

# Conflict Management Styles to Resolve Workplace Challenges

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**Abstract.** The study focused on conflict management styles and workplace challenges encountered by the respondents. The research used mixed-method descriptive research design employing explanatory sequential analysis by quantifying data first and expounding it through qualitative data. The researcher used Adkins Conflict Management Style Assessment to determine the respondents' preferred conflict management styles and a validated interview guide to gather workplace challenges that were observed and experienced by the respondents. The participants of the study were school administrators/directors, college deans/program chairpersons, and unit/office heads. The result of the study stated that most of the workplace challenges encountered by the respondents were task-related workplace challenges and interpersonal-related challenges that most likely lead to workplace conflicts. The respondents have displayed a consistent utilization of the five conflicts management styles proving its potential to differing conflicts as referred to Table 2 of the research findings. Collaborating was the most commonly used conflict management style followed by competing, compromising, accommodating, and avoiding where these conflict management styles were proven to be effective varying on the nature and extent of conflicts. Maintaining open communication during conflicts was the most frequently mentioned initiative from the respondents to mitigate workplace challenges and could help avoid workplace conflicts which was further followed by improving processes and procedures, regular trainings for pcs and deans, team building and maintaining good attitude at all times and avoiding confrontation.

**Keywords:** Avoiding; Accommodating; Collaborating; Competing; Compromising; Conflict Management Style

## Introduction

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of organizational life, arising from diverse personalities, differing goals, and varying communication styles among employees. When unmanaged, workplace conflicts can lead to decreased productivity, reduced morale, and high turnover rates (Rahim, 2017). However, if addressed effectively, conflict can be a source of innovation, stronger relationships, and improved team performance (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). Conflict management styles—ranging from avoidance and accommodation to collaboration and competition—play a pivotal role in determining whether conflict outcomes are constructive or detrimental.

One of the contributors to the success of educational organizations reliably depends on the managerial skills of their administrators and this edifies the need to acquire conflict management techniques. Through establishing a deep understanding on conflict, educational administrators could constructively resolve workplace challenges by considering regularly planned and applied professional training. These trainings offer comprehensive and structured strategies to handle organizational conflicts.

Organizational conflicts can occur anytime to any situation. (Silay, 2022) strengthen this claim in their research titled, "Conflict Management in Educational Organization" that conflicts exist everywhere and at all times since they appear between individuals or groups of individuals. Since conflicts are human, educational organizations as small units of societies always have conflicts within their bodies.

However, there are ways to handle conflicts by considering various styles such as the Adkins Conflict Management Style Assessment. A study conducted by (Carcosia, 2021) elaborated us five conflict management styles which are competing, collaborating, avoiding, accommodating and compromising. The competing style is concerned 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.

No institution or educational administration is excused to workplace challenges that most likely lead to conflict, provided that conflicts are unpredictable and inevitable, this brings an urge to the researcher to identify the conflict management styles of the respondents in resolving workplace challenges. The research findings might be a benchmark to other institutions to help them mitigate potential conflicts and alleviate workplace challenges through conflict management styles. Certainly, the research findings might be beneficial to educational leaders who aim for workplace atmosphere with camaraderie and harmony among working group and proactive management.

Though there were researches conducted about the relationship between organizational, social variables and the five conflict management styles (i.e. avoiding, accommodating, collaborating, competing, and compromising) such as those of (e.g., Blake & Mouton, 1964; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Burke, 1970; Aram et al., 1971; Thomas & Walton, 1971; Ryan & Clemence, 1973; Raisi and Asadzadeh, 2015), in this study the researcher aims to find the conflict management styles of the respondents to mitigate conflicts and workplace challenges.

## Research Questions

The study aims to identify workplace challenges and the conflict management styles of the respondents to resolve workplace challenges. Specifically, the study will answer the following research questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1 Sex;
  - 1.2 Employment Category; and
  - 1.3 Number of years in the service?
2. What are the conflict management styles of the respondents in terms of:
  - 2.1 Competing;
  - 2.2 Accommodating;
  - 2.3 Avoiding;
  - 2.4 Collaborating; and
  - 2.5 Compromising
3. Is there a significant difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their profile?
4. What common workplace challenges are observed by the respondents?
5. What are the extent of these challenges?
6. What intervention recommended to eliminate the cause of conflicts to the respondents?

## Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study focused on the conflict management styles of the respondents. The study has an interest as well on knowing the common workplace challenges, conflict management styles of the school leaders, the extent of challenges or conflicts encountered. The result of the study is used as a basis of development plan and engagement plan.

## Literature Review

Managing conflict can improve institutional performance and organizational effectiveness. According to (Mills College, 2021) inconsistent school leaders can discourage institutional performance. They have stated that administrative leaders and stakeholders can work together to build sustainable work environment for the betterment of students. This establishes a connection between effective leadership towards students' development. Since conflict is viewed as an alarming condition that can arise elsewhere, a suitable conflict management style among educational leaders is highly needed. Silay, N. (2022) strengthen this claim in their research titled, "Conflict Management in Educational Organization" that conflicts exist everywhere and at all times since they appear between individuals or groups of individuals. Since conflicts are human, educational organizations as small units of societies always have conflicts within their bodies. Conflicts from small units of groups are in need of immediate course of action from the initiative of school leaders.

Institutional conflict may arise from diverse source, it may come within the institution or other factors; the behavior of the school leaders and administrators may trigger conflict. As (Toytok, et.al, 2018) stated in their research titled, "The Effect of Administrators' Behaviors that Involves Favoritism on Organizational Opposition", they define favoritism as giving someone priority or granting privilege to

someone, favoring someone unjustly and without complying with laws and rules. In their research, they have presented that favoritism of executives can trigger organization opposition. Since others are being favored while others are not, expectedly this could create imbalance treatment among employees which will lead to division. Creating a good atmosphere in a workplace increases work motivation and job performance especially when teachers are given the autonomy to perform job responsibilities at their own not grounded by controlled system of management. As cited by (Tadic, 2015) that controlling teachers can decrease work motivation and job satisfaction. Autonomy of teachers in a classroom can decrease pressure at work and this edifies them to strategize their own working style for their own growth.

Workplace conflict must be handled intentionally with deliberate care, stated by (Miller, 2023). School leaders must be thoughtful in resolving conflicts while considering appropriate precautionary measures in handling people, failure to handle conflict properly may only complicate its root cause and increase its potential to ruin relationship and weaken job performance. The researcher added that workplace conflict has a potential to be either highly beneficial or highly damaging. However, an effective leadership skill can be a strategy for school leaders to properly handle conflicts through the application of various leadership key principles. The above-mentioned studies are empirical findings that present the potential risks when conflicts are not put into action. The cited research findings presented us clear view on the need on conflict management style to address workplace challenges.

This edifies the very essence of the research to be conducted that school leaders and managers must observe and practice conflict management style. As (Espeño, 2023) posited that to improve better output of conflict resolution, there is a need on the implementation of series of trainings and seminars to promote leadership, encourage mental health awareness, anti-bullying campaigns, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and promoting open and transparent communication. Initiatives of school leaders on conflict resolution improves their leadership and management skills, the research added.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis to explain and provide deeper insights into the quantitative findings. In the quantitative phase, a descriptive research design was utilized to determine the respondents' conflict management styles and demographic profiles. The data gathered in this phase served as the basis for testing the null hypotheses of the study and identifying patterns and relationships among the variables. Following the quantitative phase, a phenomenological research approach was employed in the qualitative phase to explore and understand the workplace challenges observed and experienced by the respondents. Through in-depth examination of the participants' lived experiences, the qualitative findings provided contextual explanations and richer insights into the quantitative results. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative findings enabled a more comprehensive understanding of conflict management styles and the workplace challenges encountered by the respondents.

### Sampling Design

The study did not undegro sampling procedure rather it used total enumeration due to the limited number of participants, the opinion of every participant matters, and they portray necessary qualifications and characteristeds that are essential to be considered by the study.

### Research Locale

The study was conducted to the three campuses of Quirino State University namely Diffun, Cabbaroguis, and Maddela. The participants of the study were school administrators/directors, college deans/program chairpersons, and faculty association presidents as these people often involve to resolving and managing conflicts. In the quantitative phase, the study used total enumeration for the selection of the participants considering the limited number of participants especially their specific characteristics, roles, and involvement in educational institutions that became useful in the study. In the qualitative phase, a criteria was considered for the selection of the participants. (1) must be a program chairperson/dean, an office head/unit head, an administrative officer, director, managerial officer, (2) must be the present school or current department head of each campus department, and (3) preferably handling an office. There criteria considered ensures the suitability of the respondents to the success of the study.

## Research Participants

The study included the 61 school administrators/directors/officials, college deans/program chairpersons, and office/unit heads of the three campuses Quirino State University since the study used total enumeration.

## Research Instrument

For the quantitative phase, a standardized survey questionnaire adapted from the Adkins Conflict Management Style Assessment was used to determine the respondents' preferred conflict management styles (few terms were converted to simple terms for an easy comprehension of the respondent). The instrument consists of 15 items, with three statements representing each of the five conflict management styles: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. Each item reflects workplace conflict situations, allowing respondents to indicate their typical responses in such scenarios. The assessment is structured to capture behavioral tendencies in conflict situations within organizational settings, making it appropriate for institutional and workplace-based research. Its strength lies in its conciseness, practicality, and relevance to real-life workplace interactions, where individuals frequently engage in interpersonal and organizational conflict resolution. The use of three items per conflict management style is considered sufficient because each dimension is consistently represented across multiple situational statements. This allows the instrument to capture recurring behavioral patterns rather than relying on a single indicator per construct. The repeated exposure to conflict scenarios strengthens the identification of dominant conflict management tendencies while maintaining clarity and reducing respondent fatigue. For the qualitative phase, an interview guide was used to explore the workplace challenges experienced and observed by the respondents. The guide was validated by experts in the field to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the questions in eliciting meaningful responses.

## Data Gathering Procedure

In the quantitative phase, the researcher secured permission to conduct the study and administered a survey questionnaire adapted from the Adkins Conflict Management Style Assessment to the respondents. The instrument was distributed to determine respondents' conflict management styles. After retrieval, the questionnaires were checked for completeness, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis. In the qualitative phase, a validated interview guide was used to explore workplace challenges experienced and observed by the respondents. The focus group discussion was conducted until data saturation was reached, considering the point of redundancy. The session was recorded with consent, transcribed, and analyzed for thematic patterns.

## Results and Discussions

**Research Question 1: What is demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, employment category, and years in the service?**

**Table 1.** Demographic Profile of the Respondents

| Demographic Profile               | Frequency<br>(n = 61) | Percent<br>(100.0) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                        |                       |                    |
| Male                              | 23                    | 37.7               |
| Female                            | 38                    | 62.3               |
| <b>Employment Categories</b>      |                       |                    |
| Administrative                    | 14                    | 23.0               |
| Support/Non-Teaching<br>Personnel | 10                    | 16.4               |
| Management/Executives             | 37                    | 60.7               |
| <b>Years in the Service</b>       |                       |                    |
| 1-10 years                        | 16                    | 26.2               |
| 11-20 years                       | 18                    | 29.5               |
| 21-30 years                       | 17                    | 27.9               |
| 31-40 years                       | 10                    | 16.4               |

The table shows the demographic profile of the respondents where most of the respondents of the study are female with 62.3 percent while the male respondents comprise only of 37.7 percent. For the employment category, most of the respondents belonged to management/executives garnering 60.7 percent

while the least number came from support and teaching personnel with 16.4 percent. In terms of years of service, respondents with 11-20 years got the highest percentage of 29.5 percent, followed by 21-30 years of service with 27.9 percentage, 1-10 years with 26.2 percent, 31-40 years got the lowest percent of 16.4.

The demographic profile of the respondents implies that the study is largely shaped by the perspectives of female employees and individuals occupying management or executive positions, which may influence how conflict management styles and workplace challenges are experienced and interpreted within the institution. The predominance of respondents from the managerial level suggests that the findings may strongly reflect leadership perspectives in handling workplace conflict, while the lower representation of support and teaching personnel may limit the extent to which the results capture experiences across all organizational levels. In terms of years of service, the distribution of respondents across different tenure groups indicates a workforce with moderate to extensive organizational experience, particularly those with 11–30 years of service. This suggests that many respondents have sufficient exposure to workplace dynamics and conflict situations, which enhances the credibility of their responses in identifying conflict management patterns. However, differences in tenure may also imply variations in how employees perceive and respond to workplace challenges, as longer-serving employees may demonstrate more established conflict-handling strategies compared to those with fewer years of service. Overall, these demographic characteristics suggest that the study's findings are most representative of experienced employees in managerial roles, which should be considered when interpreting and generalizing the results. This implication is supported by (Erdem, 2022) where they conducted a research to determine the relationship between management styles and organizational culture considering the sex, years of service, and employment category of their respondents. The existing culture of the people inside an organization is shaped by the data based on their profile which may dominate organization culture either positively or negatively.

## Research Question 2: What is the conflict management styles of the respondents?

**Table 2.** Conflict Management Style of the Respondents

| Statements                                                                                                                | Mean        | Desc      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>Collaborating</b>                                                                                                      |             |           |
| 1. I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.                                      | 3.62        | Always    |
| 2. When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open.          | 3.70        | Always    |
| 3. I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved? | 3.63        | Always    |
| <b>Category Mean</b>                                                                                                      | <b>3.65</b> | Always    |
| <b>Competing</b>                                                                                                          |             |           |
| 1. I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view.                                                | 2.68        | Often     |
| 2. I find conflicts challenging/thrilling; I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.                               | 2.21        | Sometimes |
| 3. I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.                                                         | 2.68        | Often     |
| <b>Category Mean</b>                                                                                                      | <b>2.52</b> | Often     |
| <b>Avoiding</b>                                                                                                           |             |           |
| 1. When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.                     | 2.24        | Sometimes |
| 2. Being in a disagreement with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious.                                     | 2.86        | Often     |
| 3. I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.                                               | 2.47        | Sometimes |
| <b>Category Mean</b>                                                                                                      | <b>2.52</b> | Often     |
| <b>Accommodating</b>                                                                                                      |             |           |
| 1. I try to meet the expectations of others.                                                                              | 3.10        | Often     |
| 2. In negotiations, I hold on to my position rather than give in.                                                         | 2.54        | Often     |
| 3. I let peers have their way rather than to risk our relationship.                                                       | 2.26        | Sometimes |
| <b>Category Mean</b>                                                                                                      | <b>2.63</b> | Often     |
| <b>Compromising</b>                                                                                                       |             |           |
| 1. I try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations.                                             | 3.65        | Always    |
| 2. I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.                                                         | 2.56        | Often     |
| 3. To break deadlocks, I would meet people halfway.                                                                       | 3.19        | Often     |
| <b>Category Mean</b>                                                                                                      | <b>3.13</b> | Often     |
| <b>Overall Mean</b>                                                                                                       | <b>2.89</b> | Often     |

The table shows the conflict management styles of the respondents. Collaborating conflict management style got highest mean with a total of 3.65, this means that the respondents try to keep an open communication during conflicts, see conflict on both sides, and discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs. Compromising got a mean of 3.13 where the respondents described oftentimes to be concerned with their goals and relationships during conflicts. They try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations, they break deadlocks and meet people halfway, and they try to compromise and just move on. Accommodating got a mean of 2.63 where the respondents tend to sacrifice their goals to preserve relationships. They try to meet the expectations of others, and they let peers have their way rather than risk their relationship. While competing and avoiding marked the lowest mean with the same category mean of 2.52, however they differ in scale descriptors. In competing, respondents tend to argue their case and insist the advantages of their point during conflicts. They can figure out what needs to be done and found that they were always right. They see conflicts as thrilling/challenging. In avoiding, respondents who encounter conflicts with others make him/her feel anxious and uncomfortable, they tend to avoid hard feelings, and they usually leave as soon as possible when conflict arises. Generally as presented in the table, most of the respondents do collaborating conflict management style during conflicts and disagreements in workplaces, they maintain open communication and find solutions that satisfy both themselves and other people. However, competing and avoiding got a weak mean category where the respondents do not tend to argue their case and insist on their point, rather considering the point or ideas of others. They do not prefer to see conflicts as thrilling, rather they find solutions to reduce tensions of both parties and maintain good relationships.

The results imply that respondents generally prefer a collaborative approach to conflict management, indicating a workplace culture that values open communication, mutual understanding, and joint problem-solving. The presence of moderate scores in compromising and accommodating further suggests flexibility and concern for maintaining positive relationships in resolving conflicts. Meanwhile, the low inclination toward competing and avoiding implies that respondents are less likely to adopt confrontational or evasive behaviors, which may contribute to a more harmonious and cooperative work environment. Overall, these findings suggest that conflicts in the workplace of the participants are more likely managed constructively, with emphasis on resolution and relationship preservation rather than dominance or withdrawal. The findings support the result of the study of (Carcosia, 2021) 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. This indicates that the participants most likely used collaborating style of conflict management putting value on open communication, mutual understanding, and joint problem-solving. This reflects on the result of the focus group discussion of the study were no workplace challenges reported that got worsen or escalated into worst extent. The challenges cited by the respondents appeared to be manageable and not troublesome to the participants.

### Research Question 3: Significant difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their profile?

**Table 3.** Difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their sex.

| Statements           |                                                                                                                        | Male |      | Female |      | t-value             | p-value |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|--------|------|---------------------|---------|
|                      |                                                                                                                        | Mean | Desc | Mean   | Desc |                     |         |
| <b>Collaborating</b> |                                                                                                                        |      |      |        |      |                     |         |
| 1.                   | I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.                                      | 3.78 | A    | 3.52   | A    | 1.74 <sup>ns</sup>  | .08     |
| 2.                   | When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open.          | 3.86 | A    | 3.60   | A    | 2.31*               | .02     |
| 3.                   | I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved? | 3.69 | A    | 3.60   | A    | .65 <sup>ns</sup>   | .51     |
| <b>Competing</b>     |                                                                                                                        |      |      |        |      |                     |         |
| 1.                   | I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view.                                                | 2.78 | O    | 2.63   | O    | .62 <sup>ns</sup>   | .53     |
| 2.                   | I find conflicts challenging/thrilling; I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.                               | 2.26 | S    | 2.18   | S    | .30 <sup>ns</sup>   | .75     |
| 3.                   | I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.                                                         | 2.73 | O    | 2.65   | O    | .42 <sup>ns</sup>   | .67     |
| <b>Avoiding</b>      |                                                                                                                        |      |      |        |      |                     |         |
| 1.                   | When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.                     | 2.08 | S    | 2.34   | S    | -1.08 <sup>ns</sup> | .28     |
| 2.                   | Being in a disagreement with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious.                                     | 2.43 | S    | 3.13   | O    | -2.75*              | .01     |
| 3.                   | I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.                                               | 2.43 | S    | 2.50   | O    | -.28 <sup>ns</sup>  | .77     |

| Accommodating |                                                                            |      |   |      |   |                     |     |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---|------|---|---------------------|-----|
| 1.            | I try to meet the expectations of others.                                  | 3.21 | O | 3.02 | O | .83 <sup>ns</sup>   | .40 |
| 2.            | In negotiations, I hold on to my position rather than give in.             | 2.69 | O | 2.44 | S | 1.08 <sup>ns</sup>  | .28 |
| 3.            | I let peers have their way rather than to risk our relationship.           | 2.00 | S | 2.42 | S | -2.65*              | .01 |
| Compromising  |                                                                            |      |   |      |   |                     |     |
| 1.            | I try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations. | 3.60 | A | 3.68 | A | -.55 <sup>ns</sup>  | .58 |
| 2.            | I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.             | 2.26 | S | 2.75 | O | -2.39*              | .02 |
| 3.            | To break deadlocks, I would meet people halfway.                           | 3.04 | O | 3.28 | O | -1.38 <sup>ns</sup> | .17 |

Table 3 shows the difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their sex. It can be noted that for most statements across all five conflict styles, the p-values were greater than 0.05 which indicate no significant differences between males and females. For Collaborating style, statements like discussing issues to meet everyone's needs and seeing both sides of a conflict showed no significant differences which indicate that males and females use these cooperative approaches similarly. For Competing style, all statements including arguing one's own point of view, enjoying the challenge of a disagreement, and believing one is usually right also showed no significant differences which mean that both sexes compete in the same way. For Avoiding style, saying very little during an argument and keeping hard feelings to oneself likewise showed no significant differences. These suggest that males and females avoid disagreements at similar rates. For Accommodating style, trying to meet others' expectations and holding one's position instead of giving in showed no significant differences which indicate both sexes accommodate others equally. For Compromising style, using a give-and-take approach and meeting people halfway to break a deadlock showed no significant differences which imply that males and females compromise similarly. With all these p-values exceeding the 0.05 threshold, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis for most items. This means that male and female respondents generally share the same conflict management styles. In contrast, four specific items with p-values below 0.05 revealed significant differences between sexes. Under the Collaborating style, data showed that males gather information and keep communication open during a disagreement more often than females. Under the Avoiding style, data showed that females feel uncomfortable and anxious during a disagreement more frequently than males. Under the Accommodating style, data showed that females let peers have their way to avoid hurting the relationship more often than males. Under the Compromising style, data showed that females prefer to compromise just to move on and get past the problem more often than males. For these four behaviors, the rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that significant differences exist. General result shows that male and females are alike in nearly all conflict management styles except for a few particular situations. Thus, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis, and sex does not produce general differences in conflict management styles.

The findings imply that, in general, male and female respondents exhibit similar conflict management styles, as most indicators across the five styles showed no significant differences. This suggests that sex does not strongly influence overall conflict-handling preferences in the workplace. However, the presence of a few significant differences indicates subtle variations, where females tend to show greater emotional sensitivity and relational orientation in conflict situations, while males demonstrate slightly more tendency toward open communication in collaborative contexts. Overall, the results imply that workplace conflict management is largely consistent across sex, with only specific behavioral tendencies differing in selected aspects of conflict response. The result of the study was supported by (Guiab, 2023) who presented a broader scope on the study of conflict where other demographic profile of employees was used in research analysis. According to the research results, demographic profiles of the faculty and staff do not influence their conflict management styles. This presents a clear view that the effectivity of a conflict management style is measured on its potential alone to settle existing conflict. Instead, the result of the study concluded for enhancement to the existing strategies of settling conflicts which specifically targeted.

**Table 4.** Difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their employment category.

| Statements           |                                                                                                               | Administrative |      | Support/<br>Teaching<br>Personnel |      | Management/<br>Executives |      | F-<br>value       | p-<br>value |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|-------------------|-------------|
|                      |                                                                                                               | Mean           | Desc | Mean                              | Desc | Mean                      | Desc |                   |             |
| <b>Collaborating</b> |                                                                                                               |                |      |                                   |      |                           |      |                   |             |
| 1.                   | I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.                             | 3.50           | A    | 3.80                              | A    | 3.62                      | A    | .64 <sup>ns</sup> | .53         |
| 2.                   | When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open. | 3.50           | A    | 3.50                              | A    | 3.83                      | A    | 3.69*             | .03         |

|                      |                                                                                                                        |      |   |      |   |      |   |                    |     |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---|------|---|------|---|--------------------|-----|
| 3.                   | I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved? | 3.35 | O | 3.60 | A | 3.75 | A | 3.29*              | .04 |
| <b>Competing</b>     |                                                                                                                        |      |   |      |   |      |   |                    |     |
| 1.                   | I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view.                                                | 2.92 | O | 2.50 | O | 2.64 | O | .74 <sup>ns</sup>  | .48 |
| 2.                   | I find conflicts challenging/thrilling; I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.                               | 2.28 | S | 2.20 | S | 2.18 | S | .05 <sup>ns</sup>  | .94 |
| 3.                   | I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.                                                         | 2.64 | O | 2.90 | O | 2.64 | O | .50 <sup>ns</sup>  | .60 |
| <b>Avoiding</b>      |                                                                                                                        |      |   |      |   |      |   |                    |     |
| 1.                   | When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.                     | 2.21 | S | 2.80 | O | 2.10 | S | 2.52 <sup>ns</sup> | .08 |
| 2.                   | Being in a disagreement with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious.                                     | 2.92 | O | 2.60 | O | 2.91 | O | .41 <sup>ns</sup>  | .66 |
| 3.                   | I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.                                               | 2.21 | S | 3.00 | O | 2.43 | S | 2.77 <sup>ns</sup> | .07 |
| <b>Accommodating</b> |                                                                                                                        |      |   |      |   |      |   |                    |     |
| 1.                   | I try to meet the expectations of others.                                                                              | 2.92 | O | 3.20 | O | 3.13 | O | .37 <sup>ns</sup>  | .68 |
| 2.                   | In negotiations, I hold on to my position rather than give in.                                                         | 2.50 | O | 2.50 | O | 2.56 | O | .04 <sup>ns</sup>  | .95 |
| 3.                   | I let peers have their way rather than to risk our relationship.                                                       | 2.07 | S | 2.70 | O | 2.21 | S | 3.41*              | .04 |
| <b>Compromising</b>  |                                                                                                                        |      |   |      |   |      |   |                    |     |
| 1.                   | I try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations.                                             | 3.42 | O | 3.90 | A | 3.67 | A | 2.67 <sup>ns</sup> | .07 |
| 2.                   | I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.                                                         | 2.71 | O | 2.77 | O | 2.45 | S | .85 <sup>ns</sup>  | .43 |
| 3.                   | To break deadlocks, I would meet people halfway.                                                                       | 3.14 | O | 3.30 | O | 3.18 | O | .15 <sup>ns</sup>  | .85 |

Table 4 shows the difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their employment category. It can be noted for most statements across all five conflict styles, the p-values were greater than 0.05 which indicate no significant differences among administrative staff, support/teaching personnel, and management/executives. For Collaborating style, statements like discussing issues to meet everyone's needs showed no significant differences which indicate that all employment categories use these cooperative approaches similarly. For Competing style, all statements including arguing one's own point of view, enjoying the challenge of a disagreement, and believing one is usually right also showed no significant differences which mean that all employment categories compete in the same way. For Avoiding style, saying very little during an argument, feeling uncomfortable and anxious during a disagreement, and keeping hard feelings to oneself likewise showed no significant differences. These suggest that administrative staff, support/teaching personnel, and management/executives avoid disagreements at similar rates. For Accommodating style, trying to meet others' expectations and holding one's position instead of giving in showed no significant differences which indicate all employment categories accommodate others equally. For Compromising style, using a give-and-take approach, preferring to compromise just to move on, and meeting people halfway to break a deadlock showed no significant differences which imply that administrative staff, support/teaching personnel, and management/executives compromise similarly. With all these p-values exceeding the 0.05 threshold for most items, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis for most items. This means that respondents across different employment categories generally share the same conflict management styles. In contrast, three specific items with p-values below 0.05 revealed significant differences among employment categories. Under the Collaborating style, data showed that management/executives gather information and keep communication open during a disagreement more often than administrative staff and support/teaching personnel. Under the same Collaborating style, data showed that management/executives try to see conflicts from both sides more often than administrative staff. Under the Accommodating style, data showed that support/teaching personnel let peers have their way to avoid hurting the relationship more often than administrative staff and management/executives. For these three behaviors, the rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that significant differences exist. General result shows that respondents are alike in nearly all conflict management styles regardless of their employment category except for a few particular situations. Thus, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis and employment category does not produce general differences in conflict management styles.

The findings imply that conflict management styles are generally consistent across employment categories, suggesting that administrative staff, support/teaching personnel, and management/executives tend to handle workplace conflicts in similar ways. This indicates that organizational role or position does not significantly influence overall conflict-handling approaches, which may reflect a shared institutional culture in managing workplace disagreements. However, the few significant differences suggest that management/executives demonstrate stronger collaborative behaviors, while support/teaching personnel show a higher tendency toward accommodating others. Overall, the results imply that while conflict management styles are largely uniform across job categories, specific behaviors may still vary depending on workplace roles and responsibilities. This implication of the study was supported by the idea of (Salabas, 2025) stated that even though no significant differences were observed in relation to participants employment category, understanding how demographic factors might influence management practices could assist in tailoring strategies to address potential barriers to achieving gender equality and conflict resolution in the workplace. Incorporating these insights into organizational practices will not only foster better conflict management but also enhance overall workplace harmony, leading to improved employee satisfaction and retention. Moreover, (Guiab, 2023) presented a broader scope where other demographic profile of employees is used in research analysis. According to the research result, demographic profiles of the faculty and staff do not influence their conflict management styles. This presents a clear view that the effectivity of a conflict management style is measured on its potential alone to settle existing conflict. Furthermore, the study implies that the effectiveness of a conflict management style should be evaluated based on its practical capacity to resolve or manage conflict situations rather than on the demographic profile of the individual using it. In other words, conflict management effectiveness is context-dependent and behavioral in nature, highlighting that employees may adopt similar conflict-handling approaches regardless of differences in their demographic characteristics.

**Table 5.** Difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their years in the service

| Statements    |                                                                                                                        | 1-10 |      | 11-20 |      | 21-30 |      | 31-40 |      | F-value            | p-value |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|--------------------|---------|
| Collaborating |                                                                                                                        | Mean | Desc | Mean  | Desc | Mean  | Desc | Mean  | Desc |                    |         |
| 1.            | I discuss issues with others to try to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.                                      | 3.62 | A    | 3.61  | A    | 3.64  | A    | 3.60  | A    | .01 <sup>ns</sup>  | .99     |
| 2.            | When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open.          | 3.68 | A    | 3.66  | A    | 3.70  | A    | 3.80  | A    | .15 <sup>ns</sup>  | .92     |
| 3.            | I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved? | 3.43 | O    | 3.66  | A    | 3.70  | A    | 3.80  | A    | 1.25 <sup>ns</sup> | .29     |
| Competing     |                                                                                                                        |      |      |       |      |       |      |       |      |                    |         |
| 1.            | I would argue my case and insist on the advantages of my point of view.                                                | 3.06 | O    | 2.66  | O    | 2.41  | S    | 2.60  | O    | 1.51 <sup>ns</sup> | .22     |
| 2.            | I find conflicts challenging/thrilling; I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.                               | 2.06 | S    | 2.11  | S    | 2.29  | S    | 2.50  | O    | .55 <sup>ns</sup>  | .64     |
| 3.            | I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.                                                         | 2.68 | O    | 2.55  | O    | 2.70  | O    | 2.90  | O    | .48 <sup>ns</sup>  | .69     |
| Avoiding      |                                                                                                                        |      |      |       |      |       |      |       |      |                    |         |
| 1.            | When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.                     | 2.31 | S    | 2.05  | S    | 2.35  | S    | 2.30  | S    | .38 <sup>ns</sup>  | .76     |
| 2.            | Being in a disagreement with other people makes me feel uncomfortable and anxious.                                     | 2.75 | O    | 3.00  | O    | 2.94  | O    | 2.70  | O    | .28 <sup>ns</sup>  | .83     |
| 3.            | I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.                                               | 2.31 | S    | 2.44  | S    | 2.41  | S    | 2.90  | O    | 1.07 <sup>ns</sup> | .36     |
| Accommodating |                                                                                                                        |      |      |       |      |       |      |       |      |                    |         |
| 1.            | I try to meet the expectations of others.                                                                              | 3.00 | O    | 3.11  | O    | 3.05  | O    | 3.30  | O    | .25 <sup>ns</sup>  | .85     |
| 2.            | In negotiations, I hold on to my position rather than give in.                                                         | 2.50 | O    | 2.38  | S    | 2.64  | O    | 2.70  | O    | .38 <sup>ns</sup>  | .76     |
| 3.            | I let peers have their way rather                                                                                      | 2.06 | S    | 2.27  | S    | 2.23  | S    | 2.60  | O    | 1.55 <sup>ns</sup> | .21     |

than to risk our relationship.

| Compromising |                                                                            |      |   |      |   |      |   |      |   |                    |     |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---|------|---|------|---|------|---|--------------------|-----|
| 4.           | I try to negotiate and use a give-and-take approach to problem situations. | 3.62 | A | 3.66 | A | 3.76 | A | 3.50 | A | .57 <sup>ns</sup>  | .63 |
| 5.           | I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.             | 2.73 | O | 2.44 | S | 2.58 | O | 2.50 | O | .36 <sup>ns</sup>  | .78 |
| 6.           | To break deadlocks, I would meet people halfway.                           | 3.12 | O | 3.05 | O | 3.17 | O | 3.60 | A | 1.54 <sup>ns</sup> | .21 |

Table 5 shows the difference in the conflict management styles of the respondents when grouped according to their years in service. It can be noted for all statements across all five conflict styles, the p-values were greater than 0.05 which indicate no significant differences among respondents with 1-10, 11-20, 21-30, and 31-40 years of service. For Collaborating style, statements like discussing issues to meet everyone's needs, gathering information and keeping communication open, and seeing conflicts from both sides showed no significant differences which indicate that all years of service groups use these cooperative approaches similarly. For Competing style, all statements including arguing one's own point of view, enjoying the challenge of a disagreement, and believing one is usually right also showed no significant differences which mean that all years of service groups compete in the same way. For Avoiding style, saying very little during an argument, feeling uncomfortable and anxious during a disagreement, and keeping hard feelings to oneself likewise showed no significant differences. These suggest that respondents across all years of service avoid disagreements at similar rates. For Accommodating style, trying to meet others' expectations, holding one's position instead of giving in, and letting peers have their way to avoid hurting the relationship showed no significant differences which indicate all years of service groups accommodate others equally. For Compromising style, using a give-and-take approach, preferring to compromise just to move on, and meeting people halfway to break a deadlock showed no significant differences which imply that respondents with different years of service compromise similarly. With all these p-values exceeding the 0.05 threshold for all items, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis for every statement. This means that respondents across different years in service generally share the same conflict management styles. Since no items showed p-values below 0.05, there were no significant differences found among the four groups. The rejection of the null hypothesis did not apply to any behavior. General results show that respondents are alike in all conflict management styles across every statement regardless of years of service. Thus, the study fails to reject the null hypothesis and years in service do not produce any differences in conflict management styles.

The findings imply that length of service does not significantly influence employees' conflict management styles, suggesting that respondents tend to develop and maintain similar approaches to handling workplace conflict regardless of their tenure in the organization. This indicates that conflict management behaviors may be more shaped by shared organizational culture, workplace norms, or personal disposition rather than years of experience in service. The consistency of results across all five conflict styles further implies that both newer and more experienced employees are equally capable of applying collaborative, competitive, avoiding, accommodating, and compromising approaches when dealing with workplace conflicts. Overall, the results suggest that conflict management styles are stable across tenure groups and are not dependent on years of service within the institution. (Maria Rona 2023) stated that individual causes of conflicts were the most common conflicts experienced in the system regardless of length of service. This is evident in their research when they grouped their respondents according to their educational attainment and length of service. This requires principals to implement other conflict management in managing individual and managerial conflicts. They proposed in their study a program for the enhancement of relevant skills in conflict management to manage conflicts at different levels or situation.

## Research Question 4: What common workplace challenges are observed by the respondents?

### Task-Related Challenges

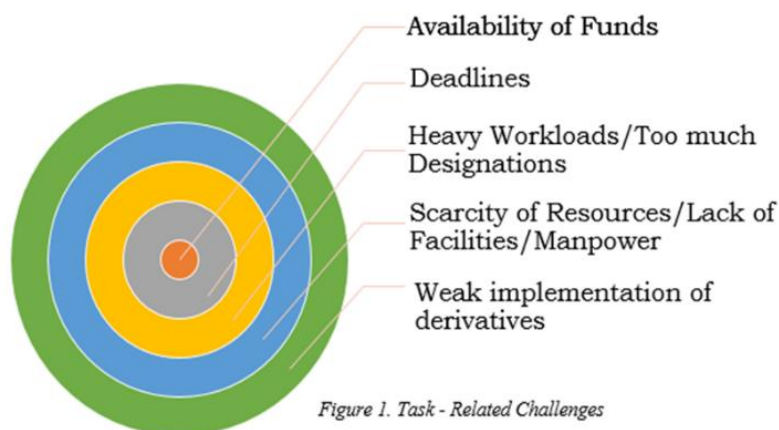


Figure 1. Task - Related Challenges

### Common Workplace Challenges Observed and Experienced by the Respondents

The following are the workplace challenges that are observed and experienced by the respondents, they are presented into major themes, task related and interpersonal workplace challenges.

#### 1. Task -Related Workplace Challenges

This theme refers to conflicts and difficulties that arise from the nature of work demands, organizational systems, and resource limitations within the institution. Respondents identified several subthemes under this category, including availability of funds, deadlines, heavy workload or multiple designations, scarcity of resources or lack of facilities, insufficient manpower, and weak implementation of directives. These challenges highlight how structural and operational constraints in the workplace create pressure on employees, often affecting task completion and coordination. Such conditions may lead to misunderstandings, stress, and conflicts when employees struggle to meet expectations under limited resources and time constraints. The findings imply that workplace conflicts are strongly influenced by structural and operational constraints such as limited funds, heavy workload, deadlines, insufficient manpower, and lack of resources. These conditions suggest that employees are often required to manage responsibilities under pressure, which may affect efficiency and increase the likelihood of misunderstandings in task execution. This highlights the need for improved resource allocation, workload distribution, and clearer implementation of institutional policies, as addressing these factors may reduce task-related conflicts and support more effective workplace functioning. But if this is being managed with open communication, it is most likely appeal to be an outlet for stronger relationship and working ties in an institution. According to (Carcosia, et al, 2021) conflict is most likely displayed to 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.

**Availability of Funds.** This was the lead among the challenges that the researcher had listed during the focus group interview to different chairpersons and unit heads. This was viewed by the respondents as recurring and prompted misunderstanding among employee who demanded budget to their units but failed to understand guidelines to follow in the use of fund. One participant stated that, "*Isa na nakakapagdulot sa amin ng conflict dito ay kung walang pondo, hindi naiintidihan ng tao, na may mga sinusunod tayong mga guidelines in the use of fund yun ang nagdudulot ng hindi pagkakaintindihan.*"

Another participant responded that they encountered insufficiency of budget which limit them to conduct students' activity, *"recurring challenges namin dito is the budget because we cannot accomplish everything without a budget."* Another unit head said that they struggle with budget and did prioritizing as remedy, *"dito sa office ma'am is budget parehas ma'am sa pera kasi di kami makapag move lalo na sa mga bata kung walang gagamitin but we do prioritizing po."*

**Coping with Deadlines while struggling with heavy teaching loads and multiple designations.** Second to the listed challenges of the respondents are deadlines which they firmly mentioned on simultaneous or multiple deadlines from CHED monitoring and compliance. This greatly affect the working routine of employees of which they are affected mentally and relationally. This most likely lead to conflict increase pressure and anxiety among employees which affect their way of communication, attitude, and behavior towards other employees. One participant stated that, *". . . bulk of work related to deadlines, in short sabay sabay na deadline ma'am."* Another participant stated that they struggle with deadlines from CHED while coping with other deadlines with students' records and other related deadlines in the university, *"mahirap kapag nagkakasabay ang deadlines lalo sa accreditation, monitoring from CHED, monitoring sa PRC at isabay mo pa ang records ng mga graduating students."* Another participant stated that deadlines are their stressors especially during accomplishment of multiple tasks, *"same is true with deadlines, yun talaga yung isang stressor lalo kami at kami yung nasa grund lalo na kapag may mga kasabay na mabibigat na activities."* Another chairperson shared that they are still weighing things to the standards of CHED concerning their department, *"sobra sa trabaho sa CHED andaming hinihingi na minsan hindi na namin naibibigay because we've done our job and duties pero wala eh wala namang nag aapply, when it comes to contract of service eh gusto nila master's graduate lahat and we fail to comply with the CHED and AACCUP wala naman kaming magagawa magtuturo pa kami."*

**Scarcity of Resources/Lack of Facilities and insufficient manpower.** These challenges were raised commonly by the university's administrative unit, non-teaching and teaching personnel. This challenge according to the respondents affect the progress of their unit operation, limit teaching-learning process, and affects teachers in their performance. Most likely, this lead to conflict when other employees demanded services yet others cannot understand the side factors that impede the process of operation. A participant of the study stated that *"...we have experienced this challenge for the past three-years that we have insufficient classroom, it is not really conducive to learning due to heat because we have 500 students and we only have six classrooms aside from that dahil karamihan sa faculty ko ay dahil sa init ng panahon tumataas ang bp kahit may mga industrial fans maingay din kasi parang nakikipagsabayan sa boses ng sa boses ng mga teachers so it is not really conducive for learning."* Additionally, one among the respondents stated that, *"dito sa budget office, existing manual system parin na ginagamit kasi compared doon sa kung may ma-adopt tayo or madevelop tayong budget system alam naman natin na mamiminimize natin yung oras tyka mas magiging efficient pa kami kung sakali."*

**Weak implementation of derivatives.** This challenge highlights the attitude of employees in following such derivatives or memos from the office of the president where behavior of employees who resist to follow seemingly create conflicts to workplaces. Weak implementation of directives can create workplace conflicts by causing confusion, inconsistent practices, and unclear expectations among employees. When policies and instructions are not properly communicated or enforced, misunderstandings regarding roles, responsibilities, and procedures may arise, leading to frustration, delays in task completion, and disagreements among personnel. Consequently, ineffective implementation of directives can negatively affect workplace coordination and harmony. One participant stated that *". . . behavior of faculty and staff na ayaw sumunod lalo na sa segregation ng basura natin same is through with our water and electricity consumption"* One of the respondents stated that, *". . . may mga nakasulat in writing or memo but the implementation itself is hindi nasusunod lahat, concrete example nito is during meetings, 8:00am ang meeting dumadating 9:30, so iyon ang hirap magpasunod."* Of the presented finding above, it can be seen that within an institution, there are societal factors perceived that can drive conflict. It can be seen that people inside an institution came from different backgrounds and societal conditions. (Hennades, T. 2025)

states that civil unrest significantly impacts educational access for students, teachers, parents, and even community leaders when its people came together is potentially active in creating conflicts, this community conflicts can arise institutional conflicts.

## 2. Interpersonal Related

This theme captures challenges arising from relationships, communication, and behavior among individuals in the workplace. The subthemes include communication gaps and handling people, resistance to change, and discipline issues among both employees and students. These findings suggest that workplace conflicts are also influenced by how individuals interact, respond to authority, and adapt to organizational changes. Ineffective communication and differences in attitudes or compliance often lead to misunderstandings and tension among members of the institution.

### Interpersonal-Related Challenges

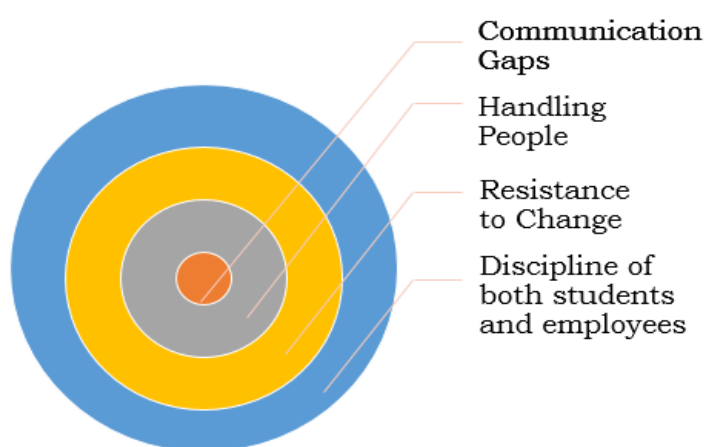


Figure 2. Interpersonal - Related Challenges

The findings imply that workplace conflicts are also significantly shaped by human interactions and communication dynamics within the institution. Issues such as communication gaps, resistance to change, and discipline concerns suggest that misunderstandings and differing attitudes can affect collaboration and workplace harmony. This emphasizes the importance of strengthening open communication, leadership strategies, and organizational discipline, as improving interpersonal relationships can help reduce conflicts and enhance cooperation among employees and students. Magtibay (2025) stated that workplace holds the ability to significantly influence the morale, relationship, performance, and job satisfaction of employees. Therefore, it is vital that organizations prevent conflicts that could result in negative outcomes especially to their relationship as colleagues in an institutional organization.

**Communication Gaps.** This is described to be failure or breakdown in the exchange of information, ideas, or feelings between people in a workplace due to different perspective or point of view. Communication gaps according to the respondents can create workplace conflicts by causing misunderstandings, unclear expectations, and misinterpretation of information. Ineffective communication may hinder the proper resolution of workplace challenges, leading to disagreements, strained relationships, and reduced collaboration among personnel. One chairperson stated that, *"Sa aking department naman, talagang communication lang po, alam naman natin na yung trabaho ng head is wala sa oras, magmemessage ang mga superior at the middle of the night then iforward ko sa faculty tapos nag aantay ako ng reply wala mang lang kahit isang reply or acknowledgement hindi ko alam kung nabasa nila or sinasadya nila."* Another participant stated that, *"Aside from that, communication gaps among colleagues din minsan kasi nga we have different approaches sometimes iba iba yung pananaw natin."*

**Struggle in Handling People.** This challenge occurs when dealing with different people of different personalities and school heads took difficulty in handling them, thus permitting conflicts to arise. Struggles in handling people can lead to workplace conflicts when differences in personalities, attitudes, and work styles are not effectively managed. Difficulties in dealing with employees, colleagues, or students may result in misunderstandings, disagreements, and strained relationships, making it more challenging to resolve workplace issues and maintain a positive work environment. A respondent says, *"since we are dealing with people, yung ano lang dealing with different personalities ng mga tao kahit iisa yung ini-implement natin iba iba yung reception or nagiging responses ng mga tao. Some people ay okay lang, others are not.* This displays the connection on the attitude on the employee towards the policies and regulations of the university, *"... pagdating sa mga tao problem namin yung punctuality halos monthly may nabibigyan kami ng memo, pagdating sa locator, marami kaming nababalitaan na lumalabas nang walang locator, sometimes nag i-in tapos umaalis then babalik nalang kung nag a-out na."* Difficulties in dealing with employees, colleagues, or students may result in misunderstandings, disagreements, and strained relationships, making it more challenging to resolve workplace issues and maintain a positive work environment.

**Resistance to Change.** The respondents stated that resistance to change can create workplace conflicts when employees are unwilling or hesitant to accept new policies, procedures, or organizational initiatives. Their differing views toward change may lead to disagreements, reduced cooperation, and tension among employees, making it more difficult to implement improvements and effectively address workplace challenges. This challenge involves the gap between the old systems of the university and the rejection to change of others. *"At sometimes being the leader or chairperson ng isang program, meron kasi yung gusto nating i-implement pero parang may resistance sa mga kasama and that will lead into a conflict ng mga kasama."* Another respondent added that, *"there are different personalities ng heads, so there are leaders na ayaw sa change kase sanay na sila sa dati nilang ginagawa so pag merong sinuggest for the betterment of the university medyo may resistant lang sa changes dahil sa different personalities lang sa tao or d lang sanay sa technology or nasanay lang sila sa kanilang ginagawa, ...sometimes may resistance kasi ayaw nilang sumunod sa kung ano yung sinasuggest natin."*

**Discipline of both employees and students.** This challenge was raised by the most of the general servicing unit of the three campuses where both students and employees have poor discipline on waste management, energy consumption, and even on wearing uniforms and IDs which likely lead to minimal conflicts of not following such guidelines. Discipline issues among employees and students can create workplace conflicts when rules, policies, and expected behaviors are not consistently followed. According to one from the participants of the study, *"There are memorandums issued by the office of the president pero non fully-compliant padin eh those are already put into writings but hinahayaan lang, over all ito sa lahat ng empleyado, naka memo na at lahat lahat hindi padin sumusunod for example pagsuot ng uniforms and IDs natin there are those na hindi padin sumusunod."* Other respondent stated that, *"poor waste management, malaking pong problema ng unit namig yung paghandle ng basura, sinasabi nga po sa amin tuwing meeting with Provincial, dapat kapag college role model na siya pero parang mas behave pa daw mga nasa elementary compared to college even faculty and staff pwede nating sabihing poor ang waste management and then sa water and electricity consumption kahit may policy or office memorandum tayo kung kailan mag turn off ng aircon pero still increasing padin ang ating consumption. Additionally, even behavior of employee to their daily time record, "Key struggle natin dito is missing time log ang reason nila is nakalimutan lang daw but as per report late palang dumating kaya nag le-letter kami."* Noncompliance with institutional standards may lead to misunderstandings, disagreements, and tensions among employees, administrators, and students, affecting workplace harmony and the effective resolution of workplace challenges.

These findings highlight the importance of fostering open communication, mutual understanding, adaptability, and effective interpersonal management to promote a more harmonious and productive institutional environment. Such issues may hinder effective collaboration, create misunderstandings, and affect professional relationships among members of the academic community.

The result support the idea of (Moon, 2020) exposed in their research that these deviant behaviors among employees have the potential to lessen work performance and job satisfaction. Much more, these unpleasant results might get worst when leaders will also possess deviant behavior. This could limit the collaboration, participation, and involvement of employees.

### Research Question 5: What are extent of challenges encountered by the respondents?

#### Extent of Challenges

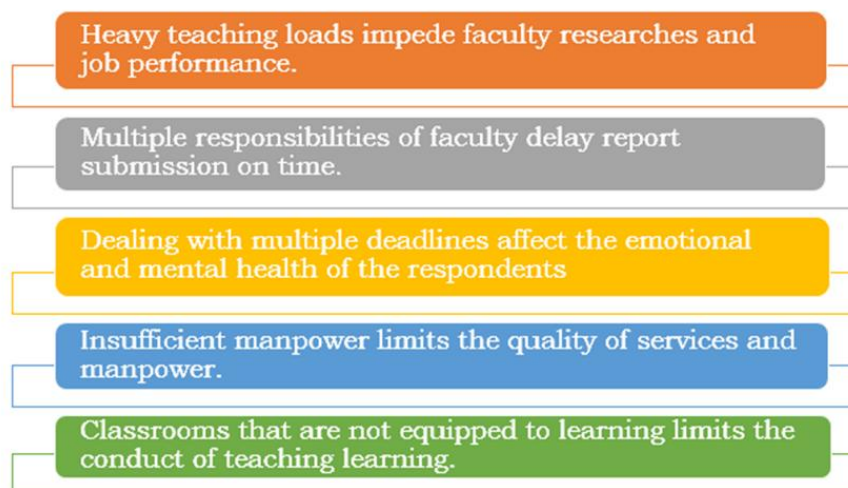


Figure 3. Extent of Challenges

This section presents us the severity of impact of the cited workplace challenges among the employees; it has two major themes:

#### 1. Task-Related Workplace Challenges Impede Job Productivity

This highlights how task-related workplace challenges directly affect employees' productivity and work performance. Challenges such as heavy workloads, multiple responsibilities, limited resources, insufficient manpower, and numerous deadlines can make it difficult for employees to complete tasks efficiently and effectively. As a result, these challenges may lead to delays, increased stress, reduced work quality, and lower overall productivity in the workplace. The findings imply that task-related workplace challenges can significantly hinder employees' ability to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. If these challenges are not properly addressed, they may negatively affect employee's productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. Therefore, institutions should consider implementing effective workload management strategies, providing adequate resources and staffing, and ensuring realistic timelines for task completion. Addressing these concerns can help create a more supportive work environment, enhance employee performance, and reduce conflicts arising from work-related pressures. As stated by (Rahim, 2017) that when conflicts are unmanaged, workplace conflicts can lead to decreased productivity, reduced morale, and high turnover rate. But (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003) claimed that when conflict is addressed effectively, conflict can be a source of innovation, stronger relationships, and improved team performance

**Heavy teaching loads impede productivity of faculty researches and job performance.** Heavy teaching loads can impede job productivity by reducing the time and energy available for research, administrative tasks, and other professional responsibilities. As teaching demands increase, faculty members may experience stress and fatigue, leading to delays in accomplishing tasks and a decline in overall work performance. A participant stated that, "Number one challenge is budget constraints and heavy teaching loads of faculty which impede productivity of faculty researches." This was viewed as factor that weakens their teaching performance, "... six preparations tapos karamihan major pa kung titignan mo yung oras kulang at yung pagod ng teacher na magtuturo."

**Insufficient manpower limits the quality of services and operations.** Insufficient manpower can affect job productivity by placing additional responsibilities on existing employees, often

requiring them to handle multiple tasks simultaneously. As workloads increase, employees may experience fatigue, stress, and time constraints, making it difficult to complete tasks efficiently and maintain the quality of services and operations. This situation can result in delays, reduced productivity, and challenges in meeting organizational goals and expectations. One participant stated that *"Sa amin ma'am kulang na kulang yung yung term in terms of manpower, kung enough yung manpower we can deliver to our students, faculty and staff."* Other respondents stated that, *"this can slow down workflow and increase stress."*

**Classrooms that are not equipped to learning limits the conduct of teaching learning process.** This extent limits the ability of faculty members to deliver instruction effectively. Inadequate facilities, learning resources, and instructional equipment may hinder the implementation of engaging and meaningful learning activities, making it more difficult to achieve desired educational outcomes. As a result, faculty members may need to exert additional effort to compensate for these limitations, which can affect their efficiency, productivity, and overall teaching performance. A participant stated that *"Ang hirap mag mano mano lalo sa amin at Mathematics yung tinuturo namin dito sa department namin kasi most of the time nagsosolve eh iisa lang ang board na gamit naming sa isang classroom, we are looking forward for a Mathematics room or interactive whiteboard."* One of the respondents also stated that, *"...we have experienced this challenge for the past three-years that we have insufficient classroom, it is not really conducive to learning due to heat because we have 500 students and we only have six classrooms aside from that dahil karamihan sa faculty ko ay dahil sa init ng panahon tumataas ang bp kahit may mga industrial fans maingay din kasi parang nakikipagsabayan sa boses ng sa boses ng mga teachers so it is not really conducive for learning."*

## 2. Task-Related Workplace Challenges Affect Employees' Mental and Emotional Health

Task-related workplace challenges can affect employees' mental and emotional health by creating pressure that often leads to workplace conflict. Multiple responsibilities, limited resources, and multiple responsibilities can cause stress, fatigue, and emotional exhaustion. In conflict situations, these pressures may lower patience and tolerance among employees, making them more prone to misunderstandings, frustration, and disagreements. As a result, task-related demands not only reduce well-being but also contribute to the occurrence and escalation of workplace conflicts. The findings imply that task-related workplace challenges do not only affect employee productivity but also have a direct impact on their mental and emotional well-being, which may contribute to workplace conflicts. This suggests the need for institutions to promote a supportive work environment by managing workloads effectively, ensuring adequate resources, and providing stress-reduction support systems. Addressing these concerns may help improve employee well-being and reduce the occurrence of task-related conflicts in the workplace. According to (Miljenovic, 2022), they added that only a mentally healthy teacher can fully dedicate himself to work and make the maximum effort to contribute to the students' mental health. Additionally, mentally healthy teachers are expected to be advocates of peace and order in an educational institution, there are low chances of conflict to come along but they themselves are expected to settle occurrences of conflicts. Hereby suggested that teachers' status to their mental health is one of the factors to be considered by the Human Resource Officer (HRMO) before hiring.

**Multiple responsibilities of faculty delay report submission on time affecting one's work focus and expectation.** Multiple responsibilities that delay report submission can affect employees' mental and emotional health by causing stress, anxiety, and fatigue due to workload pressure and unmet deadlines. One from the participants stated that, *"We teach, we do research, we do paper works, extension activities, and address to students' concerns so kadalasan yung challenges na yun hindi namin namimeet yung submission of some reports on time."* One of the respondents also stated that, *"Too much designations prompted me to not concentrate on specific task and increase high pressure environment."* This divided focus can also lead to feeling overwhelmed and emotionally strained, affecting overall well-being and work performance.

**Dealing with multiple deadlines affects the emotional and mental health of the respondents.** This affects the emotional and mental health of respondents by creating constant pressure to complete tasks within limited time. This can lead to stress, anxiety, fatigue, and feelings of being overwhelmed, especially when deadlines overlap or are difficult to meet. A participant stated that, *"Yung coping with deadlines especially yun lang yung struggle mo na nakakaffect din sayo especially when you cannot meet it and it puts the university into a badlight eh mahirap talaga iyon it really affects me a lot."* Over time, this may reduce focus, lower motivation, and negatively impact overall well-being and work performance.

## Research Question 6: What intervention recommended to eliminate the cause of conflicts to the respondents?

### Recommendations/Initiatives to Mitigate Workplace Conflicts

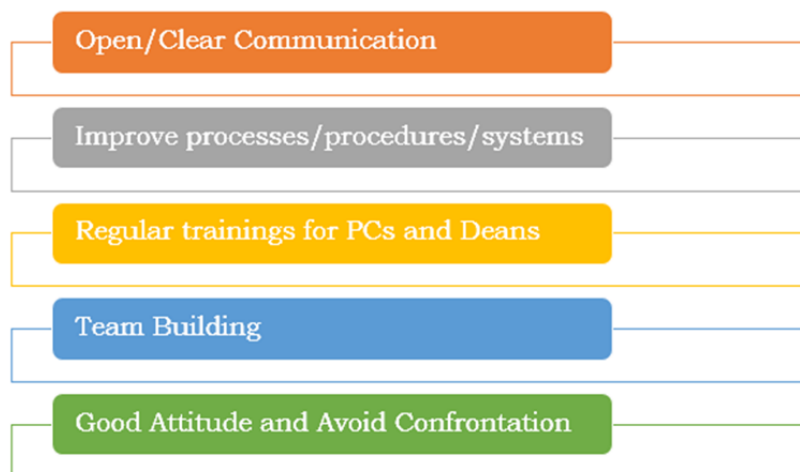


Figure 4. Recommendations/Initiatives to Mitigate Workplace Conflicts

The respondents emphasized that effective communication and collaborative engagement are essential in preventing misunderstandings and strengthening professional relationships. Furthermore, continuous professional development and improved institutional practices may contribute to a more supportive, harmonious, and productive workplace environment.

**1. Healthy relationships among employees.** Workplace conflicts can be mitigated by fostering an environment that promotes clear communication, efficient systems, and positive interpersonal relationships. When employees are encouraged to openly express concerns and clarify expectations, misunderstandings are reduced and issues are addressed before they escalate. Collectively, these practices contribute to a more harmonious, efficient, and productive workplace environment. The findings imply that workplace conflicts can be effectively minimized through a combination of strong communication practices, improved organizational systems, leadership development, and positive interpersonal behavior. When institutions promote openness, structured processes, continuous training, teamwork, and professionalism, employees are more likely to resolve differences constructively, leading to a more harmonious, efficient, and productive work environment. According to (Lin 2024 ) suggested that offering training programs for leaders to improve conflict resolution skills, promoting open communication and recognizing high-level organizational citizenship behavior. The program should also encourage cross-functional communication and teamwork, and incorporate conflict management training into leadership development courses. The goal is to create a conflict management program where issues are skillfully addressed, ensuring that employees from diverse backgrounds feel valued and motivated.

**Open/Clear communication.** The respondents believed that open and healthy communication help mitigate workplace challenges and conflicts. A respondents stated that *"One maybe is to have an open communication. Yun lang naman ang solusyon sa mga problema natin ay usap, and then of course we have to improve our processes and procedures, and mapagiting yung paghahanap ng mga pondo."* One of respondents stated that, *"improve yung communication minsan hindi kasi naidadaan sa pag uusap eh para masolusyonan ang mga problems and isa siguro is we need to put the personal life out of our work to avoid being emotional to maintain healthy discussion which can solve problems," ". . . communication among employees so that they can freely express themselves if they have concerns."* If this is considered, the university can smoothly manage workplace challenges.

**Good Attitude and Avoid Confrontation.** A good attitude and avoiding unnecessary confrontation can help reduce workplace conflicts by promoting patience, respect, and emotional control in

dealing with others. When employees maintain a positive mindset, they are more likely to respond calmly to disagreements and consider others' perspectives instead of reacting aggressively. Avoiding unnecessary confrontation also helps prevent minor misunderstandings from escalating into serious conflicts, allowing issues to be resolved more constructively. A respondents stated that, *"Para sa akin lang para maiwan ang conflict is the right attitude in everything we do saan office man tayo, ipkaita natin lagi yung magadhang pag uugali."* *"...and iwasan natin yung confrontation hangga't maari, kung pwedeng magpasensya magpasensya ka, the right attitude."* *"Para sa akin din, we need to love QSU, despite sa mga nangyayari, we need to love it."* As a result, these behaviors contribute to a more harmonious work environment where cooperation and mutual respect are maintained.

**2. Strengthen institutional systems and capacitate workplace collaboration.** This refers to improving organizational processes while also enhancing employees' ability to work effectively together. When institutional systems such as policies, procedures, and workflows are clear, consistent, and well-implemented, they reduce confusion, role ambiguity, and delays that often lead to conflict. At the same time, capacitating workplace collaboration through training, team-building, and leadership development helps employees and managers communicate better, build trust, and handle differences constructively. Together, these improvements create a more organized, cooperative, and supportive work environment that helps prevent and reduce workplace conflicts. The findings imply that strengthening institutional systems alongside enhancing workplace collaboration is essential in minimizing workplace conflicts and improving organizational effectiveness. When policies and procedures are clear and consistently implemented, employees experience less confusion and role ambiguity, reducing potential sources of disagreement. At the same time, improving collaboration through training, leadership development, and team-building activities fosters better communication, trust, and cooperation among employees. Overall, these measures contribute to a more coordinated, efficient, and harmonious work environment that supports both conflict reduction and improved job performance. According to (Towns, 2023), conflict occurring in higher education continue to rise. Where in the contrary, there is a limited information regarding conflict management style of administrative leaders in academic programs. Their research recommended for programs or interventions for academic deans and department chairs that are often forefronts of conflicts. The topic of conflict management style and the quality of the leader-follower relationship should be assessed, they added.

**Improve processes/procedures/systems.** Improving processes, procedures, and systems can help reduce workplace conflicts by ensuring that roles, responsibilities, and workflows are clearly defined and consistently implemented. When policies and procedures are well-structured, employees have a clear understanding of what is expected from them, which minimizes misunderstandings, role confusion, and disagreements. A participant stated that, *"One of our tasks naman is to improve the procedures of the university or para makasabay tayo sa mga ibang universities in terms of procerdures."* A respondent stated as well that, *"establishment and development of different systems also nasa era na tayo na talagang ang gamit ng teknolohiya ay kailangang kailangan kapag hindi tayo makasunod mahuhuli tayo and I see it as very vital dun sa ating day to day operation it will make our job easier, mas accurate, mas mabilis, mas reliable if we have the system."* Efficient systems also reduce delays, duplication of work, and miscommunication, which are common sources of frustration in the workplace. As a result, a well-organized and transparent system promotes smoother coordination among employees and helps prevent conflicts from arising.

**Regular trainings for PCs and deans/capability building activities.** This can strengthen leadership, communication, and decision-making skills. When leaders are well-trained, they are able to manage people, clarify expectations, and handle disagreements in a fair and professional manner, which minimizes misunderstandings among employees. These trainings also equip them with effective conflict management strategies, enabling them to address issues early before they escalate. The participant stated that, *"we need that because there is no perfect strategy/technique to become a leader so from time to time we should have trainings or seminars ganun po," "simple trainings help in resolving conflicts effectively strengthens relationships and improves work outcome."* As a result, employees experience clearer guidance, better coordination, and a more organized work environment, which ultimately enhances both workplace harmony and job performance.

**Team Building.** This activity strengthens trust, communication, and cooperation among employees. Through shared activities and interactions, employees develop better relationships and understanding of each other's roles and personalities. This improves teamwork, reduces misunderstandings, and promotes a more positive and collaborative work environment where conflicts are less likely to occur or escalate. *The participants stated that "Magkaroon ng team building para atleast magkaroon ng pag uusap kung paano iharmonize or pagkakasia sa mga problems arising mabubuild up dito kasi yung samahan ng faculty and staff sa palagay ko masosolve yung mga problems natin kung may ganito na activity na team building.* Through shared activities and structured interactions, employees become more familiar with each other's working styles, strengths, and personalities, which improves understanding and reduces miscommunication. As a result, team building fosters a more supportive and positive work environment where relationships are strengthened and workplace conflicts are less likely to occur or persist

## Ethical Considerations

This study is grounded on information obtained from reliable and credible sources to ensure the accuracy, objectivity, and trustworthiness of the data presented. The researcher carefully evaluated all primary and secondary sources used in the study to maintain the quality and integrity of the research process. All information gathered and incorporated into the study strictly adhered to the principles of academic honesty and ethical research practices. To uphold academic integrity, proper acknowledgment and citation of all referenced materials were observed in accordance with established citation guidelines. Plagiarism in any form was strictly avoided by ensuring that all ideas, findings, and statements derived from other authors were appropriately credited. The researchers also ensured that data were presented honestly and accurately, without fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation. In addition, informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. The confidentiality and privacy of participants were also protected by keeping their responses secure and using the collected data solely for academic purposes. Through these measures, the researchers ensured that the study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards and principles.

## Conclusion

The research synthesizes that the workplace challenges cited among by the respondents are primarily task-related that concerns with organizational and administration concerns and interpersonal-related among employees than demographic – based, and the conflict management styles are generally similar regardless of sex, employment category, or years in the service except for a few particular situations. The respondents have displayed a consistent utilization of the five conflicts management styles proving its potential to differing conflicts as referred to Table 2. While the respondents cited extent of challenges that affect work performance, emotional and mental stability, teaching learning, and delays on work progress and performance, there are no workplace challenges or personal conflicts that escalate into a worse situation because they addressed challenges and conflicts through open communication. Overall, the findings suggest that no single conflict management style is universally effective in addressing workplace challenges. Instead, administrators and employees may benefit from developing flexibility in applying the five conflict management styles depending on the nature of the conflict, organizational demands, and interpersonal dynamics within the university setting. Good leadership can be refined and enhanced through process of training and learning. One of the keys to successful leadership and management is the advancement of training and exposure at young age of which this process could possibly produce institutional leaders widely known on settling conflicts. Claimed by (Laygo-Saguil, 2021) that future leaders are shaped by today's training and learning which will open and empower potentials to leadership; thus, viewed as a key to effective teaching-learning process and management. The findings imply that workplace challenges in the institution are largely driven by task-related and interpersonal factors rather than demographic characteristics, indicating that employees generally share similar conflict management approaches regardless of sex, position, or length of service. Although these challenges affect work performance, emotional well-being, and work processes, the absence of escalation into severe conflicts suggests that open communication plays a crucial role in managing and resolving issues effectively. This highlights the importance of maintaining transparent communication practices within the organization as a key strategy for preventing conflicts from worsening and sustaining a functional and cooperative workplace environment.

## Recommendations

Considering the findings and conclusions of the study, the research recommended to the participants to maintain open communication among concerned people during conflicts, as per to the administration, since top of the listed challenges that most likely trigger conflict in the institution were fund, scarcity of funds, insufficient facilities and systems, the administration can look on potential source of fund to cater the needs of the institution. A development plan or engagement plan can be considered by the executives of the institution since most of the listed challenges are concerned with task-related and interpersonal related challenges, and a future study can be conducted to identify workplace challenges and conflicts encountered among teaching personnel for future researches.

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