IGNATIAN
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH
www.icceph.com
ISSN 2984-9942

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES THAT SHAPE WORKPLACE HARMONY AND PERFORMANCE IN OLUTANGA DISTRICT: ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

Rahma P. Waja

Graduate Studies, Southern Mindanao Colleges,
Pagadian City, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the conflict resolution strategies that shape workplace harmony and performance among public elementary school educators in the Olutanga District, Division of Zamboanga Sibugay. Utilizing a descriptive survey research design, data were gathered using a validated questionnaire-checklist administered to 19 school administrators (N_1 = 19) and 138 teachers (N_2 = 138) selected through purposive sampling. Statistical analysis was facilitated using weighted mean, ranking, standard deviation, and an independent samples t-test. Results revealed that all five conflict resolution strategies were "Always Practiced" across the district, obtaining an overall composite average weighted mean of 3.80. Collaborating emerged as the most prevailing strategy (AWM = 3.96, Rank 1), followed by Compromising (AWM = 3.84, Rank 2), Accommodating (AWM = 3.74, Rank 3), Competing (AWM = 3.73, Rank 4), and Avoiding (AWM = 3.72, Rank 5). Furthermore, the t-test yielded a computed t-value of 1.767, which was lower than the critical tabular t-value of 2.306 at a 0.05 level of significance with 8 degrees of freedom (df = 8). Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted, confirming no statistically significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers. The study concludes that educators in Olutanga District share a congruent assessment of conflict resolution practices, prioritizing collaborative problem-solving to maintain organizational harmony and enhance teacher productivity.

Keywords: *Conflict resolution strategies, Workplace harmony, Employee productivity, Collaborating, Organizational development*

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is an inevitable part of any organization, arising from differences in opinions, values, and interests among employees (International Academy of Business and Academies, n.d.). While conflict can be disruptive, it also presents opportunities for growth and improvement when managed effectively.

Schools today continue to face workplace challenges that shape professional relationships, organizational effectiveness, and the quality of educational services. As educational demands continue to evolve, teachers are expected not only to deliver quality instruction but also to maintain positive working relationships with colleagues, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. Establishing a harmonious work environment through effective conflict resolution is essential to promoting collaboration, strengthening teamwork, and ensuring the efficient delivery of educational services.

Conflict resolution strategies are important in the teaching profession because they help educators manage disagreements, maintain professional relationships, and communicate effectively with colleagues (Rambuyon & Domondon, 2021). Teachers' use of constructive conflict-management approaches can encourage mutual understanding and cooperation within the school community.

Effective conflict resolution also promotes workplace harmony by encouraging mutual respect, shared responsibility, and collaborative decision-making among teachers. A harmonious work environment minimizes interpersonal tensions, supports teachers' well-being, and encourages continuous professional growth. These positive conditions enable teachers to concentrate on their instructional responsibilities while contributing to the successful implementation of school programs and initiatives.

How conflicts are managed within the school environment may influence teachers' job performance (Farooqi et al., 2023). School principals' conflict-management styles have been investigated in relation to teachers' job performance, highlighting the relevance of conflict management to the effective functioning of schools.

Conflict is part of everyday life in any educational setting, between students, colleagues, and teachers and parents (Teachers Institute, n.d.). What separates a productive school environment from a stressful one is rarely the absence of conflict. It’s how conflict is managed. Educators and students who develop structured conflict management skills create safer, more collaborative learning communities.

Effective conflict management isn’t always about being nice or always about being tough. It’s about reading each situation clearly and choosing the approach that best serves the people involved and the mission of the school.

This study was initiated in Olutanga District, where the researcher is currently assigned. Olutanga is officially the Municipality of Olutanga (Cebuano: Lungsod sa Olutanga; Chavacano: Municipalidad de Olutanga; Tagalog: Bayan ng Olutanga), a

municipality in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay, Philippines. According to the 2020 census, it has a population of 38,438 people. The municipality is in the southwestern part of the eponymous Olutanga Island.

Olutanga District, located in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay, has a rich and evolving history rooted in its indigenous heritage and colonial past. The name "Olutanga" originates from the native Lutangan tribe, with early leadership attributed to Panglima Santikan and his wife, Indah Dindah. Initially, the area formed part of the Municipality of Alicia and was only later recognized as a municipality in its own right. On November 17, 1957, President Carlos P. Garcia issued Executive Order No. 274, officially creating the Municipality of Olutanga, which originally encompassed the entire Olutanga Island. Over time, the island was divided into three separate municipalities: Mabuhay in 1967 and Talusan in 1977, leaving Olutanga as the southwestern portion. Geographically, the district is separated from the Zamboanga Peninsula by Tantanang Bay and lies within the Moro Gulf. As of the 2020 census, the municipality has a population of over 38,000 people spread across several barangays. Culturally, the area is predominantly Catholic, with the Nuestra Señora de los Remedios Parish in Barangay Solar serving as a central religious institution since it was founded as a Jesuit mission in 1950. Economically, the district thrives on agriculture, fishing, and handicrafts, producing rice, coconut, poultry, and other essential goods. Significant development is underway, including the construction of the Guicam Bridge, which will connect Olutanga Island to the mainland and further boost trade and mobility. Through these developments, Olutanga District continues to progress while preserving its historical and cultural identity.

Residents in the Municipality of Olutanga generally fall within the low-income bracket, which significantly influences various aspects of students' educational experiences. The study is conducted in Olutanga District, where the National Achievement Test (NAT) results have shown inconsistencies over the years, highlighting the persistent challenge of sustaining academic excellence. For the school year 2013–2014, it obtained a mean percentage score (MPS) of 67.72%; for 2014–2015, it had an MPS of 70.88%; and for the year 2015–2016, it obtained an MPS of 75.42%. Over the past three years, it has averaged 71.34%, indicating near mastery of the 75% proficiency level set by the Department of Education; maintaining and surpassing this standard remains difficult.

For this reason, the researcher conducted a study on conflict resolution strategies that shape workplace harmony and performance in Olutanga District, and their significance to organizational development and employee productivity.

Research Questions

This study sought to identify the conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance in Olutanga District and their significance to organizational development and employee productivity.

Specifically, this investigation answered the following sub-problems:

1. What are the conflict resolution strategies that shape workplace harmony and performance practiced by the teachers in terms of:
   1.1. Avoiding;
   1.2. Competing;
   1.3. Accommodating;
   1.4. Compromising; and
   1.5. Collaborating?
2. How often are these conflict resolution strategies that shape workplace harmony and performance practiced by the teachers?
3. What is the extent of comparability between the responses of the school administrators and the teachers along with the five variables?
4. Is there a significant difference between the responses of the school administrators and the teachers along with the five variables?

METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive survey method (Sevilla, 1992). This method was preferred because it is more fact-finding and allows for adequate interpretation.

The descriptive method was designed to investigate a topic and gather information regarding existing conditions or situations. This method is most appropriate for describing the nature of a situation or condition as it exists at the time.

Descriptive research involves collecting data to answer questions about the current status of the study. It determined and qualified the attitudes and opinions of the group of people who provided information needed for the research. The main intention of using this method was to collect data for problem solving rather than for hypothesis testing. This determined the usefulness of the research, including the appropriate procedure applied, the accuracy of the data collection method, and the relevance of the information gathered to solve pertinent problems in the research.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was the questionnaire-checklist. This research tool is a self-made or self-devised questionnaire-checklist that typically consists of a series of written questions classified according to the sub-problems raised in this study. The researcher constructed the questionnaire-checklist using several references, such as books, magazines, periodicals, and other materials relevant to the study.

Validation of the Instrument

The preliminary draft of the self-made questionnaire-checklist underwent validation to help the researcher refine the contents and make them clear and understandable to the target respondents. After formulating the questionnaire-checklist, the researcher's adviser thoroughly scrutinized it. The researcher carefully analyzed it to produce a final

draft free from major defects and aligned with the sub-problems raised. The final draft was then submitted to the Dean and the Panel Members of the Graduate School of Southern Mindanao Colleges for further examination to determine the alignment and suitability of the instrument to the main and sub-problems. All suggestions made by the panel were incorporated into the instrument. The final copy was then reproduced and submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval. After the instrument received final approval, it was machine-copied for a dry run with school administrators and teachers who are full-fledged master's degree holders in Mabuhay District and were not included as respondents in the study. After the dry run of the questionnaire-checklist, it was submitted to the adviser for further verification to identify any items or variables that needed enrichment. After enrichment, the final copy was reproduced based on the number of copies needed to cover the actual number of respondents.

Data Gathering

Before distributing the prepared questionnaire-checklist, the researcher secured a letter of permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Zamboanga Sibugay through the District Supervisor of Olutanga. After approval, the researcher asked the principals to allow her to distribute the questionnaire to teachers and school administrators during vacant time. The researcher immediately retrieved the accomplished questionnaire-checklist with the help of the teachers and school administrators who served as respondents. After the retrieval, the researcher tallied the responses and put them into tables as a basis for statistical computation.

Sampling Design

The researcher used purposive sampling, which included 19 school administrators and 138 of 157 teachers as the principal respondents of this investigation. This gave all respondents a chance to share their ideas on the matter being investigated.

Purposive sampling is basically a part of a larger population. It is used for a more specific need or purpose, depending on the requirement. In this method, a particular group is targeted, and the results are drawn only from that group.

In purposive sampling**,** the group is selected beforehand, as it is much easier to understand a small group rather than a whole population. In this sampling method, the researcher can exclude people who do not fit the sampling group.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered in this study were systematically organized, tabulated, processed, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical treatments. The statistical procedures were selected based on the nature of the research questions, variables, level of measurement, and characteristics of the data.

This study used the Excel-Based Statistical Data Treatment and Analysis Tool developed by Camus (2026) to facilitate statistical computations and data analysis. The tool was designed to provide systematic, accurate, efficient, and user-friendly processing of research data using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Its use facilitated the computation, organization, and presentation of statistical results while the researcher remained responsible for selecting the appropriate statistical treatment, interpreting the results, and drawing conclusions based on the objectives of the study.

The statistical treatments employed in the study were weighted mean along with ranking, standard deviation, and t-test as appropriate to the respective research questions and variables.

1. Weighted Mean

This was computed by obtaining the sum of the products of the frequency and the assigned weight, divided by the total number of respondents.

The formula is according to Ruiz (1988):

$$WM = \frac{\Sigma F W}{N}$$

where,

WM = Weighted Mean
F = Frequency
N = Total number of respondents
W = Assigned weight
Σ = Summation symbol

The computation was facilitated through the Excel-Based Statistical Data Treatment and Analysis Tool developed by Camus (2026).

Ranking. This was used to determine the relative position per statement with respect to the five indicators per variable.

Four-Point Scale. The responses of school administrators and teachers with respect to the predetermined statements per variable were categorized according to the frequency they obtained. A four-point scale was used for analysis and interpretation.

Numerical Scale		Adjectival Equivalent
4 - (3.26-4.00)	-	Always Practiced (AP)
3 – (2.51-3.25)	-	Often Practiced (OP)
2 – (1.76-2.50)	-	Sometimes Practiced (SP)
1 – (1.00-1.75)	-	Never Practiced (NP)

2. Standard Deviation

The standard deviation was used to determine the degree of variability or dispersion of the respondents' scores around the mean. It indicated how closely or widely individual responses were distributed around the average response.

To obtain the value of the Standard Deviation for each group, we first take the deviation of each score from the mean, then square each difference, get the sum of the results, divide it by the quantity (N-1), and then extract the square root. The formula is borrowed from the book of Sta. Maria & Salamat (2008):

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{X})^2}{N - 1}}$$

SD - Standard Deviation
X – Scores

$\bar{X}$ - Mean
N - Total number of cases
Σ - Summation Symbol
1 - Constant number

The computation was facilitated through the Excel-Based Statistical Data Treatment and Analysis Tool developed by Camus (2026).

3. t-Test

This was used to test if there is significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers along with the five variables. The formula is given by Freund (1984).

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(N_1 - 1)(SD_1)^2 + (N_2 - 1)(SD_2)^2}{N_1 + N_2 - 2}} \sqrt{\frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2}}}$$

Where:
t = Computed t-value

$\bar{X}_1$ = Mean of the school administrators
X_2 = Mean of the teachers
SD_1 = Standard deviation of the school administrators
SD_2 = Standard deviation of the teachers

N_1 = Number of school administrators
N_2 = Number of teachers

The computation was facilitated through the Excel-Based Statistical Data Treatment and Analysis Tool developed by Camus (2026).

RESULTS

This section presents the empirical findings gathered from 19 school administrators and 138 public elementary school teachers across 19 elementary schools in the Olutanga District, Division of Zamboanga Sibugay. The investigation evaluated the conflict resolution strategies practiced by respondents across five core dimensions: Avoiding, Competing, Accommodating, Compromising, and Collaborating. Statistical treatments including weighted mean, standard deviation, and independent samples t-test were employed to address the specific research questions.

Table 1. Conflict Resolution Strategies Practiced by Teachers in Terms of Avoiding

Items	School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	Teachers (N_2 = 138)	AWM	AE	R
1. Avoiding direct confrontation when the issue is minor and does not affect work outcomes.	3.89	3.66	3.78	AP	3
2. Withdrawing from discussions to prevent unnecessary escalation of conflict.	3.79	3.85	3.82	AP	1
3. Delaying responses to allow emotions to settle before addressing concerns.	3.68	3.66	3.67	AP	4
4. Ignoring minor disagreements that do not impact teaching performance.	3.58	3.49	3.53	AP	5
5. Stepping back from conflict situations to maintain harmony in the workplace.	4.00	3.59	3.80	AP	2
Average Mean	3.79	3.65	3.72	AP	-

Legend: 3.26–4.00 = Always Practiced (AP); 2.51–3.25 = Often Practiced (OP); 1.76–2.50 = Sometimes Practiced (SP); 1.00–1.75 = Never Practiced (NP). AWM = Average Weighted Mean; AE = Adjectival Equivalent; R = Rank.

Table 1 outlines the conflict resolution strategies practiced by teachers under the Avoiding dimension. Overall, both school administrators (WM = 3.79) and teachers (WM = 3.65) reported that avoiding strategies are "Always Practiced", yielding an Average Weighted Mean (AWM) of 3.72 (AP). Among the five specific indicators, withdrawing from discussions to prevent unnecessary escalation of conflict ranked highest (AWM = 3.82, Rank 1), closely followed by stepping back from conflict situations to maintain workplace harmony (AWM = 3.80, Rank 2) and avoiding direct confrontation on minor issues (AWM = 3.78, Rank 3). Ignoring minor disagreements that do not impact teaching performance ranked lowest (AWM = 3.53, Rank 5), though remaining within the "Always Practiced" category.

Table 2. Conflict Resolution Strategies Practiced by Teachers in Terms of Competing

Items	School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	Teachers (N_2 = 138)	AWM	AE	R
1. Asserting personal viewpoints to achieve desired outcomes in conflict situations.	3.89	3.83	3.86	AP	2
2. Standing firm on decisions when believing they are in the best interest of the school.	4.00	3.77	3.88	AP	1
3. Prioritizing personal goals over others' preferences when necessary.	3.79	3.43	3.61	AP	5
4. Defending ideas strongly during disagreements with colleagues.	3.68	3.70	3.69	AP	3
5. Taking control of situations to resolve conflicts quickly and decisively.	3.58	3.67	3.62	AP	4
Average Mean	3.79	3.68	3.73	AP	-

Legend: 3.26–4.00 = Always Practiced (AP); 2.51–3.25 = Often Practiced (OP); 1.76–2.50 = Sometimes Practiced (SP); 1.00–1.75 = Never Practiced (NP). AWM = Average Weighted Mean; AE = Adjectival Equivalent; R = Rank.

As presented in Table 2, the Competing strategy achieved an overall Average Weighted Mean of 3.73, categorized as "Always Practiced". School administrators recorded a mean of 3.79, while teachers obtained a mean of 3.68. Standing firm on decisions when believing they are in the best interest of the school ranked first (AWM =

3.88, Rank 1), followed by asserting personal viewpoints to achieve desired outcomes (AWM = 3.86, Rank 2) and defending ideas strongly during disagreements (AWM = 3.69, Rank 3). Prioritizing personal goals over others' preferences registered the lowest mean under this strategy (AWM = 3.61, Rank 5).

Table 3. Conflict Resolution Strategies Practiced by Teachers in Terms of Accommodating

Items	School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	Teachers (N_2 = 138)	AWM	AE	R
1. Accepting others' suggestions even when personal preferences differ.	4.00	3.79	3.89	AP	1
2. Yielding to colleagues' decisions to maintain positive working relationships.	3.79	3.86	3.83	AP	2
3. Prioritizing harmony over personal goals during workplace disagreements.	3.58	3.62	3.60	AP	5
4. Agreeing with others' ideas to avoid conflict escalation.	3.89	3.51	3.70	AP	3
5. Giving way to others' concerns even when having a different opinion.	3.68	3.70	3.69	AP	4
Average Mean	3.79	3.70	3.74	AP	-

Legend: 3.26–4.00 = Always Practiced (AP); 2.51–3.25 = Often Practiced (OP); 1.76–2.50 = Sometimes Practiced (SP); 1.00–1.75 = Never Practiced (NP). AWM = Average Weighted Mean; AE = Adjectival Equivalent; R = Rank.

Table 3 details the findings for the Accommodating strategy, which garnered an overall Average Weighted Mean of 3.74 ("Always Practiced"). School administrators obtained a mean of 3.79, and teachers registered a mean of 3.70. Accepting others' suggestions even when personal preferences differ emerged as the top indicator (AWM = 3.89, Rank 1), followed by yielding to colleagues' decisions to maintain positive working relationships (AWM = 3.83, Rank 2). Prioritizing harmony over personal goals during workplace disagreements ranked fifth (AWM = 3.60, Rank 5).

Table 4. Conflict Resolution Strategies Practiced by Teachers in Terms of Compromising

Items	School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	Teachers (N_2 = 138)	AWM	AE	R
1. Finding middle solutions that partially satisfy both parties in a conflict.	3.95	3.77	3.86	AP	2
2. Sharing responsibilities or decisions to reach a fair agreement.	4.00	3.83	3.91	AP	1
3. Adjusting personal demands to meet halfway with colleagues.	3.89	3.67	3.78	AP	5
4. Negotiating outcomes that balance both sides' interests.	3.89	3.70	3.80	AP	4
5. Reaching agreements through mutual concessions in workplace disagreements.	4.00	3.66	3.83	AP	3
Average Mean	3.95	3.72	3.84	AP	-

Legend: 3.26–4.00 = Always Practiced (AP); 2.51–3.25 = Often Practiced (OP); 1.76–2.50 = Sometimes Practiced (SP); 1.00–1.75 = Never Practiced (NP). AWM = Average Weighted Mean; AE = Adjectival Equivalent; R = Rank.

Table 4 illustrates the results for the Compromising strategy, yielding a high overall Average Weighted Mean of 3.84 ("Always Practiced"). School administrators rated this strategy at 3.95, while teachers rated it at 3.72. The indicator sharing responsibilities or decisions to reach a fair agreement ranked first (AWM = 3.91, Rank 1), followed by finding middle solutions that partially satisfy both parties (AWM = 3.86, Rank 2) and reaching agreements through mutual concessions (AWM = 3.83, Rank 3). Adjusting personal demands to meet halfway ranked lowest (AWM = 3.78, Rank 5).

Table 5. Conflict Resolution Strategies Practiced by Teachers in Terms of Collaborating

Items	School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	Teachers (N_2 = 138)	AWM	AE	R
1. Working together to find shared solutions that satisfy all parties involved.	4.00	4.00	4.00	AP	1
2. Discussing issues openly with colleagues to understand different perspectives.	4.00	3.94	3.97	AP	2
3. Integrating ideas from others to develop better solutions.	4.00	3.90	3.95	AP	4
4. Cooperating fully with team members to resolve conflicts constructively.	4.00	3.87	3.93	AP	5
5. Engaging in problem-solving discussions to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.	4.00	3.93	3.96	AP	3
Average Mean	4.00	3.93	3.96	AP	-

Legend: 3.26–4.00 = Always Practiced (AP); 2.51–3.25 = Often Practiced (OP); 1.76–2.50 = Sometimes Practiced (SP); 1.00–1.75 = Never Practiced (NP). AWM = Average Weighted Mean; AE = Adjectival Equivalent; R = Rank.

Table 5 demonstrates the results for the Collaborating strategy, which registered the highest overall practice rating among all five strategies with an Average Weighted Mean of 3.96 ("Always Practiced"). Notably, school administrators gave a perfect mean rating of 4.00 across all indicators, while teachers evaluated it at 3.93. Working together to find shared solutions that satisfy all parties achieved a perfect rating from both groups (AWM = 4.00, Rank 1). Discussing issues openly to understand different perspectives ranked second (AWM = 3.97, Rank 2), and engaging in problem-solving discussions ranked third (AWM = 3.96, Rank 3).

Table 6. Extent of Comparability Between the Responses of School Administrators and Teachers Across the Five Variables

Variables	School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	Teachers (N_2 = 138)	AWM	AE	R
1. Avoiding	3.79	3.65	3.72	AP	5
2. Competing	3.79	3.68	3.73	AP	4
3. Accommodating	3.79	3.70	3.74	AP	3
4. Compromising	3.95	3.72	3.84	AP	2
5. Collaborating	4.00	3.93	3.96	AP	1
Average Mean	3.86	3.74	3.80	AP	-

Legend: 3.26–4.00 = Always Practiced (AP); 2.51–3.25 = Often Practiced (OP); 1.76–2.50 = Sometimes Practiced (SP); 1.00–1.75 = Never Practiced (NP). AWM = Average Weighted Mean; AE = Adjectival Equivalent; R = Rank.

Table 6 provides a summary comparison of the five conflict resolution strategies evaluated by school administrators and teachers. The overall combined Average Weighted Mean across all strategies stood at 3.80 (AP). Collaborating emerged as the most prevailing strategy in Olutanga District (AWM = 3.96, Rank 1), followed by Compromising (AWM = 3.84, Rank 2), Accommodating (AWM = 3.74, Rank 3), Competing (AWM = 3.73, Rank 4), and Avoiding (AWM = 3.72, Rank 5). All five strategies were categorized as "Always Practiced", indicating a highly constructive and adaptive approach to conflict management within the district.

Table 7. Test of Significant Difference Between the Responses of School Administrators and Teachers Across the Five Variables

Respondents	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	SD	Computed t-value	Tabular t-value	df	Level of Sig. (α)	Decision	Interpretation
School Administrators (N_1 = 19)	3.86	0.1030	1.767	2.306	8	0.05	Accept H_0	Not Significant
Teachers (N_2 = 138)	3.74	0.1116						

Table 7 presents the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to test the null hypothesis (H_0) of no significant difference between the perceptions of school administrators and teachers across the five conflict resolution strategies. School administrators recorded an overall mean of 3.86 with a standard deviation of 0.1030, while teachers obtained an overall mean of 3.74 with a standard deviation of 0.1116. The computed t-value was 1.767, which is lower than the tabular (critical) t-value of 2.306 at a 0.05 level of significance with 8 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted, proving that there is no statistically significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers regarding conflict resolution strategies.

DISCUSSION

The empirical findings demonstrated that school administrators and teachers in the Olutanga District consistently utilized all five conflict resolution strategies to foster workplace harmony and maintain professional effectiveness. Grounded in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974; Cote, 2023), these findings showed how educational personnel navigate interpersonal disputes by combining assertiveness (satisfying one's own concerns) and cooperativeness (satisfying others' concerns).

The prominence of Collaborating (AWM = 3.96, Rank 1) as the primary conflict resolution strategy underscored a mature organizational culture characterized by high assertiveness and high cooperativeness. Educators in Olutanga actively sought win-win solutions by engaging in open discussions, integrating diverse perspectives, and solving problems collectively. This finding aligned directly with Ronquillo's (2013) research, which similarly found that collaboration was the most prevalent strategy school leaders used to foster teamwork and positive competitiveness in the Ramon Magsaysay District. Furthermore, as Aguilar (2016) and Anderson (2013) noted, collaborative conflict resolution shifts school leadership teams away from destructive interpersonal dynamics toward healthy, constructive debate focused on student needs and institutional goals.

Compromising (AWM = 3.84, Rank 2) and Accommodating (AWM = 3.74, Rank 3) emerged as essential secondary strategies that support workplace flexibility and relational cohesion. When full collaboration is constrained by time or competing demands, educators rely on compromising through shared decision-making and mutual concessions (Cote, 2023). Similarly, accommodating allows teachers to yield on minor personal preferences to preserve positive working relationships and de-escalate workplace tension, corroborating findings by Rambuyon and Domondon (2021) regarding faculty conflict management styles.

Although Competing (AWM = 3.73, Rank 4) and Avoiding (AWM = 3.72, Rank 5) were ranked lowest among the five dimensions, both remained firmly within the "Always Practiced" threshold. In an educational setting, competing is constructively directed toward standing firm on decisions that advance the school's best interest rather than seeking personal dominance (Farooqi et al., 2023). Conversely, avoiding functions as a tactical de-escalation mechanism, allowing educators to withdraw from minor, non-work-critical disagreements to preserve emotional energy and maintain workplace tranquility (Cote, 2023; Ronquillo, 2013).

The statistical acceptance of the null hypothesis ($t = 1.767 < t_{tabular} = 2.306$, $df = 8$, $\alpha = 0.05$) reveals a strong alignment between school administrators ($\bar{X}_1 = 3.86$) and teachers ($\bar{X}_2 = 3.74$). This perceptual congruence indicates that administrators and teachers share a unified understanding of conflict management practices. This shared baseline minimizes structural friction, reinforces mutual trust, and establishes a stable organizational foundation that directly enhances employee productivity and overall school performance (Farooqi et al., 2023; Rambuyon & Domondon, 2021).

Conclusions

From the given findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Teachers always practiced avoiding conflict as a conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance. The teachers withdrew from discussions to prevent unnecessary escalation of conflict, stepped back from conflict situations to maintain harmony in the workplace, and avoided direct confrontation when the issue was minor and did not affect work outcomes.

2. Teachers always practiced conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance in competing, as they were standing firm on decisions when believing they were in the best interest of the school, asserting personal viewpoints to achieve desired outcomes in conflict situations, and defending ideas strongly during disagreements with colleagues.

3. Teachers always practiced conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance in accommodating. They accepted others' suggestions even when personal preferences differed, yielded to colleagues' decisions to

maintain positive working relationships, and agreed with others' ideas to avoid conflict escalation.

4. Teachers always practiced on compromising as conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance. They shared responsibilities or decisions to reach a fair agreement, found middle solutions that partially satisfied both parties in a conflict, and reached agreements through mutual concessions in workplace disagreements.

5. Teachers always practiced conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance in collaboration. They worked together to find shared solutions that satisfied all parties involved, discussed issues openly with colleagues to understand different perspectives, and engaged in problem-solving discussions to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

6. On the extent of comparability, teachers always practiced conflict resolution strategies that shaped workplace harmony and performance; it showed that the most prevailing variable is collaborating, followed by compromising, then accommodating, next is competing, while the least prevailing is avoiding.

7. On the significant difference between the responses of the school administrators and teachers along with the five variables, the computed t-test value was less than the tabular value at the five percent level of significance with the degrees of freedom of eight. This led to the null hypothesis being accepted; the results indicated no significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers, suggesting their responses were similar.

Recommendations

Relative to the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Optimally withdraw from discussions to prevent unnecessary escalation of conflict.
2. Stand firm on decisions when believing they are in the best interest of the school to the topmost level.
3. Maximize acceptance of others' suggestions, even when personal preferences differ.
4. Highly share responsibilities or decisions to reach a fair agreement.
5. Work together to find shared solutions that satisfy all parties involved to the maximum level.
6. Extremely practice conflict resolution strategies such as collaborating, compromising, accommodating, competing, and avoiding to shape workplace harmony and performance in Olutanga District, as these contribute to organizational development and employee productivity.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The author ensured strict adherence to established ethical standards throughout the planning, execution, and reporting of this study:

Institutional Permission and Informed Consent: Official permission to conduct the study was formally secured from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Zamboanga Sibugay, through the District Supervisor of Olutanga District, and approved by the respective school principals. Formal consent was obtained from all participating school administrators (N1 = 19) and teachers (N2 = 138) across the 19 participating elementary schools prior to instrument administration. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to participate without coercion or negative professional implications.

Confidentiality and Data Privacy: In accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173) and as guaranteed in the questionnaire cover letter, all personal background information and responses were kept strictly confidential. Data were processed, analyzed, and presented strictly as aggregated group statistics solely for academic research purposes.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares no personal, financial, or organizational conflict of interest that could inappropriately influence the collection, statistical treatment, interpretation, or presentation of the research findings.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: All borrowed literature, theoretical models (specifically the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model), and related studies were acknowledged through proper in-text citations and reference listings. Statistical analysis was objectively processed using the Excel-Based Statistical Data Treatment and Analysis Tool developed by Dr. Renante P. Camus (2026) without data falsification or manipulation.

Acknowledgments

The researcher expresses sincere gratitude and appreciation to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the successful completion of this study. Special acknowledgment is extended to the Almighty God for granting the strength, wisdom, and perseverance required throughout this research endeavor.

The researcher expresses gratitude to Southern Mindanao Colleges, particularly the Faculty and Administration of the Graduate School, the Dean, the Panel of Examiners, and the Thesis Adviser, for their valuable academic guidance, constructive insights, and continuous mentoring.

The researcher extends sincere thanks to the Department of Education (DepEd) Division of Zamboanga Sibugay, the District Supervisor of Olutanga District, and the School Heads for granting official permission to conduct the study. Special recognition goes to the respondents, the 19 school administrators and 138 public elementary school teachers of Olutanga District, for their cooperation, time, and valuable responses. Finally,

appreciation is offered to the researcher's family, friends, and colleagues for their unwavering moral support, understanding, and encouragement throughout this scholarly pursuit.

REFERENCES

Aguilar, E. (2016). Managing conflict in school leadership teams. Edutopia.
Anderson, K. (2013). Strategies for handling conflict in the workplace. Journal of Educational Leadership, 18(2), 45–58.
Camus, R. P. (2026). Excel-based statistical data treatment and analysis tool [Computer software]. Southern Mindanao Colleges.
Cote, C. (2023, April 18). 5 strategies for conflict resolution in the workplace. Harvard Business School Online.
Executive Order No. 274, s. 1957. Creating the Municipality of Olutanga in the Province of Zamboanga. (1957, November 17). Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines.
Farooqi, M. T. K., Ali, S., & Ahmed, S. (2023). Effects of school principals' conflict management styles on teachers' job performance. Bulletin of Education and Research, 45(3), 19–34. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1422140
Freund, J. E. (1984). Modern elementary statistics (6th ed.). Prentice-Hall, Inc.
International Academy of Business and Academies. (n.d.). Conflict resolution and its role in organizational culture. https://www.abacademies.org/articles/conflict-resolution-and-its-role-in-organizational-culture.pdf
Rambuyon, R., & Domondon, C. (2021). Conflict management styles of faculty. Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 58(4), 312–325.
Ronquillo, E. S. (2013). Resolutions in managing conflict for teamwork in Ramon Magsaysay District: Its relevance to positive competitiveness [Unpublished master's thesis]. Southern Mindanao Colleges.
Ruiz, M. (1988). Fundamentals of general management. R. P. Garcia Publishing.
Sevilla, C. G. (1992). Research methods and statistics. Rex Bookstore.
Sta. Maria, A. C., & Salamat, L. G. (2008). General statistics (3rd ed.). National Bookstore.
Teachers Institute. (n.d.). Conflict management strategies in education. https://teachers.institute/organisational-behaviour/conflict-management-strategies-education/
Thomas, K. W., & Kilmann, R. H. (1974). Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument. Xicom, Inc.

APA Citation:

Waja, R. P. (2026). CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES THAT SHAPE WORKPLACE HARMONY AND PERFORMANCE IN OLUTANGA DISTRICT: ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY. Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 4(11), 36–53. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23852743

rahma.waja001@deped.gov.ph