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School Heads' Leadership Behavior Across Conflict Management Approaches: An ANOVA Study

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Abstract: This study investigated the significant differences in school heads' leadership behavior when grouped according to their conflict management approaches, as well as the effect size of these approaches on leadership behavior. Utilizing a descriptive-comparative research design, the study surveyed 90 public school teachers using an adapted questionnaire. The findings revealed that school heads predominantly utilize collaborating and compromising approaches, and they consistently exhibit high levels of leadership behavior across personality, learning environment, and technology domains. A significant difference was found in leadership behavior based on conflict management styles, with a large effect size indicating that 93.4% of the variance in leadership behavior is explained by the conflict management approach used. The study concludes that the strategies school heads use to resolve conflicts substantially influence their overall leadership effectiveness.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership behavior among school heads is a decisive factor in school effectiveness, yet issues such as weak data-informed decision-making, inconsistent instructional supervision, and limited conflict management skills persistently impede teaching and learning. While existing literature in the Philippines extensively covers general leadership styles and efficiency, there is a scarcity of empirical research examining how leadership behavior varies across different conflict management approaches, particularly in Davao City. Grounded in Stogdill's Trait Theory, Fiedler's Contingency Theory, and Graen and Uhl-Bien's Leader-Member Exchange Theory, this study aimed to determine if significant differences exist in school heads' leadership behaviors—specifically concerning personality, learning environment, and technology—when grouped by their conflict management approaches (competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating).

II. METHODOLOGY

- Research Design: The study employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design to systematically compare variations in leadership behavior across distinct conflict management categories without manipulating variables.
- Respondents: The sample consisted of 90 public school teachers selected through universal sampling within the district, ensuring a comprehensive representation of teachers' perceptions.
- Instruments: Data was gathered using a validated, adapted 15-item Likert-scale questionnaire divided into two parts: Conflict Management Approaches (based on Thomas and Kilmann) and Leadership Behavior (anchored on Roxas).
- Data Analysis: The researcher utilized Frequency and Percentage for conflict approaches, Mean for leadership behavior levels, One-Way ANOVA to test for significant differences, and Eta-Squared for effect size computation.

III. RESULTS

- Conflict Management Approaches: The most preferred style was collaborating (30%), followed by compromising (24.44%), accommodating (18.89%), competing (17.78%), and avoiding (8.89%).
- Leadership Behavior Levels: The overall leadership behavior of school heads was rated as "High" (mean of 3.49), with individual high ratings for learning environment (3.54), personality (3.48), and technology (3.46).
- Significant Difference: The One-Way ANOVA results indicated a statistically significant difference in leadership behavior when grouped by conflict management approaches ($F = 33.278$, $p = 0.000$).
- Effect Size: The Eta-Squared value was 0.934, demonstrating a very large effect size where 93.4% of the variance in leadership behavior is accounted for by the conflict management approach.

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IV. DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that school heads in the district favor cooperative and solution-oriented strategies, which aligns with literature emphasizing that collaborative and compromising approaches foster open communication and mutually acceptable outcomes. The consistently high ratings in personality, learning environment, and technology suggest that these leaders effectively manage resources, foster teamwork, and adapt to digital demands. The significant difference and large effect size confirm that the way school heads handle conflicts is not merely an isolated skill but a dominant factor that shapes their overall leadership effectiveness, supporting Fiedler's Contingency Theory. Consequently, developing adaptive and collaborative conflict management skills is critical for school administrators to maintain a productive, harmonious, and progressive educational environment.

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