conflict management styles and the role of demographics on the preference of conflict management style of the school principals in Malaysia. The purpose of this study was to investigate the conflict management styles of principals of public and private schools and their impacts on institutional performance inter alia the role of demographics. The findings will help school management to understand their conflict management styles. The findings will also bridge the gap in the literature concerning the lack of research on conflict management styles in Malaysian schools. This will be helpful for the local government officials to take proactive measures, redesign policies, and minimize the impact of conflict. Finally, the findings will provide a spadework for future researchers to carry out further research with a different dimension of the issue.

Literature Review

Conflict creates a crisis-like situation in an organization leading to chaos and indiscipline (Bano, Ashraf, & Zia, 2013). It appears in a situation when the interests of two or more individuals appear to be aligned (Doe & Chinda, 2015; Barmao, 2012). Ghaffer (2013) and Karim (2015) stress every individual experiences conflict in the workplace. It exists in organizations and is the usual culture (Shahmohammadi, 2014). Since being as human beings work with people and work through people, thus our differing values, and situations generate tension among the competing individuals. It is considered a double-edged sword, it could be damaging but could be widely turned useful (Moonga, 2016; Shahmohammadi, 2014). The contingency view of conflict considers it to be useful or harmful depending on the way how it is handled (Gwendolin, Schwartz, josvold, Wong, & Chen, 2014; Javed & Akhtar, 2019; Crossfield & Bourne, 2018). On one hand management of conflict does not essentially need evasion, lessening, or eradication (Boucher, 2013); but, on other hand, it encourages productive conflict outcomes that decrease the counterproductive (Imperial & Madrigal, 2021). It is however believed that handling organizational conflict is very difficult in terms of cost, and it consumes about 20% of management time Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2011). Conflict in school occurs whenever a principal makes a decision that could influence everyone's control over the resources (Schwartz, 2017), where unresolved conflicts result in job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, turnover, disruption of activities, and lack of coordinated efforts (Wong, Wong, & Peng, 20104). Yet, once it is recognized, acknowledged, and managed appropriately, could result in personal and organizational benefits (Boucher, 2013). Effective leaders use conflict productively for personal development, solve problems, increase critical awareness, and self-appraisal, and consider conflicting views in decision-making (Crossfield & Bourne, 2018; Moonga, 2016; Kundi, 2021). Many difficulties can be resolved as they arise if formal arrangements are made to decrease the dissatisfaction of the employees (Saiti, 2014, 2013). In a group situation, individual members shall be able to work in a positive conflict situation because a well-managed conflict yields advancement and productivity (Barmao, 2012). Conflict could occur due to poor communication and dissatisfaction caused by management style inter alia the aspiration for power, or otherwise poor leadership, etc. (Malik, Cao, Mughal, Kundi, Mughal, & Ramayah, 2020). Three major drivers of conflict have been recognized as power, value, and economics (Shahmohammadi, 2014), likewise, ambiguity, roles, and change can be seen as other sources of conflict (Schwartz, 2017; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff,

2011). Adequately managed to add substantial value to an organization and is considered healthy, and acts as a catalyst for change, while an inadequately managed conflict possibly drains an organization in terms of material and non-material resources (Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar, 2016), although it would not be possible to eradicate it once for all. Doe & Chinda (2015) assert that conflict management is to understand the nature of each conflict because every conflict and its drivers are unique. Therefore, they suggest that managers need to tune their managerial conduct to handle collective change in thinking and to adopt constructive leadership behaviors which could promote the organization's goals (Bano, Ashraf, & Zia, 2013). For a school principal, success not only needs a strong task orientation but equally needs a good and cordial relationship orientation to the school's environment (Abraham Maslow (1970) arranged human needs according to the degree of urgency for survival ranging from basic to the self-actualization, he contends that if lower needs remain unsatisfied it will the dominating behavior as compared to the self-actualization needs that requires very good ecological conditions for materialization. This means that school principals must listen to the personal needs of employees. Thus, the principal's ability or inability affects a teacher's attitude and behavior. Doe & Chinda (2015) found that to coordinate the efforts of teachers to achieve organizational goals, they shall persuade, convince, and motivate them properly.

Structural Theory of Conflict

The structural theory of conflict accepts the notion that conflict is part of social interaction, and could exhibit cooperation, competition, or tension. Barmao (2012) states that in a network of relationships, there is a tense balance among the employees which accounts for autonomy. Shahmohammadi (2014) shared similar views. Researchers such as Bano, Ashraf, & Zia (2013); Engle & Nehrt (2011), and Moonga (2016) hold that organizational structures possibly contain a potential for conflict. Member needs to integrate their efforts into a coherent whole directed toward organizational performance (Moonga, 2016). According to Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff (2011), a high level of bureaucracy and a desire for personal gains yield a conflict since a high level of bureaucracy causes frustration. Bano, Ashraf, & Zia (2013), and Crossfield & Bourne (2018) argue that if dissatisfaction is high conflict will be the outcome. Research on the role played by communication in conflicts often reports misunderstandings due to semantics issues, ambiguous messages, or technical jargon (Saiti, 2014, 2013). On the other hand, transactional analysts argue that people interact with each other from one of the three States' egos, i.e., parent, adult, and child. The parent ego state is protective, controlling, and feeding, likewise, the adult ego state tends to be rational, factual, and impassive, while the child ego is dependent on the state, creative, spontaneous, and rebellious (Wong, Wong, & Peng, 2010). According to Bano, Ashraf, & Zia (2013), the transactions can be Parallel, crossed, or complementary. Crossfield & Bourne (2018) offer another point of view while explaining the structural conflicts, from the communication perspective, and state that their opinion in the development of transactional analysis focuses on the existence in a workplace.

Conflict Management at Schools

Teachers have varying social backgrounds and experiences so ideas about conflict are also different, which can cause damage to the school if ill-managed; hence conflict resolution strategies become imperative for school administrators, they shall be able to manage conflict effectively instead of suppressing or avoiding it (Shahmohammadi, 2014), thus it is essential that shall have knowhow such conflicts and its impact on the individual and school performance which according to Schwartz (2017) compromising, accommodating, collaborating, avoiding, and competing strategies. According to research findings, principals tried to adopt the best style that suits them and the situation to manage the conflict (Imperial & Madrigal, 2021). Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar (2016) and Boucher (2013) discussed burnout as a cause of conflict every school leader is facing, argue that they must have the required organizational, human, and managerial skills to be a good principal for example, time management especially if it is concerning the instructional supervision. They insist that leaders shall reconsider their priorities in managing the conflict. Engle & Nehrt (2011) proposed ten general principles in this regard. Organizational personnel interpersonally interact for their mutual give and take and come across the conflict with one another. Kundi, Mughal, Albejaidi, & Pasha (2021) asserts that organizations like schools do not become great because of spacious facilities but rather because of the leadership and

teams who are keen on the role of management in conflict resolution. Therefore, the principal holds a very significant position in the school system, thus, to be effective, he should have a driven energy, personality, vision, and conflict management skills to create an environment in which members can mutually cooperate.

Demographics' Effect on Conflict Management in Schools

Conflicts rest on several factors, but demographic factors like gender, designation, and age may contribute to them too (Crossfield & Bourne 2018). Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar (2016) found that females apply the integration style more than their male counterparts in dealing with conflicts. According to Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff (2011), academic setting is dissimilar to business setting; teachers are much more independent and work more independently. Male teachers use the accommodation style of conflict management more (Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar, 2016), and reported that male teachers avoid conflict more than female teachers do. It has been found that females employ a compromising strategy. As for experience is concerned, academicians with more experience prefer accommodation frequently (Imperial & Madrigal, 2021), while inexperienced females use compromising (Gwendolin, Schwartz, josvold, Wong, & Chen, 2014). Interpersonal conflict is a common phenomenon in educational institutions; they are working to put an end to the growing conflicts between management and employees by employing grievance-handling procedures and establishing conflict resolution centers. A significant relationship is reported by Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar (2016) between the principals' characteristics and conflict management styles. Gender, qualification, and teaching experience have a direct bearing on how conflict is managed (Imperial & Madrigal, 2021). Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff (2011) stresses on the selection of the appropriate approach to managing conflict depends on the demographics and concluded that principals with higher qualifications perform better in managing conflict management. Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar (2016) have found that principals with longer teaching experience perform better than their colleagues in resolving conflicts. Furthermore, older superiors seemed more dominant over their subordinates. The reason for being superior is age as with growing age, they get more knowledge, power, and experience. Saiti (2014, 2013) reported that principals with more experience had lesser instances to indulge in conflict with staff. Afshan, Sahibzada, Rani, Mughal, & Kundi (2021) and Wong, Wong, & Peng (2010) reported that male principals perform more efficiently and effectively than their female fellows.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework
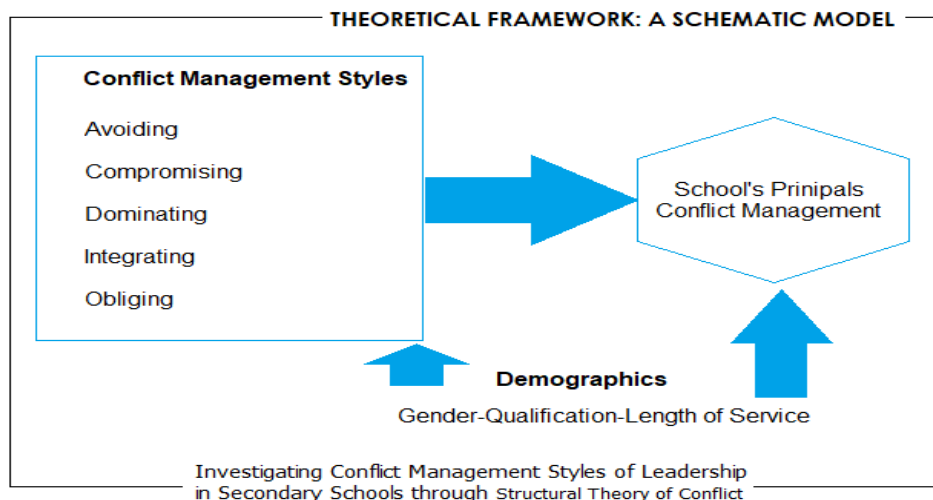
Based on the above theatrical model, the study proposed the below hypotheses:

Main and Sub-Hypotheses

H$_1$: *There is a significant difference between the conflict management styles of public and private school principals.*
H$_2$: *There are significant impacts of the demographic on the conflict management styles of public and private school principals.*
H$_3$: *Males have higher scores than females.*
H$_4$: *Graduates score high than postgraduates.*
H$_5$: *Public school principals are scoring higher than private school principals.*
H$_6$: *The second group with [11-20] years' experience is scoring higher than the rest of the groups.*

Method

The population of this research consisted of all the 'secondary school principals of Bangi, Selangor Malaysia. A pilot study was conducted to test the instrument and find the statistics for computing the sample size using standard formulas. Using the formula for the selection of sample size from a finite population, a sample of 154 was selected. The instrument consisted of six research variables, including five on conflict management styles & conflict management and four demographic variables. A 5-point Likert scale was used to record the responses. Below sample size formula was used:

$$\text{Sample Size} = ((SD^2/ ((Z^2/E^2) + (SD^2/N)))$$

Table 1

Showing Sample Selection Process

Statistics		Value
Standard Deviation	SD	0.96
Population	N	537
Error	E	0.64
Level of Confidence	Z	1.95
Sample	n	173

Findings

Cross tables were developed in SPSS for the classification of the respondents according to their demographics. Similarly, a descriptive table was developed to present means, standard deviations, etc. Multiple tools have been used to test the hypothesis i.e., correlation analysis and tests of significance (t-tests & ANOVA), and regression analysis.

Demographic Groupings

Table 2

Gender, Qualification, and School.

School			Qualification		Total
			Graduate	Postgraduate	
Public	Gender	Male	25	36	61
		Female	4	2	6
	Total		29	38	67
Private	Gender	Male	28	33	61
		Female	17	28	45
	Total		45	61	106

Table 2 points out the respondent profile, demonstrating that the majority (70.5%) of respondents were male and (29.5%) were female. Qualification displays that the majority (57.23%) of principals were graduates and (42.77%) were postgraduate. It also shows that (61.27%) of principals belong to private and (38.73%) were working in public schools.

Descriptive Statistics on the Research Variable

Table 3

Classifications across Subject

	n	Min	Max	Mean	Std. D
Avoiding	173	2.50	5.00	3.6387	.57400
Compromising	173	2.40	5.00	3.8370	.52829
Dominating	173	2.60	4.80	3.6370	.44515
Integrating	173	2.60	4.80	3.7468	.50939
Obliging	173	2.20	5.00	3.6324	.73127
Conflict Management	173	2.83	4.17	3.5482	.47167
Valid n (listwise)	173				

Association Analysis

H_1. All predictors are highly associated with the criterion variable of conflict management.

Table 4

Correlation Analysis

		Avoiding	Compromising	Dominating	Integrating	Obliging	Conflict management
Avoiding	R	1					
Compromising	R	.752**	1				
Dominating	r	.549**	.535**	1			
Integrating	r	.679**	.531**	.594**	1		
Obliging	r	.420**	.726**	.460**	.478**	1	
Conflict management	r	.613**	.558**	.662**	.611**	.401**	1

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

The first hypothesis was developed to check the association between conflict management styles and conflict management. Table 4 reports the results for the first hypothesis. According to the results, the criterion variable is significantly associated with avoiding, compromising, dominating, integrating, and obliging with (r = 0.613 p-value = 0.000); (r = 0.558 p-value 0.000) r = 0.662 p-value = 0.000); (r = 0.611 p-value 0.000) and (r = 0.401 p-value = 0.000).

Prediction of the Dependent Variable (Conflict Management)

H_2. All predictors explain variation in the dependent variable of conflict management.

Table 5

Model Summary [H_2]

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.743a	.552	.538	.32053

a. Predictors: (Constant), obliging, avoiding, dominating, integrating, compromising.

Table 5a
ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.107	5	4.221	41.088	.000a
	Residual	17.158	167	.103		
	Total	38.265	172			

a. Predictors: (Constant), obliging, avoiding, dominating, integrating, compromising
b. b. Dependent Variable: Conflict management

Table 5b
Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.414	.231		1.796	.074
	Avoiding	.125	.082	.152	1.519	.131
	Compromising	.152	.099	.171	1.534	.127
	Dominating	.412	.073	.389	5.677	.000
	Integrating	.204	.074	.220	2.761	.006
	Obliging	-.046	.054	-.071	-.843	.400

a. Dependent Variable: Conflict Management

In H_2, a regression-analysis procedure was employed to investigate the power of predictors. Table 5 highlights the model summary, according to the results, a 55% change in the performance is explained by the predictors ($R^2 = 0.552$). However, Table 5b discloses that two of the predictors DOM & INT are more significant in the regression process and emerged with p-values of 0.000 & 0.006. The predictors of AVO, COM, and OBL were found insignificant. Given these statistics, it is concluded that H_2 is substantiated.

Role of Gender

Table 6
Descriptive Data on Samples across Gender

	Gender	n	Mean	Std. D.	Std. E. Mean
Avoiding	Male	122	3.5881	.59779	.05412
	Female	51	3.7598	.49740	.06965
Compromising	Male	122	3.7787	.54776	.04959
	Female	51	3.9765	.45369	.06353
Dominating	Male	122	3.6262	.47825	.04330
	Female	51	3.6627	.35663	.04994
Integrating	Male	122	3.7311	.50568	.04578
	Female	51	3.7843	.52130	.07300
Obliging	Male	122	3.4656	.74009	.06700
	Female	51	4.0314	.53273	.07460
Conflict management	Male	122	3.5861	.48826	.04421
	Female	51	3.4575	.42011	.05883

Table 6 shows that the females are scoring higher on most of the averages therefore the emerging hypothesis will be:

Hypothesis three was developed for descriptive data. According to Table 6a, female respondents scored higher than male fellows. T-Test was used for the significance of the difference. Table 4.5a explains the six tests and reports a significant difference for 'compromising' and 'obliging' while insignificant for the rest. Therefore, this hypothesis is partially accepted as true with a ratio of 2/6 or 33.33%.

H_3: Females are scoring higher than their counterparts.

Table 6a

Independent Samples t-Test

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Avoiding	2.685	.103	-1.806	171	.073
			-1.946	111.773	.054
Compromising	1.820	.179	-2.272	171	.024
			-2.454	112.274	.016
Dominating	3.074	.081	-.491	171	.624
			-.552	124.388	.582
Integrating	.074	.786	-.625	171	.533
			-.617	91.240	.539
Obliging	9.180	.003	-4.946	171	.000
			-5.643	128.629	.000
Conflict management	4.983	.027	1.643	171	.102
			1.747	108.158	.083

Impacts of Qualification

Table 7

Descriptive Data on Qualification

	Qualification	n	Mean	Std. D.	Std. E. Mean
Avoiding	Graduate	74	3.6622	.59742	.06945
	Postgraduate	99	3.6212	.55829	.05611
Compromising	Graduate	74	3.8270	.51213	.05953
	Postgraduate	99	3.8444	.54252	.05453
Dominating	Graduate	74	3.6541	.46381	.05392
	Postgraduate	99	3.6242	.43262	.04348
Integrating	Graduate	74	3.7324	.51528	.05990
	Postgraduate	99	3.7576	.50731	.05099
Obliging	Graduate	74	3.6405	.67274	.07820
	Postgraduate	99	3.6263	.77546	.07794
Conflict management	Graduate	74	3.5676	.47295	.05498
	Postgraduate	99	3.5337	.47259	.04750

The above Table 7 reports that the respondents possessing graduate degrees scored higher than the rest of the groups, hence the emerging hypothesis was:

H_4: Graduate score high than postgraduate.

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Table 7a

Independent Samples t-Test

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Avoiding	.366	.546	.463	171	.644
			.459	151.366	.647
Compromising	.143	.705	-.214	171	.831
			-.216	161.951	.829
Dominating	.186	.667	.435	171	.664
			.430	151.191	.668
Integrating	.002	.962	-.320	171	.749
			-.320	156.074	.750
Obliging	3.584	.060	.127	171	.899
			.129	167.176	.897
Conflict management	.053	.818	.467	171	.641
			.467	157.343	.641

Table 7a point out the outcomes of six independent sample t-tests to unearth the significance of the mean differences originating in the descriptive data in Table 4.6. It has been reported none of the results are significant hence our H_4 is not substantiated and rejected on all six variables.

Impacts of public and private schools principals

Table 8

Group Statistics of public and private schools principals

	School	n	Mean	Std. D.	Std. E. Mean
Avoiding	Public	67	3.7201	.61780	.07548
	Private	106	3.5873	.54121	.05257
Compromising	Public	67	3.8866	.50719	.06196
	Private	106	3.8057	.54122	.05257
Dominating	Public	67	3.7851	.47009	.05743
	Private	106	3.5434	.40356	.03920
Integrating	Public	67	3.9731	.50078	.06118
	Private	106	3.6038	.46269	.04494
Obliging	Public	67	3.7582	.71988	.08795
	Private	106	3.5528	.73058	.07096
Conflict management	Public	67	3.7861	.41317	.05048
	Private	106	3.3978	.44518	.04324

Table 8 indicates that the respondents from public schools have higher scores than the rest of the groups therefore, new hypotheses emerged was:

H_5: Public school principals are scoring higher than private school principals. [H_5].

H_5 was developed from the descriptive data in Table 8a, 'that public school principals scores higher than private school principals'. T-tests were used to find the significance of the mean difference. Table 4.7a illustrates the results of six tests and reports a significant difference of opinion. According to the results, public school principals were recorded with a higher mean score as compared to the private school principals' mean scores on various variables. Though, the

outcomes unveil that variables dominating (DOM) (*p-value=*.001), INT (*p-value=*.000), and CM (*p-value=*.000) have significant mean differences because their p-values are less than the mandatory threshold value of 0.05. Similarly, avoiding (p-value 0.138), COM (p-value=0.328), and OBL (p-value=0.072) have p-values greater than the significant p-value 0.05. Based on the above statistics, thus our fifth hypothesis is substantiated partially with the ratio of three out of six (3/6) i.e., 50%.

Table 8a

Independent Samples t-Test

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Avoiding	2.565	.111	1.489	171	.138
			1.445	126.805	.151
Compromising	.127	.722	.981	171	.328
			.996	147.249	.321
Dominating	.436	.510	3.597	171	.000
			3.476	124.789	.001
Integrating	1.473	.227	4.954	171	.000
			4.866	132.239	.000
Obliging	.043	.836	1.811	171	.072
			1.817	142.061	.071
Conflict management	2.050	.154	5.744	171	.000
			5.842	148.230	.000

Role of Experience in Changing the Response

Table 9

Group Statistics of respondents based on experience.

		n	Mean	Std. D.	Std. Error	Min	Max
Avoiding	1-10	63	3.5437	.55092	.06941	2.50	5.00
	11-20	45	3.8667	.53460	.07969	2.75	4.75
	21-30	49	3.6684	.56455	.08065	2.75	5.00
	41-50	16	3.2812	.57645	.14411	2.50	4.75
	Total	173	3.6387	.57400	.04364	2.50	5.00
Compromising	1-10	63	3.6952	.61051	.07692	2.40	5.00
	11-20	45	4.1022	.50204	.07484	3.40	5.00
	21-30	49	3.7633	.39723	.05675	3.20	4.80
	41-50	16	3.8750	.31728	.07932	3.60	4.60
	Total	173	3.8370	.52829	.04017	2.40	5.00
Dominating	1-10	63	3.4698	.40026	.05043	2.80	4.40
	11-20	45	3.6889	.30017	.04475	2.80	4.20
	21-30	49	3.7918	.57003	.08143	2.60	4.80
	41-50	16	3.6750	.31728	.07932	3.40	4.40
	Total	173	3.6370	.44515	.03384	2.60	4.80
Integrating	1-10	63	3.5492	.43399	.05468	2.60	4.60
	11-20	45	3.8800	.55169	.08224	2.60	4.80
	21-30	49	3.9837	.42590	.06084	3.20	4.80
	41-50	16	3.4250	.46116	.11529	2.80	4.60
	Total	173	3.7468	.50939	.03873	2.60	4.80

Obliging	1-10	63	3.4667	.71572	.09017	2.20	5.00
	11-20	45	3.5378	.90133	.13436	2.20	4.80
	21-30	49	3.8245	.57970	.08281	2.80	4.80
	41-50	16	3.9625	.42091	.10523	3.40	4.40
	Total	173	3.6324	.73127	.05560	2.20	5.00
Conflict management	1-10	63	3.4127	.43775	.05515	2.83	4.17
	11-20	45	3.7444	.45726	.06816	2.83	4.17
	21-30	49	3.6088	.46092	.06585	2.83	4.17
	41-50	16	3.3438	.46535	.11634	2.83	4.17
	Total	173	3.5482	.47167	.03586	2.83	4.17

The above table of descriptive statistics on groups based on experience displays that the second group with above than 11 years of experience is scoring higher than the rest of the groups therefore, we can propose the hypothesis as:

H_6: The second group with [11-20] years' experience is scoring higher than the rest of the groups.

Table 9a

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Avoiding	BG	4.995	3	1.665	5.445	.001
	WG	51.675	169	.306		
	Total	56.671	172			
Compromising	BG	4.721	3	1.574	6.145	.001
	WG	43.282	169	.256		
	Total	48.003	172			
Dominating	BG	3.079	3	1.026	5.595	.001
	WG	31.004	169	.183		
	Total	34.083	172			
Integrating	BG	7.664	3	2.555	11.680	.000
	WG	36.966	169	.219		
	Total	44.631	172			
Obliging	BG	5.685	3	1.895	3.711	.013
	WG	86.294	169	.511		
	Total	91.979	172			
Conflict management	BG	3.739	3	1.246	6.100	.001
	WG	34.526	169	.204		
	Total	38.265	172			

Table 9a demonstrates the outcomes of six ANOVA used for the predictors and criterion variables to discover the significance of the mean differences initiated in the descriptive data. The results report significant differences for all variables i.e., AVO (p-value=.001), COM (*p-value*=.001), DOM (*p-value*=.001), INT (*p-value*=.000), OBL (*p-value*=.013), and CM (p-value=.001) as the p values are below the threshold value of 0.05. Thus, it can be decided that H_6 is accepted 6/6 which is 100%.

Summary of the Findings

Table 10

Summing up of demographics impact on predictors and criterion.

		Gender	Qualification	Experience	
1	Avoiding	-	-	.001	1
2	Compromising	.016	-	.001	2
3	Dominating	-	-	.001	1
4	Integrating	-	-	.000	1
5	Obliging	.000	-	.013	2
6	Conflict management	-	-	.001	1
	8 out of 18	2	-	6	8

Table 10 shows the demographic impacts; it provides all the outcomes of independent sample t-tests and ANOVA about the demographic effects on the predictors and criterion variables. We can conclude from the results that demographics have a mild impact except for experience on research variables, while all test results portray that 8 out of 18 tests have emerged, which accounts for a 44.44% significant impact on conflict management styles and conflict management in schools.

Table 11

Correlation between Predictors & Criterion Variable

		AVO	COM	DOM	INT	OBL
Conflict management	r	.613**	.558**	.662**	.611**	.401**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

All variables are significantly associated with conflict management.

Table 12

Summary of the Predictions based on Research Variables

	Predictor	Conflict management
	Criterion	Conflict management styles
	Models	1
	R2	.552 (55%)
1	Avoiding	.131
2	Compromising	.127
3	Dominating	.000
4	Integrating	.006
5	Obliging	.400

The outcomes regarding the prediction of conflict management (CM) are reported in table 12. 40% of the variables have a significant role in the management of conflict. In explaining CM, two out of the five variables are significantly predicting 55% of the change in the dependent variable.

Discussion

In social and organizational life, conflict is an unavoidable factor in human activities. Leadership in organizations confronts internal & external sources of conflict. Internally, conflict stems from a disagreement over power and use of resources, etc. (Shahmohammadi, 2014), however, it does not matter whether the source is internal or external,

leadership needs to comprehend conflict management, styles, and con approaches towards managing it. Because employing ineffective conflict strategies can further result in stress and tension the basis for dissatisfaction, mistrust, high turnover rates, and litigations which further undermine the overall organizational performance (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2011). Although dealing with conflict is a natural part of the workplace when people with different, beliefs, approaches with varying socio psychological backgrounds, and misunderstandings beyond the usual strains may result (Wong, Wong, & Peng, 2010). The misunderstandings are due to misperceptions and varying needs (Crossfield & Bourne, 2018). The purpose of this study was to investigate and compare the role conflict management styles of school principals. Likewise, it was intended to measure the impact of demographics in choosing conflict management styles. The results reported significant differences in the opinion between public and private school principals in the selection of conflict management styles. Public school principals were reported with a higher mean score as compared to the private school principals' for all variables. However, the results reveal that dominating and integrating variables have significant mean differences while avoiding, compromising, and obliging play insignificant roles. The findings are thus consistent with Gwendolin, Schwartz, josvold, Wong, & Chen (2014). While our results have support from Schwartz (2017) who reported that public sector organizations are facing a higher level of conflict among their members. He argues that since public sector employees enjoy a high level of job security than the private sector, thus they get more time and involve more in conflicts. This study also found that the mean scores of females are higher than those of males. Likewise, a significant difference of opinion was reported only for 'compromising' and 'obliging' while it was found insignificant on the remaining four variables. Although Schwartz (2017) reported that gender did not seem to differ significantly in the use of collaborative or compromising modes of conflict management, Karim (2015) and Faroogi (2014) reported different results, they found that gender plays a significant role in determining the conflict management style. Further, females try to be less offensive towards their colleagues, and males were reported to tend to be more inflexible and intolerant (Farooqi, Arshad, Khan, & Ghaffar, 2016). Imperial & Madrigal (2021) and Javed & Akhtar (2019) found that women used a compromising approach more frequently than men did. Gwendolin, Schwartz, josvold, Wong, & Chen (2014) study reflects the role of gender on conflict management styles. They reported that masculine individuals were high on the scale for dominating conflict style, on the other hand, feminine individuals were high on the avoiding style, and androgynous individuals were more prone to the integrating style. The finding concerning the experience was found inconsistent with previous studies and found no differences in comparing the experienced and inexperienced groups of both genders (Schwartz, 2017). This study has found that principals with above 11 years of experience reported higher scores the others. Based on the results, it could be argued that more experienced principals are sounder in leadership abilities and hold more collaborative approaches to managing interpersonal conflict (Javed & Akhtar, 2019), yet our findings are inconsistent (Karim, 2015) for predictors of the principals' preference for collaboration, avoiding, and accommodating.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The leadership in schools is facing financial problems besides issues related to the facilities. A principal's decision can affect everyone and can control the situation to perform better or worse in the conflicting situation, therefore, teachers shall extend help to the principals to manage interpersonal conflicts effectively. Principals' and teachers' greater understanding and cooperation can assist in managing the conflict easily. It is concluded that the principal and his/her conflict management styles affect the behavior and sooner or later the organization's overall performance. Therefore, it is suggested to use an appropriate conflict management approach in the given situation which also depends on the ability of a leader to be open and adaptive to the given circumstances. Equally instrumental is a trust which plays a significant role in founding cordial relationships among team members. Based on the results of the study, it is suggested that giving awareness to the employees is beneficial in managing conflicts, which also demands command of human skills this is why they shall design adequate plans following and executing the best strategies and managing the conflict. Based on the findings, the study suggests a "psychological counseling service" for employees. Although competition is beneficial both for institutions and their employees it might cause some serious psychological health issues when it turns into a personal conflict instead a professional conflict which necessitates training for the principals. Since changing a person's character is almost hard, whereas conflict arising from character differences can

be solved in week professional talk. This way, problems cannot be solved among the members of educational institutions once, on other hand, principals who continually tend to use dominating and avoiding styles might need in-service training courses to solve their ego and self-esteem problems.

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