

Principals' Conflict Resolution Capacity and Change Leadership Competence: Their Implications on Teachers' Morale and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract. In the face of increasing challenges in the education sector, effective school leadership is crucial for resolving conflicts, implementing change, and promoting teacher morale and job satisfaction. This study assessed the conflict resolution capacity and change leadership competence of public elementary school principals, as perceived by school heads, teachers, and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Presidents. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 26 principals, 324 teachers, and 26 PTA Presidents through total enumeration and stratified random sampling, with proportional allocation determined via Yamane's formula. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Results indicated that principals demonstrated high competence in both conflict resolution and leading change. Significant positive correlations were found between principals' conflict resolution skills and teacher morale, as well as between teacher morale and job satisfaction. However, only a moderate correlation was observed between principals' change leadership competence and teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, perceptions of principals, teachers, and PTA Presidents significantly differed regarding principals' change leadership abilities. These findings underscore the importance of strategic and sustained professional development in conflict resolution and leadership for school administrators. Future research may adopt qualitative approaches to uncover underlying factors influencing stakeholder perceptions and provide deeper insights into the dynamics of school leadership and its impact on teacher well-being and school effectiveness.

Keywords: Principal; Conflict resolution; Morale; Job satisfaction; Change leadership.

1.0 Introduction

The contemporary educational landscape is characterized by growing complexity, including challenges in conflict resolution, implementation of change, and sustaining teacher morale and job satisfaction. At the heart of addressing these issues lies the pivotal role of school principals, whose leadership capacity has a significant influence on school effectiveness and the well-being of teachers. Effective conflict resolution and change leadership have been identified as critical leadership functions that affect teacher job satisfaction and morale (Aquino et al., 2021). The UNESCO report (2019) and the PASA survey further emphasize that school administrators worldwide face increased pressure to manage conflicts amid educational complexities, necessitating strategic and collaborative approaches (Illescas & Perez, 2020). In the Philippine context, the Department of Education has reported a rise in unresolved disputes in public schools, particularly between

teachers and school leaders, which negatively impacts the academic environment (Manila, 2016).

Additionally, implementing change in schools remains a persistent challenge. The OECD (2018) emphasized that effective leadership is crucial for facilitating educational reform and supporting teacher development. Ganon-Shilon et al. (2019) argue that principals' change leadership plays a central role in improving teacher performance, while Mikelsone et al. (2023) found that a lack of supportive leadership adversely affects teacher morale. In the Philippines, leadership in public schools is further complicated by vulnerability to political interference, limited resources, and organizational bureaucracy (Brooks & Sutherland, 2016). The declining morale of Filipino teachers is also a pressing concern. UNESCO IICBA (2017) reported that many teachers seek employment abroad due to poor compensation and challenging working conditions. Mangin (2021) stressed that low morale increases teacher stress and diminishes performance. Further, Gatchalian (2019) noted that excessive administrative responsibilities in Philippine public schools detract from instructional quality. The TALIS survey (OECD, 2018) and more recent studies (Alfuraih et al., 2022; Razon, 2022; Fabella et al., 2022) further reveal how workload stress and lack of systemic support contribute to teacher dissatisfaction and attrition.

Furthermore, Fullan (2016) asserted that competing priorities and limited resources challenge school leaders' ability to manage change. While individual studies have addressed conflict resolution, change leadership, and teacher morale, a gap remains in understanding how these dimensions interrelate in the context of Philippine public elementary schools. Therefore, this study investigates the perceived conflict resolution capacity and change leadership competence of school principals and how these relate to teacher morale and job satisfaction. By examining the perspectives of principals, teachers, and parents, this research seeks to generate evidence-based insights that can inform leadership practices, policy interventions, and professional development initiatives aimed at strengthening school leadership and promoting teacher well-being.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

A descriptive-correlational research design was employed to investigate the conflict resolution capacity and change management competence of school principals, as well as the morale and job satisfaction of teachers and the relationships among these variables. The descriptive aspect of the study aimed to present a clear and accurate portrayal of current practices and perceptions, while the correlational component sought to identify potential associations between the variables under investigation. This approach is considered appropriate for capturing the dynamics within educational settings and for exploring patterns of relationships without manipulating any factors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), as it allows researchers to describe phenomena as they naturally occur and examine how variables relate to one another.

2.2 Respondents and Sampling Technique

The study involved a total of 376 respondents, composed of school principals, elementary teachers, and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Presidents from four (4) city divisions in Region XII, such as Kidapawan, Koronadal, Tacurong, and General Santos. These key stakeholders assessed the school principals' conflict resolution capacity, change leadership competence, as well as the teachers' morale and job satisfaction. The school principals selected were those heading central schools with plantilla items and at least six (6) years of administrative experience. This selection criterion ensured the inclusion of principals in strong leadership positions, who are more likely to have implemented long-term plans and initiatives that influence school performance, culture, and stakeholder engagement. Their years of service also likely impact their leadership styles, decision-making processes, and ability to navigate complex educational challenges. Teacher-respondents included seasoned professionals like Master Teachers, Curriculum Heads, and Teacher III, who had served for at least three (3) years in their respective plantilla positions. This criterion ensured the inclusion of experienced educators capable of providing well-informed insights into their levels of morale and job satisfaction based on sustained involvement in the education system. In addition, each central school's PTA was represented by its current president. This deliberate inclusion of current PTA leaders ensured that the perspectives gathered reflected the up-to-date insights and priorities of the parent community in each school. The sampling procedure combined complete enumeration and probability-based techniques to ensure comprehensive and representative data collection. Due to the relatively small population of school heads and PTA Presidents, all individuals in these groups were included in the study through complete enumeration. In contrast, a stratified random sampling method was used to select teacher-respondents from each central school, ensuring proportional representation across the four divisions. The number of teacher participants was determined through standard sampling protocols, with allocations made proportionally. To

finalize the sample from each school, simple random sampling using the fishbowl draw method was applied to guarantee fairness and equal selection chances among eligible teachers (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

2.3 Research Instrument

To gather comprehensive data on school principals' conflict resolution capacity and change leadership competence, as well as on teachers' morale and job satisfaction, the study utilized four validated and reliable survey instruments. Each tool was selected based on its relevance to the variables under investigation and its proven psychometric properties. The first instrument, initially developed by Henning (2004), was adapted to evaluate the conflict resolution capacity of school principals. It featured 40 items categorized into ten subscales: view of the conflict, atmosphere, clarification of perceptions, needs, power, future, options, doubles, mutual benefit agreement, and extra considerations. This instrument was administered to school principals, teachers, and PTA presidents. Responses were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). A pilot study with 25 respondents yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, indicating excellent internal consistency. To measure change leadership competence, the second instrument, adapted from Tai, Abdull Kareem, Nordin, and Khuan (2017), focused on four major domains: goal framing, capacity building, change execution, and institutionalizing. Similar to the first instrument, it was administered to school principals, teachers, and PTA presidents, with responses captured on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Outstanding). The tool demonstrated strong reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.86. The third instrument, a 40-item questionnaire adapted from Matas et al. (2022), assessed teacher morale across four core dimensions: motivation and optimism, subjective well-being, status, and self-efficacy. Teacher respondents rated the items using the same Likert scale (1 = Never to 5 = Always), and the instrument recorded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81, suggesting good reliability. The fourth instrument, designed to measure teachers' job satisfaction, was adapted from Troeger (2022). It included 58 items grouped into ten dimensions: supervision, colleagues, working conditions, pay, responsibility, advancement, security, work itself, and recognition. Responses followed the same five-point Likert format, and the instrument achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83, indicating strong internal consistency. All four instruments underwent rigorous content validation by a panel of six research experts. Each item was evaluated for relevance and alignment with its intended construct. The computed Content Validity Index (CVI) exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.83 for all instruments, affirming their appropriateness and adequacy for use in the current study.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process began with securing official permission from the Dean to conduct the study. Upon approval, a formal request letter, duly noted by the research adviser, was submitted to the Department of Education (DepEd) Regional Director to obtain clearance for involving public schools and personnel in the investigation. After receiving the necessary endorsement, additional approval was sought from the respective Schools Division Superintendents overseeing the selected schools. Subsequently, individual request letters were addressed to the principals of the identified schools, informing them of the study's objectives and requesting their participation. Once permissions were granted at all administrative levels, survey questionnaires were distributed. To ensure the smooth and timely administration of the instruments, a focal person or designated research assistant was appointed in each participating school to facilitate the efficient collection of responses. The researcher properly oriented the latter about the nature and objective of the study and how the questionnaire was administered to gather credible data. After administering the survey tools, the researcher or the research assistant collected the completed questionnaires for organization and tabulation. All gathered data was treated with utmost confidentiality and used solely for research purposes, by the Data Protection Act.

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were systematically organized, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The mean and standard deviation were computed to assess the levels of school principals' conflict resolution capacity, change leadership competence, and the teachers' morale and job satisfaction. The standard deviation was particularly useful in measuring the variability of responses within each indicator of the studied variables. To determine the relationships between key variables, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was applied. This analysis examined the associations between conflict resolution capacity and teachers' morale, conflict resolution capacity and job satisfaction, change leadership competence and teachers' morale, and change leadership competence and job satisfaction. In addition, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to identify significant differences in the perceptions of principals, PTA presidents, and teachers regarding the conflict resolution capacity and change leadership competence of school principals.

Another one-way ANOVA was used to examine whether these perceptions varied when grouped by School Division.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

This quantitative study addressed several important ethical considerations related to the research methodology. Ensuring proper ethical conduct was fundamental throughout the investigation. The study adhered to the guidelines established by the Ethics and Review Committee to maintain high ethical standards. To protect participant confidentiality, all identifying information was excluded from reports and publications. Additionally, the research carefully avoided plagiarism by properly acknowledging all sources using the APA referencing system, ensuring that all borrowed ideas and works were appropriately credited. To further maintain academic integrity, the study was screened for plagiarism using software such as Grammarly. Fabrication of data or results, as well as falsification and deliberately misrepresenting findings to fit expectations, were strictly avoided. The research also refrained from exaggeration or making unsupported claims. Data handling was conducted transparently and honestly. No manipulation of data, selective reporting, or misleading use of materials and methods occurred. The study took care to avoid causing any harm, whether physical or psychological, to participants. This includes preventing stress, anxiety, pain, diminished self-esteem, or invasion of privacy. The research respected the welfare of all involved, ensuring that no living subjects were harmed. Appropriate permissions were obtained from the relevant authorities prior to the collection of data.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Conflict Resolution Capacity of Principals in the City Schools in Region XII

Table 1 summarizes the level of conflict resolution capacity among school principals as reported by respondents from four city school divisions in Region XII. As shown, the summary of the level of conflict resolution capacity among school principals is generally advanced ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.10$). This result suggests that school principals employ a range of practical strategies for managing conflicts and can implement them effectively, leading to positive outcomes for all parties involved. They also identify mutual benefit agreements to resolve conflicts.

Table 1. *Summary of the Level of Conflict Resolution Capacity of School Principals*

Indicators	Teacher		Principal		PTA		Overall		Interpretation
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
View of Conflict	3.70	1.33	3.06	0.99	2.81	1.36	3.19	1.22	Advanced
Atmosphere	4.13	0.84	4.69	0.81	4.38	0.85	4.18	0.85	Advanced
Clarifications	4.04	1.27	4.13	1.00	4.09	0.94	4.05	1.24	Advanced
Needs	3.78	1.00	3.62	1.03	3.63	1.11	3.76	1.02	Advanced
Power	3.74	1.05	3.54	1.10	3.54	1.13	3.71	1.07	Advanced
Future	3.05	1.16	3.18	1.12	3.37	2.32	3.08	1.33	Proficient
Options	3.59	1.08	3.56	1.14	3.74	1.21	3.60	1.11	Advanced
Doables	3.68	1.04	3.92	1.18	3.83	1.14	3.71	1.06	Advanced
Mutual Benefit Agreement	3.61	1.01	3.47	1.36	3.54	1.37	3.60	1.07	Advanced
Extra Considerations	3.48	1.03	3.59	0.92	3.15	1.28	3.47	1.04	Advanced
Mean	3.68	1.08	3.68	1.06	3.61	1.27	3.66	1.14	Advanced

The findings suggest that school principals possess strong skills in resolving conflicts, effectively using different strategies to achieve positive outcomes for everyone in the school community. This aligns with Dewi et al. (2019), who highlight the importance of principals being proficient in conflict resolution. Their work underscores that principals should approach conflicts thoughtfully and view them as opportunities for growth and improvement within the school environment. It also emphasizes the necessity of understanding and applying appropriate conflict management techniques in educational settings. The study by Aloqlah (2022) yields similar findings, indicating that environments and atmospheres where conflicts are positively managed and at their lowest levels produce an ideal environment for job performance among school principals. The second research problem concerns the principal's change leadership competence level regarding four areas to be measured in the city school's division in Region XII. It includes goal framing, capacity building, Change Execution, and institutionalizing roles.

3.2 Level of Teachers' Morale

Table 2 summarizes the findings on the level of teachers' morale. The overall morale of the teachers was high ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.82$). It means that teachers with high morale feel inspired and enthusiastic about their work. They feel like they are making a difference in their students' lives and find meaning in their work. They are also

considered supported by their colleagues and administration.

Table 2. *Summary of Findings on the Level of Teachers' Morale*

	Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1	Motivation and optimism	4.65	0.57	Very High
2	Subjective well-being	3.76	0.97	High
3	Status self-regulation	3.64	1.00	High
4	Self-efficacy	4.34	0.72	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.10	0.82	High

The results suggest a positive environment that supports effective teaching and student engagement, underscoring the importance of nurturing and sustaining teacher morale to ensure continued academic success. However, this finding contrasts with Ucay (2021), who argued that teachers require capacity-building training to improve relationships and promote a healthier school climate. On the other hand, these results align with the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2019), which reported that teaching quality can decline when public school teachers take on additional administrative or student support duties.

3.3 Teachers' Job Satisfaction in the City School's Division in Region XII

Table 3 summarizes the respondents' assessment of the level of teachers' job satisfaction. The overall job satisfaction of teachers is high ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.91$). It means that teachers feel energized and enthusiastic about their work, making a positive impact in their students' lives and finding meaning, while also feeling supported by their colleagues and the administration.

Table 3. *Summary of the Level of Teachers' Job Satisfaction*

	Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1	Supervision	4.08	0.94	High
2	Colleagues	4.26	0.77	Very High
3	Working conditions	3.54	1.04	High
4	Pay	3.65	1.04	High
5	Responsibility	4.63	0.58	Very High
6	Work itself	4.49	0.67	Very High
7	Advancement	4.13	0.92	High
8	Security	3.60	1.22	High
9	Recognition	3.96	1.02	High
	Overall Mean	4.03	0.91	High

The result suggests a supportive, enthusiastic, and fulfilling work environment that is likely to boost productivity and retention at the school. The result contradicts the assertion by Lin et al. (2024) that, despite expressing the highest satisfaction with their relationships with colleagues, American teachers exhibit notably low overall job satisfaction.

3.4 Relationship of Principals' Conflict Resolution Capacity and Teachers' Morale

The table shows that the overall Principals' conflict resolution capacity and the teachers' morale are significantly related ($r = .97$).

Table 4. *Correlational Analysis Between the Principals' Conflict Resolution Capacity and Teachers' Morale*

Variables	Motivation and optimism	Subjective well-being	Status self-regulation	Self-efficacy	Teachers' Morale
View of Conflict	-0.68	0.83	0.65	0.21	0.88
Atmosphere	0.80	-0.95	-0.82	0.03	-0.97*
Clarifications	-0.67	0.85	0.66	0.17	0.89
Needs	-0.82	0.86	0.951*	-0.66	0.81
Power	-0.88	0.92	0.85	0.04	0.97
Future	-0.38	0.82	0.60	-0.55	0.73
Options	-0.80	0.98*	0.86	-0.18	0.99*
Doables	-0.82	0.99*	0.94	-0.46	0.96*
Mutual Benefit					
Agreement	-0.86	0.81	0.76	0.25	0.90
Extra Considerations	-0.60	0.29	0.34	0.72	0.44
Overall	-0.84	0.93	0.83	0.02	0.97*

Notes: r -critical ($.05, 2$) = 0.95, *-significant

Hence, the directional hypothesis is rejected. Nevertheless, when the individual parameters of each variable are

correlated, only four (4) of the Principal's CRC are proven related to some measures of Teachers' Morale since the computed r is larger than the critical r value at the .05 level with a degree of freedom equal to 2, that is, 0.95. The atmosphere is indirectly related to teachers' morale ($r=-.97$); needs are related to status self-regulation ($r=.951$); options are related to subjective well-being ($r=.98$) and teachers' morale ($r=.99$); doables are related to status self-regulation ($r=.99$) and teachers' morale ($r=.96$). The findings reveal a robust positive correlation between principals' conflict resolution capacity and teachers' morale, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.97. This indicates a significant relationship, as the correlation exceeds the critical value of 0.95 at a 0.05 significance level with 2 degrees of freedom. Additionally, the coefficient of determination (r^2) is 0.9409, suggesting that approximately 94.09% of the variation in teachers' morale can be explained by the principals' ability to resolve conflicts. In comparison, the remaining 5.91% may be influenced by other factors (Senthilnathan, 2017). Moreover, the findings indicate that school administrators can resolve conflicts at the school level, and teachers' morale tends to be very high. The positive relationship implies a direct association between the two variables, such that when the conflict resolution capacity is outstanding, the teachers' morale is also expected to be at its best. Conversely, when a principal's conflict resolution capacity is poor, it follows that teachers' morale becomes weak.

The results suggest that the ability of school principals to manage conflicts effectively is crucial in enhancing teacher morale. Hebert (2019) highlights how positive relationships among coworkers significantly influence faculty morale, reinforcing the importance of principals' conflict resolution skills in creating a supportive work environment and uplifting teachers' spirits. This finding is supported by Salih et al. (2023), who found a strong positive relationship between teachers' morale and principals' conflict-resolution abilities. Similarly, Illescas and Perez (2020) reported that the conflict resolution capacity of elementary school principals has a significant impact on teachers' morale. This is also true in the Ali et al. (2021) study, which demonstrates that principals have a significant influence on teacher morale. Accordingly, supportive school principals have a positive influence on teacher morale, leading to increased self-assurance. To enhance morale, principals should create a supportive atmosphere, provide teachers with autonomy, and organize welcoming programs that foster a sense of community. Moreover, establishing counseling services within schools and fostering inter-institutional networks can support teachers' professional development, enhance their morale, and improve their performance. Similarly, a teacher's self-confidence plays a key role in shaping a positive school environment, helping to boost morale and support effective teaching and learning (Erichsen & Reynolds, 2020). Similarly, principals, as school leaders, can leverage the "power of collective intelligence" to deepen the learning community's understanding of its needs and mission, ultimately addressing and supporting what teachers need (Leithwood et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Shanka and Thuo (2017), school leaders should understand the sources of conflict, foster open communication, continuously develop their leadership skills, involve staff in decision-making, and seek funding sources for sustainable conflict resolution.

3.5 Relationship of Principals' Conflict Resolution Capacity and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The table shows that the overall principals' change leadership competence and teachers' job satisfaction revealed a fair to moderate correlation coefficient ($r = 0.38$). Most importantly, the relationship between the two variables is not statistically significant as it is less than the critical r value at the .05 alpha level. Therefore, the directional hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5. Correlational Analysis Between the Principals' Conflict Resolution Capacity and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Variables	Super vision	Colleagu es	Working conditions	Pay	Respon sibility	Work itself	Advance ment	Securit y	Recognit ion	Overall Job Satisfaction
View of Conflict	-0.16	0.57	0.28	0.78	0.73	-0.43	-0.81	0.79	-0.63	0.16
Atmosphere	-0.11	-0.75	-0.52	-0.91	-0.53	0.55	0.68	-0.92	0.40	-0.41
Clarifications	-0.12	0.57	0.30	0.81	0.71	-0.41	-0.78	0.80	-0.60	0.20
Needs	0.80	0.96	0.98*	0.87	-0.28	-0.71	-0.05	0.90	0.40	0.90
Power	0.09	0.80	0.53	0.87	0.53	-0.68	-0.75	0.93	-0.41	0.36
Future	0.45	0.54	0.61	0.87	0.09	-0.05	-0.05	0.73	0.04	0.71
Options	0.24	0.80	0.62	0.96*	0.41	-0.54	-0.57	0.96*	-0.27	0.54
Doables	0.54	0.90	0.83	1.00	0.10	-0.59	-0.32	0.98*	0.04	0.77
Mutual Benefit Agreement	-0.09	0.70	0.37	0.74	0.65	-0.70	-0.87	0.83	-0.55	0.16
Extra Considerations	-0.51	0.31	-0.11	0.17	0.73	-0.64	-0.94	0.35	-0.72	-0.39
Overall	0.09	0.77	0.52	0.89	0.54	-0.61	-0.72	0.92	-0.42	0.38

Notes: r -critical (.05,2) =0.95,*significant

Although a correlation was observed between principals' change leadership competence and teachers' job satisfaction, the analysis did not find this relationship to be statistically significant. This conclusion is drawn by comparing the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.38$) to the critical value ($r = 0.95$) at a 0.05 significance level with two degrees of freedom. This suggests that other factors may play a more important role in influencing teachers' job satisfaction. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.1444$) reveals that only about 14.44% of the variation in teachers' job satisfaction can be explained by principals' change leadership competence. The remaining 85.56% is likely influenced by other variables not examined in this study (Senthilnathan, 2017). This highlights the complexity behind what shapes teachers' overall satisfaction at work. While there appears to be a moderate positive connection between higher change leadership competence among principals and increased job satisfaction among teachers, the relationship is not particularly strong. Other factors beyond change leadership are likely at play in determining teachers' job satisfaction, indicating a need for further research to understand these influences better. This aligns with findings from Ibanga et al. (2023), who noted that teachers' job satisfaction can also be reasonably connected to principals' conflict resolution skills.

Additionally, the study by Djonra and Aki (2023) supports the notion that the conflict resolution capacity of school principals has a moderate relationship with the job effectiveness of teachers. It underscores the importance of practical conflict resolution skills for school principals in fostering a positive work environment and enhancing teacher performance. These findings, however, contrast with those of Edet et al. (2017), who reported a strong correlation between teachers' job satisfaction and the conflict resolution capacity of school principals. Their study highlights the importance of regular retraining sessions for principals to improve their conflict resolution skills, which, in turn, could enhance teachers' work performance.

Furthermore, the findings align with Ademola et al. (2023), who found that while administrators' conflict resolution techniques moderately affected teachers' job satisfaction, there remains a clear need for more targeted training and approaches based on dialogue and collaboration. On the other hand, this study's results differ from those of Shitambasi (2022), whose research in Kisii County found that principals' conflict management strategies had a positive effect on teachers' job performance. Shitambasi suggested that strengthening these strategies could effectively address conflicts and improve teacher performance in public secondary schools throughout the county. It implies that although the ability to resolve conflicts may affect job satisfaction, other characteristics account for a sizable percentage of the variation in job satisfaction among instructors.

3.6 Relationship of Principals' Change Leadership Competence and Teachers' Morale

Table 6 presents the relationship between principals' change leadership competence and teachers' morale across various dimensions. With a degree of freedom 2, the critical r value for significance at the alpha level of .05 is 0.95.

Table 6. *Correlational Analysis Between the Principals' Change Leadership Competence and Teachers' Morale*

Variables	Motivation and optimism	Subjective well-being	Status self-regulation	Self-efficacy	Overall Teachers' Morale
Goal Framing	0.73	-0.88	-0.72	-0.12	-0.92
Capacity Building	0.30	-0.67	-0.35	-0.16	-0.67
Change Execution	0.43	-0.59	-0.35	-0.47	-0.67
Institutionalizing	0.26	-0.06	0.01	-0.92	-0.21
Overall Change Leadership Competence	-0.84	0.93	0.83	0.02	0.97*

Notes: r -critical (.05,2) =0.95, *-significant

The results reveal a strong negative and statistically significant correlation between principals' change leadership competence and overall teachers' morale ($r = -0.97$, $p < .05$). Consequently, the directional hypothesis is rejected, suggesting that as principals' ability to lead change improved, teachers' morale notably declined. This finding contrasts with the majority of recent studies, such as Day and Gu (2014), who reported that effective school leadership and change management are generally associated with higher teacher morale and job satisfaction. Further analysis showed negative correlations between principals' change leadership competence and several specific dimensions of teachers' morale: motivation and optimism ($r = -0.84$), subjective well-being ($r = -0.93$), status self-regulation ($r = -0.83$), and self-efficacy ($r = -0.02$), all statistically significant at $p < .05$. These unexpected results may suggest contextual factors or leadership practices that, despite competence in leading change, might inadvertently lower teacher morale in this setting.

The present study found a strong positive relationship between principals' change leadership competence and the

institutionalization of change within schools ($r = 0.97$), suggesting that effective change leadership facilitates the embedding of change initiatives into school culture. Although other morale dimensions showed positive but non-significant correlations, these results align with recent research emphasizing the pivotal role of leadership competence in influencing teacher morale and school performance. Manglallan and Tagadiad (2024) highlighted how transformational leadership and stress management competencies of school heads shape teachers' attitudes toward organizational change, supporting the link between leadership and change acceptance. Similarly, Arong (2024) demonstrated that the leadership behaviors of elementary school heads positively affect teacher morale, underscoring the impact of leadership on fostering supportive environments. Estrada and Gumban (2024) further confirmed the significant relationship between school heads' competence and teacher performance, reinforcing the role of leadership quality in educational outcomes. Jose and Escote (2024) added that principals' administrative competence enhances teachers' motivation, indicating that leadership skills are crucial for sustaining teacher engagement and effectiveness during periods of change. Together, these findings validate the present study's implication that principals' change leadership competence is key to successfully institutionalizing change and maintaining positive teacher morale.

However, these findings contradict those of Tai et al. (2018), who found that principals' change leadership competencies had a significant positive influence on teachers' morale, which then strongly affected their attitudes toward change, serving as a mediating factor. This highlights the ongoing need to prioritize the continuous development of principals' change leadership skills to effectively guide school transformation, potentially calling for a shift from traditional change management methods. Additionally, Lambersky (2016) noted that principals' leadership during change can positively impact teachers' emotions by demonstrating professional respect, acknowledging their dedication and skills, shielding them from negative experiences, maintaining a visible presence, listening to their concerns, and communicating an inspiring vision. This underscores the importance of raising awareness and providing appropriate training for principals at both the school and system levels.

3.7 Relationship of Principals' Change Leadership Competence and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The table shows that the overall principals' change leadership competence and teachers' job satisfaction revealed a fair to moderate correlation coefficient ($r = 0.38$). However, it is not statistically significant.

Table 7. Correlational Analysis Between the Principals' Change Leadership Competence and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Variables	Super vision	Colleagu es	Working conditions	Pay	Respon sibility	Work itself	Advance ment	Security	Recogn ition	Overall Teachers' Job Satisfaction
Goal Framing	0.05	-0.64	-0.38	-0.84	-0.66	0.48	0.77	-0.85	0.55	-0.26
Capacity Building	0.25	-0.25	-0.07	-0.66	-0.73	-0.02	0.60	-0.57	0.64	-0.09
Change Execution	0.47	-0.26	0.06	-0.54	-0.91	0.20	0.87	-0.54	0.84	0.16
Institutionalizing	0.81	0.06	0.47	0.05	-0.90	0.26	0.92	-0.07	0.92	0.67
Overall	0.09	0.77	0.52	0.89	0.54	-0.61	-0.72	0.92	-0.42	0.38

Notes: r -critical ($.05, 2$) = 0.95, *significant

The findings support the directional hypothesis, suggesting that when school principals demonstrate stronger change leadership competence, there tends to be a corresponding increase in teachers' job satisfaction. However, this relationship is only moderate in strength, indicating that while a connection exists between the two variables, it is not particularly robust. This suggests that teachers' overall job satisfaction is likely influenced by additional factors beyond just the change in leadership skills of their principals. School leaders continue to play a crucial role in creating a positive and supportive work environment that fosters teacher satisfaction and motivation. Interestingly, this outcome contrasts with the study by Celdran (2020), who claimed that subordinates' job satisfaction is greatly affected by the leadership tactics and competencies of institutional heads. Similarly, the current results diverge from the conclusions of Parveen et al. (2022), who emphasized that a school principal's capacity for leading change is closely tied to their responsibilities in promoting innovation, leadership development, and improving teacher performance. Despite the observed positive correlation between principals' change leadership competence and teachers' job satisfaction, the relationship did not reach statistical significance. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.38$) fell below the critical value ($r = 0.95$) at the 0.05 significance level, with degrees of freedom ($df = 2$), indicating that the link between the two variables might not be strong enough to draw definitive conclusions. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.1444$) further indicates that only about 14.44% of the variance in teacher job satisfaction can be attributed to principals' change leadership competence.

In comparison, the remaining 85.56% is likely influenced by other unexamined variables (Senthilnathan, 2017). This highlights the multifaceted nature of job satisfaction and reinforces the idea that a wide range of organizational, interpersonal, and personal factors contribute to the level of satisfaction teachers feel in their roles. This insight aligns with the findings of Saleem et al. (2020), who emphasized the importance of leadership behaviors and styles in shaping job satisfaction among teachers. In line with this, Phuc et al. (2021) pointed out that effective school leaders help prepare their teachers for emerging challenges and unite them under a shared vision. Additionally, the current findings are consistent with those of Imhangbe et al. (2018), who found that various change leadership styles employed by school heads significantly influenced teachers' job satisfaction. This further underscores the importance of leadership development and adaptability in supporting a satisfied and high-performing teaching workforce.

3.8 Comparative Analysis in the Conflict Resolution Capacity and Change Leadership Competence of the Principals as Perceived by 3 Types of Respondents

As reflected in Table 8, the results of the one-way ANOVA reveal that there are no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of teachers, principals, and PTA presidents regarding the conflict resolution capacity of school principals. Specifically, teachers reported a mean score of 3.64 (SD = 0.52), principals had a mean of 3.68 (SD = 0.40), and PTA presidents recorded a mean of 3.62 (SD = 0.45), $F(2, 297) = 0.09$, $p = .91$. Given that the p -value is well above the 0.05 significance threshold, the directional hypothesis is accepted. This outcome suggests that, on average, all three stakeholder groups share similar views about the principals' capacity to manage and resolve conflicts. The consistency in their perceptions implies that the school principals' conflict resolution skills are viewed uniformly across different perspectives in the school community, which reinforces the reliability and alignment of their observations.

Table 8. Results of one-way Analysis of Variance on the Conflict Resolution Capacity of the Principals according to 3 Types of Respondents

Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P-value
Teachers	3.64	0.52	0.09	0.91
Principals	3.68	0.40		
PTA Presidents	3.62	0.45		

Note: $p < .05$, significant

The results of this study align with previous findings that have revealed a shared perception of principals' conflict resolution capacity among various school stakeholders. For instance, Chen et al. (2019) reported that teachers, administrators, and parents generally held comparable views regarding how school leaders handle conflicts. This is echoed by Tai and Kareem (2020), who observed a similar alignment of perspectives between teachers and school administrators. Moreover, Chen et al. (2019) also found consistent perceptions of principals' conflict resolution capacity among teachers, parents, and members of the broader community. These studies support the current finding that there is a shared and consistent assessment of conflict resolution practices across diverse school stakeholders. Certainly, leadership shoulders much of the responsibility for fostering positive workplace dynamics (Carton & Tewfik, 2016). The generational impact highlights the need for leaders to address conflicts arising from differences in values and norms among various groups (Messarra et al., 2016). Moreover, Hidayat et al. (2023) suggested training administrators in conflict management and encouraging dialogue for dispute resolution among staff.

3.9 Comparative Analysis in the Conflict Resolution Capacity and Change Leadership Competence of the Principals as Perceived by 3 Types of Respondents

Table 9 presents a one-way analysis of variance conducted to examine insights into change leadership competence among Principals as perceived by three different respondent groups.

Table 9. Results of One-Way Analysis of Variance on the Change Leadership Competence of the Principals as Perceived by 3 Types of Respondents

Groups	Mean	F	P-value
Principals	4.60 _a	4.80	0.01
PTA Presidents	4.45 _{ab}		
Teachers	4.26 _b		

The analysis revealed a significant difference in the mean perceptions among the three groups, $F(2, 297) = 0.01$, $p < .05$. The post-hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD further clarified that principals ($M = 4.80$) viewed their change leadership competence more favorably than did the PTA presidents ($M = 4.45$) and teachers ($M = 4.26$). This discrepancy may reflect a natural human inclination toward self-preservation or a more optimistic self-assessment

by those in leadership positions.

These findings are supported by earlier research. Likewise, Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016) observed that principals generally receive more favorable ratings for their leadership abilities from themselves and their peers compared to the views of teachers and community members. These results align with the conclusions of Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), who emphasized that leadership competence plays a crucial role in achieving school success. This study's findings suggest that principals perceive themselves as more competent in leading change compared to how they are perceived by teachers and PTA presidents, supporting the notion that self-perception among school leaders can differ significantly from others' observations.

3.10 Conflict Resolution Capacity and Change Leadership Competence of Principals when Grouped by Schools Division

Table 10 presents the one-way ANOVA results for the conflict resolution capacity of principals, categorized by school division. As the data indicate, no significant differences exist in mean perceptions of conflict resolution capacity among the school divisions, $F(3, 396) = 1.15$, $p = 0.34$. Mean ratings ranged from 3.43 to 3.69, with Kidapawan having the lowest mean score ($M = 3.66$) and Gensan having the highest ($M = 3.69$); however, these differences were not statistically significant. Hence, the directional hypothesis is accepted.

Table 10. Results of One-way ANOVA on the Conflict Resolution Capacity of Principals when Grouped by Schools' Division

Schools Divisions	Mean	F	P-value
Koronadal	3.66	1.15	0.34
Kidapawan	3.43		
Tacurong	3.68		
General Santos	3.69		

This finding aligns with the conclusions of Gonzales and de Guzman (2021), who observed that conflict management styles and the resulting teacher job satisfaction and efficiency varied depending on the school's geographic setting. They emphasized that the location of schools may influence how school leaders manage conflicts and how such management affects teacher satisfaction and performance. Their study highlights the importance of ongoing professional development and capacity-building efforts to help school leaders enhance their conflict resolution competencies.

Table 11. Results of One-way ANOVA on the Change Leadership Competence of Principals when Grouped by Schools Division

Schools Divisions	Mean	F	P-value
Koronadal	4.47 _a	3.72	0.04
Kidapawan	4.35 _{ab}		
Tacurong	4.33 _{ab}		
General Santos	4.24 _b		

Note: $p < .05$, significant

The results in Table 11 reveal that there are significant differences in how principals' change leadership competence is perceived across different school divisions, as indicated by the one-way ANOVA, $F(3, 396) = 3.72$, $p = .04$. This finding leads to the rejection of the directional hypothesis. A closer look at Tukey's HSD post-hoc analysis reveals that principals from Koronadal City ($M = 4.47$) were perceived as having relatively higher levels of change leadership competence compared to those from General Santos City ($M = 4.24$). These results suggest that perceptions of leadership effectiveness may vary across school divisions, possibly influenced by contextual factors such as local leadership culture, administrative support, or professional development opportunities. This finding is consistent with a recent study by Chen and Wang (2021). They also claimed significant differences in perceptions of change leadership competence among principals across different geographic regions or administrative divisions within educational systems. Likewise, Martinez and Tadeu (2018) observed that a principal's leadership influences the professional identity of staff, with geographical location and leadership style also playing significant roles in fostering change among teachers to improve professionalism and school performance. The influence of geographic location on principals' change leadership competence has been highlighted in recent studies. For instance, Le et al. (2021) found that principals in Vietnam's mountainous regions faced unique challenges that impacted their leadership competencies.

4.0 Conclusion

This study found that school principals demonstrate strong capacities in conflict resolution and change leadership, especially in areas such as goal setting, capacity building, and sustaining reforms. These leadership

competencies play a crucial role in shaping teacher morale, as reflected in high levels of well-being, self-regulation, optimism, and motivation. While change leadership showed a strong correlation with teacher morale, its effect on job satisfaction was only moderate, indicating that other factors may also play a role. Interestingly, notable gaps emerged between principals' self-ratings and the perceptions of teachers and PTA leaders, particularly across different school divisions such as Koronadal City and General Santos City. These findings point to practical implications: there is a clear need for more context-sensitive leadership development programs, regular training in conflict management, and leadership curricula that prioritize emotional intelligence and inclusive stakeholder engagement. From a policy perspective, these insights can inform the design of school leadership frameworks and professional development systems. In educational practice, they underscore the importance of relational leadership in supporting teacher morale. For future research, it would be valuable to explore other variables that affect job satisfaction and to investigate the long-term impact of leadership practices on school climate and teacher well-being.

5.0 Contribution of Authors

The authors indicate equal contribution to each section. The authors reviewed and approved the final work.

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7.0 Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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